



**Studies on the Relationship between Irish Drama in the Irish
Literary Revival and the National Dramatic Movement of
China, Mediated through Translations in Japan, and through
the Chinese Intellectual Guo Moruo**

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Abstract

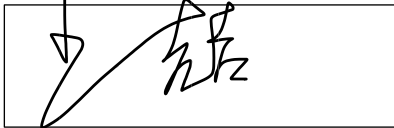
The dramatic movement of the Irish Literary Revival had a profound influence on the development of Chinese drama, especially the National Drama Movement of China. This thesis focuses on early 20th-century China, delving deeply into why The May Fourth scholars voluntarily introduced and translated Irish literature, and what motivations allowed writers, who never met, to resonate strongly in their creative and political philosophies. This study centers on two figures from each movement, J. M. Synge from the Irish dramatic movement and Guo Moruo from China's National Drama Movement, exploring their intellectual and dramatic connection.

After an introduction and a literature review, this thesis is structured into three main sections. Chapter 3 primarily analyzes Guo Moruo's political philosophy, examining the diachronic evolution of his ideas before and after his studies in Japan. The fourth chapter discusses the introduction, translation, and adaptation of Irish literature within the Japanese academic sphere. It examines the literary image of Irish literature as understood by the Japanese academia and focuses on three Japanese writers' adaptations of J. M. Synge. The final chapter considers the influence of various aspects of Japanese culture, politics, and religion, and examines why the Japanese-adapted Synge resonated more with Guo Moruo than the original Synge, considering China's national conditions and cultural background at the time. Finally, this chapter discusses why Guo Moruo did not fully accept the Japanese-academic-adapted Synge, in his own adaptations and his creative interpretation of Synge.

Declaration of Originality

Declaration: I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and does not contain the work of any other individual. All sources that have been consulted have been identified and acknowledged in the appropriate way.

Signature of Candidate:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature consists of a stylized 'W' followed by 'Zhe' in Chinese characters.

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Date: 16/09/2024

Signature of Supervisor:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Eugene O'Brien' in a cursive script.

Professor Eugene O'Brien

Date: 16/09/2024

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The completion of this doctoral dissertation marks the culmination of a long and transformative journey, one shaped by the pursuit of knowledge, perseverance through adversity, and the support of many individuals along the way. This dissertation was made possible through the intellectual and emotional guidance I received from numerous people.

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Dedication

To my beloved family, my supervisors and my friends.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Research background

This introduction outlines the overall objectives and research questions of the thesis. It briefly introduces the two central movements that form the core of the study, followed by a detailed discussion of the most significant section—the academic value, significance, and research background of the chosen topic. I will present the research context, the origins of the study, and its importance, particularly in light of the diplomatic relations established between China and Ireland in 1979, which have since developed steadily. High-level exchanges between the two countries were achieved in the late 1990s, marked by Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern’s visit to China in 1998, where he proposed the ‘Asia Strategy’ with a focus on China. This was followed by visits from former Chinese Premiers Zhu Rongji and Wen Jiabao to Ireland, which further strengthened bilateral political and economic ties. In recent years, Ireland has deepened its engagement with Chinese provinces such as Fujian and Hubei in sectors like high technology, food, agriculture, and environmental protection, resulting in substantial progress. Notably, after Brexit, Ireland became the only native English-speaking country in the European Union, positioning itself as a bridge between the UK and the EU. This shift has attracted global attention, including from China, which has maintained long-standing relations with Ireland. Consequently, research on Ireland has been expanding globally. In China, Irish studies have taken on a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary focus, covering fields such as history, culture, politics, economics, and

international relations. However, to truly understand the origins of Sino-Irish relations, one must return to the realm of literary studies, where the intersection of Chinese and Irish literature began during the early 20th century translation movement led by Chinese students studying in Japan, which carried strong political motivations.

The National Dramatic Movement in China, also referred to as the New Drama Movement, emerged in the early 20th century with the primary objective of fostering social and cultural change through the modernization and nationalization of theater. This movement was heavily influenced by Japan's New Theater Movement, a significant development within Japanese theater at the time. The Japanese New Theater Movement sought to move beyond traditional forms such as Kabuki and Noh, integrating elements of Western modern drama to create a theatrical form capable of addressing contemporary social issues and individual psychology. The pioneers and advocates of this movement drew considerable inspiration from Western modern drama, translating and studying numerous European and American works, with the Irish Literary Revival being one of the most notable influences. Through Japan, a cultural connection between China and Ireland was thus established.

As a prominent figure in China's National Dramatic Movement, Guo Moruo played a pivotal role in introducing J. M. Synge, a leading figure of the Irish Literary Revival, to Chinese audiences by translating many of Synge's works into Chinese. What drove Guo to transcend significant cultural, political, and religious barriers to connect with and resonate with Synge? Did Guo ever have direct contact with Synge?

Furthermore, after being translated by Guo and interpreted by various Chinese scholars of the time, can it be said that Synge's works remained unchanged? What did Synge's "journey to China" entail, and what legacy did it leave behind? These questions form the basis of this study and provide the research context for this thesis.

Synge and Guo

John Millington Synge stands as a towering figure in the Irish Literary Revival, and his plays delve into the lives of the Irish peasantry, depicting their struggles, joys, and the raw beauty of the Irish landscape with both realism and poetic lyricism. His work is characterized by a deep empathy for his characters, coupled with an unflinching portrayal of the harsh realities of their lives. Themes of nature, the human condition, and the clash between the individual and societal norms are recurrent in his oeuvre, offering insights into the complexities of rural Irish life (O'Neil, 2017).

Synge's style combines elements of naturalism with rich, lyrical prose that draws heavily from Irish folklore and the Gaelic language. This blend of realism and poetic expression creates a distinctive voice that captures the essence of Irish life and the rhythms of its speech. His use of dialect, in particular, lends authenticity to his characters, allowing them to speak in a manner that reflects their cultural and social backgrounds (Fitzgerald, 2019).

Synge's most famous work, *The Playboy of the Western World*, sparked significant controversy upon its premiere at the Abbey Theatre in 1907, due to its portrayal of patricide and its unvarnished representation of Irish rural life. However, the controversy

underscored Synge's impact on Irish society, challenging prevailing norms and encouraging a reevaluation of national identity (McDonagh, 2018). His works have left an indelible mark on Irish drama, influencing generations of playwrights by demonstrating the power of drama to provoke, challenge, and reflect societal values.

Guo Moruo, a prominent figure in the National Drama Movement and the New Culture Movement, wielded his literary and intellectual prowess to spearhead the modernization of Chinese literature and drama. Through his diverse body of work, which spanned drama, poetry, and critical essays, he sought to reconcile the influences of Western literature with Chinese themes, advocating for a literature that was both revolutionary and deeply reflective of China's quest for a new identity.

Guo was instrumental in adapting Western dramatic techniques and themes to Chinese theater, which was traditionally dominated by classical forms. His works introduced new ideas about individualism, freedom, and national identity, resonating deeply with the aspirations of the New Culture Movement. His plays often tackled social issues and critiqued traditional values, aligning with the movement's goals of cultural and societal renewal (Li, 2020).

Beyond drama, Guo's poetry and essays contributed significantly to the literary landscape of early 20th-century China. His early poetry, characterized by its embrace of romanticism and revolution, echoed the tumultuous changes occurring within Chinese society. Later, his works reflected a more complex understanding of China's cultural heritage and its place in the modern world (Zhang & Wang, 2021).

His critical essays on literature, culture, and society were influential in shaping the discourse of the New Culture Movement. His advocacy for a synthesis of Chinese and Western thought, and his critical stance against Confucianism, exemplified the intellectual ferment of the era. Guo's legacy is evident in the broad influence he had on Chinese drama, literature, and intellectual thought, contributing to the foundation of modern Chinese cultural identity (Chen, 2019).

Both John Millington Synge and Guo Moruo utilized their respective platforms in drama and literature to reflect, critique, and influence the societies in which they lived. Synge's exploration of Irish rural life and Guo's advocacy for modernization and cultural renewal in China demonstrate the transformative power of literature and drama. Their works not only provide a window into the societal concerns and cultural dynamics of their times, but also continue to inspire and resonate with audiences today, highlighting the enduring relevance of their contributions to global literature and thought.

Research Significance

The geographical distance between China and Ireland is huge, and accordingly, great differences on the perspectives of cultural heritage, population, and economic development are also generated. However, since modern times, both China and Ireland had experienced a history of external aggression and oppression, and both have achieved the rapid development in terms of economy and society through exploring the developing paths actively for the past thirty years. Therefore, these similarities provide

the possibilities for studying the course of Irish literature from the perspective of crosscultural analysis. Professor Li Chengjian pointed in *A Study on Contemporary Irish Drama*:

Standing at the beginning of Twenty-first century and tracing back to the past forty years' developing progress of Irish drama, the contemporary Chinese academic circle should pay attention to at least two perspectives of historical experiences of it. Firstly, in order to deliver the historical attitudes and cultural standpoints, the Irish playwrights demonstrate their strong awareness for social responsibilities undertaking and culture participation through the form of drama. Secondly, with the support of emerging culture industry, Irish national culture (Drama) has been successfully broadcasted to overseas to model the image of Irish nationality, and to carry forward the national culture. This type of successful experience needs to be highlighted. Currently, 'Carrying forward Chinese National Culture' and 'Going Abroad of Chinese Culture' are the strategies of cultural development in our China, so, to a certain extent, borrowing the exploring course and the successful broadcasting experience of the Irish national literature as references makes the study of contemporary Irish literature become essential and unavoidable. (Li, 2015)

As one of the countries with an ancient civilization, and one of the countries with a large population and national territorial area, China has received a lot of scholarly attention from the rest of the world. Although Ireland is small in terms of land area, it has a long and tumultuous history, similar to China, marked by numerous invasions and colonization that gave rise to a resilient national consciousness. Ireland has endured the

Great Famine, fought for national independence, established the Republic, and experienced the Celtic Tiger, evolving over centuries into an indispensable member of the European Union. Throughout this period, Ireland has produced numerous world-renowned writers and artists.

This trajectory of concurrent economic and cultural development has drawn close attention from around the world, including China. Using the mode of comparative studies in Irish and Chinese literature, and comparing perspectives of literature, culture, nationality, social background, history of China and Ireland, leads to the generation of significant new developments. To some certain extent, studies of this kind will promote more mutual understanding of these two countries. In consideration of the current scarce understanding of Chinese academia in terms of Irish culture and literature, let alone among the general population, and the infrequent broadcasting of Chinese culture and literature in Ireland, this kind of comparative study is both timely and necessary, especially in the light of broader economic and political connections between the two countries. After all, making progress together bases on basis of mutual learning is the key to mutual understanding of two very different cultures. The eastward transmission of Synge's literary imagery, which this thesis focuses on, constitutes a significant aspect of recent comparative literature and cross-cultural studies. The process by which literary and cultural imagery undergoes domestication and transformation due to various influencing factors during its transmission is a critical component of cultural exchange

and interaction between nations. Therefore, this thesis holds substantial academic significance.

Research Purpose

This dissertation aims to elucidate four key aspects: firstly, how Synge's literary imagery, including the thematic elements of his works, transcended time and geographic boundaries to reach China; and secondly, in the transmission of Synge's literary imagery to China, what roles did Irish nationalists, contemporary Japanese scholars, and, most importantly, Chinese May Fourth scholars, particularly Guo Moruo, play. Additionally, how did Synge's literary imagery resonate with Guo Moruo, and what impact did this resonance have on Guo's own dramatic works at the time? Finally, I hope to show how Synge's literary persona and works underwent a process of cultural adaptation and transformation through multiple translations and reinterpretations by Guo Moruo, ultimately presenting a distinct literary spirit in China.

Hence this study focuses on the early 20th century, beginning with the initial connections between Chinese scholars and the Irish Dramatic Movement. Given that many Chinese scholars at the time engaged in translating and analyzing the Irish Dramatic Movement, a broad horizontal analysis would risk superficiality. Thus, this study selects Guo Moruo, a leading figure and primary translator of Synge in China, as the focal point. By examining Guo Moruo's work, this thesis will explore the broader context and then delve into specific details, ensuring a cohesive and logically structured analysis.

The early 20th century was a tumultuous period for China, marked by internal and external strife. Following decades of the Opium Wars and the signing of humiliating treaties, coupled with the Qing dynasty's oppressive feudal rule and subsequent warlord fragmentation, the nation was impoverished and its people suffered greatly. Scholars of the era, including Guo Moruo, approached Western literature and culture with strong political motives rather than mere literary curiosity. Consequently, the study first explores his political and philosophical evolution before and after his studies in Japan, contextualized within the broader socio-political landscape.

Emphasizing the pre- and post-study period in Japan is crucial, because Japan served as the intermediary through which Chinese scholars accessed the Irish Dramatic Movement. During the late Taisho and early Showa periods, Japan was a burgeoning capitalist nation, vibrant with the adoption of advanced Western ideas and an open societal attitude. The Irish Dramatic Movement thrived in Japan due to this intellectual climate. Thus, this thesis traces the transmission path of Synge's works in Guo's work: his interpretation of Irish nationalism; his understanding of Japanese academia, and through this, his translations of Synge into Chinese.

Following this trajectory, this work examines how the Japanese academic community translated and adapted Synge's works within their cultural and political context, leading to transformations in Synge's literary imagery. The subsequent section analyzes the impact of these adaptations on Guo, who immersed himself in Japanese culture, and why this led him to the original works of the Irish Dramatic Movement,

including Synge's plays. This analysis elucidates his selective approach to secondary materials, and the reasons behind his choices, considering the political and cultural differences between China and Japan and the evolution of Guo's political philosophy.

After establishing the connections and logical framework, the study concludes by analyzing his creative translations and adaptations of Synge's works, based on his evaluations of the Irish Dramatic Movement and of Synge himself. This final analysis aims to reveal how Synge's literary imagery became transformed upon reaching China, and how it embodied new meanings within the Chinese literary context.

Outline of the Thesis

This dissertation is divided into six chapters, including the introduction, literature review, three chapters of argumentation, and conclusion. Chapter 1, the introduction aims to outline the historical context of the research topic. It begins with the current national relations between China and Ireland and traces the historical connections between the two countries' drama movements to explain the genesis of this research topic. This section will then introduce the representative figures of these two drama movements, Synge and Guo. Finally, it will elucidate the research objectives and the significance of cross-cultural studies.

Chapter 2 aims to provide a background introduction from the perspective of literature review. It first introduces the historical context of the two writers under study, including the Irish Literary Revival, the Chinese National Dramatic Movement, and the Japanese New Theater Movement. Next, the chapter will systematically review Chinese

research on Irish literature, covering prominent figures such as Wilde, Yeats, Shaw, and Beckett. It will then narrow the focus to studies on Irish drama, including the literary revival period and contemporary Irish drama research. Finally, the review will focus on cross-cultural comparative studies, culminating in the comparative analysis of Synge and Guo, to establish the research value of this thesis.

Chapter 3 serves as the foundation for the study, illustrating how Synge's literary imagery was transmitted to China and transformed. To understand how Synge's works were introduced to China, it is essential to discuss the range and experience of Chinese students studying in Japan at the time. Their political philosophies were the fundamental reason for translating foreign works. This chapter will chronologically detail Guo's political philosophies before and after studying in Japan, highlighting different periods and corresponding political beliefs through a close reading of his representative works and letters. It will divide Guo's career into three phases and discuss his development: as an enthusiastic student with patriotic fervor but limited by his economic conditions; as a passionate young patriot openly expressing political views; and finally, as a reflective thinker embracing internationalism and advocating anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolutions.

Chapter 4 begins with an analysis based on cultural transmission theories and cross-cultural comparative theories to highlight Japan's crucial role in the Sino-Irish drama transmission and the necessity of Synge's transmission in Japan. It will then examine how three Japanese writers with different political inclinations and literary philosophies

translated, evaluated, and adapted Synge's works: Ryūnosuke Akutagawa, Kikuchi Kan, and Saijō Yaso. Akutagawa, representing the bourgeoisie, integrated religious and philosophical reflections in his writings, resonating with Synge's literary creation. Kikuchi, representing the emerging bourgeoisie, focused on local governance and cultural revival, adapting Synge to reshape discourse power and challenge traditional norms and Saijō, an extreme nationalist and militarist in early Shōwa Japan, used Synge's techniques for political narratives and public agitation.

Chapter 5 covers a broad scope and involves intricate argumentative logic. First, it will analyze why Japanese writers adapted Synge's works by considering economic, political, and religious factors. It will then explore why Chinese students, represented by Guo, were influenced by these adaptations, considering Guo's varying political philosophies. This chapter will also compare the different national contexts of China and Japan to explain why Chinese students chose to translate Synge's original texts rather than the Japanese adaptations. Finally, it will analyze how Guo inherited and transcended Synge's works, illustrating the transformation of Synge's literary imagery in China.

Chapter 6 offers a conclusion to the thesis. It will summarize the findings of the study, emphasizing the comprehensive relationship chain of how Synge's works were transmitted from Japan to China, and the transformation of his literary imagery in China. It will also highlight the significance of such detailed cross-cultural research, which is unprecedented in both Chinese and Irish academic circles, and affirm the academic

value of this study. Finally, it will showcase the drawbacks of this thesis and list the research gaps which can be further studied in the future.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

At the dawn of the 20th century, amidst the tumult of empires crumbling and nations rebirthing, two distinct yet parallel cultural movements emerged on opposite sides of the globe: the Irish dramatic movement within the Irish Literary Revival and the National Drama Movement in China. These movements, born from a crucible of social upheaval, colonial pressures, and a burgeoning desire for national identity, sought to reinvigorate and redefine the cultural landscapes of Ireland and China, respectively. Central to this comparative analysis are the towering figures of John Millington Synge in Ireland, and Guo Moruo in China, whose works not only epitomized the essence of their respective movements, but also played a pivotal role in the cultural renaissance and political discourse of their times. This literature review delves into the depths of these movements, unraveling the complex tapestry of historical, social, and cultural threads that wove the fabric of Irish and Chinese national drama.

The significance of comparing these movements lies in their profound impact on the national consciousness and cultural identity of Ireland and China. Through a meticulous exploration of primary texts, critical essays, and historical documents, this review aims to illuminate the shared aspirations and divergent paths of these movements. The methodology embraces a holistic approach, incorporating comparative literature to dissect the thematic and stylistic elements of Synge and Guo's works; historical analysis

to contextualize their contributions within their respective national struggles; and cultural studies to understand the broader societal implications of their legacies.

In Ireland, the late 19th and early 20th centuries were marked by a quest for cultural revival and political independence. The Irish Literary Revival, with drama as its beating heart, sought to reclaim Irish identity from the clutches of colonialism, reviving Gaelic culture and folklore. Synge, with his groundbreaking plays, stood at the forefront of this movement, challenging societal norms and portraying the raw beauty of rural Irish life. His works, including *The Playboy of the Western World*, ignited controversies and conversations, pushing the boundaries of what Irish drama could achieve.

Conversely, in China, the early 20th century was a period of profound intellectual and social ferment. The New Culture Movement, and the subsequent May Fourth Movement, represented a seismic shift in Chinese thought, advocating for the abandonment of Confucian traditions in favor of modernization and Western ideals. Against this backdrop, Guo Moruo emerged in the vanguard of the National Drama Movement, infusing Chinese drama with new life and ideologies. His adaptations of Western classics and original works echoed the tumultuous quest for a new Chinese identity, blending revolutionary ideas with artistic innovation.

The parallel examination of Synge and Guo, and the movements they represent, offers unparalleled insights into how drama can serve both as a mirror to societal changes and also as a hammer with which to shape them. This literature review not only

aims to bridge the geographical and cultural divide between Ireland and China, but also to highlight the universal power of drama in articulating national identity, catalyzing social change, and forging a collective cultural memory.

Through this extended analysis, the review will underscore the enduring relevance of Synge and Guo's contributions to their countries' cultural heritages. It will explore how their legacies continue to resonate within the realms of literature, drama, and beyond, shaping the discourse on national identity and cultural renewal. This comparative study is not merely an academic exercise but a tribute to the transformative power of drama and literature in shaping the destiny of nations.

Ireland: The Late 19th and Early 20th Century

The period spanning the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Ireland was characterized by a profound national introspection and a burgeoning desire for political autonomy. The country, under British rule, experienced a series of cultural, social, and political movements aimed at reclaiming its identity and sovereignty. Among these, the Irish Literary Revival emerged as a pivotal force, intertwining the cultural renaissance with the fervent push for independence.

Ireland's cultural renaissance was deeply rooted in its historical grievances and aspirations. The Great Famine of the 1840s had left deep scars, exacerbating the Irish people's disenfranchisement and emigration. Against this backdrop, the Gaelic League was founded in 1893, with the aim of reviving the Irish language and traditions, signaling the start of a broader cultural awakening. This renaissance was not only about

reclaiming the past, but was also about forging a future where Ireland could stand as a nation distinct from British influence.

The Irish Literary Revival, which took place against this complex socio-political tapestry, was marked by the works and efforts of key figures like W.B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, and J.M. Synge. These individuals believed that the essence of national identity lay in its folklore, myths, and linguistic heritage. Through their literary and dramatic productions, they sought to instill a sense of pride and self-awareness among the Irish people. Yeats, in particular, championed the idea that art could serve as a vehicle for national and political expression, famously asserting that ‘education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire’ (McDonagh, 2019, p. 87).

The establishment of the Abbey Theatre in 1904 by Yeats, Lady Gregory, and others was a landmark moment for the revival. It became a platform for showcasing Irish life and folklore through drama, challenging the prevailing stereotypes and narratives imposed by colonial rule. Synge’s *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907), with its portrayal of Irish rural life and its departure from traditional moral and religious norms, sparked controversy and dialogue, illustrating the revival’s capacity to provoke societal reflection and debate.

The Irish Literary Revival was intricately linked to the burgeoning nationalist movement, culminating in the Easter Rising of 1916, a pivotal event in Ireland’s struggle for independence. The cultural awakening had nurtured a sense of national consciousness and unity, providing the ideological underpinnings for political action.

The revival's emphasis on a distinct Irish culture and identity played a crucial role in galvanizing support for independence, demonstrating the power of cultural expression as a form of resistance and assertion of sovereignty.

China: The New Culture and the May Fourth Movements

The late Qing Dynasty was a time of turmoil and decline for China, characterized by military defeats, foreign concessions, and internal unrest (Wang, 2020). The defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), and the subsequent Treaty of Shimonoseki were particularly humiliating, highlighting the Qing Dynasty's weakness and the urgent need for reform. These events set the stage for the intellectual and cultural ferment that would emerge in the early 20th century.

The New Culture Movement began around 1915, following the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1912, and the establishment of the Republic of China. This movement was a radical break from the past, questioning the foundations of Chinese society and culture, particularly Confucianism, which had been the dominant ideology for centuries (Li& Zhang, 2022). Intellectuals like Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi, and Lu Xun were at the forefront of this movement, advocating for democracy, science, and a departure from the feudal values they believed were holding China back (Chen, 2021).

One of the hallmark initiatives of the New Culture Movement was the promotion of the vernacular Chinese language, *Baihua*, over Classical Chinese. This was intended to make literature and education more accessible to the general population, thereby democratizing knowledge and encouraging broader participation in cultural and

political discourse (Hu, 2019). The movement also saw the introduction of new literary forms and themes, with an emphasis on realism and on the exploration of social issues. This period witnessed the rise of modern Chinese literature, with writers like Lu Xun critiquing traditional society and exploring the struggles of individuals in a changing China (Lu, 2021).

The May Fourth Movement, which took place on May 4, 1919, was a direct protest against the Treaty of Versailles' decision to transfer German concessions in Shandong Province to Japan rather than returning them to China (Yang, 2020). This event sparked widespread national outrage, and demonstrated the Chinese people's disillusionment with the Western powers and the Beiyang government. What began as a student protest in Beijing quickly spread across the country, evolving into a broader movement encompassing a wide range of societal reforms (Wu, 2021). This Movement amplified the New Culture Movement's calls for modernization and reform, pushing for a thorough overhaul of Chinese culture, education, and politics. It was a critical moment in the development of Chinese nationalism and an anti-imperialist ethos that would shape the country's future trajectory.

The intellectual ferment of this period led to significant debates about China's path forward. The concepts of 'Mr. Science' and 'Mr. Democracy' became rallying cries for those seeking to transform China into a modern, powerful nation capable of standing up to Western and Japanese imperialism. This period laid the groundwork for the subsequent political movements in China, including the rise of the Chinese Communist

Party and the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) (Zhang, 2019). The New Culture and May Fourth Movements profoundly influenced Chinese society and culture. They not only challenged the traditional social hierarchy and Confucian values but also promoted a vision of a new, modern China. The movements played a crucial role in shaping the ideologies of the generation that would lead China through the rest of the 20th century, including figures like Mao Zedong, who participated in the May Fourth protests.

The legacy of these movements is still evident today, as they represent a pivotal moment in China's quest for identity, modernity, and national strength. They underscored the power of cultural and intellectual movements in driving societal and political change, setting the stage for the dramatic transformations China would undergo in the following decades (Xu, 2022).

Historical Overview of Japanese Theater

Japanese theater has a rich and diverse history spanning over a millennium. Its oldest form, Noh (or Nogaku), can be traced back to the 14th century. Noh is a musical drama known for its elegant and symbolic gestures performed by actors in masks (Kawatake, 1984). Kabuki, emerging in the 17th century, became the most popular form of theater among the common people. Kabuki is known for its highly stylized performances, the vibrancy of its makeup and costumes, and its incorporation of music and dance (Leiter, 2002). Bunraku, a form of puppet theater, rose to prominence around the same time as Kabuki. Accompanied by narrative music, Bunraku presents human-sized puppets operated by puppeteers in full view of the audience (Keene, 1976). Traditional Japanese

theater is rich and varied, with a history that spans several centuries. Each form of theater has its unique characteristics, storytelling methods, and cultural significance. The major traditional forms include Noh, Kabuki, and Bunraku, each of which has played a significant role in shaping Japanese performing arts.

Noh theater emerged in the 14th century and was formalized by Kan'ami and his son Zeami, who established the fundamental structure and aesthetic principles of Noh. It was initially performed at religious sites and enjoyed the patronage of the samurai class (Kawatake, 1984). Noh is characterized by its minimalist stage, use of masks, slow-paced movements, and poetic language. The stories often revolve around supernatural themes, historical events, or classical literature. The performers wear elaborate costumes, and the main actor (*shite*) wears a mask to portray various characters.

Noh is considered a high art form in Japan, and it has influenced various aspects of Japanese culture, including literature, art, and dance. It reflects the Zen Buddhist philosophy, with an emphasis on simplicity, depth, and the transient nature of life. Kabuki originated in the early 17th century and was founded by Okuni, a female performer. Unlike Noh, Kabuki was popular among the common people and evolved over the centuries to include more extravagant and dramatic elements (Leiter, 2002). Kabuki is known for its stylized drama, elaborate makeup, extravagant costumes, and use of *hanamichi* (a walkway extending into the audience). The performances are lively, with music, dance, and dramatic acting. Male actors, called *onnagata*, perform female

roles. Kabuki reflects the Edo period's urban culture and is closely tied to the lives of common people. It has remained popular to this day and is an integral part of Japanese cultural heritage.

Bunraku developed during the late 16th to early 17th centuries. It reached its peak in the 18th century under the influence of Chikamatsu Monzaemon, a prominent playwright (Keene, 1976). Bunraku features large, intricately crafted puppets operated by puppeteers in full view of the audience. The stories are narrated by a chanter, accompanied by a shamisen (a three-stringed instrument). The narratives often focus on historical or romantic themes. Bunraku is considered a sophisticated art form, and like Kabuki, it reflects the values and aesthetics of the Edo period. It has influenced various aspects of Japanese literature and theater, including Kabuki.

These traditional theater forms have not only shaped the performing arts in Japan, but have also played a significant role in preserving and transmitting Japanese culture, values, and aesthetics through generations. They continue to be celebrated and performed today, serving as a testament to the enduring appeal and cultural significance of traditional Japanese theater.

Introduction of Western Theater to Japan

The introduction of Western theater to Japan marks a profound intersection with the nation's history of foreign interaction, modernization, and the pursuit of a national identity. This integration began in earnest in the latter half of the 19th century, following earlier contacts that had been established as far back as the late 16th century. During

this initial period, Portuguese Jesuit missionaries introduced the first Western-style plays as a method of evangelization. These religious-themed dramas, starkly different from traditional Japanese theater, represented the initial infusion of Western dramatic traditions into Japan.

The Meiji Restoration in 1868 signified Japan's end to its isolationist policy, ushering in a period of rapid modernization and Westernization, which prominently included the arts. In 1895, the formation of the Shochiku Company, which would become one of Japan's most influential theater and film companies, played a pivotal role in popularizing Western-style dramas and cinematic adaptations. The early 20th century saw significant figures such as Tsubouchi Shōyō, often regarded as the father of modern Japanese drama, who translated Shakespeare's works and promoted the study and adaptation of Western literature and drama. His plays, inspired by Ibsen and Shakespeare, introduced modern playwriting techniques to Japan. Alongside him, Shimamura Hōgetsu advocated for the establishment of a 'New Theater' (*Shingeki*) influenced by Western realism, bringing works by Henrik Ibsen and others to Japanese stages, resonating deeply with contemporary societal critiques and notions of individual freedom. By the 1920s, *Shingeki*, or New Drama, became synonymous with modern theater in Japan, incorporating Western-style acting techniques, contemporary themes, and innovative stagecraft. The translation and performance of plays by Anton Chekhov, August Strindberg, and Bernard Shaw profoundly influenced Japanese theater.

The post-World War II era brought another wave of Western influence during the American occupation from 1945 to 1952, emphasizing democracy and individual rights. American plays, particularly those themed around freedom and anti-fascism such as Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, were promoted and gained popularity. Japanese playwrights and directors began to innovatively merge Western and Japanese styles, as seen in Yukio Mishima's modern adaptations of traditional Noh and Kabuki plays, integrating contemporary themes with Western playwriting techniques.

As the 20th century closed, increased globalization and exchange led to crosscultural theater collaborations. Directors like Suzuki Tadashi gained international recognition for productions that blend Western plays with traditional Japanese theater techniques, exemplified by his interpretation of *The Trojan Women* using Noh elements. Contemporary Japanese playwrights like Oriza Hirata continue to be influenced by both traditional Japanese theater and their Western counterparts, creating works that resonate globally while staying rooted in Japanese sensibilities. This dynamic process reflects more than mere cultural assimilation; it illustrates a critical engagement by Japanese artists, scholars, and audiences with Western plays, adapting them to reflect Japanese contexts and using them as tools for societal critique, political commentary, and artistic experimentation.

Development of a Fusion of Japanese and Western Theater

The development of a fusion between Japanese and Western theater is a fascinating journey, encapsulating Japan's dynamic engagement with global cultural trends, while

preserving its unique artistic heritage. From the late 19th to the early 20th century, pioneers like Tsubouchi Shōyō initiated the assimilation of Western theatrical elements into Japanese plays. These early adaptations, while noticeably Western in their stylistic choices, retained a strong Japanese character in their content and portrayal of characters.

The term '*Shingeki*' or 'New Drama' emerged to denote this modern, Westerninfluenced theater in Japan. Early *Shingeki* works were often translations or adaptations of Western plays, but over time, they began to weave in Japanese sensibilities. The expressive movements characteristic of traditional forms like Noh, and the vibrant staging of Kabuki, were integrated into these modern performances, creating a theatrical experience that was both international and inherently local. Post-World War II Japan saw further experimentation and fusion in theater. Directors like Suzuki Tadashi played a pivotal role, incorporating the physicality of traditional Japanese theater with the textual depth of Western plays. His Suzuki Method of Actor Training is a testament to this blend, drawing from both Western and Japanese theatrical traditions. Similarly, playwright Yukio Mishima brought modern themes and motifs to traditional Kabuki plays, thereby enriching the repertoire.

In the contemporary era, Oriza Hirata's 'Quiet Theater' reflects the influence of Western 'slice-of-life' plays, focusing on the minutiae of everyday life, while maintaining a distinct Japanese perspective. The *Angura* (Underground) Theater movement, emerging in the 1960s, exemplified the blend of Western counterculture and Japanese theatrical traditions, capturing the socio-political unrest of the era. Beyond

drama, dance and performance art in Japan have also seen significant fusion. *Butoh*, the ‘dance of darkness,’ combines elements of Western modern dance and Japanese performance traditions. Its existential themes and surreal performances resonate with Western philosophical concerns, delivered through a medium reminiscent of traditional Japanese theater’s controlled physicality.

The fusion of Japanese and Western theater is not limited to domestic stages; it has also led to international collaborations, resulting in productions that transcend cultural boundaries. These collaborations often merge diverse techniques and narratives, creating universal resonance and highlighting the adaptability and fluidity of artistic expressions.

In summary, the fusion of Japanese and Western theater represents a crosscultural dialogue, celebrating both the universality of human experiences and the uniqueness of Japanese artistic heritage. It has not only enriched the Japanese theatrical landscape but also made significant contributions to global theater, showcasing the endless possibilities that arise when different cultural artistic expressions come together.

The Practice of Adapting and Interpreting Western Plays in Japan

Japanese theater, steeped in tradition yet continually evolving, has embraced the adaptation and interpretation of Western plays, resulting in a fusion of cultural narratives and theatrical techniques. This practice, which has flourished over the years, serves as a testament to Japan’s openness to external influences and its capacity for innovation in the arts. The adaptation and interpretation of Western plays in Japan is a

multifaceted practice, rooted in a desire for artistic innovation, cultural exchange, and the reinvigoration of traditional theater. At the core of this endeavor is a pursuit of modernity, as Japanese theater artists continually seek ways to evolve and enrich their craft by integrating diverse influences and perspectives. The late 19th and early 20th centuries, characterized by Japan's rapid modernization, saw intellectuals and artists striving to bridge the gap between the East and West, fostering an environment that was receptive to foreign artistic forms.

The infusion of Western narrative styles and themes provided Japanese theater with fresh, novel content, expanding the artistic palette available to playwrights and directors. These adaptations allowed for a re-examination and reinterpretation of universal themes such as love, conflict, and identity through a distinctly Japanese lens, thereby enriching the country's theatrical tradition. Notable critic Tanaka Hiroshi highlights the significance of this practice, stating, 'the inclusion of Western plays in our repertoire has broadened our artistic horizons, offering new and diverse avenues for creative expression' (Tanaka, 1998).

In addition to fostering artistic growth, the adaptation of Western plays also serves as a means of cultural diplomacy and exchange. By interpreting and presenting foreign narratives, Japanese theater contributes to a global dialogue, promoting cross-cultural understanding and appreciation. As renowned director Suzuki Tadashi articulates, 'our endeavor to reinterpret Western plays is not just about artistic expression; it is also about building bridges, creating a mutual understanding between disparate cultures' (Suzuki,

2002). This practice reflects Japan's broader commitment to internationalism and its recognition of the arts as a universal language, capable of transcending borders and bridging divides.

Furthermore, the adaptation of Western plays in Japan reflects a conscious effort to preserve and revitalize traditional theatrical forms. By integrating elements of Noh, Kabuki, and other indigenous styles into Western narratives, artists breathe new life into these ancient practices, ensuring their relevance in contemporary society. This delicate balancing act between preservation and innovation highlights the Japanese theater community's respect for its cultural heritage, as well as its willingness to embrace change and diversity.

In essence, the practice of adapting and interpreting Western plays in Japan is a testament to the country's dynamic and evolving theater scene. It encapsulates a collective desire to explore new artistic frontiers, foster international connections, and ensure the continued vitality of traditional Japanese theater, all while contributing to a rich and diverse global cultural tapestry.

Notable Adaptations of Western Plays in Japan

The landscape of Japanese theater has been profoundly enriched by the adaptation of Western plays, a process that has not only introduced international narratives to Japanese audiences but also fostered a unique blending of theatrical traditions (Miyamoto, 2004a). This endeavor has produced several notable adaptations that stand as testaments to the creative dialogue between Japanese and Western cultures.

One of the most celebrated figures in this context is Yukio Ninagawa, whose visionary adaptations of Shakespeare have captivated audiences both in Japan and around the world. Ninagawa's approach to Shakespeare, is emblematic of the potential for cross-cultural reinterpretation; his production of *Macbeth*, for instance, is set against the backdrop of feudal Japan, with samurai warriors taking the place of Scottish lords (Ninagawa, 1999). This reimagining not only brings the play closer to Japanese audiences by situating it within a familiar historical and cultural context, but it also highlights the universality of Shakespeare's themes. The use of traditional Noh and Kabuki elements in the staging and performance further underscores the synthesis of styles that characterizes Ninagawa's work, offering a visually stunning and emotionally resonant experience that transcends linguistic and cultural barriers.

Anton Chekhov's plays have also found a receptive home in Japan, with directors like Amon Miyamoto offering reinterpretations that resonate deeply with Japanese sensibilities. Miyamoto's adaptations often emphasize the subtleties and nuances of Chekhov's exploration of human relationships, aligning them with the introspective quality of traditional Japanese drama (Suzuki, 2002). By transplanting Chekhov's narratives into Japanese settings, these adaptations create a bridge between the Russian playwright's keen observations of human nature and the Japanese audience's appreciation for understated emotion and social nuance.

The movement known as *Angura*, or Underground Theater, in the 1960s, further exemplifies the innovative spirit of Japanese adaptations of Western plays (Tanaka, 1998). *Angura* productions were characterized by their experimental nature, blending

various artistic disciplines and cultural influences in a challenge to both traditional Japanese and Western theatrical norms. This movement, with its *avant-garde* approach and emphasis on social and political themes, reflected a broader cultural shift towards questioning and redefining identity in post-war Japan.

These adaptations, and others like them, underscore the rich potential for crosscultural exchange in the realm of theater. Through the creative reinterpretation of Western plays, Japanese directors and playwrights have not only expanded the scope of their own artistic traditions but also contributed to a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the universal human condition. In doing so, they have affirmed the theater's power to connect disparate cultures, fostering a sense of shared humanity across divides of language and geography.

In sum, the notable adaptations of Western plays in Japan represent a vibrant and ongoing conversation between East and West. They showcase the adaptability and ingenuity of Japanese theater, illustrating how traditional forms can evolve to incorporate new influences while maintaining a distinct cultural identity. Through these creative endeavors, Japanese theater continues to explore the complexities of human experience, offering audiences fresh perspectives on familiar stories and deepening the global dialogue of the arts.

Methods of Adaptation and Interpretation within Japanese Cultural forms

The methods of adapting and interpreting Western plays within Japanese cultural aesthetics represent a nuanced and complex process, deeply rooted in Japan's rich

theatrical heritage. This creative endeavor involves more than merely translating text from one language to another; it is an intricate act of cultural translation that requires a sensitive understanding of both the source material and the target culture. Japanese directors and playwrights navigate this process with a deep reverence for their own traditional forms, such as Noh, Kabuki, and Bunraku, while simultaneously embracing the narrative and thematic richness of Western plays.

At the heart of this adaptation process lies the principle of '*hon'yaku*' (translation), which in the context of Japanese theater, extends beyond linguistic conversion to encompass cultural and aesthetic reinterpretation. This principle is evident in the works of esteemed directors like Yukio Ninagawa, who masterfully blends Shakespearean dramas with elements of Noh and Kabuki. Ninagawa's adaptations are not mere transpositions of Western plays into a Japanese setting; they are transformative works that weave the essence of Japanese aesthetics into the fabric of Western narratives. For instance, Ninagawa's *Macbeth*, as already mentioned, is set in the Sengoku period, employing Kabuki's theatrical techniques and Noh's musical elements to create a version of Shakespeare's play that resonates with Japanese cultural sensibilities while retaining the universal themes of ambition, power, and guilt (Ninagawa, 1999).

Another method involves the incorporation of traditional Japanese music, costumes, and stagecraft to create a visual and auditory experience that is distinctly Japanese. The use of Noh masks in the portrayal of Western characters, for example, introduces a layer of symbolic meaning unique to Japanese theater, allowing for a

deeper exploration of character psychology and thematic complexity. This practice not only enriches the audience's experience but also bridges the gap between the modern and the traditional, the foreign and the familiar (Suzuki, 2002).

Furthermore, the adaptation process often entails a thematic reinterpretation, whereby universal themes are re-examined through the lens of Japanese philosophy and social norms. This approach allows Japanese theater to engage in a dialogue with Western plays, exploring issues such as identity, morality, and societal roles from a perspective that is rooted in Japanese cultural and historical context. Through this dialogue, Japanese adaptations of Western plays contribute to a global theatrical discourse, offering insights that are both culturally specific and universally relevant.

In conclusion, the methods of adaptation and interpretation within Japanese cultural aesthetics highlight the dynamic interplay between tradition and innovation in Japanese theater. By integrating Western narratives with Japanese theatrical forms, artists create works that are at once uniquely Japanese and globally resonant. This fusion of cultures enriches the theatrical landscape, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the diversity and universality of human experiences.

Review of Previous Studies on Irish literature in China

Irish literary studies are a prominent field within Irish studies both in the West and in China. As early as the New Culture Movement, Irish literary works were translated and introduced to China, where they were received and appreciated by Chinese readers. By the 1980s, Chinese scholars' research on Irish literature had entered a phase of

comprehensive promotion. Given the diverse approaches to Irish studies worldwide, it is challenging to provide an exhaustive review, and such a review would not be directly relevant to the theme of this thesis. The transmission of Synge's literary imagery in China, constrained by the limitations of native language research, and by the complexities of Chinese textual studies, has seen most comparative scholars focusing on Sino-Irish studies based in China, with only a few Irish scholars specializing in Chinese studies. Therefore, this thesis concentrates on the review of Chinese research on Irish literature.

China's studies on Irish literary writers and their works are most concentrated, extensive, and in-depth regarding James Joyce. In the late 1990s, the successive publication of different Chinese translations of Joyce's *Ulysses* marked a new phase in Joyce studies in China. Studies on Joyce in China has yielded substantial results. The most representative work is Dai Congrong's *The Formal Experiments in Joyce's Novels* (2005), which presents many new insights, such as linking his six works through the stages of realism, modernism, and postmodernism. The book points out that the development stages of Joyce's novelistic art correspond to the developmental process of modern English novels. It describes *Ulysses* as a monument to modernism, 'marking the end of Western heroic literature since the Middle Ages', and *Finnegans Wake* as 'an extraordinarily important experimental novel during the transition from modernism to postmodernism in Western literature' (Dai 2005, 68 & 105).

Papers published in China mainly focus on Joyce's three most famous works, namely *Ulysses*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Dubliners*. These studies delve into the structural form, thematic significance, writing techniques, narrative art, style, epiphanies, and stream-of-consciousness techniques of these works, as well as feminist interpretations and aesthetic studies. Academic journals feature numerous papers analysing individual short stories from *Dubliners*, exploring the mystery of 'E·C', and providing detailed analyses and interpretations of aspects such as the representation of time and space, women, language variation, musical form, and narrative techniques in *Ulysses*.

China has also made significant progress in the study of W.B. Yeats. Fu Hao's books, *Yeats* and *A Critical Biography of Yeats* (1999), detail the life of the renowned Irish poet, playwright, and prose writer. Most dissertations on Yeats were published after 2004, correlating with the recent rise in Yeats studies in China. The most studied themes include the use of Irish folklore and mythology in his poetry and its impact on Irish nationalism, his relationship with the Irish Literary Revival, and his connections with national culture and identity construction. Additionally, there is considerable focus on the depiction of female figures in his poetry, stylistic analysis, and narrative strategies. These trends indicate that Chinese studies on Yeats are primarily concentrated on his poetry's engagement with Irish mythology, nationalism, and identity, which are also key concerns among contemporary Irish writers. In academic journals, articles often provide detailed analyses of specific poems, specialized

examinations of Yeats's gyre theory and mystical philosophy, and studies on the symbolism and magical elements in his works.

In recent years, Yeats studies have primarily focused on analyzing his poetry through emerging theories such as ecological anti-colonial poetics. Scholars have examined Yeats's translation works to explore the anti-colonial practices reflected therein and have investigated the national political implications of Yeats's theatre through an analysis of stage design in his dramatic performances. For instance, Hu Zeyuan's 2023 article *Yeats's Ecological Anti-Colonial Poetics and His Poetry Creation* traces the origins and key content of Yeats's ecological anti-colonial poetics from his literary theories and explicates the ecological anti-colonial writings in his works. One of the most innovative aspects of Yeats's "cultural nationalism" is his critique of the industrial rationality and commercial civilization represented by Britain, along with the corresponding discourse of "progress." Yeats proposed an Irish model of ecological development distinct from that of Britain. Through his ecological anti-colonial writings, Yeats subverted Britain's demonizing depiction of Irish nature and achieved a form of cultural anti-colonialism for Ireland. Similarly, Li Yuan's *I Call to the Eye of the Mind: W.B. Yeats's Ritual Theatre and National Politics in At the Hawk's Well* provides an insightful analysis of the interplay between mysticism, theatre, and politics in Yeats's work. It effectively demonstrates how Yeats's engagement with Noh theatre helped him develop a unique form of ritualistic drama that could address both spiritual and national concerns. The author's exploration of the hypnotic and manipulative aspects of Yeats's

ritual theatre adds depth to the understanding of how art can be used to shape political and national identities.

Research on Seamus Heaney in China began in the 1990s, particularly gaining momentum after Heaney won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1995. Professor Li Chengjian has highlighted issues of identity construction and recognition in Heaney's poetry in his books and journal articles. This focus is driven by Heaney's unique identity and the distinctive political situation in Northern Ireland.

In recent years, influential articles on Seamus Heaney have concentrated on the work of two scholars. Yuan Guangtao, in *A Portable Monument: Seamus Heaney's Beowulf and Cultural Memory* (2023), provides a thorough analysis of Heaney's *Beowulf* translation within the framework of cultural memory, positioning Heaney not only as a translator but also as a cultural mediator. He highlights how Heaney's work transcends mere linguistic translation to engage in a broader dialogue with history, culture, and identity. Additionally, in his 2021 article *Continuous Digging: The Bog and Cultural Memory in Seamus Heaney's Poetry*, Yuan offers a nuanced and in-depth analysis of the symbolism of the bog in Heaney's poetry. He demonstrates how Heaney's work bridges personal, cultural, and political memories, using the bog as a rich, multi-layered symbol that evolves over time, reflecting Heaney's deep engagement with the complexities of identity, history, and memory.

Another important scholar, Dai Congrong, in *A Community of Poets: Seamus Heaney and the Belfast Group*, offers a comprehensive exploration of the role the

Belfast Group played in shaping Seamus Heaney's career. The article effectively highlights how the group provided Heaney with a vital space to develop his craft, receive critical feedback, and build connections with other writers.

Studies on Beckett also gained momentum in the 1990s. Wang Yahua (2005) conducted an in-depth study of Beckett's novels, pointing out that Beckett's exploration of the self is a process of formal experimentation. In Beckett's novels, the protagonists ultimately achieve an authentic existence, which is, paradoxically, nihilistic, and represented by death or silence. The novels enact transitions from clarity to chaos, culminating in a complex and formless narrative web: 'This process, on the one hand, presents the chaotic subconscious activities of the characters as an object of representation, and on the other hand, becomes a kind of structure'. Thus, Beckett practiced the creative philosophy of 'content is form, and form is content' (Wang 2005, 9).

In 2000, to commemorate the centenary of Oscar Wilde's birth, the China Literary Press published a six-volume Chinese edition of *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, encompassing his novels, plays, poems, essays, letters, and fairy tales. Among the works by Chinese scholars, Zhang Jieming (2005) examined aestheticism and Wilde from a modern perspective, identifying Wilde's aesthetic characteristics as 'beauty in sensibility, beauty in taste, beauty in imagination, and beauty in formal innovation' (Zhang 2005, 82). Li Yuan's *The Aesthetic Dandy: Oscar Wilde's Self-Construction and Rebellion* (2010) takes the unique European cultural figure of the dandy as the main

thread, integrating Wilde's artistic concepts and the content of his works through the dandy spirit, and strives to explore Wilde's self-construction as a dandy in his artistic ideas and literary creations.

In recent years, Chinese scholarship on Oscar Wilde has been particularly fruitful, with several high-quality studies emerging. Among them is Chen Zhiying's *Wildean Resistance: Individualism, Art, and Ireland in "The Soul of Man under Socialism"* (2024) which presents a compelling analysis of Wilde's intersectional approach to art, politics, and nationalism. It demonstrates how Wilde's artistic philosophy goes beyond aesthetics to engage with the political realities of his time, particularly the struggle for Irish independence. Chen effectively shows how Wilde's socialism is not a typical Marxist or collectivist socialism but one that prioritizes individual development, which he believes can only be fully realized under a socialist system. However, the article could delve more deeply into the contradictions in Wilde's thought. While Wilde champions individualism, his socialist leanings suggest a collective struggle, and the tension between these two ideals could be more fully explored. Additionally, the article could benefit from further analysis of how Wilde's ideas were received by contemporary audiences, particularly in Ireland and Britain, to understand the broader impact of his work on political and cultural discourse.

Jiang Yusi focuses on the early expressions of dandyism and aesthetic modernity in Oscar Wilde's fairy tales in his *On Dandyism and Aesthetic Modernity in Oscar Wilde's Fairy Tales*. He provides a thought-provoking analysis of Oscar Wilde's fairy

tales, moving beyond traditional interpretations of them as moralistic children's stories. By situating Wilde's tales within the broader context of dandyism and aesthetic modernity, the author sheds new light on the philosophical underpinnings of Wilde's work. The discussion of aesthetic autonomy and salvation is particularly compelling, as it highlights Wilde's belief in the transformative power of art, while also acknowledging the limitations of this ideal in the face of social and moral concerns.

Gao Weiquan examines Oscar Wilde's treatment of Celtic identity within the context of British imperialism, using three of Wilde's works: *The Model Millionaire*, *The Portrait of Mr. W. H.*, and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in *Oscar Wilde and Celtic 'Imperial Discourse': Starting with Erskine in the 'Portrait Trilogy* (2022) which offers a detailed and insightful examination of the political and cultural dimensions in Oscar Wilde's works, particularly in relation to his complex relationship with Celtic identity and British imperialism. By focusing on the character Erskine, Gao effectively highlights Wilde's engagement with both imperial and nationalist discourses, demonstrating how Wilde navigated the contradictions of being both an Irishman and a participant in the British cultural establishment. However, this journal could delve deeper into Wilde's personal views on the Irish question, particularly how his public statements and private correspondence align with the political messages in his works. Additionally, while the focus on Erskine is well-founded, a more comprehensive analysis of how other characters in Wilde's works reflect Celtic and imperial identities would further enrich the discussion.

Research on Irish drama in China overlaps with studies on Irish literature, as figures like Yeats were not only novelists but also renowned playwrights. The studies on Irish drama in China mainly focus on the eminent Irish playwrights or the text of the plays in the period of the Irish Literary Revival. He Shu (2002), in *From Home to the World – The Studies on the Irish Literary Revival*, has teased and studied the combined, conflicted and detached history of the Irish Literary Revival and the Irish National Movement, illustrates the national origin and characteristics of the development of the Irish drama. However, the academic orientation of this work is not from the perspective of dramatic literature, but from the perspective of historical science.

There are also theoretical studies of Synge, O’Casey and their respective plays which examine the literary aesthetic value of their works. Most of the studies are concentrated in masters’ theses, particularly those written by students of the few scholars in China who specialize in Irish literature. Consequently, the reference value of these theses is not particularly high. However, this also reflects that the study of Irish literature in China is still in its pioneering stage.

Among the noteworthy journal articles, Li Yuhua’s (2002) *Weeping Amid Laughter, Advancing Amid Grief: A Review of Synge’s The Playboy of the Western World* reveals Synge’s unique ‘Irish-style tragicomedy’ artistic style. The article points out that through an absurd ‘patricide’ story, Synge exposes the weaknesses of certain aspects of the Irish national character and, indeed, of the Literary revival Movement, and uses this dramatic form to awaken the public, highlighting the vast difference between fantasy

and reality. Synge's works reveal that indulging in fantasy can only lead to tragedy, while facing reality is the path to true freedom and liberation. This analysis demonstrates the profound social criticism and national reflection inherent in Synge's works. Additionally, in her 2016 paper *The Aesthetic Art of Modern Tragedy in John Millington Synge's Riders to the Sea*, the same author extends her interpretation of Synge's tragic aesthetic. She argues that the core of Synge's tragedy lies in reflecting the modern man's sense of loss and 'alienation' from society. The characters are depicted as isolated 'outsiders', whose actions gradually lose meaning, ultimately spending their lives in spiritual torment and numbness.

Studies on O'Casey are even scarcer. The only noteworthy study is Ye Hong's 'Tragicomedy: From Tradition to Modernity—A Study on Sean O'Casey's *Dublin Trilogy*' (2005). The article suggests that O'Casey's works reveal the painful situation of the Irish people in their historical context, and delve into the inherent flaws in aspects of the Irish national character. This universality allows his works to transcend temporal and spatial limitations, not only reflecting the plight of the Irish people but also the universal human condition of tragedy. Moreover, O'Casey's ingenious use of comedic elements in his plays does not mitigate the tragic effect but rather deepens the tragic themes.

As for Irish drama since 1960s, in the past decade, Chinese academia has gradually begun to take notice, resulting in the emergence of some introductory monographs and influential academic journal articles. For example, Professor Chen Shu,

who is one of the forerunners in this area, gave a brief introduction to contemporary Irish drama to Chinese readers to remedy the omission of translations of contemporary Irish drama in his *The Irish Dramatic Movement* (1986). Professor Li Chengjian's *A Study on Contemporary Irish Drama*, which was published in 2015, is the first book that introduce the contemporary Irish drama systematically to Chinese readers.

Another significant voice in this area is that of Li Yuan, a distinguished young scholar in Beijing Foreign Studies University, whose *The History of Irish Drama in 20th Century* (Li Yuan, 2013), has been accepted as a major project of National Social Sciences Fund. His *The Renarration of the National Identity – The Irish Drama in the Period of Celtic Tiger* (2013), reveals the essential characteristics of the Irish national narration in 20th century, from the theoretical perspective of national identity. Besides that, *The Bog of Cats*, which was written by the contemporary playwright, Marina Carr, was translated by Li Yuan. This was the first Chinese translated version of a text from contemporary Irish drama.

Since 2018, research on Brian Friel has increased in China, with several highquality articles being published. One notable example is Xiang Dingding's 'Brian Friel's Story Plays and Contemporary Reflections on "Irishness"' (2018). In this article, the author analyzes Friel's dramatic works to reveal his reflection and deconstruction of the myth of 'Irishness' within the context of contemporary Irish culture. Xiang argues that Friel's plays deconstruct the monolithic, nostalgic narratives of 'Irishness' through techniques such as counter-narrative and irony, highlighting the anachronism of these

traditional narratives in modern society and critiquing their oppressive impact on contemporary experiences. Friel's works call for the construction of a new, diverse Irish identity. Despite providing an in-depth analysis of Friel's dramatic works, the study has its limitations. Firstly, it focuses mainly on specific works by Friel, with less attention to the works of other Irish playwrights, thus failing to provide a comprehensive view of the evolution and development of Irish drama as a whole. Secondly, the analysis is predominantly literary and cultural, lacking a thorough examination of the social, economic, and political contexts, which somewhat limits the understanding of the transformation of 'Irishness'.

Another significant study is Qi Yaping's *The New Historicist Historiography in Brian Friel's 'Making History'* (2019). Qi argues that Friel, by embedding fictional life fragments into established historical facts, showcases the rhetorical nature of historical narrative, and emphasizes the characteristics of plot construction and literary pastiche in historiography. The article also notes that Friel aims to challenge and dismantle the authority of official history, exploring new ways to reconstruct Irish cultural identity. However, despite discussing the historical background of *Making History*, the article lacks a detailed analysis of the complex historical relationship between Ireland and Britain, failing to fully illustrate how these historical contexts specifically influence Friel's creation. Additionally, the article focuses solely on *Making History*, without placing the play within its contemporary context to compare it with other plays and playwrights of the same period, and lacks a higher-level, more ideological analysis.

As for other contemporary Irish playwrights such as Frank McGuinness and Martin McDonagh, they have also garnered academic attention in China. However, most of this attention is concentrated in masters' theses from various normal universities, with very few academic journal articles. The perspectives presented are often lacking in depth, and the overall quality of these studies is not high.

Regarding comparative studies between Irish drama and Chinese drama, there are only a few articles that analyze the influence relationship between the National Drama Movement in China and the Irish Literary Revival. There are no articles comparing the development of drama in other periods, including modern and contemporary drama. This has resulted in a research gap in the macro-level comparative development of Sino-Irish drama.

Previous Studies on the Relationship between Synge and Guo Moruo

As Gao Moruo was the first scholar introducing Synge's plays into China, the literary relationship between the two writers deserves analysis and investigation. Since the 1980s, the study of foreign literature in China has gradually resumed, with some discussion about the relationship between Guo Moruo and Synge. Although the number of the studies about the literary relationship between the two writers at home and abroad is not high, nevertheless there are still some research achievements. Most of the studies derive from the perspectives of comparative literature, while others focus on the translation.

Some researchers have analysed the aesthetic purports and creative ideas shared between the two dramatists. For example, Liu Jue (1986) pointed out that the bond between Guo Moruo and John Synge was their common views of the theatrical aesthetic ideal and dramatic artistic temperament. While Zhong Dehui (1984) mentioned that Guo Moruo believed that Synge's sympathy with the lower classes made his dramas outstanding. In addition, Yuan Diyong (1993) considered that the factors of realism existing in Synge's works were the motivation for Guo to translate those plays.

Analyzing the impact of Synge on Guo is still a hot spot for some researchers. In the Master's thesis, Yan Biyu (2009) pointed out that the colloquial words used by Guo to express the character's moods are influenced by Synge, and Yan Biyu also noted *In the Shadow of the Glen* as well as the blind person in *Nieh Ying* as examples to support the point. Besides, in another Master's thesis, Yan Xiaoying (2007) pointed out that the symbolism in Guo Moruo's play *Morning*, was influenced by *Riders to the Sea*, which is one of the representatives among symbolic dramas. Also, some researchers also believed that Guo's handling of characters' emotion, myths and legends in his works were all related to Synge's creative experience.

Other scholars tended to discuss translation skills. Liao Simei (2009), pointed out that Guo used the methods of domestication and foreignization in his translating process to translate Synge's six works, while Yuan Diyong (1993) talked about the translation of proper nouns and moods, of which Guo adopted free translation. In addition, in the book *Study on Guo Moruo's Translation* (2009) edited by Fu Yonglin, researchers

analyzed Guo's translated version of the titles, pointing out the profound meaning of Guo's translation on the dramas' names. For example, one of Synge's plays, *The Playboy of the Western World*, was translated by Guo Moruo as 《西域的健儿》¹, while it has also been rendered as 《西部好汉》². Today, however, the translation 《西方世界的花花公子》 is more commonly used, and this version has been staged again. From a contemporary perspective, in terms of fluency and faithfulness to the original text, the latter seems superior to the former. However, the author argues that in translation, one should consider the perspective of the audience—ensuring that the title conveys the essence and spirit of the work without misleading readers. The term "花花公子"³ is a direct Chinese translation of "Playboy". Yet, from the content of the play, it is clear that the protagonist is not a figure solely indulging in vice. Moreover, translating "west world" as "西方世界" in the Chinese context typically refers to developed, capitalist Western nations. Therefore, a direct translation might lead readers to believe the story revolves around a wealthy, extravagant playboy living in a developed country. In contrast, Guo Moruo's translation is more faithful to the original,

¹ If translate directly, 《西域的健儿》 should be *The Valiant in the Western Area*

² If translate directly, 《西部好汉》 should be *The Brave Man in the Western Area*

³ "花花公子" in Chinese context, is always derogatory, refers to the people who are flirtatious with relationship and live an extravagant life.

reflecting his unique insights into translation practices. His version considers not only linguistic accuracy but also cultural and historical connotations, avoiding misconceptions that might arise from a direct translation. As the particularity of the study object, there have not been much research abroad about Guo Moruo and Synge. Some scholars only slightly mentioned it in their articles. For example, Jerusha McCormack (2013) pointed out that Guo has translated a collection of Synge's plays, and has written a fervent requiem for the death of the hunger striker, Terence MacSwiney.

Through the review of the aforementioned papers, it is clear that after decades of research and development, the comprehensive picture of Irish literature is gradually being unearthed by Chinese scholars and presented to Chinese readers. Current research is no longer limited to the great literary figures in Irish history; contemporary Irish playwrights and novelists are also slowly gaining attention and being translated into Chinese. Studies on the unique characteristics of Irishness are becoming more refined, allowing Chinese academia and readers to clearly distinguish between Ireland and Britain. However, as in-depth studies of individual authors or specific types of writers become more thorough, cross-cultural comparative articles are becoming increasingly rare.

Among these rare cross-cultural comparative articles, most are Master's theses written by students of Irish literature scholars, with only a few high-quality journal articles. These articles mainly focus on how Synge's literary techniques influenced Guo

Moruo and broadly discuss why Guo Moruo chose to translate Synge, often mentioning in passing that both China and Japan were motivated by nationalist political purposes. However, this broad explanation leaves many questions unanswered. Was the Japanese academic community uniformly translating Irish drama for the same political purpose? Did scholars from different social strata share the same political philosophy? What were the experiences of Chinese students studying in Japan? Why did they not simply translate the already adapted Japanese versions of the plays? How did the literary images of Irish playwrights resonate with scholars in a distant Eastern country and what transformations did these images undergo? These are areas that current research has yet to explore in detail.

The Chinese academic community has not yet provided detailed explanations on these topics, let alone the Irish academic community. Due to the scarcity of Chinese language learners, and the influence of the Irish government's cultural policies towards China, research on Chinese literature in Ireland is still in its infancy. Apart from Professor Jerusha McCormack at UCD, who has compared Chinese and Irish literary figures from the same period, such as James Joyce and Lu Xun, and some attention that has been paid to the novels of Chinese Nobel laureate Mo Yan, there are almost no comparative studies between Irish and Chinese literature. Specific studies on Synge and Guo Moruo or on the transmission of Synge's works in China are even rarer.

Therefore, this thesis focuses on the Irish Literary Revival and the Chinese National Dramatic Movement, selecting the most representative authors from each

movement, Synge and Guo Moruo, to provide a detailed and comprehensive analysis of how Synge and his works were transmitted to China via Japan. It also explores the transformations in Synge's literary imagery in China. By using the eastward transmission of Synge's literary imagery as a starting point, this thesis aims to reveal how scholars in specific periods introduce foreign literature based on their political and philosophical views and to illustrate the complexity of establishing literary and cultural relations between China and Ireland. Such a comprehensive and detailed study is unprecedented in both Chinese and Irish academia, demonstrating the academic value of studying this topic.

Chapter 3 Political Philosophy of Guo Moruo during 1910-1930

The period from 1910 to 1930 was one of immense turbulence and transformation in Chinese history, marking a critical transitional phase between the collapse of the old order and the establishment of a new one. During this time, China underwent a significant shift from a feudal imperial system to a republican regime. The revolution led by Sun Yat-sen, known as the Xinhai Revolution, successfully overthrew the twothousand-year-old feudal monarchy, leading to the establishment of the Republic of China.

The continuous wars and political instability during this period severely impacted on agriculture and traditional handicrafts, paving the way for the initial development of modern industry and transportation. With the demise of the Qing government, the traditional imperial examination system was abolished, and a Western-style education system gradually took its place. This new system promoted democracy and science, while rejecting feudal traditions, leading to the flourishing of new ideas and culture, which in turn propelled the modernization of society. Meanwhile, foreign powers continued to expand their influence in China, exploiting economic privileges through unequal treaties, thus undermining China's sovereignty.

Overall, these two decades were marked by internal strife, external threats, social unrest, and economic hardship. Yet, this period was also filled with opportunities and challenges that laid the groundwork for China's subsequent development.

Amidst the backdrop of internal and external crises and the urgent need for modernization, many Chinese youth scholars opted to study abroad in Europe, the United States, and Japan. They sought to acquire advanced scientific knowledge and ideological insights to facilitate China's social reforms and national modernization. Among these students studying in Japan was Guo Moruo.

The years from 1910 to 1930 were a crucial period in Guo Moruo's life, transitioning from his youth to his emergence as a prominent figure. During this time, he established himself as a poet, playwright, and historian, while also undergoing significant developments in his political thought and philosophy. This chapter focuses

on Guo Moruo's 20 years of study in Japan, combining a close reading of his writings, poetry, and correspondence with friends and family during this period to provide a detailed analysis of the evolution of his political philosophy during his time abroad.

Guo Moruo in Japan and the Beginnings of his Political Philosophy

In 1914, Guo Moruo crossed the ocean from Leshan City, Sichuan Province to Japan and began his decade-long career as a student. As one researcher has summarised, ‘这

十年，正是中国革命史上风云变幻的十年，也是郭沫若思想发展史上决定性的十年’ (*this was a decade of change in the history of the Chinese revolution, and a decisive decade in the history of Guo Moruo's intellectual development*) (Tang, 1981: 180) .

During this period, Guo Moruo grew from a young student who had written ‘初出夔门’⁴ (*First Leaving from the Kui Gate*), to the creator of new poetry, whose intellectual trajectory was inextricably linked to the things he experienced and thought about during his travels to Japan. It can be said that the journey to the east was an important event in Guo's relationship with literature.

Literature, to a large extent, can be considered partly as a reflection of real life, and the political culture that pervades the environment in which writers live has a more profound impact on their thinking and writing than the concrete events that take place

⁴ One of the prose pieces of Guo Moruo, Kui Gate is the name place in Sichuan Province.

in reality, influencing their attitudes towards political objects in at least three ways: ‘cognitive, emotional and evaluative’ (Almond, 1987). During Guo Moruo’s ten years in Japan, the political and cultural system that had a major impact on his thinking and actions was the nascent political community of the Republic of China.⁵ Guo Moruo

⁵ After the Xinhai Revolution (The Xinhai Revolution was a national revolution that took place in the Chinese lunar year Xinhai, the third year of the Qing dynasty’s Xuantong reign, from 1911 to early 1912, setting out to overthrow the Qing dynasty’s autocratic empire and establish a republican system of government). The Republic of China was proclaimed in Nanjing on 1 January 1912, and became the first internationally recognised democratic republic in Asia. After the end of World War II, it became a founding member of the United Nations and a permanent member of the Security Council, and took over Taiwan, Penghu and the islands of the South China Sea, becoming a major world power. In 1947, the country entered the constitutional period; later, due to successive defeats against the Chinese Communist Party in the Second Communist Civil War, the central government moved from mainland China to Taiwan at the end of 1949, and the main territory was restricted to Taiwan. After the outbreak of the Korean War, the US forces assisted in the defence of Taiwan, and the US-China Mutual Defence Treaty was signed in 1954. After losing control of the island of Zhongyi in 1971, the effective ruling territory of Taipeng and Jinma has been maintained to this day. In 1971, the Republic of China was forced to withdraw from the UN as a member when its former seat as the representative of China was replaced by the People’s Republic of

once recalled that ‘二三十年前的青少年差不多每一个人都可以说是国家主义者’ (*‘almost every one of the youths of twenty or thirty years ago could be described as a “nationalist”’*) (Guo Moruo, 1932:145), nationalism here was certainly not the systematic and strictly discriminatory ‘statism’ or ‘nationalism’, but rather a sense of ‘national consciousness’. National consciousness is essentially a sense of identity and how to imagine and construct a set of narrative mechanisms that can represent and imagine a ‘community’. During the decade when Guo Moruo travelled to Japan, Chinese national consciousness was in fact still in an era of obscurity, and there was a wide divergence of perceptions between different groups on the question of ‘what is the nation’. Prior to the May Fourth New Culture Movement, because the Chinese social and cultural order had not yet completely disintegrated, people still took certain traditional values and beliefs for granted. At the same time, however, some of the first generation of modern Chinese intellectuals had already begun to attack certain elements of Chinese social and cultural traditions in the 1890s (Lin Yusheng, 1986). Then again, as far as the speed of the disintegration of the old Chinese social and cultural order was concerned, there was also, objectively speaking, a wide gap from the southeastern coast to the interior of the country, and even more so in the Sichuan basin, where Guo Moruo lived as a teenager. It would seem that Guo’s life as a student from Sichuan to Japan was not only a process of generating and renewing a body of knowledge, but also a

China. Since then, it has been forced to sever diplomatic relations with most of the world’s sovereign states and become a limited recognition state.

process of generating and developing a sense of nationhood.

Guo Moruo's own account of his life in Japan is relatively detailed. In essays such as *My Student Days* and *Ten Years of Creation*, he recreates the years that shaped his life in the form of an autobiography, but there are significant problems pertaining to this restoration; as since more than ten years had passed since the events, he inevitably participated in some inaccuracies in the process of writing. What is more, when Guo Moruo wrote his autobiography, his thinking had already turned to Marxism, and when he used Marxism to unify the internal logic of his narrative, he could not help but systematize the otherwise fragmented traces of his life in order to serve his own narrative, thus obscuring to a greater or lesser extent the original picture of his life abroad. Fortunately, Guo Moruo's correspondence with his family and friends during his study in Japan provides an important historical source for the study of his intellectual development during his study in Japan, as well as a basis for the study of the generation and evolution of his national consciousness during the same time span. In addition, during his study in Sichuan and his overseas study in Japan, Guo Moruo had many poetic exchanges with his friends, and his correspondence with Tian Han, Zong Baihua and others was also collected into 《三叶集》 (*The Collection of Three Leaves*), which also provides important support for scholarly research into Guo's psychological journey during this period. The combination of these materials and Guo Moruo's later recollections of his own experiences allows him to sketch the basic contours of his understanding of the 'state' as a category during his studies in Japan.

Chinese Revolution and its Impact: The Sichuan Uprising and Road Protection Movement

Since the late Qing Dynasty, when Zhao Ersun was in charge, the situation in Sichuan province was not very stable, especially after the ‘Road Protection Movement’,⁶ ‘全省大中小资产阶级乃至无产者可以说七千万人都全部参加了’ (*in which ‘the bourgeoisie and even the proletarians in the province could be said to have participated in all 70 million people’*), ‘各地保路同志会的暴动，攻打各地的府县城池，围攻成都，有一时期吧成都围得来几乎水泄不通’ (*the riots of the Road Protection Comrades’ Associations all over the province, attacking the prefectures and counties, besieging Chengdu, and for a period, besieging Chengdu almost to the point of flooding’*) (Guo Moruo, 1992: 151). The conflict within the Great Han Military Government had remained fierce for a long time,⁷ with military leaders such as Pu

⁶ The ‘Road Protection Movement’, also known as the ‘Road Protection Tide’, took place in the third year of the Xuantong era in the late Qing Dynasty (1911) in Sichuan, Hubei, Hunan and Guangdong provinces to oppose the nationalisation of the Chuan-Han and Yue-Han railways, which was preparing to build locally. The movement in Sichuan province was the most intense.

⁷ This was a transitional local government during the Xinhai Revolution, which was proclaimed in Chengdu on 27 November 1911, with Pu Dianjun as governor and Zhu Qinglan, the former army commander, as vice-governor. After the mutiny on 8 December, Yin Changheng was elected governor, and on 2 February 1912, and the merger with the Chongqing Shu military government took effect, forming the Sichuan Governorate of the Republic of China.

Dianjun and Yin Changheng attacking each other, and taking turns to sit on the throne, leaving Sichuan in a state of near-anarchy.

At this time, Guo Moruo was in Chengdu, which was at the centre of the conflict whirlpool, and he even directly witnessed a political plot to overthrow Pu Dianjun. Guo Moruo, who once imagined at the beginning of the Republic's existence that ‘蜀道传光复，豺狼庆划除’ (*the road to Shu will be restored and the wolves will be free*), soon began to lament that ‘眈眈群虎犹环视，岌岌醒狮尚倒悬’ (*the tigers are still watching and the waking lion is still hanging in the balance*) (Guo Moruo, 2012). Knowing full well that the cause of this phenomenon was precisely ‘群鸛趋逐纷纭，肝胆竟同楚越分’ (*the fact that the swarms of rushes were so diverse that their hearts and guts were divided with the Chu Yue*),⁸ he lamented, ‘敢是瓜分非惨祸，波兰遗事不堪隐’ (*I dare say that the division was not a tragic disaster, and the legacy of Poland is too much to hide*) (Guo Moruo, 2012: 84). In other words, if the situation did not change in time, China's fate would be like that of Poland, which had suffered at the hands of Austria, Prussia and Tsarist Russia. The warlords who had worked together to overthrow the Qing government had been brothers in arms, but they were driven by profit, leaving the newly awakened lion of the Republic of China in danger of being

⁸ This poem line means the revolutionary camps, which should be as close as liver and guts to each other, were now as hostile as Chu and Yue (two rival states in the Warring States period).

torn apart by the Western powers. From another perspective, Guo Moruo looked forward to a stronger force to integrate the various forces to maintain the formal integrity of a nation, which he believed was the prerequisite for the rise of the waking lion.

The Fragmentation of Chinese Authority and Guo's Response

Guo Moruo not only believed that there should be a strong force to end the division of China, but he himself suffered from the inconvenience of the division of the country and the autonomy of the provinces. In June 1913, Guo's first trip north, from Chongqing to Tianjin to attend the Tianjin Army Medical School, was cut off by the fires of the Second Revolution, led by Sun Yat-sen,⁹ which forced him to return to Chengdu (Guo Moruo, 1992). However, the election of Yuan Shikai¹⁰ as President unexpectedly became a prerequisite for Guo Moruo to continue his journey northwards.

⁹ Sun Yat-sen (12/12/1866 – 12/03/1925) was a great national hero, a great patriot, a great pioneer of the Chinese democratic revolution, the founder of the Republic of China and the Chinese Nationalist Party, and an advocate of the Three Principles of the People. He was the first to raise the banner of complete anti-imperialism and antiféudalism.

¹⁰ Yuan Shikai (16/09/1859 – 06/06/1916) was a famous political and military figure in modern Chinese history, and a leader of the Beiyang Warlords. Yuan Shikai actively promoted modernization and reform during the New Deal of the late Qing Dynasty. In 1913, he suppressed the Second Revolution and was elected the first President of the Republic of China in the same year. In 1914, he promulgated the Treaty of the Republic of China, and in December 1915, he proclaimed himself emperor, renamed the country the Chinese Empire, and established the Hongxian Empire, known as the 'Hongxian Imperial System'. This was opposed by all sides and led to the Patriotic Movement, which forced Yuan Shikai to abolish the imperial system after 83 days as emperor. He died of uremia

After the failure of the Second Revolution,¹¹ Sun Yat-sen fled to Japan, Yuan Shikai formally reunified the Chinese Republic, and Guo Moruo was able to arrive safely in Tianjin. During the journey, he wrote to his parents at home, ‘正式大总统业也举定袁

世凯，欧美各国俱各承认矣。似此则吾中华民国尚有一丝生机矣，无任庆幸’ (*The*

official president has also appointed Yuan Shikai, and all the countries in Europe and America have recognized him. I am glad that the Republic of China still has a chance of survival) (Guo Moruo, 2012:92). After Yuan Shikai reunited the independent governments of the regions, although after the war, ‘城外焚毁民房数千家，惨不忍睹’ (*thousands of houses were burned outside the city, which was unbearable*), ‘兵业已退完’ (*the soldiers had retired*), and ‘居民渐就安静’ (*the inhabitants were*

on 6 June 1916 and was buried in Anyang, Henan Province. Yuan Shikai’s achievements and failures have been judged differently, with some calling him a ‘dictator and a thief’, while others considering him to be the ‘first of the reformists’ for his contribution to the modernisation of China. In short, Yuan Shikai is one of the most controversial figures in modern Chinese history.

¹¹ The second revolution is also known as ‘the battle against Yuan, Guichou battle. On 20 March 1913, on the eve of the meeting of the National Assembly of the Republic of China, the acting chairman of the Kuomintang, Song Jiaoren, was killed and in April, Yuan Shih-k’ai illegally signed a large loan to start a civil war to destroy the revolutionary forces in the south. Seeing Yuan’s reactionary face, Sun Yat-sen returned from Japan and argued for an armed confrontation with Yuan.

getting quiet') (Guo Moruo, 2012:94). What is more, the students were '兵勇护送' ('*escorted by soldiers*') in each of the through which counties they passed, so that they were '并无惊扰情形' ('*not disturbed by the war*'), although under the circumstance '初经战事, 伏莽犹多' ('*the war has just ended, [and] there are still many hidden dangers*') (Guo Moruo, 2012:94). Not only that, Yuan Shikai's election to the presidency also enabled the powers surrounding the Republic of China to recognise the new regime on a national level, thus making it possible to end the crisis of the tigers surrounding the awakening lion, which is why Guo Moruo called him '福星降临' ('*a lucky star shining through*') (Guo Moruo, 2012:94).

It is clear that in Guo's mind at this time, Yuan Shikai was undoubtedly the 'lucky star', an important factor for the future stability of the Republic of China. In other letters, Guo Moruo is clearly pleased with Yuan Shikai's punishment of Yin Changheng for '在京吞食中央解款二十万' ('*embezzling 200,000 Yuan of the central government's money in Beijing*'), and says that:

中国自反正以来, 一般得志青年, 糊涂捣蛋, 蠹国病民, 禽荒沈湎, 忘却兄台贵姓, 袁氏此次振救, 颇快人意, 一棒当头, 喝醒痴顽亦复不少也 ('*since 1911, the general young men with so-called some achievements have been confused and mischievous, corrupting the country and the people, obsessing with*

hunting and drinking and have forgotten the name of their own already. Yuan's rescue is quite pleasant which is a blow to the head to wake up the demented and stubborn'). (Guo Moruo, 2012:103)

The defalcation of public funds by Yin Changheng is not only considered to be a hoax set up by Yuan Shikai to strengthen his rule over the southwest region, by the current historical research community, but also by public opinion at that time, which generally believed that there was an ulterior motive behind it (Tan Jihe, 2013). The influential 《顺天时报》 (1914) (*Shuntian Times*), for example, was clearly on Yin Changheng's side, and published the 《尹昌衡无罪之证明书》 (1914) (*Certificate of Innocence of Yin Changheng*) in successive issues of the newspaper over several days.

The reason why Guo Moruo was so critical of Yin Changheng at that time was that, apart from the fact that Yin Changheng made the Chamber of Commerce spend large amounts of money getting flowers for him during his administration in Sichuan (Guo Moruo, 1992), was that, in his view, Yuan Shikai was the representative of the power politics that could really bring peace to China. Only with a strong enough political figure like Yuan Shikai could the relatively independent political forces of the provinces the Republic of China be suppressed and balanced, thus ensuring the interests of the state to the greatest extent possible. Guo Moruo supported Yuan Shikai, not only because of his arrest of Yin Changheng, but also because he taught the 'the general young men with so-called some achievements', a lesson by forcing them to obey the orders of the central government, which in Guo's view was the most important thing. It

is for this reason that Guo Moruo always supported Yuan Shikai's political ideas, and even after his accession to the throne, Guo Moruo's sentiments were still on Yuan's side.

In early 1916, after Yuan's accession to the throne, Li Liejun, Xiong Kewu, Cai E and others sent telegrams in Yunnan to suppress Yuan, and Guo Moruo, who was in Okayama, Japan, wrote to his family after learning of the news: ‘云南变故家中想受影响，然吾家深居山僻，或者当无可虞。现在中央军队已陆续进发，想小小变故，

亦不难荡平也。’ (*I think my family was affected by the change in Yunnan. However, as my family lives in the mountains, we may not be in danger. Now that the central army has been moving in one after another, I think it will not be difficult to overcome the minor changes*) (Guo Moruo, 2012:105). It is easy to see that the ‘changes’ Guo Moruo refers to are the allied armies that are crusading against Yuan Shikai, and from the tone of Guo's voice, he not only supported the ‘central army’ of Yuan Shikai's government from an emotional point of view, but he also believed that the central army would definitely win the southwest area which stood against Yuan. For Guo Moruo at this time, Yuan Shikai and the central army were the representatives of the fledgling state, and Yuan's army brought a lot of instability to that fledgling state.

Nationalism and Guo Moruo's Early Political Philosophy Development

It is easy to see that an imaginary community ‘state’ was very important to Guo Moruo, but how to construct this state was not set out in his thinking. At this time, his perception of the Republic of China was merely that he was a member of the state, and that the rise

and fall of the state was closely related to his own fate; it was not elevated to the point that the Republic of China should be a 'state' of the people. In other words, for Guo Moruo at this time, the new Republic of China could not be questioned or reflected upon, and as a member of the Republic of China, the greatest support for the state was to follow the lead of the Republic of China. The reasons for Guo's thinking were manifold: for one thing, being in Sichuan, which had been at war for years at the time, made the young Guo Moruo's heart yearn for a stable country, and although the establishment of the Republic of China brought him hope, the strife that ensued as soon as the country was founded brought him much anxiety and concern. Guo Moruo wrote a poem in which he sighed: '频来感觉兴衰事, 极目中原泪似麻' (*I have often felt the rise and fall of the country, and look at the Central Plains with tears like flax*),¹² and '伤心国势飘摇甚, 中流砥柱仗阿谁' (*I am sad that the country is in such a state of flux, and who is the mainstay of the middle stream*) (Guo Moruo, 2012:132).

Secondly, Sichuan was deep in the hinterland of the mainland, and in the early years of the Republic, its cultural development lagged far behind that of the southeastern coastal areas, and its political and cultural consciousness was even more backward.

¹² 'Tears are like flax' is ostensibly a description of tears flowing down the face, forming a thread of tears like flax, but in fact, in Chinese, when used as an adjective, flax often forms the word '麻木' (*numb*, so what Guo

Moruo is really trying to express here is that, watching the rise and fall of the country is so painful that it is almost numb.

After the Xinhai Revolution, Sichuan's intellectual circles were a mixture of the old and the new, and the mind of speculation was rife. As Guo Moruo recalls, ‘最可注意的是一座成都城有四五十座私立政法学校！三月速成，六月速成，愈快的班数，学生也愈见多。那时候真可以说是做官欲的洪水时代！’ (*The most notable thing was that there were forty to fifty private schools of politics and law in the city of Chengdu! Graduating in three months or in six months. The classes with shorter term, the more students there were. It was really a time of flood of desire to be a government official!*) (Guo Moruo, 2012:144). In such a cultural context, Guo Moruo naturally could not clearly identify the difference between democracy and autocracy.

Thirdly, Guo's status as a foreign student required a stable and unified government behind him to act as his economic and spiritual safeguard. For Guo during his stay in Japan, there were both official and self-funded daily expenses. As Zheng

Boqi, a contemporary of Guo Moruo, put it, ‘留日学生既不像留美学生那样多属达官富商的子弟，也不像留法的勤工俭学生那样经过劳动锻炼，绝大多数是没落地主和城市小资产阶级出身’ (*the students in Japan were neither the sons of wealthy merchants like the students in the United States, nor had they undergone labour training like the work-study students in France, but were overwhelmingly from the bankrupt landlords and urban petty bourgeoisie*) (Zheng, 1988:23). Guo Moruo, who came from a family of bankrupt landlords, recalls:

家里虽然成了一个中地主，但在我有记忆的时候，我记得我们母亲还背着小我三岁的弟弟在亲自洗他的尿布。由我以上的二兄二姐的鞠育，不消说都是我们母亲一人一手的工作了。我们是一个大家庭，母亲初来的时候，听说所过的生活完全和女工一样，洗衣、浆裳、扫地、煮饭是由妯娌三人（那时我们的九叔还小）轮流担任。一手要盘缠，一手还要服务家庭，令人倍感贫穷人的一生只是在做奴隶。

(Although my family had become a medium landlord, as far back as I can remember, my mother was still washing the nappies of my brother, who was three years younger, on her back. It goes without saying that the upbringing of my two brothers and two sisters above me was all the work of our mother alone. We were a large family, and when my mother first arrived, I was told that the life she led was exactly like that of a woman worker, with the three sisters-in-law (our ninth uncle was still young at the time) taking turns to do the washing, laundry, sweeping and cooking. With one hand on the work and the other on the service of the family, she will do which makes me feel that the life of a poor man was only one of slavery.)

(Guo Moruo, 1929:22)

As can be seen, the fact that Guo Moruo went to Japan to study added to the woes of his own less than affluent family.

Therefore, after arriving in Japan, Guo Moruo actively fought for official fees to study abroad. As his letter states, ‘悬的在官费’ (*the only thing that bothers me is the*

official fee'), and '为希图博得官费到手, 则万无一说'('in order to get the official fee

in hand, nothing can hinder me'), and his choice of school was also an important

criterion for obtaining the official fee: '将来应考学校, 以东京四校为准。四校即师

范、高工、谦叶医校、第一高等。此四校乃政府与日人特为立约, 官费较为可靠

故也。'('In the future, the four schools in Tokyo for application will be the most

important. The four schools were the Normal School, the High School of Technology,

the Kenpakuha Medical School and the First High School. These four schools belong

to the special contract which made by our government and Japanese, thus, the possibility of getting the official fee is more reliable') (Guo Moruo, 2012:25). At this

time, Guo Moruo was not only actively fighting for official fees himself, but six months

after arriving in Japan, he also persuaded his younger brother Guo Kaiyun to study here

as well, so he had even stronger reasons to be fight for official fees. He wrote: '元弟近

已归家否? 今岁毕业后, 可急行东渡'('Has Yuandi returned home recently? After

graduating this year, he can rush to the east'), and that '考上官费, 便是好算盘; 国

内无此便宜, 而学科不良, 校风确劣无论矣'('it is a good plan to get government

fees. There are no such advantages at home, cause the subjects are not good, and the

school style is really bad regardless') (Guo Moruo, 2012:26).

After the death of Yuan Shikai, Guo Moruo's primary concern was also the issue of government fees. Shortly after Li Yuanhong became president of the Republic of China, Guo Moruo sent a letter to his family, containing the phrase ‘国事似稍就绪，学费停止事，想不至实现矣’ (*the state seems to be slightly ready, I don't think the government will stop sponsoring the tuition fees to me*) (Guo Moruo, 2012:26). Yuan Shikai's accession to the throne, abdication and death brought a great deal of uncertainty within the Republic of China, and changes in domestic and foreign affairs had an impact on the lives of students studying in Japan. It was only when he learned that his official fees for studying abroad would not be affected that the stone fell from Guo Moruo's heart. It is clear that for Guo Moruo and his family, who were far away from Japan and not very well-off, the stability of the country was an important guarantee of life and of the continuation of their studies.

Guo's Early Political Philosophy Shows on 'Yuan Shikai's Death'

After the death of Yuan Shikai, Guo Moruo also did not have much reflection on his claim to the throne and abdication; on the contrary, the Republican government was prepared to declare war on Germany which gave him a new hope for the country, ‘但

今次政府处置如此勇决，必确有见地把握，又，国中名士多积极的主张与德宣战，

大有全国一致之势云’ (*but this time the government disposed of such courageous decision, must really have the insight to grasp, and, many of the country's eminent scholars*

have positively advocated the declaration of war with Germany, national consensus can be seen as a tendency') (Guo Moruo, 2012:28). However, behind the jubilation, Guo Moruo

also saw the hidden worries of the Republic of China's participation in the war:

我国不久亦将参战。此次参战决大害，惟一面参战，一面仍当锐意镇顿内治，双方并进，方可无虞。然据现刻国内情形观察，内乱纷纷，弊窦百出，战与不战，皆自取败亡之道耳'

(Our country will soon also participate in the war. This participation in the war will do great harm. Only participating in the war in one hand and still be sharply focused on the suppression of internal governance on the other hand, safe can be guaranteed. However, according to the current situation in the country, there are a lot of internal chaos, drawbacks, and weaknesses. To fight or not to fight, we are all self-defeating). (Guo Moruo, 2012:30)

It is easy to see Guo Moruo's attitude and position from the comparison of the two passages above, the dead Yuan Shikai or the living Li Yuanhong was not important to him; what he valued was ultimately the existence of the Republic of China.

On the one hand, the declaration of war against Germany opened his eyes to the strength of a new country, and to the possibilities of the Republic of China becoming a real country in the world. On the other hand, the 'dispute between the House and the Court', between Li Yuanhong and Duan Qirui after Yuan Shihkai's death, led him to suspect, for the first time, the existence of institutional problems in the Republic of

China from within. Shortly thereafter, Zhang Xun restored the empire, supporting the abolition of the emperor Puyi, and changing the name of the Republic of China to the ninth year of Qing dynasty Xuan Tong. This event really opened his eyes to the crisis behind the new Republic: a seemingly solid state could be overturned in an instant by the political system. When analysing the situation, he wrote in his family letter, ‘段氏近已就总理之职，总统现系冯国璋代理，此人首鼠阴险，闻颇与段氏不甚相契，亦非国家之福也。’ (*Duan has recently assumed the post of Premier, and the President is now represented by Feng Guozhang, a man who is sinister and heard to be not quite in tune with Duan which is not a blessing to the country*) (Guo Moruo, 2012:32).

It can be seen that, although at this time he had recognized the structural instability brought about by the separation of powers between the Presidency and the State Council of the Republic, he simply attributed it to the leadership’s own problems:

张勋造反，破坏民国，奈有段祺瑞一人奋起义师，十日之内削平大乱。近阅时报，北京已经恢复，张勋已脱逃，段公已入京，黎总统已救出，从此以来，

我国其可望小康乎。 (*Zhang Xun rebelled and destroyed the Republic, but Duan Qirui alone rose up as a righteous division and put down the chaos within ten days.*

Recently read the Times, Beijing has been restored, Zhang Xun has escaped, Duan Gong has entered the capital, President Li has been rescued, since then, our country can hope to be well). (Guo Moruo, 2012:33)

In his view, the responsibility for Zhang Xun's restoration should have been borne by Li Yuanhong alone, while Duan Qirui was the hero who saved the Republic's edifice from falling:

此次大乱，实则全系黎总统一人庸懦不明之过导致。张逆之入京，黎氏召之。

召寇启戎，真是第二何进。 (*The chaos was in fact caused by the cowardly and unknown fault of President Li alone. When Zhang entered the capital, Li summoned him. It's like setting a fox to keep his geese, he was really the second He Jin*).¹³ 段氏功业甚伟，众望所归。如天佑中华，使段氏得安于位者十年，

国家其庶几有起色乎。 (*Duan's achievements are so great that everyone expects it. If God blesses China, Duan can be able to rest in his positions for ten years, the country can be greatly improved*). (Guo Moruo, 2012:35)

¹³ In 189, he disobeyed the advice of Cao Cao and Chen Lin and conspired with the warlord Dong Zhuo to execute the eunuchs. When the plot was foiled, he was killed by Zhang Rang, a member of the General Chamberlain, and his descendants were the Nanyang He family, a high-ranking scholarly family of the Wei and Jin dynasties.

The solution Guo Moruo envisaged at this time to the problem of the disputes between the House and the Court was to have someone powerful enough to integrate and consolidate the House and the Court, thus achieving unity of thought and action in the Republic of China, and avoiding the recurrence of Zhang Xun's restoration. He did not realise that the root of the problem lay in the limitations of the Republic as a whole, and the intricate conflicts of interest within the Beiyang warlords grouping, which could not be solved by replacing the President of the Republic. This identification with, and admiration of, power politics was a limitation of his thinking at that time, as it was an ideological conception that confused politicians with forms of government and failed to move beyond the perception of equating a leading figure with a state.

Guo's Early Political Philosophy and his Family correspondences

The analysis of the letters exchanged between Guo Moruo and his family, which have not been artistically manipulated, allows for a macro-level perception of the basic political-philosophical conceptions of his understanding of family and state. However, an in-depth analysis of his literary works, such as his novels and plays, is needed to provide a comprehensive view of the political philosophy he held at the time. His literary experience is not without reference to his change in career choice, as it was a 'tradition' for early Chinese students to study law and politics, engineering and medicine. Xu Shoushang, recalling his life in Japan, once said:

一九零二年的夏天，留日学生的人数还不过二三百，后来‘速成班’日见增多，人数达到二万，真是浩浩荡荡，他们所见习的科目不外乎法政，警察，农，工，商，医，陆军，教育等，学文艺的简直没有，据说学了文学将来是要饿死的。)

(In the summer of 1902, the number of students studying in Japan was only 200 or 300, but later the number of ‘crash courses’ increased and reached 20,000, which was a massive number. It is said that those who learn literature will starve to death in the future). (Xu,1999:31)

Guo Moruo was one constituent of the ‘massive number’.

In the early days of the Republic of China, studying law and politics was supposed to be a shortcut to promotion and fortune, and it was a shortcut to a change of scene at a time when there was a lot to be done, but it reeked of speculation. Guo Moruo recalled that he had long seen the problems with studying the subject of law and politics, and before he went to Japan to study, his elder brother, Guo Kaiwen, had said to him, ‘学法政也真是没有着落，天下大乱实在是病在于学法政者之多’ (*It is really hopeless to study law and politics. The disorder of the world is really caused by the large number of people who study law and politics*) (Guo Moruo, 1992: 24). When he set out on his

journey to Japan, he did not have a clear plan of his future career, or even of his desired career. When he first arrived in Tokyo, the letter he sent to his family simply said, ‘当痛自刷新, 力求实际。学业成就, 虽苦尤甘’ (*I should refresh myself and try to be practical. I will be happy to achieve academic success, though I will suffer*) (Guo Moruo, 2012: 64). This is not without a point of reference, as can be seen from the admonition given to him by his elder brother, before he left for Japan. Shortly thereafter, he also expressed a similar view to that of Guo Kaiwen in a letter to his third brother, Guo Kaicheng: ‘吾国猎官运动, 适自捉亡, 明眼人自能见到也。不多谈。’ (*My country’s movement of “official hunting”, which is like bringing destruction to themselves, and it can be seen by the discerning eye. There is no need to talk much about it*) (Guo Moruo, 2012:67).¹⁴

It can be seen that Guo Moruo’s letters at this time indicated that he wanted to choose ‘实际学业’ (Guo Moruo, 2012:64) (*practical studies*), in fact, he was clearly telling his family that the discipline of law and politics was not his choice, though he was not yet sure which discipline to study, when he first arrived in Japan. Between March and September 1914, his choices were narrowed down from four schools, namely, the Normal School, the High School of Technology, the Kenyah Medical School and the First High School, to two schools, the First High School and Kenyah

¹⁴ Chasing after government positions like go hunting

Medical School. After passing the examination of the First Higher School and ‘立志学医，无复他顾’ (*‘determined to study medicine, no other choices will be considered’*), because ‘医学一道，近日颇为重要。在外国人之研究此科者，非聪明人不能成功，且本技艺之事，学成可不靠人，自可有用也’ (*‘the study of medicine is very important these days, and those who study it in foreign countries cannot succeed unless they are wise, and this is a skill that can be learned without relying on others, and can be useful for yourself’*) (Guo Moruo, 2012). Guo Moruo’s words are intriguing, as ‘学成技艺，可不靠人’ (*‘a skill that can be learned without relying on others’*) is important, and the reason for his sentiments can be clearly understood in the context of his family situation at the time.

A number of his family members died of illnesses, such as the early death of his sixth sister’s child. The other reason, which sounds inexplicable, seems to be that he wanted to prove that he was a ‘wise man’, but many years later, in his autobiography, he said, ‘我在初，认真是想学一点医，来作为对于国家社会的切实贡献，然而终究没有学成，这却是一件遗憾的事’ (*‘I seriously wanted to learn a little medicine at the beginning as a practical contribution to the country and society, but I did not learn it after all, which is a matter of regret’*) (Guo Moruo, 1992: 65), which shows that his

most important motivation for studying medicine was his desire to make a practical contribution to his country and society. He said:

长受国家培植，质虽鲁钝，终非干国栋家之器，要思习一技，长一艺，以期自糊口腹，并籍报效国家。*(I have been nurtured by the state for a long time, and although I am not of a dull quality, I am not an instrument for the country, so I want to learn a skill and cultivate an artistry, so that I can feed myself and serve the country).* 现在国家弱到如此地步，生为男子，何能使不学无术，无一筹以报国也。*(Now that the country is so weak, how can I, as a man, be uneducated and unskilled and have nothing to offer the country?).* (Guo Moruo, 1992:66)

This passion for the country is the reason for Guo Moruo's interest in literature, which can be gleaned from a passage he wrote to his brother Guo Kaiyun in 1915:

元弟在家不可虚耍。新学问自是无从下手，然吾国旧书不可不多读也。一国文学为一国之精神，物质文明固不可少，而自国精神终不可使失坠也。近世学子，通者无几人矣。而究之物质方面，智识仍仅肤浅，实是自欺欺人事。*(You must not play in vain at home. There is no way to begin new studies, but we must read more of the old books of our country. The literature is the spirit of a country, and while material civilization is indispensable, the spirit of the country must not be lost. In recent times, there are few students who have mastered the*

subject. But when it comes to the material aspect, the intellect is still only superficial, which is really a matter of self-deception). (Guo Moruo, 1992: 67)

In Guo Moruo's mind, there was no clear answer to what literature was, and '文学' ('*literature*') and he even equates with '学问' ('*learning*'), a view that had something to do with the Chinese Ming and Qing dynasties, which advocated that scholarly writings should be '经世致用' ('*innovative applications on reality*') (Yang, 2010), in contrast to the correspondence of Hu Shi,¹⁵ and other students in the United States, who had begun to discuss the difference between the '文之文字' ('*words of article*') and the '诗之文字' ('*words of poetry*') in the same period.

Guo's perception of literature is somewhat old-fashioned, but both sides attach considerable importance to the 'spiritual' aspect that exists within literature. Compared to Hu Shi's suggestion that elaborated the claims of a cultural reconstruction:

今日欲救旧文学之弊，须先从涤除'文胜'之弊入手.....其病根在于种形式而去精神.....诗界革命，与文界革命正复相同，皆当从三事入手：第一、须言之有物，第二、须讲究文法（大家之诗无论古诗、律诗皆有文法可言），第三、当用'文之文字'时，不可故意避之

¹⁵ Hu Shi (17 December 1891 - 24 February 1962) was a modern Chinese thinker, writer and philosopher.

(If we want to save the old literature today, we must start by eliminating the evils of ‘the forms matters’ The root of the problem lies in the cultivation of form without the spirit The revolution in poetry is precisely the same as the revolution in literature, and should begin with three things: firstly, the words must convey spirit. Secondly, grammar must be taken into account (everyone’s poetry, whether ancient or rhythmic, has grammar to speak of). And thirdly, when the ‘words of article’ are necessarily used, they must not be deliberately avoided). (Hu, 2003: 74)

He was more inclined to absorb the ‘spirit of self-country’ from traditional Chinese literature, and while these two seemed to be on different paths, they were leading to the same destination. At this time, Guo Moruo and Hu Shi, who were far away from each other, were both thinking about how to revitalise the spirit of China, but Hu Shi was driving the development of the literary spirit through the innovation of literary expression, whereas Guo Moruo was expecting young people, represented by Guo Kaiyun, to communicate with the spirit of tradition through reading the old books of China, and thus to improve themselves under the system of traditional Chinese culture.

In contrast to the comprehensive study and acceptance of western culture by Hu Shi and others during this period, Guo Moruo was wary of western culture, especially material civilization. One of the reasons why Guo Kaiyun was told to read more old books was because Guo Moruo believed that because of their ‘incomprehension’ about traditional Chinese culture, modern students were not able to appreciate the progress that material civilisation had brought to Chinese society, even though they were in the

midst of the material civilisation that had emerged in the west since modern times (Wu, 2018). People could not see a way forward, but turned back and found that they had lost the roots of the Chinese spirit. In Guo Moruo's eyes, literature and what the national spirit carried behind it, fed the individual, and additionally, literature was also a kind of emotional expression of one's feelings towards the country in the spiritual realm, and literary creation was a refraction of one's own national consciousness.

For Guo Moruo, the study of medicine and the pursuit of literature were both acts of national service under the control of his national consciousness, and there was an inherent consistency between the two. Thus, in his experience of studying abroad, there was no real move to abandon medicine for literature, as Lu Xun had done.¹⁶ During his studies in Japan, he always knew that his future lay in medicine rather than literature, unlike what Lu Xun had in mind:

¹⁶ Lu Xun (25 September 1881 - 19 October 1936) was a famous literary scholar, thinker, revolutionary, educator and democracy fighter, an important participant in the New Culture Movement and one of the founders of modern Chinese literature. During his lifetime, Lu Xun made significant contributions to a number of fields, including literary composition, literary criticism, the study of ideas, the study of literary history, translation, the introduction of art theory, the introduction of basic science, and the proofreading and study of ancient texts. He had a major impact on the intellectual and cultural development of Chinese society after the May Fourth Movement, and became famous in the world of literature, especially in the fields of Korean and Japanese thought and culture, and has been described as 'the writer who occupies the largest territory on the cultural map of East Asia in the twentieth century'.

医学并非一件紧要事，凡是愚弱的国民，即使体格如何健全，如何茁壮，也只能做毫无意义的示众的材料和看客，病死多少是不必以为不幸的。所以我们的第一要著，是在改变他们的精神，而善于改变精神的事，我那时以为当然要推文艺，于是想提倡文艺运动了。

(Medicine is not an emergent thing, for all the foolish and weak people, even if they are able-bodied and strong, can only be meaningless material for public display and for all the spectators, and it is not necessary to think that it is unfortunate that they should die of illness. Therefore, our first priority is to change their spirit, and I thought that the best way to change their spirit was to through literature and art, so I wanted to advocate a literary movement). (Lu, 2005)

Even when Guo Moruo was actively preparing for literary activities with others in ‘创造社’ (*the Creation Society*),¹⁷ he did not abandon his concern for medicine. It is evident that he also clearly saw the connection and distinction between literature and medicine. While literature could enlighten the people and save the spirit of a nation, medicine was a more ‘practical’ discipline that could directly affect the physical bodies of the people themselves. This is not unrelated to Guo Moruo’s initial goal of studying in Japan based on his desire to serve the Republic of China, therefore his insistence on studying medicine during his stay in Japan was a concrete expression of his national

¹⁷ The group was founded in 1921 by Guo Moruo, Yu Dafu and Cheng Fangwu. Its basic tendencies were antiimperialism, anti-feudalism and positive romanticism.

consciousness at this time. Hence, a contradictory political philosophy that was introverted but that wished to also be outwardly focused, and contain both idealistic with practical, emerged in Guo Moruo's early literary ideas.

For Guo Moruo, literature was inward-looking, and the problem he was addressing was more one of his own emotions in the face of social phenomena, and finding a corroboration for the rationality of such emotions (Wu, 2018). Many of the letters in his family correspondence contain discourses on how to engage in literary creation. After he had already made a name for himself in Chinese literature with his collection of poems 《女神》 (*The Goddess*), when he was revising his poems for his brother Guo Kaiyun, he recounted his own creative insights, namely that

要做旧诗，就要严守韵律，要做新诗，便要力求自然。诗是表情的文字，真情流露的文字自然成诗。新诗便是不假修饰，随情绪之纯真的表现而表现以文字，打个比喻如象照相。旧诗是随情绪之流露而加以雕琢，打个譬比如象

画画

(to make old poetry, one must strictly adhere to rhyme, and to make new poetry, one must strive for naturalness. A poem is a word of feeling expression, and words that reveal true feelings are naturally poetry. A new poem is one that follows the pure expression of emotion without embellishment, like taking a picture. The old poems are crafted with the flow of emotion, like painting). (Guo Moruo, 2021: 142)

He put forward several principles for making poems, including ‘要有纯真的感触，情动于中，令自己不能不写’(Guo Moruo, 2021,1443) (*To write a poem, you must have*

a pure feeling, a feeling that moves you, so that you cannot help but “write”). It is clear that the essence of literature, according to Guo Moruo, is the release of emotions. In his letters to and from his poet friends Tian Han and Zong Baihua, he makes this point even more thoroughly, listing the formula ‘诗= (直觉+情调+想象) + (适当的文字)’

(*poetry = (intuition + mood + imagination) + (appropriate words)*) (Tian& Zong& Guo, 1920). In other words, during his study in Japan, the poems in his mind were in fact his own emotions at the moment, which contributed to the mixed content of his 《女神》 (*The Goddess*), often with the previous poem still steeped in enthusiasm for serving his country, such as 《炉中煤》 (*Coal in the Grate*):

— 眷念祖国的情绪啊，我年青的女
郎！我不辜负你的殷勤，你也不要辜
负了我的思量。我为我心爱的人儿燃
到了这般模样！

啊，我年青的女郎！你该知道了我的前
身？你该不嫌我黑奴卤莽？要我这黑奴的
胸中，才有火一样的心肠。

啊，我年青的女郎！我想我的前身
原本是有用的栋梁，我活埋在地底
多年，到今朝总得重见天光。

啊，我年青的女郎！我自从重见天
光，我常常思念我的故乡，我为我心
爱的人儿燃到了这般模样！

1920年1、2月间作 (Guo Moruo, 1982:13)

Coal in the Grate

Dedicated to my native land

*Ah, my fair young maiden, I
shall not betray your care, let
you not disappoint my hopes.
For her my heart's delight
I burn to such a heat.*

*Ah, my fair young maiden, you must
know of my former life. You cannot
shrink from my coarseness:
only in such a breast as mine could
burn a fire so bright.*

*Ah, my fair young maiden,
certain it is that in my former life
I was a trusty pillar buried alive
for years on end:
today must I see the light of day again.*

*Ah, my fair young maiden, since
I see the light of day again
I think only of my native home:
for her my heart's delight
I burn to such a heat.*

(January-February 1920) (Lester and Barnes, 1958)

Guo Moruo was not able to participate in the May Fourth Movement in China because he was far away in Japan, but the surging tide of the revolution affected him greatly.

He saw the hope and future of his country and was inspired by his deep feelings for it. In his excitement, he wrote this poem. The poem is written throughout in the tone of a coal burning in a furnace. The so-called 'Coal in the Grate', which is already indicated by the subtitle of the poem 'Dedicated to my native land', is only a metaphor, but actually refers to the poet's own sentiment of attachment to the motherland. The 'fair young maiden' who is 'heart's delight' of the 'coal in the grate', which is repeatedly mentioned in the poem, is the symbol of the motherland in the May Fourth era. The poet's heart burns like a roaring coal fire because of his strong longing for the

motherland. When the coal burns up, it brings light and heat to the earth, but turns into ashes itself, which is a metaphor for the poet's love for the motherland, which is costly.

The poem that follows becomes an aria on industrial civilization, as in 《日出》
(*Sunrise*)

哦哦，环天都是火云！好像是赤的游龙，赤的狮子，赤的鲸鱼，赤的象，赤的犀。你们可都是亚坡罗的前驱？

哦哦，摩托车前的明灯！你二十世纪底亚坡罗！你也改乘了摩托车吗？我想做个你的助手，你肯同意吗？

哦哦，光的雄劲！玛瑙一样的晨鸟在我眼前飞腾。明与暗，刀切断了一样地分明！这正是生命和死亡的斗争！

哦哦，明与暗，同是一样的浮云。我守看着那一切的
暗云……被亚坡罗的雄光驱除干净！是凯旋的鼓吹
呵，四野的鸡声！

1920年3月间作 (Guo Moruo, 1982:35)

*Fiery clouds gridle the rim of sky
Like crimson dragons roving the air,
Like crimson lions, whales, elephants, rhinoceroses.
Perhaps you are all outriders of Apollo?*

*And you, blazing headlights of motorcars,
You twentieth-century Apollos,
Have you not changed your mount for a car?
I would be your driver, will you engage me?*

*Ah! The vitality of light!
Agate morning birds scatter before my eyes.
Light and dark are divided with the clean cut of a knife.
For light there are floating clouds, for dark there are floating clouds.¹⁸*

*Both are floating clouds, why then dark, why light?
I hold my gaze on the darkness of the clouds:
All are dispersed by Apollo's potent beams.*

¹⁸ The translation of this phrase is strange, for the original is intended to indicate that light and darkness are like life and death, and that the light of headlights illuminate the darkness of death, this is the very fight of life and death!

Then I saw that the cockcrows all about me have a deeper meaning.

March 1920 (Lester and Barnes, 1958)

Guo's fiery emotions explode in this poem, which opens with a magnificent scene in which the inanimate clouds of fire are compared to animals overflowing with life, coming as the 'all outriders of Apollo', ready to fight the darkness which means death. This is followed by the statement that Apollo is the 'blazing headlights of motorcars', which represents the pride of the industrial revolution and the symbols of the democratic and scientific spirit of the west at the time, all of which fascinate him. It also represents his confidence that western industrial civilisation would deliver the Chinese people from their lost human desires, which had been suppressed by thousands of years of traditional culture. The 'Agate morning birds [that] scatter before my eyes' are a metaphor for the burgeoning creativity and unbridled state of human nature displayed by man in breaking free from bondage. This is his affirmation and eulogy of the pursuit of freedom, individuality, rights and dignity that makes people human.

But in general, during this period of study in Japan, the tone of his emotions was one of national consciousness, and he admonished Guo Kaiyun that '国家积弱，振刷须材，年少光阴，瞬间即逝，殊为可惜也' (*the country is weak, and it is a great pity that the young time, which is passing in an instant, thus, you should work hard to be the talents our country needs*) (Guo Moruo, 2012:53). Because of the tensions between

China and Japan at this time, he repeatedly denounced Japan as a 倭奴 (‘Japanese slave’) and a 鬼国 (‘ghost country’) (Guo Moruo, 2012:55) in his letters, and this national consciousness had become his ever-present self-consciousness, which inevitably affected his literary work at this time. This political and cultural underpinning of his literary works was a natural outpouring of Guo Moruo’s inner emotions, and in the course of his literary work, this sense of nationhood was constantly reinforced.

At the same time, many researchers have noted the distinctly ‘potential writing’ nature of Guo Moruo’s works at this stage (Zhou, 2012), in that his writing was not disseminated through the emerging public media, but rather through a form of poetic chanting. This means that the audience for Guo’s works was confined to a relatively closed circle, rather than a conscious effort to transform literature into a resource for saving the Chinese national spirit, as Lu Xun did. In Guo’s eyes, literature was an important way for him to communicate emotionally between the state and himself, a communication that was more genuine and less purposeful, and instead, more likely to find in Guo’s words his true, uncarved political and philosophical ideas.

The First Shift in Guo’s Political Philosophy

Guo Moruo’s shift in national consciousness was exemplified by his novel 《牧羊哀话》 (*The Lament of the Shepherd*), which was set in Korea and published in the *New China Magazine*. Guo Moruo wrote many literary works on foreign subjects during his lifetime, but while most of these were related to Japan, where he lived for a long time,

this is the only novel set in North Korea. In this novel, 'Korea' is not just a backdrop for the story, but a mirror image of China.

If we examine the subjects of his novels during his study in Japan, we will find that they all focus on the lives of Chinese students studying in Japan, and are all set in Japan or China, and all bear the shadow of his own life and studies. It can be said that in his novels of this period, the 'overseas student' is not only a writing perspective but also a writing strategy, and through the identity of the 'overseas student', Guo Moruo integrates his own journey and the plot development of his novels into one, forming his '自叙传' ('*self-referential biography*') (Wu, 2018). In *The Lament of the Shepherd*, however, Guo Moruo deliberately avoids the element of 'foreign student', and instead writes a story that is completely unrelated to his own life, in which an unspeakable sense of national awareness is hidden.

Background and Historical Context of the Novel

Korea, the setting of *The Lament of the Shepherd*, was only a place Guo Moruo briefly passed on a train during his journey to Japan in 1914, and in his letters, he describes '在纵贯朝鲜的铁路上虽是跑了一天一夜' ('*a day and a night on the railway that runs through Korea*') (Guo, 1992:117). But in *The Lament of the Shepherd*, he describes other scenes of North Korea, such as the small village at the foot of Mount Geumgang, where:

‘村上只有十来户人家,都是面海背山,半新不旧的茅屋。家家前面,有的是蒺藜围墙;更有花木桑松,时从墙头露见。村南村北,沿海一带,都是松林,只这村之近旁,有数亩农田,几园桑柘。菜花麦莠,把那农田数亩,早铺成金碧迷离。那东南边松树林中,有道小川,名叫赤壁江,汇集万二千峰的溪流,暮暮朝朝,带着哀怨的声音,被那狂暴的日本海潮吞吸而去。’

(‘there are only about ten families in the village, all with half-new huts facing the sea and the mountains. In front of each house there is a wall of thistles; moreover, there are flowers, trees, mulberries and pines, which are sometimes seen from the wall. To the north and south of the village, along the coast, there are pine forests, but near the village, there are several acres of farmland and several mulberry gardens. The fields are covered with flowers and wheat grass, which are shimmering with gold and green. In the southeastern pine forest, there is a small river called the Chibi River, which brings together the streams from thousands of the peaks of mountains, and is swallowed up by the violent Japanese tide with a mournful sound). (Guo Moruo, 2012: 7)

The novel is just based on the imagination of ‘一些照片和日本文士大町桂月的《金刚山游记》’(‘*photographs and the Japanese scribe Katsutsuki Omachi’s “Travels to Mount Geumgang”*’), and not only is ‘小说里面所写的背景,完全是出于想象’(‘*the*

setting of the novel entirely imaginary'), but '全部情节' (*the entire plot*) is also the author's '幻想出来的' (*fantasy*).

This is at odds with his other literary creations of this period, which were characterized by 'self-referential biographies'. Guo Moruo once recalled the creation of *The Lament of the Shepherd*: '我只利用了我在一九一四年的除夕由北京乘京奉铁路渡日本时, 途中经过朝鲜的一段经验, 便借朝鲜为舞台, 把排日的感情移到了朝鲜人的心里' (*I only made use of my experience of passing through North Korea on the way from Beijing to Japan by the Jing-Feng Railway on New Year's Eve in 1914, and used North Korea as a stage to move the feelings of Japanophobia into the hearts of the North Koreans*) (Guo Moruo, 1992: 118). Such an approach was widely divergent from his previous writing behaviour. Earlier, he had cursed Japan as a 'ghost country' and lamented that China was now a 'Japanese slave' more than once in his letters to his family because of the signing of *Article 21* between China and Japan, and because he was also forced to flee from Tokyo to Shanghai because '当时岌岌有开战之势' ('war was in the offing') (Guo Moruo, 1992:118), so it makes sense that he would create a novel in the style of 'self-referential biographies' based on his own experiences in order to express his anti-Japanese feelings. There are complex political and cultural factors behind the author's affection for the North Korean protagonist, and Guo's implacable and contradictory sense of national awareness can be revealed by a deeper analysis.

Firstly, it has to do with his status as a foreign student. According to the studyabroad regulations of that time, as a government-funded student studying in Japan, he was not allowed to make public statements concerning Sino-Japanese relations. This was largely because in the early years, as there had been an incident among the group of students studying in Japan in which Wu Jingheng and others were expelled by the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department for besieging the embassy. In 1903, the Qing government issued the *Regulations for Restraining Overseas Students* to restrict the activities of overseas students in Japan, in which it was explicitly stated that:

‘学生在学堂是，应以所修学业为本分当为之事，如妄发议论，刊布干预政治之报章，无论所言是否，均属背其本分，应由学堂随时考察防范，不准犯此禁令。如经中国大臣总督查访留学生中有犯此令之人，随时知会该学堂，应即剴切诫谕学生，立即停辍。如有不遵，即行退学。’

(‘Students should take their studies as their duty in the academy, and that any presumptuous comments or publication of newspapers that interfere with politics, whether they are made or not, are against their duty. The school should be inspected and prevented from breaking this prohibition. If the General Supervisor of the Chinese Ministry finds any foreign student who has violated this order, he shall inform the school at any time, and shall immediately warn the student carefully to stop immediately. If they do not comply, they shall be expelled from the school’). (Shu, 1927: 57)

This regulation greatly restricted the intellectual and cultural activities of students studying in Japan beyond their established studies. From the late Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China, although the rules and regulations concerning students in Japan were adjusted from time to time, the '不得干预政治' ('*no interference in politics*') rule was inherited by every supervisor or manager, and some even thought '你们又要爱国, 又要诳文凭, 二者是不可得兼的' ('*You have to be patriotic and bamboozle your diploma, you can't have it both ways*') (Shu, 1927:57).

As can be seen, for government-funded students, including Guo Moruo, making political statements was likely to affect the process of their study abroad. The government fees were a matter of whether or not Guo Moruo's studies would go smoothly. Before he studied in Japan, his elder brother, Guo Chengwu, who had been one of the family's key breadwinners, lost his job due to the loss of his boss, Yin Changheng, in a political battle. Therefore, Guo Moruo, who had already received a government fund to study in Japan, would not have risked having his official fee being suspended, or even being ordered to leave his studies, in order to express his emotions in his literary works.

Secondly, in previous analyses of Guo Moruo's letters, this thesis has mentioned his strong desire for a unified and stable nation-state, as he needed the government of the Republic of China to allocate funds to support his work. Guo Moruo had always wished wishfully that China and Japan would not be at war, even though at the time China and Japan were already in conflict, because Japan was using the opportunity of

supporting Yuan Shikai's claim to the throne to send troops to the northeast of China. He was also reluctant to envisage the scenario after a war between China and Japan. In his correspondence, he also reassured his parents that '此次交恶本属险恶，然使便至交战或恐未必' ('this conflict is indeed a dangerous one, but I don't believe that it may lead to a war') (Guo Moruo, 2012), a reassurance that was actually better described as a reassurance to himself.

Even after the tensions in Sino-Japanese relations eased with Yuan Shikai's signing of the *Article 21*,¹⁹ Guo Moruo did not make any comments about the treaty, which was a disgrace to his country, and kept trying to justify Yuan's government: '此次交涉之得和平解决，国家之损失实属不少。然处此均势破裂之际，复无强力足供御卫，至是数百年积弱之敝有致。' (*The country has lost a lot by the peaceful settlement of this negotiation. However, at this time when the balance of power has broken down, there is no strong enough to defend the country, which is the result of*

¹⁹ Article 21, the secret terms of the Japanese imperialists' vain attempt to destroy China, was presented to Yuan Shikai in person by the Japanese Minister to China, Nikki Yoshi, on 18th January 1915. On 25th May 1915, an amendment to the Article 21 was signed in Beijing. Later, due to the unanimous opposition of the whole country and the conflicting interests of the powers in China, the Japanese demands were not fully realized. The demands of the Article 21 seriously undermined China's national sovereignty and violated the basic norms of international relations. The patriotic anti-Japanese movement during the negotiation period of Article 21 also became a preview of the May Fourth Movement.

centuries of accumulated weakness') (Guo Moruo, 2012:88), '将来尚望天保不替, 民自图强, 则国其庶可救也。' ('*In the future, we still hope that heaven will bless our country, and that the people will strengthen themselves, then the country will be saved*') (Guo, 2012). In Guo's eyes, although the unequal treaties had cost China dearly, the 'imagined community' was still stable, at least formally. He knew clearly that the Republic of China was impoverished and weak, and that the key to its survival and development lay in its rapprochement with the neighbouring powers, and he also knew that '果使万不得已而真至于开战, 则祖国存亡至堪悬念, 个人身事所不敢问矣' ('if, as a last resort, war really came, the survival of the motherland would be in doubt, and one person would not dare to ask about his own personal affairs') (Guo, 2012:88). This made him even more reluctant to see his country, which was supporting his studies, go to war with Japan. He stubbornly believed that a war between China and Japan would be detrimental to the Chinese side. Therefore, in *The Lament of the Shepherd*, Sino-Japanese relations became a scar that he did not want to touch.

It is for these two reasons that the Republic of China, an element that should have been present in *The Lament of the Shepherd*, becomes an unspeakable presence, and in 1919, when the sovereignty of the Shandong peninsula renewed tensions between the Republic of China and Japan, Guo Moruo, who was in Japan at the time, was moved by this, but for various reasons could not express it in literary forms. Since it was

impossible to speak of China, North Korea became the perfect backdrop for the development of the story.

Symbolism and Allegory in the Novel

The North Korea in *The Lament of the Shepherd* was, in Guo Moruo's eyes, a mirror image of China, also a Japanese colony, and one that mirrors not only the fate of the country but also the culture of the society.

The early 20th century saw a similar socio-cultural context between China and North Korea. In 1894, when Japan invaded North Korea in the Sino-Japanese War, China, as the suzerain country of North Korea, was defeated, and the Sino-Japanese *Treaty of Shimonoseki*,²⁰ led to a further loss of Chinese sovereignty and the annexation of North Korea by Japan in 1910. The First Sino-Japanese War cast a huge psychological shadow over China, and the scandalous behaviour of the Chinese generals who fought in Korea, such as Ye Zhichao, who fled without a fight, was a great shock to China's long-established mentality of being a powerful and mighty country.

Chinese intellectuals, on the one hand, had seen the precariousness of the country's situation, but on the other hand, they were still haunted by the fact that the Qing Empire had been defeated by Japan in front of the small, subordinate country, and were willing to indulge in the delusion of the powerful suzerain empire, imagining that:

²⁰ The Treaty of Shimonoseki was an unequal treaty between the Qing Dynasty government of China and the

‘中日既立商约之后，公敦和睦。中国深耻为倭所败，乃将各政事大修，参以西法，又开芦沟铁路，创立银行，设办邮政，政治一新，四方民人皆享升平之世，至今外邦犹未敢犯，想必将来益加强盛，威震五洲矣。识者谓中国不有此败，未必鼎新革故，改章变通，此亦天假日人以成中国自强之道也。’

Meiji government of Japan, signed on 17 April 1895 (23 March 1895) in Shimonoseki, Yamaguchi Prefecture, Japan, formerly known as the Shimonoseki New Treaty and known in Japan as the Treaty of Shimonoseki or the Treaty of Peace between Japan and Qing. The signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki marked the end of the Sino-Japanese War in the First Sino-Japanese War. Under the terms of the treaty, China ceded the Liaodong Peninsula (which was later unsuccessfully returned to Liaoning due to the intervention of three countries), Taiwan and its subsidiary islands, and the Penghu Islands to Japan, and compensated Japan with 200 million taels of silver. China also opened additional commercial ports of Sha, Chongqing, Suzhou and Hangzhou and allowed Japan to invest in factories at China's commercial ports. The Treaty of Shimonoseki gave Japan huge benefits and stimulated its aggressive ambitions. At the same time, the Treaty made China's national crisis more serious than ever and its semi-colonisation much deeper. The Treaty responded to the need of the imperial powers to export their capital to

China, and subsequently the powers set off a frenzy to carve up China.

(‘After the Republic of China and Japan had established a commercial treaty, there would be public harmony. China was so ashamed to be defeated by the Japanese that it overhauled all its political affairs and adopted Western methods, opened the Lugou Railway, established banks, and set up postal services. It is said that if China does not have such a defeat, it may not be able to change the old rules and regulations, and this is also the way for China to become self-improving’). (Hong, 2013)

This ambivalence has led Chinese intellectuals to talk about the Sino-Japanese War, often using Korea as a metaphor for China, as a warning to China, and Guo Moruo follows this tradition by telling a story set in North Korea.

In the early years of the Republic of China, the purpose of most of the works on North Korea is to prevent China from following in the footsteps of the fall of North Korea, such as in the preface to *The History of the Fall of the North Korea*, in which it is explicitly stated that the purpose of the work:

‘切望全国同胞毅力坚持，要剥离政府，由和会直接交换青岛。废一受人胁迫之条约，不达目的不止，庶几不步三韩后尘，时则余今日所以刊本书之微意云尔’

(‘I hope that the compatriots of the country will persevere and insist on the divesting power of the government and the direct exchange of Qingdao by the Peace Conference. Keep to the abolition of this coerced article, and never give up until the goal is achieved, so as not to follow in the footsteps of the North Koreans, is the slight intention that I published this book today’). (Li, 1911)

In the minds of these writers, because of the many unequal treaties signed with Japan,

‘不识不知、无声无色而主权即为他人所有’(*‘the sovereignty of the Republic of China*

was owned by others without any notices or warnings’). It was very likely that the

Republic of China would be '所定条约而灭' ('*destroyed by the treaties made*') (Li, 1911). In their eyes, the newly born Republic of China, like the fallen Qing Empire, was nothing more than a piece of meat for the Japanese invaders, and there was no essential difference between them.

In contrast to these works, *The Lament of the Shepherd* does not simply dwell on the tragic aftermath of the fall of North Korea, but focuses on a topic of 'possibility'. In the text, Guo Moruo takes a first-person perspective, looking beyond the tragedy and pain of the fall of North Korea to the question of where the people of North Korea, as a feudal dynasty, would go after the fall of the country. He saw something deeper, 'the people'. He emphasises the significance of the name 'Republic', which is no longer an empty symbol, but a symbol of the richness of the present democratic nation. In his eyes, the fundamental reason why China did not and would not go the same way as North Korea was the 'republic' of the Republic of China, a country with the 'public' as its name. He had great faith and enthusiasm in this, and believed that the advanced Republic of China, replacing the backward new government, was bound to lift the tide. He believed that the current Republic of China was '民基伤未坚' ('*not yet firmly established*') (Guo Moruo, 2012), and that, in his view, the new government was trying to build on the mess left by the Qing dynasty.

This political proposition is reflected in the tone of the story set in *The Lament of the Shepherd*, where Korea and Japan, for Guo Moruo, are a mapping of the Republic

of China and Japan, but this mapping is not an exact contrast like a flat mirror, but rather a distorted mirror. The distorted mirror presents a hypothesis – the human tragedy that would have occurred if China had not been established as a republic and colonised by Japan. This implies Guo’s strong identification with a modern democratic country such as the Republic of China, and his great faith in its government.

Set in a small village at the foot of Geumgangsan Mountain in North Korea, *The Lament of the Shepherd* is told in the first person, ‘I’, throughout the text. A young Chinese man, ‘I’, comes to Geumgangsan to explore the mountain and stays with a villager, ‘Yin Ma’. One day he sees a shepherdess on the mountain. He hears the sad story of this shepherdess told by Yin Ma. The shepherdess was the daughter of Min Chonghua, a Viscount of the Li Dynasty,²¹ named Min Peiyi, whom Yin Ma had served. She grew up with Yin Ma’s son, Yin Ziyong, and they were known to each other as brother and sister. However, the Viscount’s wife secretly colluded with Ziyong’s father and attempted to kill him and his daughter. She is discovered by Ziyong, who is killed by his own father in defense of the Viscount’s father and daughter. After Ziyong’s death, Min Peiyi takes over the flock of sheep that Ziyong used to look after and goes to the mountains alone to graze them.

In addition to the Paris Peace Conference, an important Asian event occurred during the same period as the Paris Peace Conference, namely the marriage of Li Ying,

²¹ The Joseon Dynasty (Korean: 조선왕조, 1392-1910), also known as Li’s Joseon, or simply Li Dynasty, was the last unified feudal dynasty in the history of the Korean peninsula.

the eldest son of the Li Dynasty, to Fonko Ippongu. Li Ying, the third son of King Taejong Li, was crowned Prince of Ying at the age of four, and came to Japan to study with Ito Hirobumi in 1907 at the age of eleven. In fact, the study abroad was just a pretext for Japan to bring Li Ying to Japan as a hostage for the purpose of ruling North Korea. (Fujita, 2003) Three years later, in 1910, the Treaty of Merger between Japan and Korea was signed, and the Li dynasty was extinguished, and in August 1916, Li Ying was betrothed to a member of the Japanese royal family, Fonko Ippongu. The marriage was announced in all the newspapers on 5th September. The marriage between Yi Ying and Fonko was undoubtedly a political hoax laid by the Japanese government, which the North Korean people would not have welcomed, and a marriage that left a North Korean woman in a tragic situation (Honda,1991), That was Min Kah Wan, the original betrothed of Yi Ying. Born in the same year and month as him, Min was chosen as the future Crown Prince's consort in 1907 at the age of 11. She was engaged to be married in the same year.

By this time, however, Li Ying had already stayed in Japan, and in 1918, he was engaged to Fonko, so Min Kah Wan was forced to cancel the engagement after waiting for ten years. It was customary in North Korea at the time that a chosen woman whose marriage was annulled could not marry for the rest of her life, and her siblings were not allowed to marry either. We can only imagine how devastated Min Kah Wan and her family were when their marriage was annulled. Min's father, Min Young-don, was a diplomat and temple priest at the time, and the Min family was part of the North Korean

aristocracy, but after the marriage was annulled, the Min family was oppressed by the court and the Japanese governor's office, and lost her grandmother and father within a year. In 1920, she was forced to die in Shanghai. On the 28th of April of the same year, Li Ying married Fonko in Japan.

Guo Moruo does not seem to have talked about Li Ying's marriage to Fonko or Min Kah Wan's misfortune, but the young girl in *The Lament of the Shepherd* is the young lady of the Min family, called Min Peiyi, and the young boy's name is Yin Ziying, also known as Brother Ying. Were the names of these two characters set by chance? The two of them are linked by a pure love, and after Ying's death, Min Peiyi misses him day and night, a plot aspect that again parallels the tragic fate of Min Kah Wan.

Works such as *Tears of the Destructed Country* and *The Painful History of North Korea: Shadow of the Destructed Country*, which are based on the details of major historical events, some of the episodes, such as ‘惨事传来闵妃遭戮，虚词掩去西报见讥’ (*The tragic events that led to the murder of Queen Min, and the false words that concealed the ridicule of the western newspaper*) (Li, 1911), are based on the ‘Dingwei Incident’ in which Japanese Ronin murdered the Korean Queen Min. Although the Min family is also mentioned in *The Lament of the Shepherd*, this is based on the family tragedy of the Min's and Yin's families and is not directly related to the feud between the state and the family. This suggests that the events of the fall of North Korea and the tragic life of the North Korean people under Japanese rule were not the focus of Guo Moruo's attention. In other literary works of the same period on the subject of North

Korea, the characters in the story are personally involved in the historical events surrounding its fall. *The Painful History of North Korea: Shadow of the Destructed Country* writes in relation to the Dingwei Incident that ‘两人看了都生出且惊且喜的感情来，喜的是谋弑闵妃的事情自己虽然没做到，已有日人替他代做；惊的是闵妃虽然弑却，那日人的势力又要膨胀起来，国家的前途急急可危。’ (*both of them were surprised and delighted to see that although they had failed to kill Queen Min, the Japanese had already done it for him; they were surprised that although Queen Min had been killed, the power of the Japanese was about to expand and the future of the country was at stake*) (Koshigawa, 1915). Guo Moruo, on the other hand, deliberately erases major historical events from the main body of the story, leaving only traces of the Li Dynasty and the *Bonding Treaty of Two Countries*, and the reason why ‘I’ came to North Korea in the novel is because he admired the ‘金刚山万二千峰的山灵’ (*spirit of Mount Geumgang’s 10,000 peaks*).

In addition, compared to other works on the same subject, the portrayal of the characters in *The Lament of the Shepherd* is more complex, as in works such as *The Story of the Fallen Kingdom of North Korea*, the characters are portrayed in a way that tends to be more loyal and more evil. For example, the villain in this novel is described as ‘不是个正派人物，性情骄纵，心中既无见识，又无把握，却很高兴自作聪明，遇有事端，全不管做的做不得，一味鲁莽前去，任意拨弄吾辈，不识大体。’ (*not*

a decent character, arrogant in nature, neither knowledgeable nor sure in his mind, but very happy to be clever, and when something happens, he doesn't care what he can't do, but just goes ahead recklessly, fiddling with us at will, without understanding the general interest') (Koshigawa, 1915). The author's aim was purely to show the narrative sweep of the story, not to explore the deep human complexities of the protagonists, but to warn the Chinese government of the time through such straightforward, North Korea-set, stories.

The portrayal of the antagonist, Mrs. Li, is complex and vivid: ‘李氏夫人也是名门小姐,从小时便到日本留学,毕业之后,又曾经游历过纽约、伦敦、巴黎、维也纳。算来是在国内的时候少,在国外的时候多呢。归国的时候,年才二十二岁,恰好金氏夫人下世后,已经满了三年。李府倩人说合,不久便做了子爵的继室。子爵未弃官以前,李夫人在京城里,要算是数一数二的社交家。’ (*Mrs. Li was also a lady from a famous family who studied in Japan when she was a child, and after graduating, she travelled to New York, London, Paris and Vienna. She spent less time at home and more time abroad. When she returned home, she was only twenty-two years old, three years after the death of Mrs. Kim. She became the Viscount's stepmother soon afterwards. Before the Viscount abandoned his official post, Mrs. Li was one of the most famous socialites in the capital*) (Guo Moruo, 1992: 12). ‘这样个聪明伶俐、有学问、有才干的新夫人’ (*Such an intelligent, learned and talented new madam*) created her character’怎么能自甘淡泊,久受这山村生活的辛苦呢?’ (*how could she*

be content to suffer the hardships of village life for so long?') (Guo, 1992:12). It also laid the groundwork for Mrs. Li's later denunciation of Min Chonghua's poetry, which implies the meaning of opposing the Japanese invaders to the Japanese gendarmerie. Guo Moruo would like to suggest that Mrs. Li's evil behaviour was not entirely caused by the Japanese invasion of North Korea, but was deeply rooted in her life experiences and character traits.

The Reflection of Guo's Political Philosophy in the Novel

These characteristics of his writing show that although Guo Moruo's choice of the North Korean context maps the Sino-Japanese relationship, at this time Guo Moruo did not want to focus on showing his readers the cruelty of the war and the tyranny of the colonialists; instead, his political and philosophical awareness at this time made him more concerned with the establishment of the national ideology, and at this time, the establishment of the Republic of China gave him immense confidence, so in *The Lament of the Shepherd*, although the brutality of the Japanese invaders was the object of his attack, he wanted to show more what he could do as a member of the nation in times of national crisis. He began to notice the importance of the 'people' in the establishment of the Republic of China, and his thinking was radically different from that of the early Republic of China.

In the previous sections of this thesis, Guo's perception of the state in the early Republic focused on the '国中之民' ('*people within the state*'), that is, for a person of

the Republic of China, the best support for the state was complete submission to the official discourse. He always looked forward to a stronger force to integrate the various dimensions and maintain the formal integrity of a nation, which he saw as a prerequisite for the country's rise to power. These ideas were not unrelated to his early experiences as a student in Sichuan Province, so all he could do at the time, as a new student in Japan, was to obey the arrangements of the state and to study in a motivated manner, leaving the rest to the government and the army. At this time, he thought that as a 'people within the state', he only had to passively accept the arrangements of the state. However, in *The Lament of the Shepherd*, Guo began to realise that he was not only one of the 'people', a small part of a common state, but also the people of the Republic state which is the foundation and root of a democratic community. In the context of a democratic state, he then reflects on how the people can actively participate in the construction of the state.

The novel opens with a detailed and beautiful description of the scenery, and at the end of the text the emotional tone of the text is expressed: '那东南边松树林中,有道小川,名叫赤壁江,汇集万二千峰的溪流,暮暮朝朝,带着哀怨的声音,被那狂暴的日本海潮吞吸而去。' (*In the southeastern pine forest, there is a small river called the Chibi River, which brings together the streams from thousands of the peaks of mountains, and is swallowed up by the violent Japanese tide with a mournful sound*) (Guo, 1992:8). The words '哀怨' ('mournful') and '日本海潮吞吸而去' ('swallowed

up by the tide of the Japanese sea’) allude to the grievances of the North Korean people against the Japanese colonialists. Immediately afterwards, ‘I’ describes the house of the Yin’s family as ‘房里别无他物,只有一张短檠,两面推窗,象是久无人居,早变就灰尘世界。’ (*having nothing else in it but a short lampstand and two sliding windows, as if it had been unoccupied for a long time and had become a dusty world*) (Guo Moruo, 1992). It suggests that after the Japanese colonisation of North Korea, people’s livelihoods were in ruins. However, even though the house was in such a dilapidated state, ‘尹宅门首,贴副白色门联,朝鲜风俗尚白,门上春联,也用白纸,俨然如同国内丧事人家一般。联上写的现成语句:‘近水楼台先得月,向阳花木早逢春。’ (‘The door of the house is decorated with a white couplet, as it is the custom in North Korea to use white paper for the Spring Festival couplets, just as it is for mourning in China’) (Guo Moruo, 1992: 9). The couplet reads, ‘近水楼台先得月,向阳花木早逢春’。 The couplet is a poem which is about the fact that buildings near the water’s edge can see the moon’s projection first because they are not shaded by trees, and that flowers and trees facing the sun are naturally much better lit, so they sprout earlier and are most likely to produce a spring scene.

This verse emphasises that everything in the world has its own natural laws and its own unique growth environment, which can be exploited to achieve unexpected results. As a couplet to welcome the New Year and the revival of all things, it is a far cry from the traditional auspicious words (e.g. ‘旧岁又添几个喜, 新年更上一层楼’

(The old year has added a few more joys, the new year will reach a new level), and Guo Moruo's placement of this line here highlights his political stance in this text, namely that Korea's deplorable state of being colonised by Japan was also a powerful external factor for change in the country. It is precisely because of this harsh political environment that North Korea may have had a burgeoning intention to renew itself from the fall. Suffering is to be chewed over, but it is the glimmer of hope in the midst of suffering that is the simple political philosophy that he wants to express at this time. And the 'people' of the Republic were the source of that light, the hope for progress. The awakening of the people to the country's desperate situation inevitably accelerated the country's growth.

In the novel, the main character, Yin Ziying, once left a letter to his mother before he gave up his life for righteousness:

母亲:

儿今放羊回家,在这羊栏旁边,拾得一封书信,明明是父亲遗失的。因为是已经开了封,儿便把那内容取来一看—呀!母亲!儿不看犹可,看了之后,早令儿魂飞魄散!

母亲!儿今已决意救我子爵、蕙妹、父亲。儿不忍我父亲犯出这样大不义的罪行。儿想父亲定已来在寺中,儿却四处寻之不得。母亲!儿想此事声张出去,不仅父亲一人的攸关。儿今夜里要在寺中巡逻,能私下地把父亲吓退,最为

上策。母亲!倘若儿万一是死了的时候,母亲!请你切莫悲哀!儿想生为亡国之民,倒不如早死为快。

母亲!时间已迫,不能多写。密书阅后,请火化之!抽屉中有日记二册,请交蕙妹惠存。

儿子英跪禀。

(Mother:

When I returned home from sheep farming today, I found a letter next to the sheep pen, which my father had obviously lost. Since it was already opened, I took the letter and read it - Oh! Mother! If I had not read it, I would have been scared out of my wits!

Mother! I am determined to save my viscount, my dear sister Yi, and my father. I cannot bear the thought of my father committing such a great injustice. I think my father must have come to the temple, but I have searched everywhere for him. Mother! I think that if word of this gets out, it will not only be my father's fault. I will patrol the temple tonight, and it would be best if I could scare my father away privately.

Mother! If I were to die, mother! Please do not mourn! I think it would be better for me to die sooner than to be born as a national to witness my fallen country.

Mother! Time is running out, and I cannot write more. Please cremate the secret letter after reading it! I have two diaries in the drawer, please give them to my sister Yi for safekeeping.

Son, Ying, kneels). (Guo Moruo, 1992:24)

Yin Ziyong is the son of Yin Shihu, a minister in Viscount Min's household, and his sacrifice of himself to save the Viscount not only demonstrates his loyalty to his master's family, but also constitutes a metaphor for the relationship between the individual and the state in this text. In the text, although Viscount Min has already retired to the government ('只因当时朝里,出了一派奸巨,勾引外人定下了甚么合邦条约。闵子爵一连奏了几本,请朝廷除佞安邦,本本都不见批发。子爵见大势已去,不可挽回,便弃了官职,携带一门上下,从京城里迁徙而来') 'It was only because there was a group of treacherous giants in the court who had seduced outsiders into making some kind of treaty of unity. The Viscount Min had submitted several petitions to the court to get rid of the sycophants and secure the state, but none of them were approved. Seeing that the situation had already changed and was irreversible, the viscount abandoned his official position and moved from the capital with his entire family' (Guo, 1992: 26). However, his title of Viscount shows his status as an 'official', and even after he resigned, he still had his heart set on the affairs of his family and country, and his poem 《怨日行》 (Complaint of The Sun) is a clear demonstration of his extreme anger and discontent with the Japanese invaders, and it is also the poem that he was later found by his wife and Yin Ziyong's father, who wanted to use it as a form of defection to the enemy.

《怨日行》

炎阳何杲杲,晒我山头苗。土崩苗已死,炎阳心正骄。 安得后
羿弓,射汝落海涛?安得鲁阳戈,挥汝下山椒? 羿弓鲁戈不可求,
泪流成血洒山丘。 长昼漫漫何时夜,长恨漫漫何时休。

《怨日行》 大韩遗民闵崇华挥汗书。

(Complaint of The Sun

*The sun shines brightly on my hilltop. The earth has collapsed and the
seedlings are dead, but the sun is proud of itself.*

*How can I get Hou Yi's bow to shoot you down to the sea? How can I get the
sword of Lu Yang to wield you from the mountain?*

*The bow of Hou Yi and the goblet of Lu Yang cannot be found, and tears
have been shed to spill blood on the hills.*

When will the long day last and the long hate last?

*Complaint of The Sun, Min Chong Hua, an adherent of a former dynasty of
the North Korea, writes in sweat). (Guo, 1992:28)*

The poem is an attack on the Japanese invaders, using a harmonic sound.²² The poem ends with the title ‘大韩遗民’ (‘an adherent of a former dynasty of the North Korea’), a direct reference to the fact that he is in fact a symbol of the nation. Although

²² The sun is written as ‘日’ in Chinese, and the Chinese word for Japan is ‘日本’, so the sun was used by the literati as a homophonic for ‘Japan’.

Yin Ziyong was a servant in the house of Viscount Min, he was able to '僭分' ('arrogate to himself hierarchy') because of the Viscount's affection '我的儿子名叫尹子英,是闵子爵替他取的名字。子爵十分爱他,常叫他作'英儿英儿'。英儿比佩萸小姐大一岁,小姐常叫他作英哥,英儿也僭分着叫小姐是夷妹。他们两人你怜我爱的,倒真正地如同同胞骨肉一样。 ('My son's name is Yin Ziyong, named for him by Viscount Min. The Viscount loved him so much that he used to call him 'Ying'er 'Ying'er. Ying'er was a year older than Miss Peiyi, and she used to call him Brother Ying, and Ying'er used to call her Sister Yi. The two of them were truly like flesh and blood.) (Guo Moruo 1992:29). In other words, Yin Ziyong is a relatively free 'person' of the Min household, and his freedom comes directly from Viscount Min, namely, the nation. This metaphor contains dual implications. The first is that in an independent nation (as implied by Min's resignation and restoration of his freedom), the 'people' have full freedom (there is no longer a hierarchy, no distinction between master and servant, and the son of a servant is free to fall in love with the lady of his master's house).

Secondly, to be free as a 'people', one needs the existence of the nation behind one (without the existence of a viscount, Yin Ziyong would never have been able to overstep the strict feudal hierarchy). In this way, Yin's sacrifice of his life to save Viscount Min can be seen as a symbol of his personal initiative to participate in the construction of the nation. The fact that Yin Ziyong did not choose to inform Min after picking up the secret letter written by Mrs Li to Yin Shihu, but instead confronted Yin

Shihu, who was threatening Min's life, in a more direct way, implies that at this time Guo Moruo already realised that as a democratic state like the Republic of China, the people were an important subject of the state and had an inescapable responsibility for its construction, and therefore, when faced with something that might threaten the interests of the state, the people could go beyond the official discourse and take up their obligations directly.

Guo Moruo's reflection on the relationship between 'country' and 'people' is not just to be found in his *The Lament of the Shepherd*; this shift in national consciousness is also evident in other literary works of his contemporaries. Although he did not write many chapters directly about Sino-Japanese relations due to various reasons, such as the study abroad system, his political philosophy is still hidden in his poems about the feelings of the country. For example, in 1919, he composed an ancient poem and song:

《少年忧患》

少年忧患深苍海,血浪排胸泪欲流。

万事请从隗始耳,神州是我我神州。

(The Young Men's Anguishes

Young men's anguish is ocean deep,

Waves of blood surging with tears drop.

Everything should start from Kui,

Shenzhou is I, I am Shenzhou). (Guo Moruo, 2008:251)

The national consciousness of ‘country’ and ‘people’ in this poem is exactly the same as the one Guo Moruo wanted to express in *The Lament of the Shepherd*. This poem utilises the story of Guo Kui from *The Records of the Grand Duke of Yan* to express the author’s fervent desire to serve his country. Guo Kui was a minister of the state of Yan during the Warring States period, and he advised King Zhao of Yan: ‘王必欲致士，请从隗始；况贤于隗者，岂远千里哉？’ (‘to implement the policy of talent, King Zhao, please start with me. Even a person like me is respected by you, let alone those who are better than me’) (Zhai, 2009). The latter phrase ‘Shenzhou’ refers to the land where the Chinese nation has always lived, and is China in the geographical sense.

Guo Moruo did not refer the Republic of China but Shenzhou, which also ties the geographical China to the Republic of China in the sense of a modern democratic state, representing his trust in the Republic of China as the soil for the survival and reproduction of the Chinese nation. At the same time, more importantly, the chiasmus utilised in poem expresses that ‘I’ as a citizen and ‘Shenzhou’ as a country, that is, the Republic of China, are united in the poem, and as a part of the Republic of China, every citizen has the right and obligation to directly take up the important task of building the country. It is a profound poetic example of his nascent political philosophy.

Further Shift in Guo’s Political Philosophy

The long poem 《黄河与扬子江对话》 (*Dialogue between the Yellow River and the*

Yangtse River) written in 1922 speaks of the suffering of the Chinese people on this land through the mouth of the Yellow River and the Yangtse River:

黄河：啊，说起来真痛心极了。你不知道住在北边的人好苦。我自从通过了黄土之后，便带了一身血水出来。他们这几年来没有一天不在流血……他们的血液流得遍地都是；连我也被他们的血液充满了。

(Yellow River: Ah, it hurts so much to say that. You don't know how hard it is for people who live in the north. I have brought blood and water out with me since I passed through the Loess Plateau. They have bled every single day in these years Their blood flowed everywhere; even I was filled with their blood.)

扬子江：唉，黄兄，南边又不是一样吗？你看，我的一身不也是血液吗？……他们在人头上打起仗来真是厉害，死的人真是不少！你不看我带了许多尸骸出来吗？

(Yangtze River: Alas, brother Huang, is not the same in the south? Look, I'm covered in blood too. It's amazing how they fight, and how many people die! Don't you see that I brought out many corpses?)

However, the conversation turns from lamenting the hardships of people's livelihood to criticizing the people for appeasing the traitors and not thinking of an uprising to get rid of the tyrant, but instead kneeling down and praying for the tyrant's mercy.)

黄河：我想来也是他们自己讨得的。

(Yellow River: I think they also came to ask for it themselves.)

扬子江：你不曾知道，近来还出了一群畸形儿。他们怕见流血，他们怕采取直接行动去驱除那些‘毒菌’，他们竟向那些‘毒菌’求怜，希望它生出些人心来呢！黄河和扬子江抨击完之后，发愿要把人民的迷梦唤醒。

(Yangtze: You do not know, recently there is a group of deformed children. They are afraid to see bloodshed, they are afraid to take direct action to exorcise those ‘poisonous bacteria’, they even to those ‘poisonous bacteria’ for mercy, hoping that it gives birth to some hearts!

After the Yellow River and Yangtse River had finished their attack, they made a wish to wake up the people’s dream.

After they finished their talk, they merged into one; turning half of the merged body into steam and flying into space.)

They turn into snow and hail and fly down; this is a hint to the people: ‘你们快造些榴散弹来打在‘毒菌’们的头上来吧！’ (‘Make some grenades to hit the ‘poisonous bacteria’ on their heads!’)

They turned into clouds and lightning, and this is a hint to the people, ‘你们快如陈涉、吴广一样揭竿为旗，丛祠篝火，直接和‘毒菌’们作战！’ (‘Make banners like Chen She and Wu Guang, and fight directly against the ‘poisonous bacteria’!’)

.....

就这样，那澎湃的歌声传遍了中国：人们
哟！醒！醒！醒！你们非如北美独立战争
一样，自行独立，拒税抗粮；你们非如
法兰西大革命一样，男女老幼各取直接行
动，把一大群的路易十六弄到断头台上；
你们非如俄罗斯无产专政一样，把一切的
陈根旧蒂和盘推翻，另外在人类史上吐放
一片新光；人们哟，醒！醒！醒！已往
的美与法—是十八世纪的两大革命，新兴
的俄与中—是二十世纪的两大革命。二十
世纪的中华民族大革命哟，快起！起！
起！快在这二十世纪的世界舞台上别演一
场新剧！人们哟，莫用永在泪谷之中歛
歛！你们把人权恢复了之后，人类解放
的使命，世界和平的使命，要望你们二十
世纪的两个新星双肩并举！

人们哟，起！起！起！

1922 年 11 月 12 日于日本

(In this way, the surging song spread throughout China:

The people yo! Wake up! Wake up! Wake up!

*You are not like the North American War of Independence,
when you were independent and refused taxes and food;*

*You are not like the French Revolution, where men,
women and children took direct action, and guillotined a
whole bunch of Louis XVI's;*

*You are not like the Russian dictatorship of the proletariat,
which overthrew all the old roots, and put a new light in
the history of mankind;*

The people, wake up! Wake up! Wake up!

*The former America and France – the two great revolutions of the
Eighteenth century.*

*The newly emerging Russia and China are the two great revolutions of the
Twentieth century.*

The Chinese national revolution of the Twentieth century.

Get up! Rise! Rise!

Perform a new drama on the world stage of the Twentieth century!

*The People, don't lament in the valley of tears forever!
When you have restored human rights.*

The mission of human liberation, the mission of world peace.

Look to the two new stars of the Twentieth century to stand side by side!

The People, rise! Arise! Rise!

November 12, 1922 in Japan) (Guo Moruo, 1923)

It can be seen from this long and surging poem that Guo Moruo believed that the Beiyang warlord system that had established the Republic of China had completely lost its dynamism in the context of the 1920s, and had become the root cause of social unrest in China. He, who had always stood for the government, supported it unconditionally, and believed that the stability of the regime was above all else, believed that ‘我们的祖国已不是古时春花烂漫的祖国，我们的祖国只是冢中枯骨的祖国了’ (*our motherland is no longer the motherland of the old days when spring flowers were in full bloom; our motherland is only the motherland of dry bones in the mound*) (Guo,1992: 59). He believed that the only way to change Chinese society today was to raise every citizen’s awareness of his or her relationship with the state, and to start a revolution in which the people could participate. He also felt that literature was the catalyst and propaganda tool for this violent revolution. The ideological changes of this period were much more overt than those of the period of *The Lament of the Shepherd*, and the central importance of the nation was made clearer. His view was that the nation was the master of a modern democratic state, that the fate of the nation was in the hands of each individual, and that a bloody and violent revolutionary uprising was essential and urgent at the necessary moment.

Dialogue between the Yellow River and the Yangtse River is far from an isolated instance; The poems included in the 《前茅》 (*Vanguard poetry collection*) published around the same time as this one indicate that his political philosophy was undergoing

a rapid transformation. He was evolving from a patriotic student who prioritized his studies and bore his grievances in silence, into a fervent young patriot willing to sacrifice everything for the love of his country. This shift is already evident in the preface poem of *Vanguard*, where we can see the beginning of a departure from the subtlety and romanticism of his previous poems collected in *The Goddesses*. His style is becoming more raw and direct. The patriotic fervor that once seemed restrained during his student days, is now overflowing, ready to burst forth:

序诗这几首诗或许未免粗暴，
这可是革命时代的前茅。这
是我五六年前的声音，这是我
五六年前的喊叫。

在当时是应者寥寥，还听着许多冷落的嘲
笑。但我现在可以大胆地宣言：我的友人是
已经不少。

1928年1月11日

(*Preface Poem*)

*These few poems may seem somewhat rough,
But they are the vanguard of a revolutionary era.*

*This is the voice I had five or six years ago,
This is the cry I made five or six years ago.*

*At that time, there were few who responded,
And I heard much cold laughter and scorn.
But now, I can boldly declare:
My friends are no longer few.*

January 11, 1928) (Guo Moruo, 2012: 13)

This preface poem, written in 1928 for his poetry collection, serves as an introductory piece that reflects on his poetic creations beginning in 1923. It not only summarizes the poet's creative journey and inner experiences over the past five or six years, but also expresses his firm belief in social change and his optimistic outlook on the future.

In the first stanza of the preface, he begins by acknowledging that these poems might seem 'rough', but he quickly emphasizes that they are the 'vanguard of a revolutionary era'. Here, 'vanguard' signifies the forefront or leading edge, indicating that these works played a radical and transformative role during the revolutionary times. These two lines reveal that as he reflected on his creative process over the past five or six years, he clearly recognized a shift in his literary style—a shift that simultaneously highlighted the dramatic changes in his political philosophy.

The poems included in the *Vanguard* collection, such as those published before and after *Dialogue between the Yellow River and the Yangtze River*, including *Marching*

Song (August 28, 1922), *Farewell to Japan* (April 1, 1923), *Morning in Shanghai* (April 7, 1923), *Encouraging an Unemployed Friend* (May 7, 1923), and *Friends Gathered in Prison* (May 27, 1923), employ phrases like ‘万恶的魔宫’ (‘*wicked palace of evil*’), ‘劳苦人的血汗与生命’ (‘*blood and sweat of the toiling masses*’), ‘血惨惨的生命呀’ (‘*bloody, tragic life*’), ‘永远的监禁’ (‘*eternal imprisonment*’), ‘狰狞的恶犬’ (‘*ferocious dogs*’), ‘牛鬼蛇神’ (‘*monsters and demons*’), ‘魔群’ (‘*demonic horde*’), and ‘囚牢’ (‘*prison*’) to fiercely criticize the warlord government that preyed on the people, the exploitation of capitalism, colonial oppression, and the darkness and injustice in society. Meanwhile, he also emphasized in his poems, ‘朋友哟， 怆痛是无用， 多言也是无用!’ (‘*Friends, lamentation is useless, and so is much talk!*’) ‘前进!前进!前进! 我们虽是支孤军， 我们有无数后盾。’ (‘*Forward! Forward! Forward! We may be a lone force, but we have countless supporters.*’) ‘朋友哟， 我们不用悲哀!不用悲哀! 从今后振作精神誓把这万恶的魔官打坏!’ (‘*Friends, we need not grieve! We need not grieve! From now on, let us muster our spirits and vow to destroy this wicked palace of evil!*’) ‘兄弟们哟， 我相信! 就在这静安寺路的马路中央， 终会有剧烈的火山爆喷!’ (‘*Brothers, I believe! Right in the middle of Jing’an Temple Road, there will eventually be a violent volcanic eruption!*’). Through tones of admonishment, awakening, and encouragement, he called for resistance and liberation, expressing his strong yearning for freedom and justice.

In summary, this period marks the second leap in Guo Moruo's political philosophy. During this time, he was courageous and fearless, expressing his thoughts directly and loudly, voicing his call for freedom and democracy. He sought to comfort and inspire the Chinese people, who had long suffered from hardship and pain, urging them to resist all oppressive forces that weighed upon them, even at the cost of bloodshed and sacrifice. Although it might still seem like a solitary struggle, the strong support of the people was being established, and a time of united response was approaching. Victory was on the horizon.

Final Stage of Guo's Political Philosophy at the End of the 1920s: Analysis of *Nostalgia - Su Ziqing on Lake Baikal*

Guo Moruo composed a unique group of poems that underwent several years of revision before reaching its final form in 1928. This process of continual refinement reflects a significant shift in his political philosophy during the late 1920s, particularly during his final years of study in Japan. This transformation was closely related to his personal experiences and the broader social environment of the time. The title of the poem group is *In the Light of Electricity and Fire*, which is an important piece in *The Goddess* collection.

《电光火中》 (*In the Light of Electricity and Fire*) is an important poem in *The Goddess*. In the first two parts of the poem, he expresses his dilemma in the tangle of nationalistic ideas about his homeland through a creative interpretation of Su Wu's

sheep herding and Miller's painting, utilising Su Wu and his 'abandoned wife' as mirror images.²³ Guo Moruo missed his homeland, but he married a woman from an enemy country. At that time, a narrow nationalist ideology prevailed in the community of Japanese overseas students, demanding that foreign students with Japanese women be divorced on the spot, and his patriotic qualifications were scrutinized and questioned. In this dilemma, he advocated the idea that '国境之外，也还有人道，也还有同胞存在!' ('there is humanity and compatriots beyond the national borders!') (Guo, 1932) to interrogate some of the nationalistic ideas of the time (Li, 2021).

In the Light of Electricity and Fire consists of three poems, originally published in the 《时事新报》 (*New Journal of Current Affairs*) on 17 April 1920. In 1921, when it was published in *The Goddess*, the second song was modified, and in 1928, when it was included in Moruo's *Collected Poems*, the second song was changed again, and by combining these two changes and referring to the first poems, 《怀古 – 贝加尔湖畔之苏子卿》 (*Nostalgia- Su Ziqing (Su Wu) by Lake Baikal*), we can understand to a certain extent the development of Guo Moruo's thoughts on family and nation.

²³ During the 54-year reign of Emperor Wu in Han Dynasty, who had been at war with the Xiongnu for 44 years, Su Wu was one of the many ambassadors he sent to spy on the Xiongnu, only to be detained by them. In addition to the many defeated Han generals who surrendered to the Xiongnu during the war, Su Wu was an exception to the rule. In order to force him to surrender, the Huns banished him to the North Sea and left him to fend for himself, but not only did Su Wu not submit to the Xiongnu, he also stayed in the bitter cold for nineteen years.

In the first of the poems in *In the Light of Electricity and Fire*, 《怀古 – 贝加尔湖之苏子卿》 (*Nostalgia - Su Ziqing on Lake Baikal*), the poet imagines Su Wu herding sheep on the shores of Lake Baikal in nomadic costume:

电灯已着了光，我的心儿却怎这么幽暗
着？我一人在市中徐行，恍惚地想到了
汉朝的苏武。我想像他披着一件白羊
裘，毡巾复首，毡裳，毡履，独立在苍
茫无际的西比利亚荒原当中，背后有雪
潮一样的羊群随着。我想像他在个孟春
的黄昏时分，正待归返穹庐，背景中贝
加尔湖上的冰涛，与天际的白云波连山
竖。我想像他向着东行，遥遥地正望南
翘首；眼眸中含蓄着无限的悲哀，又好
像犹有一毫的希望燃着。

*(The electric light is already on,
Why is my heart so dark?
I was walking alone in the city.
I thought in a trance of Su Wu of the Han Dynasty.*

*I imagined him clad in a white sheep's fur. with a felt scarf
cover his head, felt clothes and felt shoes,
I imagine him alone in the middle of the endless Siberian wilderness, with
a snowy tide of sheep at his back.
I imagine that he is returning to his dome at dusk in spring, with the waves.
of ice on Lake Baikal in the background and the white clouds at the bottom
of the sky.
I imagine him heading east.
I imagine that he is looking south from a distance.
There is an infinite sadness in his eyes.
And yet there is a glimmer of hope.) (Guo,1928: 77)*

This poem needs to be examined in relation to the second poem in *In the Light of Electricity and Fire*, 《观画 – Millet 的〈夕暮伴归羊〉》 (*Viewing the Painting – Millet's 'Accompanying the Returning Sheep at Evening'*). The first and second poems both relate to Millet's *Accompanying the Returning Sheep at Evening*, in which the author overlaps the image of the shepherd in Millet's painting with that of Su Wu, merging Su Wu into Millet's painting (Rina Fujita, 2019).

The poem *Nostalgia - Su Ziqing on Lake Baikal* ‘通过缅怀苏武表现作者身在异国他乡所感到的乡愁与孤独’ (*expresses the author's nostalgia and loneliness in a foreign land by commemorating Su Wu*) (Rina Fujita, 2019). After Guo Moruo went to Japan to study, he wrote a letter to his parents complaining:

Just as Guo Moruo looked westward at China with great ambition from the shores of Hakata Bay, so many scholars, such as Fujita Rina, believe that Guo Moruo's memory of Su Wu was only meant to reflect his nostalgia and loneliness, but the 'sorrow in his eyes' and the idea that 'there is a glimmer of hope' clearly show Guo Moruo's thoughts on the situation of the Republic of China at that time, his deep concern for the future of his country, and his desire to see the future of his country realised in a positive and affirming way. This is clearly a reflection of his thoughts on the situation of the Republic of China at the time, his deep concern and ardent hope for the future of his country. Combining this with the historical and cultural context of the next poem, it is clear that his deep political philosophy and thoughts on the modern democratic state can be stripped away. Guo Moruo's fervent patriotism during this period was tempered by a deep sense of nostalgia and anxiety about the uncertain future of his homeland, allowing him to reflect more calmly on the direction of both his life and China's future. Even though China was in a state of chaos, Guo still saw a glimmer of hope. His personal family circumstances and the hardships he faced also forced him to rethink the path to China's revival. This path, he believed, should not follow Japan's unchecked promotion of extreme nationalism, which fanned the flames of mass hysteria. Evidence of these thoughts can be seen in his correspondence with friends and the revisions he made to his poetry, where glimpses of his introspective considerations and critiques of nationalist fervor are revealed.

He was studying at the Faculty of Medicine at Kyushu Imperial University when he wrote *In the Light of Electricity and Fire*. At that time, Fukuoka, where Kyushu Imperial University was located, held an industrial fair, and a month before writing *In the Light of Electricity and Fire*, Guo Moruo reported in a new letter to Zong Baihua that he and Tian Han had visited the industrial fair in Fukuoka. He wrote furiously, ‘我们在日本留学，读的是西洋书，受的是东洋气。我真背时，真倒霉！我近来很想奋飞，很想逃到西洋去，可惜我没钱，我不自由，唉！’ (*We studied in Japan, reading Western books and suffering from Eastern affairs. I am so unlucky! I have recently wanted to fly, to escape to the West, but unfortunately, I have no money, I am not free, alas!*) (Guo Moruo, 2012, 74) It is clear that he was strongly stimulated by the fair. As Benedict Anderson put it, ‘museums and the museumizing imagination are profoundly political’ (Anderson, 2011, 178). The fairs held throughout Japan at the time were no exception; after the First World War, Japan’s economy, as a victorious nation, had grown by leaps and bounds and nationalist sentiment in the country was at an all-time high.

During the Taisho era, when Guo Moruo studied, ‘被看作所谓国家社会主义的思想源头的北一辉、上衫慎吉的思想，以及内务省 – 特高警察、在乡军人会代表的日本保守反动势力，他们在这一时期成为日本社会事实上的中坚力量。’ (*the ideas of Kita Ichikai and Ueshi Shinkichi, who were seen as the ideological*

source of so-called national socialism, and the conservative reactionary forces in Japan represented by the Ministry of Internal Affairs - the Special High Police and the Jigo Military Association, who became the de facto backbone of Japanese society during this period')(Ouyang, 2015); ‘占日本总人口 82% (1920 年人口调查时) 的郡辖区人们所拥有的是, 把国家放在优先地位的想法, 也就是国家主义思想和皇室中心主义的历史观。’ (*What people in the prefectural districts, who made up 82% of the total population of Japan (at the time of the 1920 census), possessed was the idea of giving priority to the country, that is, the nationalist ideology and the imperial-centric view of history.*’) (Ouyang, 2015).

In Guo Moruo’s 1922 novel 《未央》 (*Weiyang*), there is a detailed description ‘一出门去便要受邻近的儿童们欺辱, 要拿棍棒投石块来打他: 可怜了才满三岁的一个小儿, 他柔弱的神经系统, 已经深受了一种不可疗治的疮痍。’ (*as soon as he went out, he was insulted by the neighbouring children, who would beat him with sticks and stones: pity a little child who had only reached the age of three, whose tender nervous system was already deeply affected by an incurable sore*’) (Guo, 1922). This is a naked portrayal of the ‘nationalist ideology’ of Japan, which is deeply rooted even in children. Stirred by this national sentiment, Japan trumpeted the history of Japan’s victorious foreign wars and advocated the justice of a war of aggression. Guo Moruo expressed disbelief at Japanese propaganda about the victory over the Yuan army,

arguing that natural circumstances helped Japan in the war back then, as the Yuan army led by Fan Wenhui happened to encounter a stormy sea. In 《箱崎吊古》 (*Commemorating in Hakozaki*), he laments:

那六百三十八年前元朝的大将，范文虎将军，带了四千只的楼船，十多万的同学来攻讨日本的时候，全军覆没了，不是就遇着这般怪风，就在这博多湾的海上，就在这闰七月初一日的一天么？我跑到了 – 我跑到博多湾的海岸了！四千只的楼船 – 啊啊！还在海上翻！惊砂扑面来，我看见范文虎同蔡松坡指挥着十万多的同学战 – 同怪风战，狂涛战，怒了的自然战，宇宙间一切的恶魔战…… 我的同学哟！我奋勇的同学哟！

(When General Fan Wenhui, a great general of the Yuan Dynasty, brought 4,000 ships and more than 100,000 compatriots to fight against Japan 638 years ago, his whole army was wiped out, didn't he encounter such a strange wind, right here on the sea of Hakata Bay, on this day, the first day of the seventh month of the leap year?

I've made it – I've made it to the shore of Hakata Bay!

Four thousand boats... Still tossing in the sea!

The sand came crashing down on me, and I saw Fan Wenhui and Cai Songpo commanding more than 100,000 of my countrymen in battle - in battle against the

strange winds, against the wild waves, against the angry nature, against all the demons of the universe

My fellow countrymen! My brave countrymen!). (Guo,2008)

The diction of the poem and the historical episodes that Guo Moruo invented bring to the fore the sense of nationhood and nationalism that Guo Moruo harboured at this time.

First of all, there is still a great deal of controversy in academic circles as to whether or not the history of China includes the Yuan dynasty, which under Genghis Khan had become an independent Mongol empire and had been completely deHantianised. Whether or not the Yuan dynasty belongs to Chinese history is a topic that has been revisited by historians since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, when political intentions were added to the study (Hanshan, 2022). Throughout Chinese history, the relationship between the various dynasties and the minority regions has been one of cooperation and resistance, with endless conquests and wars. The Han dynasty of the Central Plains referred to the ancestral peoples living in the Huai Shui valley of present-day Jiangsu and northern Anhui and the coastal areas of Shandong as the 'Eastern Yí'. The ancestors who lived in the present-day southeast and south of the Yangtze River were collectively referred to as 'Southern Mán'. The ancestors who lived in the present-day Hebei, northern Shanxi, Inner Mongolia and north-eastern China were collectively known as the 'Northern Dí'. The ancestors who lived in the northwest and south-west of the Yangtze River were known as the 'Western

Róng'. The land of 'Mán Yí' has always been a term of contempt for the barbaric and backward regions, and up to the time of the Qing dynasty, the saying '非我族类，其心必异' (*'if it is not one of us, it will be different in heart'*) was frequently used.

After the Qing dynasty, during the Republic of China, in a purely geographical sense, the 'eighteen provinces of Han', or the 'central country', and the 'central plains', were the 'headquarter of China'. China's headquarter, in a purely national sense, was also a state nurtured by the Zhou dynasty and spawned by the Qin and Han dynasties. In determining whether a regime is a Chinese regime, one must look at whether it can trace its origins back to the Zhou, Qin and Han dynasties: the 'central state'. According to some scholars, two conditions are needed to determine the transmission of the legal system: firstly, the origin of the regime, and whether it was an endogenous regime within the original Chinese territory. Secondly, the nature of the regime, and whether it was of an indigenous Chinese nature or not. The Jin state, which destroyed the Northern Song dynasty (and later established the Yuan dynasty), had its origins not within the central state, the Northern Song, and was not an internal rebellion, but an external invasion, so the Jin state was not China. Moreover, the Yuan regime relied on Mongolian and Sermonites ²⁴ as high officials and chief officials, and even made deliberate

²⁴ The Sermonites ('people of all colours and names') was the collective name given to the peoples of Central and Western Asia, Western Asia and Europe during the Yuan Dynasty, and was one of the four classes of people during the Yuan Dynasty

distinctions between ethnic groups throughout society, with the Hans at the bottom of the hierarchy, without any semblance of a native regime (Wu, 2021).

After the overthrow of the Yuan dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang, the founding emperor of the Ming dynasty, wrote in his diatribe on the Northern Expedition: ‘自古帝王临御天下，皆中国居内以制夷狄，夷狄居外以奉中国，未闻以夷狄居中国而制天下也’

(Hanshan, 2022) (*‘Since the ancient times, when emperors ruled the world, all the Chinese lived inside to control the barbarians and the barbarians lived outside to serve China, but it is not known that the barbarians lived in China to control the world’*)

which clearly pitting the barbarians against China. ‘驱逐胡虏，恢复中华’ (*‘To expel the Hu captives and restore China’*), ‘方欲遣兵北逐胡虏，拯生民于涂炭，复汉官之威仪’ (*‘I want to send my troops north to expel the Hu captives, to save the people from suffering and to restore the prestige of the Han officials’*) (Hanshan, 2022). All

these show that Zhu Yuanzhang did not recognise this part of China’s history inherited from the Yuan dynasty, but regarded it as a foreign invader to be driven out. This is why Guo Moruo of the Republic of China regarded this controversial period as part of Chinese history and shouted in his poem that Fan Wenhui led an army of 100,000 Mongolian, Sermonites and Hans as ‘compatriots’, which is worth pondering.

Guo Moruo's work in the field of historical research has been a great success and many monographs have been written during his life. In the foreword to the 《中国史稿》 (*Draft of Chinese History*) edited by Guo Moruo, he says:

‘中国是一个统一的多民族的国家。汉族和各兄弟民族在长期的生产斗争和阶级斗争中，共同缔造了我们统一的多民族的祖国，开发了祖国的锦绣河山。祖国境内的各少数民族的历史，都是我国历史不可分割的组成部分。他们都为我国统一的多民族国家的形成和发展，为实现祖国各民族平等的联合和解除外来的民族压迫，做出了各自的贡献。’

(‘China is a unified multi-ethnic country. In their long struggle for production and class, the Hans and the various fraternal nationalities have worked together to create our unified multi-ethnic motherland and develop its beautiful mountains and rivers. The histories of all the ethnic minorities in our motherland are an inseparable part of our history. They have all made their respective contributions to the formation and development of our unified multi-ethnic state, to the realisation of the equal union of the various nationalities of the motherland and to the lifting of foreign ethnic oppression’). (Guo Moruo, 1976:2)

And we can also see some of his nationalistic ideas in his many historical dramas. The main structure and framework of his historical dramas, which are the result of his combination of literary art and historical research, are based on historical facts with artistic processing and fiction, but which are consistent with the national ideas he displayed in his

historical research. In his historical drama 《蔡文姬》 (*Cai Wenji*), published in 1959, the dialogue between Zhao Siniang and Cai Wenji in the first act:

‘我一定要把你女儿抚养成人，一定要看到匈奴和汉朝真正成为一家。’ (*I must raise your daughter to adulthood and must see that Huns (an ancient minor-nationality in China) and the Han dynasty truly become one family*) (Guo Moruo, 1984), and the dialogue between Dong Sei and Cai Wenji: ‘如今汉朝和匈奴已如一家’ (*Now the Han dynasty and the Huns have become one family*) (Guo Moruo, 1984), all show that Guo Moruo’s long-held national value is the affirmation of national integration, and that despite the endless warfare in the past, as long as one has the goal of unification and can fight for the well-being of the people living in the land at this moment, then all ethnic divides should be set aside.

Guo Moruo’s strong sense of compatriotism here was a dissolution of the nationalist sentiments preached by Japan at the time. And the poem features a man who should never have fought alongside Fan Wenhui in his mission – Cai Songpo (Cai E), who was appointed Governor of Sichuan by the Li Yuanhong government in September 1916 and died in November at the hospital attached to Kyushu Imperial University in Japan after a long illness. Sichuan was Guo Moruo’s hometown and the hospital where Cai E died belonged to the university where he was studying at the time. Guo Moruo and Cai E were inseparably linked. Cai E was a famous soldier in modern Chinese history, and as mentioned earlier in this thesis, he was prominent in the revolt against

Yuan Shih-kai's retrograde and presumptuous attempt to restore the feudal dynasty and made an outstanding contribution to the re-establishment of the Republic of China.

In this poem, Guo Moruo has Cai E travel back more than six hundred years to command a hundred thousand troops alongside Fan Wenhui, suggesting that he was not composing the poem at this time simply to vent his anger, and trying to find traces of history and belittle Japan. Rather, he sees Cai E as representing China in the modern sense, fighting to the death for the hope of the nation and the well-being of its people, which is precisely what Guo Moruo's own national consciousness personifies. And Fan Wenhui, as a great general of the Yuan dynasty, is seen as a representative of the Chinese nation, leading an army of 100,000 men, even if they were Sermonites or Huns, but the same people who were struggling in the land of China (in the geographical sense), at a time when the people of the two eras intersected and their respective national identities no longer mattered, but were already integrated and had the same goal.

What is more interesting is that Japan is not presented as the target of national resistance in *Commemorating in Hakozaki*, but that Fan Wenhui and Cai E led their armies to '*fight the strange winds, the wild waves, the angry nature, all the demons in the universe*'. This came together in the purest sense of nationalism that Guo Moruo had at the time – the rejection of nationalism, the idea that a nation did not need to defeat other nations in order to survive. The way for a nation to survive was to fight nature, to fight all the demons in the universe, and these demons included extreme narrow-minded nationalism. As citizens of the world, living on this blue planet, the goal of each nation

should be the well-being of its people, the hope for the future. Win-win cooperation, rather than attempting to invade other nations and persecute them for their own personal gain, was Guo Moruo's mockery of the narrow nationalism advocated by Japan at the time and his pity for the cruel fate of humanity.

Analysis of Millet's 'Accompanying the Returning Sheep at Evening

It is at this point that the political philosophy embodied in Guo Moruo's two revisions of the poem's content is better understood when one comes to the second piece in *In the Light of Electricity and Fire, Viewing the Painting – Millet's 'Accompanying the Returning Sheep at Evening'*.

When it was included in the first edition of *The Goddess*, all but the first six lines were rewritten, and the title changed to *Viewing the Painting – Millet's 'Shepherd Girl'*.

The first six lines of the poem read:

电灯已经着了火，我的心儿还是这么幽暗
着！我想象着苏子卿的乡思，我步进了街头
的一家画馆。我赏玩了一回四林湖畔的日
晡，我又在加利福尼亚州观望瀑布 –

(The electric light is already on.

Why is my heart so dark?

I imagined the thoughts of Su Ziqing's homesick.

I stepped into a painting gallery on the street.

I admired the sun on the shores of Lake Lucerne (Vierwaldstättersee).
I watched the waterfall in California again –) (Guo Moruo, 2008: 21)

The first two stanzas are a repetition of the beginning of three of the poems in this group, with the focus on the location of one of the paintings in the fifth stanza – the shores of Lake Lucerne. Lake Lucerne is associated with Goethe and Schiller, two of Guo Moruo's most respected German literary figures at the time.

In 1779, Goethe visited the Lake Lucerne region and was so impressed by the local legend of Vilhelm Tell that he suggested that Schiller write a play on the subject, and in 1803 Schiller wrote Vilhelm Tell. The play opens with an idyllic scene on the shores of Lake Lucerne, where the people of the three cantons around Lake Lucerne have become intolerant of the persecution of the Austrian governors and have secretly formed a free union. Tell considers himself peaceful and does not join. The governor, fearing the marksman, asked Tell to use his arrows to shoot the apple placed on his son's head. Tell took two arrows and firmly told the governor that if the first arrow hit the child, the second arrow would kill the governor. Tell succeeded in hitting the apple, however, the governor intensified his persecution of Tell. The governor is finally shot dead by Tell which becomes the rallying cry for the popular movement on the shores of the Lake Lucerne. The play caused a great deal of excitement and has been translated in numerous versions in China.

Before writing this poem, he had mentioned Schiller several times in his dealings with Tian Han, Zong Baihua and others, and he and Tian Han also wanted to be the Goethe and Schiller of China. When Guo Moruo saw this painting about the landscape on the shores of Lake Lucerne, he immediately read the painting, through the lens of Schiller's text, as embodying the spirit of a weak people rising up against the colonisers and fighting for freedom and independence, as expressed in *Vilhelm Tell*. This spirit is also expressed in Guo Moruo's 《狼群中的一只白羊》 (*A White Sheep Among Wolves and Death of Victory*), written in 1920. *A White Sheep Amongst Wolves* is based on the stoppage of a Korean priest's speech at a World Day service in Japan, and shows the struggle and tragic fate of the Koreans in the midst of their national collapse. 《胜利之死》 (*Death of Victory*) is about the Irish independence leader Terence MacSwiney's hunger strike against British colonial rule. ‘两首诗都反映了郭沫若对帝国主义者、殖民统治者的憎恨，对反抗殖民统治的弱小民族的同情与声援。’ (*Both poems reflect Guo Moruo's hatred of imperialists and colonial rulers, and his sympathy and solidarity with the weaker peoples who resisted colonial rule.*) (Rina Fujita, 2019). China's situation was similar to that of North Korea and Ireland, and Guo's concern for North Korea and Ireland is full of his own thoughts of the nation.

The second half of *A View of the Painting – Millet's 'Shepherd Girl'*, included in the first edition of *The Goddess*, is:

哦，好一幅理想的图画！理想以上的画
图！画中人！你可便是苏武胡妇么？胡
妇！一个野花烂漫的碧绿的大平原；在
我面前展放着。平原中也有一群归羊，
牧羊的人！你可便是苏武胡妇么？胡妇！
你左手持着的羊杖，可便是他脱了旄的汉节
么？胡妇！背景中好像有一带迷茫的水光，可
便是贝加尔湖，北海么？胡妇！

*(Oh, what an ideal picture! A picture above the ideal!
The person in the painting! Are you Hu wife²⁵ of Su Wu? The Hu wife!
A great green plain of wildflowers. is
spread out before me.
In the plain, too, there is a flock of returning sheep.
Shepherd of sheep! Are you the Hu wife of Su Wu? The Hu wife!
The sheep's rod you hold in your left hand,
Is it his Han knot without Sheng?²⁶ The Hu wife!
In the background there seems to be a misty glow of water.
Is that Baikal, the North Sea? The Hu wife!). (Guo Moruo, 2008:21)*

²⁵ The Northern barbarian tribes in ancient China

²⁶ Ancient flag with yak's tail



This painting was painted in 1863 and the following year Miller entered it in the Salon des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where it received great acclaim and became one of Miller's masterpieces. In the foreground on the right is a ragged young woman in a red scarf and an old felt shawl, her head bowed on a wooden stick, with a flock of white sheep behind her and a lake faintly visible in the distance. The scene is simple, soft and earthy under a glorious sunset. Some scholars have interpreted the painting as showing the simple and reverent religious sentiments of the peasants, with the maiden bowing her head in prayer as a way of thanking God for the opportunity to shepherd her sheep. However, Guo Moruo made a creative association with the painting, imagining the shepherd girl as the Hu wife left behind in Siberia after Su Wu's return to Han Dynasty.

Su Wu married a Hu woman in Xiongnu because it was the tendency of the time, and Zhang Qian²⁷ and others also married Hu women in Xiongnu. According to Ge Jianxiong (2015)'s research

‘汉人之所以能大大方方地娶胡妇，除了当时人的观念开放外，汉匈双方还有实际需要。匈奴是游牧民族，物质生活艰苦，人口增长率低，所以除了大量掳掠汉人外，还特别重视婚配生育。’(*the reason why the Han could marry Hu women so openly was that, apart from the open-mindedness of the people at the time, there was a practical need for both Han and Xiongnu. The Xiongnu were nomadic, with a hard material life and a low population growth rate, so in addition to taking large numbers of Han Chinese, they also attached particular importance to marriage and procreation.*) ‘苏武等娶有胡妇在当时并非秘密，更不是什么绯闻，所以连皇帝都认为是正常现象。’(*It was not a secret, let alone a scandal, that Su Wu and others had married Hu women at the time, so even the emperor considered it normal.*). (Ge Jianxiong, 2015)

There are many different interpretations of the fact that Su Wu married a Hu woman, and Wen Yiduo (1916) has argued that Su Wu married a Hu woman because he wanted to

²⁷ Zhang Qian (c. 164 BC - 114 BC), known as Ziwen, was a native of Chenggu, Hanzhong County (now Chenggu County, Hanzhong City, Shaanxi Province), an outstanding Chinese diplomat, traveller and explorer during the Han Dynasty, and the pioneer of the Silk Road.

make the Xiongnu chieftain feel less confident so that he could return to his country. Others have argued that Su Wu, like the traditional literati, could not get past beauty. 《鹤林玉露》 (*The Heslin Yulu*) exclaims: ‘乃知尤物移人，虽大智大勇不能免。由是言之，’世上无如人欲险’，信哉！’(*I know that a man cannot be spared by a great intellect or courage when he is moved by a beautiful woman. In this sense, ‘there is nothing in the world as dangerous as human desire’. That is true!*) (Luo, 2017). There is another reading that Guo Moruo may well have wanted to borrow to clarify his own inner thoughts, and that is to affirm the importance of ‘love’ under the influence of the Ming dynasty’s ‘情学思潮’(*‘love trend of thought’*). Yuan Mei, in his 《随园诗话》 (*Poems from the Sui Garden*), argues:

‘古之忠臣孝子，皆情为之也。胡忠简公劾秦桧，流窜海南，临归时，恋恋于黎倩，此与苏子卿娶胡妇相类。盖一意孤行之士，细行不矜，孔子所谓‘观过知仁’，正此类也。’(*In ancient times, loyal courtiers and filial sons were all motivated by emotion. Hu Zhongjian publicly impeaches Qin Hui and is exiled to Hainan. When he is about to return from Hainan, he falls in love with a Li woman, which is the same type of thing as Su Ziqing marrying a Hu woman. The man who is bent on doing nothing is not reserved in his fine deeds, as Confucius called it, ‘to know benevolence by looking at it’, which is exactly the same.*) (Xia, 2019)

The Qing dynasty's notebooks comment,

‘自古忠臣义士皆不拘小节，如苏子卿娶胡妇，胡忠简公狎黎女，皆在载史册。近偶阅范文正公、真西山公、欧阳文忠公诸集，皆有赠妓之诗。数公皆所谓天下正人，理学名儒，然而不免于此，可知粉黛乌裙，故无妨于名教也。’

(‘Since ancient times, loyal courtiers and righteous men have been unconventional, such as Su Ziqing, who married a Hu woman, and Hu Zhongjian, who had sex with a Li woman. Recently I have read the collections of Fan Wenzheng, Zhen Xishan and Ouyang Wenzhong, all of whom have poems about giving gifts to prostitutes. All of them are called the righteous men of the world, famous scholars of science, yet they are not exempted from this, so it is clear that the powder and the skirt are not detrimental to the famous religion.’) (Xia, 2019)

In the preface to his translation of Miyazaki Laicheng's 《虞美人》 (Beauty Yu), Wu Renda said at the end of the Qing Dynasty

‘自古惟真英雄，有真性情。苏武之眷眷胡妇，项羽之不能忘情虞美人，类非

浅夫俗子所可与语。’(‘*Since ancient times, only true heroes have true feelings.*

Su Wu’s affection for the Hu woman and Xiang Yu’s inability to forget his love for

Yu Beauty are not to be confused with the shallow and vulgar.’) (Wu, 2017)

Although Guo Moruo did not mention a single word about the love life between the Hu woman and Su Wu in either the first edition of *The Goddess* or the reworked version, there is a detail in the first half of *The Lightning and the Fire*, a detail often overlooked by scholars of Guo Moruo’s studies – ‘你左手持着的羊杖，可便是他脱了旄的汉节

么？胡妇！’(‘*The sheep’s rod you hold in your left hand, Is it his Han knot without Sheng²⁸? The Hu wife!*’).

Most scholars who have spoken of this detail tend to gloss over it in a vague manner, arguing that it is not clear from the poem whether the Hu woman is herding the sheep with Su Wu or alone. It is also unclear why she is holding Su Wu’s ‘Han knot without Sheng’, and what she is thinking about. It is not clear why she is holding Su Wu’s ‘Han knot without Sheng’. I argue, however, that Guo had already implicitly used the detail of the Hu woman holding the Han knot in her hand in the first edition to highlight the deep feelings between the Hu woman and Su Wu, which could not be expressed overtly enough due to the political

²⁸ Ancient flag with yak’s tail

factors of the time. And a few years later, the poem was reprinted in full colour, expressing without scruple the lament of the lonely and desolate Hu woman after Su Wu's return to China. Both revisions of the poem are political expressions by Guo Moruo's own developing philosophy, and both are a cascading of the poet's emotional expression.



The 'Han knot without Sheng' is not simply a shepherd's staff, but a symbol of Su Wu's integrity and determination to return to his country. As the name suggests, the Han Knot played an important role in the political life of the Han dynasty, and its bearer could even represent the emperor and had great power. The shape of the Han Knot was developed from the 'Jing' of the Zhou dynasty, but it retained the political significance of the Zhou envoy as a representative of military power, and became a marker for the emperor to send with an envoy or to temporarily grant privileges. During the Han

dynasty, only the emperor could set up a 'knot', known as the 'Han Knot', and vassal states or local authorities did not have the right to set up 'knot'. The Han Knot was eight feet long (the Han scale, about 1.8 metres today) and was made of a bamboo pole with a triple banner made from the tail of a yak (Song, 2017).

In addition to guarding the emperor and handling general affairs on his behalf, the main purpose and role of the knot holder was to deal with major political events, visiting ethnic minorities and neighbouring countries, performing major ceremonial activities, holding the knot during funerals, engaging in mystical activities such as witchcraft, and touring the world to pacify the people. Su Wu, on the other hand, was sent by Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty on a mission to Xiongnu, but was unexpectedly detained by the Xiongnu for several years, and even banished to the North Sea to herd sheep. The image of Su Wu as a powerful and unyielding man is evident in the descriptions given earlier in this thesis, and the transmission of this powerful and unyielding image is concentrated in a detail of his daily life, namely, the fact that he held a Han knot as a shepherd's staff every day, even though the yak's tail on the Han knot had fallen off. The Han Knot represents his original heart, and his patriotic sentiments that he would rather die than give in. With the Han Knot in his hand, he was able to persevere even in the snow and ice, and his desire to return to his country was never altered by the harshness of his circumstances. Even if the poem is set after Su Wu's return to China, it is unlikely that something as important as the Han Knot would have been easily left

in the hands of a Hu woman who, as the legend goes, married him because of her ‘scheming’, ‘beauty’, etc.

In order to verify whether this plot is true or not, I have conducted an extensive search of the extant history books that record Su Wu’s life. Su Wu was trapped in the frozen North Sea for nineteen years before he was finally released to the Han Dynasty in the sixth year of Emperor Zhaoyuan’s reign (81 B.C.). In the following year, he was removed from office because of his involvement in the rebellion against Shangguan Jie. In the first year of Yuanping (74 B.C.), he took part in the establishment of Emperor Xuan of Han and was appointed Marquis of Guannei. Su Wu died in the second year of his reign (60 B.C.) at the age of 80 or so. However, the records of Su Wu’s captivity in Xiongnu are not well documented, especially his love life in Xiongnu, except for Ban Gu’s mention of his son, Su Tongguo, who was born to that Hu woman in 《汉书》 (*The Books of Han*), Volume 54, 《李广苏建传第二十四》 (*The legend of Li Guang and Su Jian XXIV*) (Ban, 1962):

武所得赏赐，尽以施予昆弟故人，家不余财。皇后父平恩侯、帝舅平昌侯、乐昌侯、车骑将军韩增、丞相魏相御史大夫丙吉皆敬重武。武年老，子前坐事死，上闵之，问左右：‘武在匈奴久，岂有子乎？’武因平恩侯自白：‘前发匈奴时，胡妇适产一子通国，有声问来，愿因使者致金帛赎之。’上许焉。后

通国随使者至，上以为郎。又以武弟子为右曹。武年八十余，神爵二年病卒。

(All the rewards Wu received were given to his deceased brother Kun, and his family had no money left. The empress's father, the Marquis of Ping'en, the emperor's uncle, the Marquis of Pingchang, the Marquis of Lechang, the General of the Che Cavalry, Han Zeng, and the prime minister, Wei Xiang, the imperial historian, Bing Ji, all respected Wu. When Wu was old, his son died because of getting involved into a treason crime. The emperor asked around him, 'Wu has been in Xiongnu for a long time, does he have a son there?' Wu confessed to the Marquis of Ping'en: 'When I was sent to the Xiongnu, a Hu woman gave birth to a son named Tongguo, and there was a message receiving that Xiongnu are willing to exchange my son with gold.' The emperor agreed. Later, when Tongguo arrived with the messenger, he was appointed to the post of Lang. He also took Wu's disciple to be his right-hand Cao. Wu was more than eighty years old and died in the second year of his reign). (Ban, 1962)

There is no record of what happened to the Hu woman after Su Wu's return to China, but if Su Wu really had such deep feelings for her that he could entrust her with such an important token as the Han knot, as the poem suggests, he would not have thought only of his son's situation after his return to China, without mentioning the woman. Therefore, it is likely that the Hu woman was a pawn about which Su Wu had to compromise when he returned to China.

As this discussion mentioned earlier, Guo Moruo was not only a literary scholar, but he was also an archaeologist and historian. It is quite unlikely that he, who was well

versed in history, did not know the authenticity of this detail. However some scholars believe that this detail was devised by him in the poem without any historical evidence, is quite meaningless and had no major significance. This thesis believes that this detail was deliberately concealed by Guo Moruo as a metaphor for his political philosophy.

In 1918, Duan Qirui's government, which had sold out to the Japanese imperialists, secretly signed 《中日陆军共同防敌军事协定》 (*The Sino-Japanese Military Agreement on the Joint Defence of the Army*) and 《中日海军共同防敌军事协定》 (*The Sino-Japanese Military Agreement on the Joint Defence of the Navy with Japan*), which gave the Japanese the privilege of stationing troops in China, and freely entering and leaving China's northeast and Mongolia, thus bringing a large part of China's territory under Japanese control. On May 5th, 1918, the Republic of China Students' Salvation League was formally established in Japan to lead the students' strike to return to China. At the founding meeting, it was decided that the purpose of the movement was ‘冀图团结一致，警觉当局，唤醒国民，抵制日人谋我之野心，打消其亡国之条件’ (*‘to unite, to alert the authorities, to awaken the nation, to resist the ambitions of the Japanese and to eliminate the conditions for their downfall’*).

‘The Republic of China Students’ Association for the Salvation of Japan’ was the largest student organisation in Chinese history before the May Fourth Movement. It organised and mobilised young students from all over the country to join the revolutionary struggle against imperialism and feudalism, so that they moved from ‘科

学救国’(‘*saving the country through science*’) and ‘实业救国’(‘*saving the country through industry*’) to ‘政治救国’(‘*saving the country through politics*’), and from ignoring politics to devoting themselves to the cause of national liberation. Under its guidance, China’s modern student movement came to a climax, laying a good foundation for the awakening of the Chinese people before the outbreak of the May Fourth Movement. However, some of the actions of this patriotic student movement went against the original guiding philosophy and went too far.

The first version of the poem was composed around 1920, and according to Guo Moruo in his 《创造十年》 (*Decade of Creation*) (1932), he recalled:

‘1918年的五月，日本留学届为反对‘中日军事协议’的事体，曾经起过一次很剧烈的全体罢课的风潮。在那次风潮上还有一个副产的运动，便是有一部门热心爱国的人阻止了一个诛汉奸会，凡是有日本老婆的人都认为是汉奸，先给他们一个警告，要叫他们立地离婚，不然便要武力对待。这个运动在当时是异常猛烈的，住在东京的有日本老婆的人因而离婚的也很不少。’

(*In May 1918, there was a very violent wave of all strikes in the Japanese study session in opposition to the ‘Sino-Japanese military agreement’. There was also a side movement on that occasion, that is, a group of ardent patriots prevented a traitor-killing society, in which anyone who had a Japanese wife was considered*

a traitor, and they were given a warning to divorce them immediately, or else they would be dealt with by force. This movement was very violent at the time and there were many people with Japanese wives living in Tokyo who got divorced as a result.’ (Guo Moruo, 1932: 5)

This suggests that within the patriotic movement of the international student community in Japan at the time, a ‘patriotic theory’ was developed, an ethic that encompassed a new hierarchical order, a narrow nationalist sentiment, and a demand for ‘purity’ of descent. For Guo Moruo, who lived with a Japanese woman and had a son, this ‘patriotic theory’ was intensely uncomfortable, and he heartily disassociated himself from all such narrowly focused camps of patriotic attention.

During this patriotic movement, some of the international students protested so violently that they ended their studies and returned to China. Guo Moruo, in his 《创造十年》 (*Decade of Creation*), speaks of the international students who returned to China in 1915 because they opposed Yuan Shikai’s signing of 《二十一条》 (Article 21):

‘跑北京的代表们听说是段祺瑞亲自接见过一次，嘉奖了他们要他们回到日本安心求学，说政府是决不做有损国体的事的。这一部分的代表有的早回来了，有的留在北京在运动做官，又有一部分南下到了上海，和派到上海的代表们

合在一道，现在在办着救国日报，空空洞洞地只是一些感情文章。我看他们通是一些政客啦！”郭沫若蔑称这些学生是些‘政客’，终止学业回国只是些作秀行为，为的只是向政府献忠心以谋取高位而已，只有忍辱负重，继续留在日本学习救亡图存的道路方才是留学生应该做的事。

(‘The delegates who ran to Beijing heard that they had been received once by Duan Qirui himself, who commended them and told them to return to Japan to study without fear, saying that the government would never do anything to undermine the state. Some of these delegates returned long ago, some stayed in Beijing to work as officials in the movement, and some went south to Shanghai, where they joined the delegates sent to Shanghai, and are now running a daily newspaper for national salvation, which is empty of sentimental articles. I think they are all politicians!’) (Guo Moruo, 1932: 7)

Guo Moruo scornfully called these students ‘politicians’ and that they were only putting on a show by ending their studies and returning to Japan in order to offer their loyalty to the government in order to gain a high position, and that the only thing foreign students should do was to endure the humiliation and stay in Japan to learn the way to salvation and survival.

Rewriting

The many emotions as well as the political expression prompted Guo Moruo to rewrite all the last six lines of ‘*View of the Painting – Millet’s <shepherd girl>*’ in 《郭沫若诗集》 (*Guo Moruo’s Collected Poems*), published in 1928

平原中立着一个执杖的女人，背后也涌着了一群归
羊。那怕是苏武归国后的风光，他的弃妻，他的群
羊无恙；可那牧羊女人的眼中，眼中，那含蓄的是
悲愤？怨望？凄凉？

*(On the plain stood a woman with a staff.
And behind her back swarmed a flock of returning sheep. That
could be the landscape of Su Wu’s return to his country. his
abandoned wife, his flock of sheep unharmed.
But in the eyes of the shepherdess, in the eyes
Is it grief and anger? Is it resentment? Desolation?). (Guo Moruo, 1928)*

The altered stanza makes it clear that Guo Moruo’s setting is ‘the landscape of Su Wu’s return to his country’, and that the word ‘Hu woman’ has been changed to ‘abandoned wife’. This use of the word ‘abandoned’ is more tendentious than the subtle expression ‘the Hu wife holding a Han knot’.

If the traditional interpretation is from Su Wu's perspective, the word 'abandon' here changes the perspective to that of the Hu woman. She is 'abandoned', and in the original version derogatory, the contemptuous 'Hu woman' becomes a formal 'wife' ('Hu wife' in the translation of the first edition of the poem is a free translation, and it should be 'Hu woman' if a direct translation is adopted). The word 'abandon' indicates the woman's desolate situation, and is a sign of Guo's infinite pity for the woman and his desire to arouse the reader's sympathy for her. In Miller's 'The Shepherdess', the young woman's head is hung low and her eyes cannot be seen, let alone the expression in her eyes, but here the altered stanza is heavily speculative about the eyes of the 'abandoned wife': 'Grief and anger? resentment? Desolation?' The reader, along with the poet, enters the heart of the 'abandoned wife', and the literary image of the woman comes to life; her independent character comes to the fore; she is no longer an appendage of Su Wu, not even deserving of a description, but now she and Su Wu become two separate subjects.

Given that Guo Moruo's sentiment for Su Wu in this poem was described earlier in this discussion, it is clear that, by extension, his intention in choosing Su Wu as a historical figure is clear. The Hu woman in Millet's 'Shepherd Girl' is also a natural choice for Anna. Anna, or Tomoko Sato, and Guo Moruo were married in late 1916. By the time he wrote this poem, they already had two children. Guo Moruo was so concerned with his country that he was bound to return to serve it, but what was Anna to do as a foreign woman? Should they return together, or should they separate? This

leaves him in a deep conflict. He portrays Su Wu and his ‘abandoned wife’, but in his mind he is thinking of himself and Anna, who are genuinely in love with each other across the racial divide, and this is not something that can be separated by a single phrase of national enmity; indeed, this narrow-minded ‘patriotic’ charade of forcing lovers apart because of the breakdown of relations between countries disgusted him.

Guo Moruo had always been quite dismissive of narrow-minded nationalists, even when such nationalists were his own countrymen. In 1923, when the Japanese anarchist Ei Osugi and his wife were killed by Japanese gendarmes, Guo Moruo wrote an essay entitled 《国家的与超国家的》 (*The National and the Supranational*) to commemorate the occasion. In this essay, Guo Moruo clearly states:

‘国境之外，也还有人道，也还有同胞存在!’我们古代的哲人教我们以四海同胞的超国家主义，然而同时亦不离开国家，以国家为达到超国家的阶段。”我们现在是应该把我们的传统精神恢复的时候，尤其是我们从事于文艺的人，应该极力唤醒固有的精神，以与国外的世界主义者相呼应。’

(*‘Beyond the borders of the state, there is also humanity, there is also the existence of compatriots!’ ‘Our ancient philosophers taught us the supranationalism of compatriots in the four seas, yet at the same time we do not leave the state and use it as a stage to reach the supranational.’ ‘It is high time that we revived our traditional spirit, especially those of us who are engaged in literature and art, and that we should make every effort to awaken the inherent spirit in order to echo the cosmopolitans abroad’*). (Guo, 1925)

Guo did not make distinctions between people solely on the basis of nation and race, a distinction to which he was very sensitive, and which many Japanese made, and many Chinese overseas students made, but he did not follow this logic entirely, but went beyond it to sympathise with all the oppressed and damaged citizens of the weaker nations, and with oppressed people within the colonial state. The constantly revised *In the Light of Electricity and Fire* contains both Su Wu's longing for his homeland and the 'resentment' of his 'abandoned wife' in an enemy country. This transcendent attitude towards nationalist thought was present in 1920, and was fully realised in 1928 when his own helpless encounter with his wife in the context of the times led to the realisation of his transcendent political philosophy.

Conclusion

The period from 1910 to 1930 was not only a crucial phase in China's national development and transformation but also a pivotal 20 years in the evolution of Guo Moruo. During this time, he transitioned from a patriotic student to a passionate and aspiring youth, from a medical student in Japan to a cultural worker who wielded the pen as a weapon, and ultimately, one could even say, into a cultural revolutionist. It was during these two decades that Guo Moruo's political philosophy underwent two significant transformations: first, from a narrow nationalist supporter to an advocate of proletarian revolutionary ideals pursuing freedom and democracy, and finally, it

evolved into a commitment to international communism, promoting peace and opposing militarism.

Chapter 4 The Broadcasting and Adoption of Synge's Works in Japan

In the process of cultural transmission, any 'transit' person (including individuals, groups and nations) will consciously or unconsciously select, eliminate, discard and play with the transmitted material according to their own needs, understanding and nature. For Guo Moruo, and other students who studied in Japan, from the moment they crossed the ocean to study in that country, there was already a clear subjective idea that they wanted to learn more about the Western world and advanced Western science and culture through the medium of Japan, so they would subjectively feel, learn and absorb what they wanted to assimilate, and intentionally ignore other aspects that were not as interesting to them. The reason why Guo Moruo was particularly fond of Irish playwright Synge, this thesis believes, is that apart from being enchanted by Synge's subtlety and genius, the resonance of the political philosophy revealed in his works must have played a decisive role.

Therefore, after analysing Guo Moruo's political philosophy in detail in the previous chapter, this thesis will analyse and elaborate on Synge's political philosophy in this chapter. Moreover, as mentioned in the introductory section, the dramatic movement in Irish Literary Revival was able to have such an impact on Chinese scholars

thousands of kilometres away, in a time, around the 1930s, when communication was so poorly developed, largely because of Japan's role as a cultural bridge. However, the translation and interpretation of foreign literary movements and related works must be adapted to the local cultural context, as local cultural aspirations will play a restraining role in the process of importation, thus imprinting foreign literature with the indelible cultural identity of the translated language (Wang, 1995).

So, the Irish playwrights as they are seen by the Irish are likely to be different from the Irish playwrights as they are seen by Japanese scholars, and by Chinese scholars who have been influenced by these Japanese scholars. and who then take the initiative to come into direct contact with Irish playwrights, and even the literary images and interpretations of these playwrights will be very different. So, to look at the political philosophy embedded in Synge's works from the perspective of Irish scholars alone, and then to compare it with Guo Moruo's political philosophy is thin, static, and will never allow us to see anything like the truth of the interaction.

One of the supporting theories for this discussion in terms of analysing the resonance of Synge's and Guo's literary creation concept and political philosophy is the theory of intertextuality, which focuses on the textualisation of external influences and forces, and the transformation of all contexts, where all contexts, whether political, historical, or social or psychological, become intertextual, emphasising the fractured lines and uncertainties displayed by the text, and showing that:

the text is no longer analysed solely in terms of text, otherwise it would fall into the trap of formalist literary theory. The theory of intertextuality takes formal analysis as its starting point, and eventually extends itself to the whole field of literary traditions and cultural influences, and there is a logical progression from the intertextuality of texts to the intertextuality of subjects to the intertextuality of cultures (Dong, 2006).

With ‘influence’ as its central element, intertextuality theory brings into its field of concern the many factors that influence literary creation, thus moving beyond the level of mere formal studies to the level of multiple dialogues. The text is therefore placed within a non-textual historical framework, forming an intertextual account that refers to non-literary texts such as historical documents, religious rituals and folkloric activities. So this study will analyse the influence of the Irish dramatic movement in Japan at the time; explore the impact of this culturally altered Irish literary imagery on Chinese writers; and directly address the intertextual influence of Chinese writers and Irish Playwrights, taking into account the powerful intercultural encounter between Ireland, Japan and China.

In summary, this chapter will look at the impact of the Irish dramatic movement in the Irish Literary Revival on the Japanese academy at the time, taking the writings, reviews, interviews and plays adapted from the ideas of Irish playwrights by Japanese scholars who disseminated and translated Irish plays in Japan from the late 19th to the early 20th centuries.

The intention of the reception on Irish dramatic movement

The late 19th century saw the rise of the Irish Literary Revival. This cultural movement, in the name of reviving Irish national literature, was partly the result of a sense of Irish national independence, and partly a cultural driver of the independence of the Irish nation (the Irish Free State) (Li, 2019). To the surprise of the Irish, who led the movement, it also attracted the attention of the Japanese literati from as far away as East Asia. With the Meiji Restoration, Japan began to learn from the West in political, economic, cultural and educational terms, and the Irish Literary Revival was introduced to Japan. A large number of Irish plays were translated, adapted and performed in Japan, contributing to the rise of the New dramatic Movement. It was not until the Showa period (1926-1989) that this boom receded.²⁹

The culmination of the translation of Irish literature from the late Meiji period to the Taisho period seems to have been the result of a succession of generations of Japanese scholars, in the form of a phenomenon that must have involved a Japanese writer of Irish descent, 小泉八雲(Koizumi Yakumo). Yakumo Koizumi (27 June 1850/26 September 1904) was a Japanese novelist, born in Greece as Patrick Lafcadio Hearn, who was naturalised in Japan in 1896 and changed his name to Yakumo Koizumi.

²⁹ The Showa period (1926-1989) is generally divided into the pre-Showa period and the late Showa period, with the surrender of Japan in 1945 in the Second World War as the dividing line. The early Showa period was a time when Japan's imperialist and militarist ideology was expanding, when right-wing forces gradually took control of the literary world and most Japanese writers joined the path of advocating colonialism for various reasons.

Hearn was born on 27 June 1850 in Lafcadio, Ionian Islands, Greece, and later adopted Lafcadio as his nickname. His father, Charles Bush Hearn, was an army doctor of Irish descent who was stationed in the Ionian Islands during the British occupation, and married Rosa Antoniou Kassimati, a Greek woman from the islands. Hearn was brought to Ireland by his father when he was old enough to attend the Catholic school. When he was about seven years old, he was left in Ireland by his mother, who was discriminated against because of her ethnicity. His father later died as a result of the war.

In 1890, Hearn went to Japan and married 小泉節子 (Setsuko Koizumi), an English teacher at Matsue High School in Shimane Prefecture, and later became a professor of English literature at Tokyo University. Having lived in Japan for many years, he fell in love with the fascinating culture and customs of the region, and heard many Japanese folk tales from his wife, so he set about writing them in English as short stories in the book 怪談 (*Kwaidan: Stories and Studies of Strange Things*) which was later translated into Japanese by Shinichi Hirai, making him the originator of modern Japanese strange-tales literature (Hirakawa, 2007). Kobayashi Masaki has continued his influence on strange literature by making films of his stories such as ‘耳なし芳一’ (‘Yoshiichi with No Ears’) and ‘スノーメイデン’ (‘The Snow Maiden’). The famous Japanese director 黒澤明 (Akira Kurosawa) himself admitting that the film ‘夢’ (‘Dream’) was inspired by Yakumo Koizumi. Yakumo Koizumi was fluent in English, French, Greek, Spanish, Latin and Hebrew, and had a wide range of knowledge.

In 1904, he died of a coronary artery disease. His *日本と日本人* (*Japan and the Japanese*) is an important work in the study of the Japanese people.

It was also his teaching experience at Tokyo Imperial University, where he taught Irish literature in the classroom, that directly or indirectly influenced lovers of Irish literature at Tokyo Imperial, including mainly writers such as 上田敏 (Toshi Ueda), 厨川白村 (Kuriyagawa) and 芥川竜之介 (Ryunosuke Akutagawa). Subsequently, Toshi Ueda and Kuriyagawa went on to teach at Kyoto Imperial University, leading to a younger generation of translators and interpreters of Irish literature, such as 菊池寛 (Kikuchi Kuan), 矢野峰人 (Yano Minamoto) (1893-1988) and 小林象三 (Kobayashi Zosan) (1893-1974). Later, Kobayashi Zosan took up a position at the Otaru Higher School of Commerce in Hokkaido, where he introduced a young student, 伊藤整 (Itousei), to the study of Irish literature, and these scholars were largely responsible for the popularity of Irish literature in Japan.

However, when we examine this literary phenomenon in the historical and cultural context of Japan's turn of the century, the interpretation of the origins of Irish literature in Japan did not just involve a sense of novelty for Japanese scholars of a foreign culture:

流行が何であれ、重要な理由は常に時代の気風に合うかどうかであった。

日露戦争の勝利、日露戦争、1902年からの日英同盟、1910年の日韓合

併、1914年の第一次世界大戦への参戦と、日本がイギリス、フランス、ドイツ、アメリカ、ロシアなどの列強と植民地を争った帝国主義時代、文学者たちは「アイルランド」を投影したのである。を日本に紹介します。ルネッサンス期のアイルランドに日本のイメージを投影し、日本独自の文芸スタイルを確立した。

(Whatever was popular, one of the important reasons was always to fit with the fortune of the times. The victory in the Sino-Japanese War and Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese-British alliance that began in 1902, the merger of Japan and Korea in 1910, participation in the First World War in 1914, and Japan which is situated in the imperialist era, was fighting against Britain, France, Germany, the United States, Russia and other powers for colonies. The Japanese literati at that time projected 'Ireland' on Japan. They projected Japan's image on the island of Ireland in the Irish Literary Review, mapping out a distinctive Japanese literary style.) (Suzuki, 2005:25)

As Japanese contemporary Irish literature researcher Suzuki Hiroshi has pointed out, Japan's enthusiasm for Irish literature and cultural movements was deeply rooted in the circumstances at that time, and the national appeal of Japan in the early twentieth century. It thus becomes necessary to review the political geopolitical and regional relations of Japan in the first decade or so of the twentieth century.

The great success of the Meiji Restoration in the late 19th century, coupled with the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), and Japan's rapid foreign colonial expansion after the occupation of Taiwan and Penghu Island in China, greatly stimulated Japan's self-imagination and the growing desire of becoming a member of the Western Powers, which unfortunately was not shared by those Western Powers. The most typical example was the signing of the 马关条约 (*Treaty of Shimonoseki*) after the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, when Japan tried to occupy Liaodong, Shandong and other places in addition to Korea and Taiwan, but was prevented from doing so by the British and Russian powers. This was very frustrating for Japanese intellectuals such as 德富蘇峰 (Tokutomi Soho) (1863-1957), '就很有挫败感和悲凉感, 本来以为日本是列强了, 结果还是被列强欺负。' (*There was just a great sense of frustration and sadness that Japan was thought to be a great power now, but it turned out that it was still being bullied by the great powers.*) (Xu, 2015). Faced with the oppression of the Western powers, Japan developed a desire to extricate itself from its awkward position on the periphery of the West, and to re-establish a 'self' that overlapped geopolitically and politically, economically and culturally, so it looked to the Irish national independence movement and the Anglo/Irish geo-cultural relationship of the same period.

The England invasion of Ireland in the 15th century resulted in the gradual destruction of the native Celtic culture and the conversion of the national language, Gaelic, to English, resulting in the formation of the distinctive Anglo-Irish English

language by the early 19th century. The great famine of the 1840s intensified ethnic tensions in the Irish region, galvanised the struggle against British colonial rule, inspired a strong desire to revitalise national literature, and activated a new awakening of national consciousness. In order to break free from the political and cultural stranglehold of England, writers such as William Butler Yeats, John Millington Synge and Lady Gregory advocated the use of Anglo-Irish to create works that reflected Irish national history, culture and rural life in order to establish an Irish national literary identity. But in fact, the relationship between England and Ireland was not simply one of colonisation and the colonised; on the one hand, Ireland did suffer from a long history of brutal England colonial rule, so, it holds a strong desire for national independence. However, Ireland also participated in colonial conquests in other parts of the world as a member of the British Empire, for example, in India in the late 19th century, where over 1000 Irishmen served as British officials (Gauri, 2004). Ireland's dual role in modern world history as 'colonised' and 'colonising abroad' is similar to that of Japan at the end of the Meiji period, when the country was 'colonised by the Western powers' and 'eager to participate in foreign colonisation', which is an important reason for the attention paid to Ireland in Japanese academic circle.

Toshi Ueda and Shiramura Kitagawa's emphasis on 'Celtic literature' at the beginning of the translation of Irish literature into Japan, especially the 'national awakening' and 'poetic nationality' of Ireland, was also self-evident, coming from the intellectuals' desire to create a new geopolitical self-image after Japan's frustration in

international relations and their desire to create a ‘new Japan’ with a separate national identity from the previous ‘colonised’ one.

As the years passed, Japan’s economic and political power grew by leaps and bounds. In 1904, with the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, Japan succeeded in gaining control of the Sakhalin Islands, the Liaodong Peninsula and the Manchurian Railroad dependencies from Tsarist Russia, and in 1910, under the pretext of ‘protecting Korea’, Japan signed the Japan-Korea Agreement and the Japan-Korea Concordat with Korea. In 1910, Japan signed the 日韓協定書 (Japan-Korea Agreement) and the 日韓協約 (Japan-Korea Concordat) with Korea which made a formal incorporation of Korea into its colonial territory. From 1894 to 1910, Japan went from being a small East Asian country to an Asian power, and its self-confidence and belligerence reached a climax:

‘日俄战争对日本来讲，确是其’充分发展的基点’.....日俄战争后的日本一变而为世界的八大强国之一，进入了所谓的 ‘世界的大日本’ 的时代.....在日本国内，当时也确有不可一世之概.....日俄战前便积极鼓吹对俄作战的’七博士’，便在报纸上公开提出了种种’最低限度’的讲和条件.....还有人要求，俄国割让贝加尔湖以东.....’

(‘The Russo-Japanese War was indeed the ‘baseline for Japan’s full development’ After the Russo-Japanese War, Japan became one of the eight most powerful countries in the world and entered the era of the so-called ‘Great

Japan of the World' Within Japan, there was also a sense of invincibility The 'Seven Doctors', who had been actively advocating war against Russia since before the Russo-Japanese War, openly put forward various 'minimum' terms for peace in the newspapers There were also demands that Russia cede the area east of Lake Baikal'). (Mi, 1988:229)

It is worth noting that with the victory in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, the invasion of Korea and the establishment of a governorship in 1910, Japan rapidly entered the process of a general war of national colonization abroad, and academics as a resource gradually became the 'academics' of political ideology. At this time, Japanese academia's interpretation of the Irish Literary Revival, and Irish literary works whose ideological content include national independence in the Revival, also changed in response to changing social and cultural aspirations. By 1917, when Kitagawa Shiramura claimed that Japanese interpretations of the Irish Literary Revival had become significant, Irish national literary production, with its fusion of Celtic historical traditions and Anglo-Irish English, had evolved in Japanese academia as a rational basis for colonial policy towards Korea.³⁰

³⁰ The Irish Revival's emphasis on local tradition and language could have been manipulated by Japanese scholars to argue that Japan's colonial project in Korea was similar to Ireland's attempt to revive its culture under British rule. This parallels the common colonial justification of spreading 'civilization' while paradoxically undermining the colonized people's autonomy.

Japanese colonial consciousness was evident in the relations between Japan and Korea. Firstly, after 1905, the teaching of Japanese was officially included in the compulsory curriculum of Korean education:

‘首先，普通学校、高等学校、师范学校中都安排了与朝鲜语几乎同等课时的日语课.....在日本成为朝鲜的保护国后，日语成为正式教学科目，其性质已经完全不同，是日本的一种殖民教育渗透。’

(‘First of all, Japanese language classes were arranged in general, higher and Normal schools for almost the same number of hours as the Korean language After Japan became a protectorate of Korea, Japanese became a formal teaching subject, and its nature was completely different, a kind of colonial educational infiltration by Japan’). (Qu, 2016:29)

In 1910, Japan established a governor’s office in Korea. Japan further strengthened its cultural control by proposing a ‘Korean Literary Revival’. Writers such as Shimamura Hakuetsu and Kikuchi Kuan helped to promote this. In his 1917 essay, 朝鮮だより僕のページ (*Korea in My Eyes*), Shimamura pointed out that:

アイルランド人が英語を使ってアイルランド人の国民性を出すのと、
今の韓国人が日本語を使って韓国人の国民性を出すのと、どちらが多

いかは、結果が物語っていますね。すべては、純韓国的な伝統の中で育った若い人たちが、(かれら) 文学的価値のある日本語を使って、真の韓国民族の魂を呼び起こし、インタビューすることから始めたいし、韓国人の手から真の文学が生まれることを期待したいのです。

(Which is more likely, the Irish using English to bring out the Irish nationality or the Koreans now using Japanese to bring out the Korean nationality, the result speaks for itself. In short, I would like to start with young people who have been brought up in a purely Korean tradition, (who) use Japanese of literary value to call upon the soul of the true Korean nation and interview it, and I would like to see true literature from the hands of Koreans). (Shimamura Haoetsu, 1917:226)

It is no coincidence. Kikuchi Kuan, in his 1924 essay 朝鮮文学の希望 (*Hope for Korean Literature*), made similar remarks:

アイルランド人が英語で新しいアイルランド文学を立ち上げ、それがイギリス文学を圧倒したように、韓国の若者たちも日本語で新しい韓国文学を推進し、それによって日本文学を圧倒することが、紳士たち(韓国の文人たちのこと)の思いと同じようにできるのです。この文学運動は、多くの国民運動の先駆けになった。新しい韓国の開拓者た

ちは、新しい韓国文学を作らなければならないということでも意見が一致した。今後、韓国と日本の関係は、アイルランドとイギリスの関係にますます似てくると思います。

(Just as the Irish launched a new Irish literature in English, just as they overwhelmed English literature, so the young Koreans could launch a new Korean literature in Japanese, thus overwhelming Japanese literature, in line with the wishes of you (the Korean literati). The literary movement became the forerunner of many national movements. The pioneers of a new Korea also agreed that there must be a new Korean literature. I think that the relationship between Korea and Japan will in the future become more and more similar to the relationship between Ireland and England). (Kikuchi Kan, 1960:341)

For both writers, the linguistic superiority of the suzerain state was undeniable, and the ‘long’ history of the use of English by the Irish served as a successful precedent to justify the use of Japanese by the Korean nation. Thus, the discursive representation of the Korean Literary Revival is, in essence, a cultural representation of the imperial consciousness of the Taisho period in Japan.

According to the Japanese scholar 加藤道也 (Michiya Kato), Japanese politicians, represented by 吉村源太郎 (Gentaro Yoshimura) and 時永浦三 (Urazo Tokunaga), were full of arguments about 英蘇併合論 (*Discussion on the Merger of*

England and Soviet Union) and 愛蘭問題と朝鮮'(The Problems of Ireland and Korea):

‘植民地における異種族支配の可能性を論じるために、吉村源太郎はアイルランドをサンプルとした研究を行った。そして、異質な支配が可能であろうとなかろうと、支配者と被支配者の間に信頼関係が形成されうる、と結論づけたのである。アイルランドにおけるイギリス支配の失敗は、大英帝国の権力と不安定さにアイルランド人が幻滅した結果であった。吉村は、異質なルール成功例として、相互の信頼関係が構築できたスコットランドの法人設立の例を挙げている。この異種族支配の成功例は、日本の植民地朝鮮に対する支配が成功の方向に進んでいたことを示唆しているのだろうか。’

(‘In order to discuss the possibility of heterogeneous rule in the colonies, Gentaro Yoshimura conducted a study on a sample of Ireland. He concluded that, whether or not heterogeneous rule was possible, a relationship of trust could be formed between the ruler and the ruled. The failure of British rule in Ireland was the result of Irish disillusionment with the power and volatility of the British Empire. As an example of successful heterogeneous rule, Yoshimura cites the example of Scottish incorporation, where a relationship of mutual trust could be established. Does this

example of successful heteronational rule suggest that Japanese rule over colonial Korea was advancing towards success?’). (Michiya Kato, 2010:81)

Undoubtedly, the cultural imagination of Japanese literati in the interpretation of Irish literature played a reverse role in shaping Japan’s ever more explicit sense of empire. (Li, 2019).

In addition, Japanese writers not only projected Ireland onto Japan’s colonies, but also explored the development of local literature in backward and remote areas of Japan, such as Kyoto, Akita and Hokkaido, using the Irish Literary Revival as a model. The writers, including 坪内逍遥(Tsubouchi) and Kikuchi Kuan, advocated the ‘大阪ルネッサンス’(Osaka Literary Revival), the ‘京都ルネッサンス’(Kyoto Literary Revival), and the 北日本ルネッサンス(Northern Japan Literary Revival). In this regard, researcher Suzuki Hiroshi talks about:

大正初期以降、アイルランド文学の翻訳や入門書の数はかつてないほど増加した。同時に、大英帝国とアイルランドの宗主国と植民地の関係を日本に当てはめ、アイルランド・ルネッサンス運動について繰り返し語る作家もいた。

(From the early Taisho period onwards, there was an unprecedented increase in the number of translations and introductory texts on Irish literature. At the same

time, writers applied the relationship between suzerain and colony between the British Empire and Ireland to Japan, repeatedly talking about the Irish Literary Revival). (Suzuki Hiroshi, 2014:302).

Tsubouchi's articles 大阪と新芸術 (*Osaka and the New Art*), 新民芸発祥の地 (*Osaka, the Birthplace of the New Popular Art*) and 北日本と新文学 (*Northern Japan and the New Literature*) refer to the fact that Japan and Britain were both island nations. Japan could draw on the relationship between Britain and Ireland to deal with the relationship between the central and local levels in Japan. Just as the revival of Irish literature revived English literature, so the development of local literature in Japan could contribute to the development of the centre and ultimately improve Japan's international status (Tsubouchi, 1935:2-5).

Thus, from the 1880s to the 1920s, Japan's interest in the Irish Literary Revival and its literary interpretations and studies evolved in tandem with the evolution of Japan's political, international and regional relations landscape during this period. From the mid- to late-19th century – Meiji Restoration, Japan saw its national independence and consciousness awakening in the Irish Literary Revival, to the mid- to late-Taisho period, and especially from the 1920s, when Japan's imperial consciousness continued to rise, the literary imagination of the Irish Literary Revival underwent fundamental changes. As a result, the exotic imagery of Irish culture was essentially linked to the

changing times and cultural aspirations of Japan. This meant that, when interpreting, adapting and commenting on Irish literary works, Japanese scholars were bound to do so in light of the political imagination of the time and their own political aspirations, which would also directly influence the perception and imagination of a large number of Chinese scholars in Japan, such as Guo Moruo and Lu Xun, on Irish literary works.

Since the Meiji Restoration, Japan has turned its attention towards the West. Interest in Western literature extended well beyond Irish literature, encompassing British, French, and Russian literary works. The introduction of new artistic movements, from Romanticism to Naturalism to Symbolism, continuously refreshed the Japanese literary scene. However, unlike other Western literary translations, Japan's introduction of Irish literature exhibits distinct characteristics due to Ireland's small nation status and its national and cultural relationship with Britain. Japan's translation of Irish literature has developed alongside the historical trajectory from the late Meiji to the Taisho period. The cultural imagination of Ireland served as a cultural symbol of Japanese imperial consciousness and actively participated in the construction of Japan's great power consciousness in the early 20th century.

The Irish literary revival of the late 19th century was an act of national literary consciousness development in Ireland. Its purpose was to decolonize through the retrospection and revival of Gaelic cultural traditions. However, during the late Meiji period of the 19th century, some Japanese literati overlooked the anti-colonial nature of the Irish literary revival in the process of introducing Irish literature into the Japanese

context. Was this neglect due to ‘historical ignorance’ of a distant, small Western country, leading to unintentional misinterpretations in the cross-cultural transmission of Irish literature? Or was it a conscious act of cultural filtering, a mutation of ‘imperial’ rewriting based on their own cultural needs?

Japanese scholars, in fact, understand the essence of the Irish literary movement. For instance, Kuchikawa Hakuson’s *Overview of the Celtic Literary Revival* clearly explained it:

‘フランス革命後の自由民権思想に揺れ動く近代において、彼は政治的自由と解放を求め続けた。近年では、政治史上の大問題であるアイルランド本国統治事件もこの頃から起きている。……。文壇では、詩人イエーツの依頼を受けたジョージ・バーナード・ショーが「ジョン・ブルのもう一つの島」(＝アイルランド)を起草し、1904年のアイルランド文学講座で上演され、アイルランド自治権問題に大きな弾みがついた。国家の覚醒は、政治だけでなく、文学や芸術でも表現されなければならないものである。

(*‘With the recent modern era, shaken by the ideas of freedom and civil rights after the French Revolution, constant demands for political liberation have been made. In recent years, the great political issue of Irish self-government has also arisen*

from this... On the literary front, Shaw, following the request of the poet Yeats, drafted a piece entitled 'John Bull's Other Island' (referring to Ireland) for a lecture on Irish literature in 1904, showing great ambition for the Irish selfgovernment issue. The awakening of a nation is not only revealed in politics, but it must also be expressed in literature and art'). (Kuchikawa Hakuson, 1934:89-190).

Kuchikawa Hakuson clearly pointed out the connection between the Irish literary revival at the end of the 19th century and the civil rights movement on the European continent. He recognized the interaction between literature and national consciousness. Since the Meiji Restoration, Japan has sought cultural drivers for national development from foreign literature, including those from Britain, France, and Russia.

Therefore, the imagination and transformational adaptations of Irish literature during the late Meiji Restoration and the Taisho period were based on Japan's own epochal characteristics and the needs of its construction of consciousness. At the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, after experiencing the innovations of the Meiji Restoration, Japan's domestic political situation stabilized, and its economic and military power significantly strengthened. Through victories in a series of wars, such as the Sino-Japanese, Russo-Japanese, and Korean-Japanese wars, Japan's position in East Asia markedly improved. In the face of the European powers advancing into East Asia

and the trend of power division, the realization of Japan's dream of becoming a great power seemed imminent:

‘不平等条約’がまだ全面改正されていない（1999年に治外法権は廃止されたが、関税自主権はまだ認められていない）ため、欧米に比べて国際政治で不利になることが多いばかりか・・・・・・・・・・。一刻も早く欧米列強と対等な立場に立ちたいというのが、国民の強い願いであった。しかも、東アジアを分割し、世界を支配しようとする列強の競争は、年々激化していた。このような「世界の潮流」の前に、後発国の日本が、中国文明との古くからの接触以来、いかに弱い国であったか・・・・・・・・・・’

(‘The unequal treaties have not yet been fully revised (extraterritoriality was abolished in 1899, but tariff autonomy has not yet been obtained). Compared with Europe and America in international politics, Japan often finds itself at a disadvantage... The intense desire of the people to sit on an equal footing with the European and American powers as soon as possible is evident. Moreover, the competition among the powers to divide East Asia and dominate the world intensifies year by year. Faced with this ‘trend of the world,’ Japan, a latecomer country, has been particularly weak since its ancient contact with Chinese civilization...’). (Inoue Kiyoshi, 1981:148).

The introduction and translation of Irish literature into Japan coincided with this critical period of Japan's rise in East Asia. This period provided the historical context for Japanese writers, represented by Shimagi Baigetsu and Kikuchi Hiroshi, to engage in cross-cultural communication. They emphasized Ireland's English-writing tradition, highlighted the subjugated national relationship between Ireland and Britain, and filtered out the anti-colonial and resistance consciousness in the Irish literary revival. This deliberate cultural filtering not only symbolized Japan's imperial consciousness in the early 20th century but also indirectly fueled the deep-rooted shaping of the imperial consciousness among the populace.

In fact, Japan's pursuit of national self-strengthening consciousness did not begin after the Meiji Restoration but much earlier. Japan has always maintained a strong ambition to break through its geographical narrowness and natural constraints to seek survival and development in a broader region. As early as the 16th century, military commanders Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who unified Japan, showed ambitious aspirations towards the Asian continent. On this, Shinobu Kiyomitsu pointed out,

‘織田信長は明との戦争を計画したが、開始前に弁慶の反乱に襲われた。

豊田秀吉は、勝利した場合には天皇を中国の皇帝とし、日本の皇位を皇太子に譲るつもりで、明との戦争を開始した……。’

(‘Oda Nobunaga planned the war to conquer the Ming Dynasty, but he was assassinated before he could carry it out. Toyotomi Hideyoshi launched the war to

conquer the Ming Dynasty, planning to make the Emperor of Japan the Emperor of China and the Japanese throne to the prince when victorious...') (Shinobu Kiyomitsu, 1982).

In the 17th century, famous Japanese statesman Yamaga Sokou, in his 《中朝事実》 (*Chinese Dynasty Facts*), praised the achievements of the Emperor Shōjin, saying: ‘海外諸藩はすべて中央国家（日本）の一部であり、海外王朝（中国）に接近するためには、隣国と呼ぶには不十分であった’ (*All the feudal lords overseas belong to the Central Kingdom (Japan), which is not enough to be called a neighbor for communicating faith with the foreign dynasty (China)*)’ (Shinobu Kiyomitsu, 1982:51).

However, it is important to note that the filtering out of the anti-colonialism of the Irish literary revival was a result of Japan’s historical need to construct a great power consciousness from the late 19th to the early 20th century. It is an expression of the imperial consciousness and discourse of some Japanese literati. In 1912, Japan entered the Taisho period, and the focus of Japanese writers during this period differed significantly from that of the late Meiji period. New Trend writers in this period admired Synge’s drama, inclining towards his realistic style and use of surreal techniques. They emphasized the public concerns and realistic aspects in Synge’s drama and learned from and borrowed from Synge in their own literary practice.

Kikuchi Hiroshi, as one of the representative writers of the New Trend school, had a ‘imperial consciousness’ that was markedly different from the literary ideas of other writers in the New Trend school. The complexity and contradictions behind these differences perhaps embody the ideology of the Taisho era in Japan, which 内部的には、忠実で愛国的な国家主義を批判し、自由主義的な道徳を提唱する……。対外的には、「倫理的帝国主義」を採用する。*(criticized nationalism that adores the king and the country internally, advocated moral liberalism...and adopted ‘ethical imperialism’ externally)*³¹ (Toyama Shigeruki, 1983:158). This is worth further deep exploration and research by scholars.

Synge’s Literary Contributions and Their Political Undertones

John Millington Synge’s plays, in particular, have become canonical in Irish drama, appreciated for their vivid portrayals of characters, sharp wit, and deep understanding of the human condition. In addition to their artistic merit, Synge’s works also have political undertones that warrant exploration and analysis. This aspect of his work is particularly important given the historical context in which Synge was writing. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Ireland was undergoing significant political and social change, marked by a growing nationalist movement that sought to define and

³¹ According to Toyama Shigeruki, ‘ethical imperialism’ means ‘not aggression with the aim of monopolizing China, but competition with Europe and the United States on the one hand and coordination with them on the other to divide it up, that is, imperialism in accordance with international law’.

assert a distinct Irish identity (Foster, 1995). Synge's works can be seen as engaging with this broader political context, offering subtle commentaries on the state of Irish society, politics, and culture.

Overview of Synge's Irish political and social environment

The late 19th and early 20th centuries were a period of significant political and social change in Ireland, marked by events such as the Land War (1879-1882), the establishment of the Gaelic League in 1893, the rise of the Home Rule movement, and the cultural revival (Foster, 1995).

The Land War was a socio-political movement advocating for peasants' rights and land reform. This period saw significant tension and violence between landlords and tenants, with the latter campaigning for fair rents, fixity of tenure, and free sale of land occupancy. The agitation brought about significant reforms that improved conditions for rural tenants and facilitated the transfer of land ownership from landlords to tenants (Foster, 1995). Simultaneously, the late 19th century saw a renewed interest in Irish language and culture. The Gaelic League, founded by Eoin MacNeill and Douglas Hyde in 1893, aimed to revive the Irish language and preserve Ireland's distinct cultural identity. This cultural nationalism was closely tied to political nationalism, with many advocates for the Irish language also supporting Home Rule (Kiberd, 1996).

The Home Rule movement, led by Charles Stewart Parnell and later by John Redmond, sought to achieve a measure of self-government for Ireland within the United Kingdom. Although the movement was divided by internal conflicts and did not achieve

its aims during Synge's lifetime, it was instrumental in setting the stage for the political changes that would follow in the 20th century, including the Easter Rising of 1916 and the subsequent War of Independence (Foster, 1995). The late 19th and early 20th centuries also witnessed a cultural renaissance in Ireland known as the Irish Literary Revival. This cultural movement was closely linked with the political and social changes occurring during this period. Leaders of the Revival, including W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, and Douglas Hyde, sought to create a new literature that would reflect and contribute to a distinct Irish identity (Kiberd, 1996). Although initially resistant to the overtly nationalistic sentiments of the Revival, Synge became a key figure in the movement through his involvement with the Irish National Theatre Society, later the Abbey Theatre. His plays, with their focus on rural Irish life and their use of HibernoEnglish dialect, contributed to the Revival's goal of creating a distinct Irish literature (Murray, 2000).

The Irish Literary Revival was not without controversy. Many of its leading figures, including Synge, were Anglo-Irish, and their vision of Irish identity and culture often clashed with the experiences and aspirations of the predominantly Catholic, Gaelic-speaking majority. This tension is evident in the reception of Synge's plays, which were often met with criticism and controversy for their portrayal of Irish life (Kiberd, 1996). Despite these controversies, the Irish Literary Revival played a crucial role in shaping modern Irish literature and national identity. It helped to establish a distinct Irish literary tradition and created a platform for subsequent generations of Irish

writers to explore and express their own visions of Ireland in the English language (Foster, 1995). Synge's works, with their vivid and authentic portrayal of Irish life and their subtle engagement with the political and social issues of the time, remain a significant part of this literary tradition. They offer valuable insights into the historical context in which they were written, and contribute to our understanding of the complex relationship between literature, culture, and politics in Ireland during this transformative period (Parker, 1991).

Exploration of Synge's major works: Plays

Synge's literary output, while limited by his early death, was considerable and includes both plays and prose works that have had a significant impact on Irish literature. *Riders to the Sea* (1904) is one of Synge's most celebrated works. This one-act tragedy tells the story of an Aran Islands family devastated by the loss of its menfolk to the sea. The play explores themes of fate, sacrifice, and the harsh realities of life in the Aran Islands (Hutchinson, 1987). *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907) is perhaps Synge's bestknown work, notorious for the controversy it stirred due to its portrayal of patricide and its depiction of the Irish peasantry. The play is a darkly comic examination of heroism, reputation, and society's capacity for self-delusion (Pine, 1990). *The Well of the Saints* (1905) explores themes of illusion and reality, presenting the story of a blind couple who regain their sight, only to be disillusioned by the world they see. Like much of

Synge's work, it is marked by its dark humor and its exploration of the human condition (Pine, 1990). *Deirdre of the Sorrows* (1910) is Synge's unfinished play based on the Irish legend of Deirdre, one of the most significant tales in the Ulster Cycle of Irish mythology. The play explores themes of love, fate, and societal conflict (Hutchinson, 1987).

Prose works: themes, motifs, and stylistic elements

The Aran Islands (1907) is a work of creative non-fiction based on Synge's experiences living on the Aran Islands. It is an invaluable record of a way of life that was already disappearing at the time of Synge's sojourn there, and it provides the material for many of the situations and characters found in his plays (Kiberd, 1996). The essence of Synge's work lies in his depictions of the Irish rural life, with a focus on the hardship and the resilience of its inhabitants. This is a recurring theme in both his plays and prose, and is painted with empathy and realism (Pine, 1990). An examination of Synge's work reveals his fascination with the themes of illusion and reality. This is particularly evident in *The Well of the Saints*, in which the main characters' regained sight represents a bitter disillusionment, and in *The Playboy of the Western World*, where the hero's reputation is built on false assumptions (Hutchinson, 1987).

Synge's use of language is another distinctive aspect of his work. He employed a Hiberno-English dialect, drawn from his time spent in the Aran Islands and West Ireland, using its rich idioms and unique rhythms to create dialogue that was both authentic and poetic. This innovative use of language served, not only to convey the distinctive voice

of his characters, but also to challenge the literary norms of his time, giving his work a unique place in Irish literary history (Kiberd, 1996). A focus on the relationship between the human being and the natural world is also evident throughout Synge's work. This relationship often reflects the harsh realities of rural life, such as in *Riders to the Sea* where the sea is depicted as both life-giving and destructive. Simultaneously, Synge often infuses the natural world with a mystical quality, hinting at a spiritual dimension that transcends the everyday struggles of his characters (Pine, 1990).

Finally, Synge's plays are noteworthy for their exploration of societal norms and the individual's role within society. His characters often grapple with societal expectations, and their struggles reflect the tension between the individual and the community. This theme, coupled with his critique of romanticized notions of rural life and heroism, lend his work a subversive quality that often provoked controversy, but which also contributed to its enduring appeal (Hutchinson, 1987). Synge's works offer a unique blend of realism and lyricism, humor and tragedy. His distinctive voice, his ability to capture the complexities of human experience, and his exploration of the Irish rural life all contribute to his lasting significance in the canon of Irish literature.

Political Undertones in Synge's Works

John Millington Synge's plays, known for their artistic portrayal of Irish peasantry, also contain implicit political commentary. For example, *Riders to the Sea* presents an authentic picture of the harsh life in the Aran Islands, with the sea serving as both a lifesustaining force and an omnipresent threat. The tragedy of Maurya's family, having

lost all its male members to the sea, symbolizes the suffering of the Irish peasantry, living at the mercy of nature. In this play, political undertones may be found in the depiction of the stoic resilience of the islanders despite the adversity they face. Their determination and spiritual strength can be interpreted as a metaphor for the Irish people's endurance under British colonial rule. The sea, which gives and takes away, could be read as an emblem of the British Empire, with the people of the Aran Islands representing the colonized Irish, subjected to the mercy of an overpowering entity (Greene, 1965).

Take *The Playboy of the Western World* as another example, political subtexts are more readily identifiable. The central character, Christy Mahon, who claims to have killed his oppressive father, becomes a celebrated figure in the Mayo community. However, when his father reappears, alive, Christy's heroism is exposed as a fraud, and the people turn against him. The acclaim Christy receives, built on a foundation of patricide, may be viewed as an allegory for the violent struggle for Irish independence. Furthermore, the community's initial celebration of Christy's deed and subsequent revulsion echoes the public sentiment towards the violent means used in political struggles. By depicting the town's people as fickle, easily swayed by appearances and rumours, Synge implicitly critiques the populist rhetoric that often drives political movements (Harrington, 2002). While in *The Well of the Saints*, political subtext can be read into the power dynamics between the characters. Martin and Mary Doul, the blind

beggars who regain their sight only to prefer blindness, are at the mercy of the village, mirroring the power dynamic between the ruling class and the Irish peasantry.

In their choice of blindness, the Douls reject the imposed societal standards of beauty and reality, reflecting the Irish struggle for cultural and political autonomy (Greene, 1965).

The political implications of Synge's depiction of Religion, Morality and Power

The themes of religion, morality, and authority are recurrent in Synge's works, and their representation carries significant political implications. Religion is a dominant force in the lives of Synge's characters. It shapes their worldview, influencing their perceptions of fate, morality, and societal norms. However, Synge does not present a sacrosanct image of religion. Instead, he often highlights the superstition and ignorance intertwined with religious beliefs among the peasantry. This is evident in *The Well of the Saints*, where the characters attribute their suffering and blessings to divine intervention, blurring the line between religion and superstition (Pine, 1990).

This portrayal can be interpreted as a critique of the church's role in perpetuating ignorance and passivity among the masses, contributing to their economic and social subjugation. Simultaneously, by exposing the contrast between religious ideals and the harsh realities of rural life, Synge underscores the gap between the spiritual and material

realms, indirectly questioning the social order upheld by religious institutions (Greene, 1965).

In Synge's works, morality is often depicted as a complex and fluid concept, influenced by societal norms, individual desires, and the struggle for survival. His characters frequently grapple with moral dilemmas, and their decisions challenge conventional moral codes, hinting at the limitations and contradictions of the societal values. *The Playboy of the Western World* offers a striking example, where patricide, a grave sin, is celebrated and its perpetrator idolized. The moral inversion is not just a source of dark comedy but a critique of societal hypocrisy and the relative nature of moral judgement. By challenging the conventional understanding of morality, Synge questions the authority that imposes these moral standards (Harrington, 2002).

Authority in Synge's plays is often associated with oppression and conflict. From the domineering father in *The Playboy of the Western World*, to the church's influence in *The Well of the Saints*, authority figures are shown to stifle individual freedom and self-expression. This recurring theme can be seen as a commentary on the oppressive structures in society, including the British colonial rule in Ireland (Greene, 1965). In Synge's final unfinished work, *Deirdre of the Sorrows*, the themes of authority and rebellion are central to the narrative. The tragic heroine, Deirdre, defies the authority of King Conchobar by choosing to elope with her lover, Naoise. This decision, though disastrous, is Deirdre's assertion of her autonomy against oppressive patriarchal

authority. In this play, the King's tyranny can be seen as an allegory for the British rule, and Deirdre's defiance symbolizes the Irish struggle for freedom (Greene, 1965).

Synge's portrayal of the Irish peasantry's resilience, his critique of societal norms, his subversion of the hero-myth, and his exploration of authority and rebellion all contribute to the political undertones in his works. His representation of the rural life, infused with the political realities of his time, offers an invaluable perspective on the complex intersections of culture, politics, and society in turn-of-the-century Ireland (Hutchinson, 1987).

In conclusion, the political undertones in Synge's works, while often subtle and implicit, are an integral part of his representation of Irish society. They offer insights into the socio-political dynamics of Ireland during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and continue to stimulate critical engagement with the complexities of Irish identity and nationhood.

Controversies and Criticism in Synge and his works

The infamous 'Playboy Riots' epitomize the controversies and criticism surrounding Synge's works. When *The Playboy of the Western World* was first staged at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin in 1907, it provoked violent public outrage, culminating in riots. The crowd objected to the play's themes, its depiction of Irish characters, and the language used in the play, particularly Christy Mahon's reference to a 'shift', a term for women's underwear that was deemed vulgar and inappropriate. The uproar was not confined to the audience. The Irish media also played a significant role in fuelling the controversy.

Newspapers of the day carried scathing reviews and critiques, accusing Synge of blasphemous and offensive representations of Irish identity. The Irish Independent declared the play to be ‘an unmitigated, protracted libel upon Irish peasant men, and worse still upon peasant girlhood’ (Hunt, 1998).

However, it was not just the play’s supposed immorality and vulgarity that provoked such strong reactions, but also its perceived insult to the nationalist self-image of the Irish. The peasantry was a potent symbol in Irish nationalist discourse, often idealized as the repository of a pure, Gaelic culture. Synge’s less-than-romantic portrayal of rural life and characters struck a discordant note with this idealized vision, triggering a backlash from the nationalist-minded audiences and critics (Kiberd, 1996).

Apart from *The Playboy of the Western World*, Synge’s other works have also been subjected to criticism for their unconventional themes and characters. His portrayal of Irish rural life, replete with poverty, ignorance, superstition, and moral ambiguity, was seen as a derogatory representation of the Irish people, particularly the peasant class. Synge’s portrayal of religion was another point of contention. His depiction of the Church’s influence over the peasantry and the intertwining of religion and superstition was deemed disrespectful by many. The playwright’s apparent irreverence for established religious norms and practices was perceived as a challenge to the moral order and an insult to the Catholic-majority Irish populace (Greene, 1969).

Synge’s use of Hiberno-English, a dialect that blended English and Gaelic, was also controversial. While Synge saw it as a unique linguistic resource and an authentic

representation of the speech of the Irish rural classes, critics accused him of ridiculing the Irish by using a dialect that was often associated with backwardness and vulgarity (Hutchinson, 1987).

These controversies reflect the political climate of the time

The controversies surrounding Synge's works cannot be detached from the political climate of the time. The late 19th and early 20th century marked a period of intense political activity in Ireland, characterized by the rise of nationalism, the Home Rule movement, and the cultural revival efforts aimed at rediscovering and reaffirming Irish Gaelic identity (Foster, 1988). In this politically charged environment, literature and the arts became a significant battleground. The dominant narratives of the time sought to idealize the Irish past and the Gaelic peasantry, presenting them as symbols of a pure and noble Irish identity, in stark contrast to the perceived corruption and decadence of the British. Consequently, any portrayal that deviated from these idealized narratives was seen as an affront to Irish nationalism and the struggle for self-definition (Kiberd, 1996).

Synge's realistic portrayal of the Irish peasantry, with all its flaws and complexities, clashed with the romanticized peasant image propagated by cultural nationalists. His characters were not the noble and heroic figures of nationalist imagination, but ordinary people grappling with the harsh realities of rural life. This unromantic portrayal was perceived as a threat to the nationalist agenda, leading to the vehement public and critical backlash against his works (Hutchinson, 1987).

Furthermore, Synge's critique of religion, morality, and authority resonated with the broader political discourse of the time. The Catholic Church wielded significant influence in Irish society, often aligning with the nationalist cause. Synge's portrayal of the Church's role in perpetuating ignorance and superstition among the masses was seen as an attack on a pillar of Irish society and an ally of the nationalist movement. It was a challenge not only to religious authority but also to the social and political order that the Church supported (Greene, 1969).

The controversies surrounding Synge's use of language also had political undertones. The Gaelic revival was a significant aspect of the cultural nationalism of the time, and there was a concerted effort to promote the Irish language as a marker of national identity. By choosing to write in Hiberno-English, Synge was seen as aligning with the anglicization of Ireland, a trend that the nationalists were vehemently opposing (Hutchinson, 1987). Despite the criticism and controversy, Synge's works were also acknowledged for their artistic merit and their contribution to the Irish dramatic tradition. Leading literary figures of the time, including W. B. Yeats and Lady Gregory, co-founders of the Abbey Theatre with Synge, staunchly defended his works. Yeats famously addressed the riotous audience during the 'Playboy Riots', asserting the playwright's right to represent life as he perceived it (Harrington, 2002).

In hindsight, the controversies surrounding Synge's works can be seen as a reflection of the broader tensions and conflicts within Irish society during a critical period of its history. The struggle between tradition and modernity, the conflicting

visions of Irish identity, and the contestations of authority and power that mark Synge's plays also encapsulate the socio-political dynamics of turn-of-the-century Ireland. The criticisms and backlash against Synge highlight the extent to which literature and the arts were implicated in the politics of the time. They serve as a reminder of the power of literary works to provoke, challenge, and disrupt dominant narratives, making them a vital arena for cultural and political debates.

As a playwright, Synge chose to portray Ireland not as an idyllic land of heroic peasants and virtuous maidens, but as a complex and diverse society with all its contradictions and challenges. This decision, while controversial, testifies to his commitment to artistic truth and his refusal to conform to politically expedient narratives. Despite the backlash, his works have endured, providing valuable insights into the realities of Irish rural life and the socio-political dynamics of his time. Finally, Synge's literary legacy, though marred by controversy, has been a subject of reappraisal and reinterpretation in later years. Modern scholars and critics have recognized the complexity and nuance of his works, and their relevance extends beyond their historical context. His plays continue to be performed and studied, not just for their artistic excellence, but also for their socio-political insights (Greene, 1969).

In his nuanced portrayal of rural Ireland, Synge exposes the deep-seated social, economic, and political issues that underpin Irish society. He presents a critique of the socio-political structures of his time, subtly revealing the intricacies of power, class, religion, and authority (Hutchinson, 1987). Moreover, Synge's work serves as a

powerful critique of the romantic nationalism that dominated the political discourse of his time. He deftly exposes the limitations and contradictions of this narrative, highlighting its inability to accommodate the complexities and ambiguities of real life. In doing so, he invites his audience to question and challenge the dominant narratives of identity and nationhood (Kiberd, 1996).

Indeed, it is this capacity to provoke thought and stimulate debate that makes Synge's work so politically significant. His plays may not offer clear-cut solutions or unambiguous political messages, but they raise essential questions about identity, power, and society. They invite us to engage with the political undercurrents and complexities of the world they depict, prompting us to reflect on our own socio-political realities (Foster, 1988).

In conclusion, Synge's works, despite the controversies they provoked, have made a significant contribution to Irish literature and politics. They offer a compelling portrayal of rural Ireland, providing deep insights into the socio-political dynamics of the time. Moreover, they challenge the dominant narratives of identity and nationhood, stimulating critical engagement with the political implications of these narratives. While Synge's works were born out of a specific social and political context, their exploration of power, identity, and society resonate not only in Ireland as well as in Japan and other countries.

Irish nationalists through the lens of the Prague School

However, Synge's works, initially met with significant resistance, later became integral to the Irish dramatic movement. What significant turning points facilitated this transformation? This shift cannot be attributed solely to Synge's efforts. Unlike Guo Moruo, whose differing political ideologies across various periods led to vastly different creative philosophies, Synge's brief life ended in his prime, and his early works, once heavily criticized, later garnered great acclaim. The same work experiencing such divergent fates suggests a reevaluation by Irish nationalists. Their reinterpretation of Synge's works likely played a crucial role in this change in perception.

Miroslav Hroch, a prominent Czech historian, developed a three-phase model to explain the evolution of nationalist movements in small European nations, particularly those in Central and Eastern Europe (Nolte, 1996:51-62). This Three-Phase Model of Nationalist Movements provides a compelling framework to analyze how Synge's works, initially controversial, later became celebrated as integral to the Irish dramatic movement. This model, which breaks down nationalist movements into the phases of cultural awakening, national agitation, and mass political movement, helps to elucidate how the reinterpretation of Synge's works by later nationalist scholars and critics played a pivotal role in his posthumous recognition as a pioneer of Irish theatre. The first phase of the Prague School model focuses on the period of cultural awakening, which is the phase of scholarly interest where intellectuals and artists begin to rediscover and revive their nation's cultural and linguistic heritage. Their goal at this stage is to raise

awareness of a common identity, but without yet making explicit political or nationalistic demands. (Matejka, 1971). In the context of Ireland, this period saw a burgeoning interest in Gaelic culture, language, and folklore, leading to the Gaelic Revival of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Synge's works are deeply embedded in this cultural awakening. His detailed and nuanced portrayals of rural Irish life and use of Hiberno-English dialects were initially met with resistance because they diverged from the idealized image of the Gaelic peasantry promoted by cultural nationalists. As Kiberd (1996) notes, Synge's realistic depictions, filled with human flaws and complexities, contrasted sharply with the romanticized vision of a noble, unblemished rural Ireland that was a cornerstone of the nationalist narrative at the time. Synge's ability to depict the harsh realities of peasant life challenged the prevailing myth of the noble peasant, which was crucial for fostering a unified national identity.

Furthermore, the Gaelic League, founded in 1893, played a significant role in this cultural awakening by promoting the Irish language and culture. However, Synge's decision to write in Hiberno-English rather than Irish was seen as controversial. This choice highlighted a tension within the nationalist movement: the push for cultural purity versus the practical realities of linguistic diversity and the need for a broader audience. Synge's works, therefore, can be seen as part of the broader debate about what constituted authentic Irish culture during this phase of cultural awakening (Hutchinson, 1987).

The second phase, national patriotic agitation, involves the mobilization of these cultural awakenings into a political force. A wider range of activists emerge, seeking to engage the broader ethnic group in the nationalist cause. They start advocating for the creation of a national identity, moving toward political demands for national recognition, who are often characterized by a push for autonomy or independence.

During this period, the narratives and symbols from the cultural awakening phase are often harnessed to foster a collective national identity and political consciousness (Matejka, 1971). In this phase, Synge's works began to be reevaluated through a nationalist lens. Although his plays had initially sparked controversy, the broader political struggles for Irish independence and the desire for a distinct national identity prompted a reexamination of his contributions. According to Hutchinson (1987), the realistic elements of Synge's plays, which were once seen as a threat to the nationalist ideal, started to be appreciated for their authentic portrayal of Irish life, offering a more nuanced understanding of Irish identity. This shift in perception aligns with the nationalist need to construct a cohesive and inclusive narrative that could unite the population in the struggle against British rule.

During the national agitation phase, the Irish Literary Revival, of which Synge was a part, sought to use literature and drama to inspire and unify the Irish people. The Abbey Theatre, co-founded by Synge along with W.B. Yeats and Lady Gregory, became a focal point for this cultural and political movement. The theatre aimed to produce plays that reflected Irish life and concerns, thereby contributing to the nationalist cause.

Despite initial resistance, Synge's plays were gradually seen as valuable contributions to this effort due to their deep engagement with the social and cultural issues of the time (Harrington, 2002).

This is the stage of mass mobilization. The nationalist movement expands to involve a significant portion of the population, leading to the formation of political movements with various ideologies (e.g., liberal, conservative, democratic), each with its own vision for the future nation.

The final phase of the Prague School model, mass political movement. The nationalist movement expands to involve a significant portion of the population, leading to the formation of political movements with various ideologies (e.g., liberal, conservative, democratic), each with its own vision for the future nation (Matejka, 1971). In Ireland, this phase was marked by significant events such as the Easter Rising of 1916 and the subsequent War of Independence, which ultimately led to the establishment of the Irish Free State.

During this period, the reinterpretation of Synge's works as part of the national cultural heritage became more pronounced. The Abbey Theatre, as a prominent institution in the nationalist movement, played a crucial role in re-contextualizing Synge's works within the narrative of Irish independence. Yeats and Gregory, both significant figures in the nationalist cultural movement, defended Synge's work vigorously. Yeats's famous address to the audience during the 'Playboy Riots'

underscored the importance of artistic freedom and the right to portray life authentically, even if it contradicted popular nationalist sentiments (Harrington, 2002).

As the new Irish state sought to consolidate its cultural identity, Synge's works were increasingly viewed as essential components of the national literary movement. The initial controversies surrounding his plays were recontextualized as part of the broader struggle for Irish self-definition and cultural autonomy. This recontextualization was crucial in cementing Synge's legacy as a pioneer of the Irish dramatic movement. Grene (1969) argues that this later acceptance and celebration of Synge's works reflect a maturation of the nationalist movement, where the complexities and contradictions of national identity are acknowledged and embraced.

The transformation of John Millington Synge from a controversial figure to a celebrated pioneer of the Irish dramatic movement can be effectively analyzed through the Prague School Scholar's Three-Phase Model of Nationalist Movements. Initially met with resistance during the cultural awakening phase for his realistic portrayals of Irish life, Synge's works were later reevaluated during the national agitation phase, as the need for a comprehensive and authentic national identity became paramount. Finally, in the mass political movement phase, his contributions were fully integrated into the national narrative, highlighting the evolving nature of cultural and political identities in post-independence Ireland.

Synge's works have been interpreted differently over time due to the shifting sociopolitical ideologies in Ireland. Similarly, when Synge's works were introduced to

the distant eastern nation of Japan through various channels, they undoubtedly underwent interpretations by Japanese academia. These interpretations could potentially be transformative, given Japan's unique historical context and motivations for introducing Irish literature. As previously discussed, Japan's primary interest in Irish literature stemmed from its desire to understand Ireland's dual identity of being colonized by Britain and assisting in British colonial endeavors. This dual identity provided a framework for Japan to navigate its own transformation from being a colonized nation to becoming an increasingly powerful empire with colonial ambitions.

While Synge's original political ideals were unlikely to align with the political aspirations of Japanese scholars, especially those with strong nationalist sentiments. However, the interesting point is that Synge's works, after being reinterpreted by Irish nationalists and 'imbued' with strong political motivations, found favor with many Japanese nationalists. However, although Japan had joined the ranks of the emerging Western powers, its culture, politics, natural and human geography, and even aspects such as cuisine, clothing, and customs were vastly different from those of the Western nations. The colonial treatment it experienced and its national priorities as it grew stronger were also distinct.

When analyzing the connection between Guo Moruo, Japan, and Synge, it is crucial to thoroughly examine how Synge's works were translated, disseminated, and adapted in Japan. Understanding how Synge's creative ideas and political philosophies evolved in the Japanese context is vital for comprehending Guo Moruo's interest in

introducing Synge. Therefore, the rest of this chapter will introduce the state of development on Synge's works in Japan and systematically analyse the mainstream interpretations of his works in Japanese academic circles in the early 20th century.

The interpretation of Synge and his works in Japan

Firstly, the author verified Japanese sources 新劇年代記 (*New Drama Chronicle*) and 演劇年報 (*Theatrical Yearbook*), from which the records of Synge's works performed in Japan in chronological order and established a performance list has been extracted, as shown in the table below. The timeline of Synge's works being promoted and performed in Japan, as well as the selected works, number of productions, and frequency of performances can be basically understood from the table.

	日程 Performance date	作品名 Play title	劇団名 Theater company	劇場 Venue	訳者 Translator/adapter
1	1914.09	靈驗(聖者 の泉) The Miracle (The Well of the Saints)	無名会(第 5回公演) Mumeikai (5th Performance)	帝劇 Imperial Theater	坪内逍遥翻案 Tsubouchi Shoyo (adaptation)

2	1919.05	谷間の影 The Shadow of the Glen	常盤楽劇団 (第1回公演) Tokiwa Music Drama Group (1st Performance)	観音劇場 Kannon Theater	
3	1920.04.25- 26	谷の影 ³²	研究会 Kenkyuza	有楽座 Yurakuza	渡平民
		The Shadow of the Glen			Watari Heimin
4	23 1923.12/21-	西の人気 男 The Playboy of the Western World	新劇協会 (第4回公演) Shingeki Association (4th Performance)	渋谷道玄 坂九頭龍女学校 講堂 Shibuya Dougenzaka Kyuuzuryuu Female Academy	松村みね子 Matsumura Mineko

³² 谷間の影 and 谷の影 are the both the shadow of the glen with different Japanese translation. Same as The

Playboy of the Western World which has various editions of translation, like 西の人気男, 西の国の人気者, プ

5	1924. 02	西の人気 男 The Playboy of the Western World	新劇協会 (第 5 回、第 4 回 リバイバル公演) Shingeki Association (5th, 4th Revival Performance)	帝国ホテ ル演芸場 Imperial Hotel Performance Hall	松村みね子 Matsumura Mineko
6	27 1924. 05. 24-	西の人気 男 The Playboy of the Western World	新劇協会 Shingeki Association	渋谷聚楽 館 Shibuya Jūrakukan	松村みね子 Matsumura Mineko

レイボーイ, 西の国は大騒ぎ, プレイボーイ オブ ザウエスタンワールド, 西の国のプレイボーイ, 西の
国の伊達男.

7	23 1925. 09/19-	西の人気 男 The Playboy of the Western World	近代劇場 Modern Theater	築地同志 館 Tsukiji Comrades' Hall	松村みね子 Matsumura Mineko
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8	25 1926. 04. 23-	西の人気 男 The Playboy of the Western World	新劇協会 (第 13 回公演) Shingeki Association (13th Performance)	帝国ホテ ル演芸場 Imperial Hotel Performance Hall	松村みね子 Matsumura Mineko
9	1934	谷間の影 The Shadow of the Glen	早大劇藝術 研究會 Waseda University Art Research Association	大隈講堂 Ōkuma Auditorium	武藤由蔵 Mutou Yuzo
10	1935. 07	海へ行く 騎手 Riders to the Sea	自由舞台 Free Stage	仁寿講堂 Ninju Auditorium	
11	1935	西の人気 男 The Playboy of the Western World	日大演劇科 Nihon University Drama Department	築地小劇 場 Tsukiji Small Theater	
12	1948. 03. 04	谷の影	ぶどうの会 Budō no Kai	毎日ホー ル	木下順二

		The Shadow of the Glen		Mainichi Hall	Kinoshita Junji
13	1948. 08. 03	谷の影 The Shadow of the Glen	ぶどうの会 Budō no Kai 	毎日ホー ル Mainichi Hall	木下順二 Kinoshita Junji
14	1956. 05	西の国の 人気者 The Playboy of the Western World	劇団民芸 Mingei Theatre Company	全国巡演 National Tour	菅原卓 Sugawara Takashi
15	1975. 05. 01- 20	プレイボ ーイ The Playboy of the Western World	オンシアタ ー自由劇場 On Theater Free	六本木自 由劇場 Roppongi Free Theater	
16	1976. 10	あっぱれ 我等が大ぼら 吹き Bravo, Our Great Bluff	劇団昴 Subaru Theater Company	三百人劇 場 300 People Theater	中村保男 Nakamura Yasuo

17	1977. 02. 25- 03. 10	西に黄色 のラプソディ — Rhapsody in Yellow from the West*	オンシアタ —自由劇場 On Theater Free	六本木自 由劇場 Roppongi Free Theater	
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18	1977. 04. 26- 27	西の国の 人気者 The Playboy of the Western World	劇団東演 Tōen Company	全国労音 会館 National Rōon Hall	菅原卓 Sugawara Takashi
19	1981. 01. 10- 15	西の国の 人気者 The Playboy of the Western World	劇団東演 Tōen Company	東演パラ ータ Tōen Parata	相沢史郎 Aizawa Shiro
20	1981. 02. 11- 03. 02	西に黄色 のラプソディ — Rhapsody in Yellow from the West	オンシアタ —自由劇場 On Theater Free	六本木自 由劇場 Roppongi Free Theater	

21	1983. 06. 03- 12	モーリア の海で死んだ六 人の息子た ち The Sons of Moria Died at Sea (riders to the sea)	オンシアタ 一自由劇場 On Theater Free	六本木自 由劇場 Roppongi Free Theater	
22	1983. 06. 03- 12	ウィック ローに降る雨を 眺めながら	オンシアタ 一自由劇場 On Theater Free	六本木自 由劇場 Roppongi	

		Watching the Rain in Wicklów		Free Theater	
23	07 1985. 01. 05-	プレイボ ーイ志願 Volunteer Playboy	劇団民芸 Mingei Theatre Company	砂防会館 ホール Sabo Hall	秋浜悟史 Akihama Satori
24	13 1985. 07. 12-	西の国の 人気者 The Playboy of the Western World	劇団蒼生樹 Aoseiju Theatre Company	横浜市教 育文化センター Yokohama City Educational and Cultural Center	菅原卓 Sugawara Takashi

25	1987. 08. 28	海へ駆り ゆく人々 Riders to the Sea	能法劇団	アーツ スペース無門館	
26	03 1988. 10. 02-	海へ駆り ゆく人々 Riders to the Sea	竹内スタジオ るつぼ	ライヒ館 モレノ	木下順二
27	30 1991. 06. 27-	西の国は 大騒ぎ The Playboy of the Western World	劇団京	前進座劇 場	速水一郎

28	1991.05.19	西の国の 人気者 The Playboy of the Western World	劇団支木 Shiki Theatre Group	青森市民 文化ホール Aomori Civic Culture Hall	
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29	1991	アイルランドのほらふき男 (歌入り芝居) The Irish Bluffer (Musical Play)*	劇団湖 Lake Theatre Group	三笠市文化会館 Mikasa City Cultural Hall	
30	14 1995.02.08-	プレイボーイ オブ ザ ウエスタンワールド The Playboy of the Western World	スタジオライフ Studio Life	ウエストエンドスタジオ West End Studio	
31	26 1995.02.24-	プレイボーイ オブ ザ ウエスタンワールド The Playboy of the Western World	スタジオライフ Studio Life	横浜相鉄本多劇場 Yokohama Sotetsu Honda Theater	

32	2002.05.26	喜劇 靈 験 Comedy: The Miracle	劇団シアタ ー・ウィークエン ド Theater Weekend	名古屋能 楽堂 Nagoya Noh Theater	坪内逍遙翻案 Tsubouchi Shoyo (adaptation)
33	2005	聖者のお 水 The Well of Saints	アリストパネ ス・カンパニー Aristophanes Company	スタジオ AR Studio AR	黒川欣映 Kurokawa Kinei
34	2005	宿無し男 (原題:谷の影) The Homeless Man (Original title: The Shadow of the Glen	フランケン ズ Frankenz	ST スポット ST Spot	中野成樹 Nakano Shigeki
35	2007	遊び半分 (原題:プレイボー イ) The Playboy of the Western World	フランケン ス Frankenz	赤坂 RED/THEATER Akasaka RED/THEATER	中野成樹 Nakano Shigeki

36	2007	西の国のプレイボーイ The Playboy of the Western World	トルイトジ アター・カンパニー	パークタワー ホール Park Tower Hall	(原語) (In original language)
			Druid Theatre Company		
37	2008	西の国の伊達男 The Playboy of the Western World	劇団俳小 Haisho Theatre Group	東京芸術劇場 小ホール2 Tokyo Art Theater Small Hall 2	大場建治 Ōba Kenji
38	10 2009. 10. 07-	西の国の人気者 The Playboy of the Western World	まつもと市民芸術館レジデントカンパニー Matsumoto Civic Art Gallery Resident Company	まつもと市民・芸術館 Matsumoto Civic Art Gallery	
39	30 2010. 10. 29-	シングを 読む Reading Synge	演劇集団円 Theatre Group En	ステージ 円 Stage En	

It is noteworthy that out of the 39 plays listed, 7 are not original works by John Millington Synge, but are adaptations based on one or two of his works or specific

motifs from his works. However, the 演劇年報 (*Theatrical Yearbook*), consistently credits ジョン・ミリントン・シング (*John Millington Synge*) as the author in the author column, using the term 訳 (translate), commonly used for translators, except for Tsubouchi Shoyo's adaptation of *The Miracle*, which is marked as 翻案 (adaptation).

For instance, the play あつぱれ我等が大ぼら吹き (*Bravo, Our Great Bluff*) performed in October 1976 lists John Millington Synge as the author in JapaneseEnglish translation, with the translator being Nakamura Yasuo. After consulting all available Japanese video websites and textual materials, no specific performance content or script details for this play could be found. One can only infer from the title and performance photographs that the play likely derives from Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World*, as the protagonist Christy Mahon gains local fame by claiming to have killed his father, a story filled with exaggeration and self-aggrandizement, traits synonymous with a 'braggart.' This bears a striking resemblance to the 1991 musical アイルランドのほらふき男 (*The Irish Bluffer*).

As for 西に黄色のラブソング (*Rhapsody in Yellow from the West*), the title suggests a narrative that possibly explores the cultural fusion or contrast between the West (potentially Ireland or broadly European culture) and the East (Japan or Asian culture), with 'yellow' perhaps symbolizing elements of Eastern culture or symbolic imagery. This play is also likely influenced by or based on 'The Playboy of the Western World' due to its themes of individual and societal relationships, identity, and

selfdiscovery, which are easily connected and explored across different cultures. Another play, プレイボーイ志願 (*Volunteer Playboy*), reveals its influence from *The Playboy of the Western World* through the term *playboy*, with the addition of *volunteer* suggesting a role voluntarily assumed or self-proclaimed on the original narrative to explore similar themes. ウィックローに降る雨を眺めながら (*Watching the Rain in Wicklow*) is most likely inspired by Synge's prose *In Wicklow and West Kerry*. This table reflects the ongoing translation, dissemination, and adaptation of Synge's works in Japan's theatrical sphere from 1914 to the present, never ceasing, and spreading widely both academically and popularly, demonstrating significant influence.

Looking back at history from the present, it can be said that the deep acceptance and widespread dissemination of Synge's works and Synge as a playwright in Japan are largely due to the efforts of scholars in the early 20th century who, driven by various factors such as political ambitions and literary tastes, actively translated and adapted his works. Among these pioneers, the most notable for their translations, comparative analyses, and in-depth explorations of Synge's works are the three renowned Japanese writers, Akutagawa Ryunosuke, Kikuchi Kan, and Saijou Yasō. The forthcoming sections of this thesis will discuss these authors' commentaries on Synge's works and the differences and similarities between their adaptations and the original works, illustrating Synge's interpretation in Japan.

芥川龍之介 (Akutagawa Ryunosuke)

Akutagawa Ryunosuke, born in Tokyo in 1892 and deceased in 1927, is one of the most distinguished figures in modern Japanese literature. His literary career, though brief, produced a prolific and profoundly influential body of work that is characterized by its narrative complexity, psychological depth, and stylistic innovation. Akutagawa's contributions are often associated with the Taisho period (1912-1926), a time of rapid modernization and cultural upheaval in Japan (Keene, 1998).

Akutagawa's educational background included studying English literature at Tokyo Imperial University, where he was influenced by both Western literary traditions and the works of contemporary Japanese authors (Ueda, 1976). Initially focusing on translations, Akutagawa soon began writing original stories that drew inspiration from both Japanese and Western narratives. His major works, such as 羅生門 (*Rashomon*) and 藪の中 (*In a Grove*), explore themes of ambiguity, morality, and the nature of reality, challenging the reliability of perception and memory and profoundly questioning the reader's understanding of truth (Keene, 1998). Noted for his precision, economy of expression, and lyrical quality, Akutagawa's literary style effectively captures the existential quandaries and internal psychological states of his characters. This unique ability has led to him being recognized as the 'father of the Japanese short story' (Ueda, 1976). Despite his significant contributions, Akutagawa's life was tragically marked by mental illness, leading to his suicide at the age of 35.

In honor of his monumental impact on Japanese literature, the prestigious Akutagawa Prize was established in 1935 and remains one of the most coveted awards for literary achievement in Japan. This prize serves as a lasting testament to Akutagawa's influence and legacy in the literary world (Keene, 1998).

As for the relationship between Akutagawa Ryunosuke and John Millington Synge is explored extensively in シング紹介 (*Introduction to Synge*) and also in the articles he published in 新思潮 (*New Thought Wave*), 假面 (*Mask*) and 帝国文学 (*Imperial Literature*). Akutagawa Ryunosuke took part in the 愛蘭土文学研究会 (*Irish Literature Study Group*) formed by 日夏耿之介 (*Hika Kusano*) and 西條八十 (*Saijou Yasō*), contributing translations and introductory articles on W.B. Yeats and J.M. Synge to *New Thought Wave*. He played a significant role in the history of the reception of Irish literature in Japan.

According to Akutagawa's correspondence, as early as October 1913, he had finished reading Synge, as indicated by the letter stating, 学校は不相変つまらない / シンヂはよみ完つた *Deidre of the Sorrows* と云ふのが大へんよかつた (*School is boring as usual / I finished reading Synge, Deidre of the Sorrows and it was quite good*) (Letter to Yasu Ikagawa, dated October 17th, 1913). What is intriguing is that the day after the first study group meeting on March 1st, 1914, he sent a letter saying, 新思潮で愛蘭土文学号を出すさうだ イエーツの Secret Rose があいてゐたら 送つてくれ給へ (*It seems that New Thought Wave will publish an Irish Literature*

Edition. If you have Yeats' Secret Rose available, please send it to me.) The magazine 聖盃 (*Seihai*) (later renamed *Kamen*), which published a 'Yeats' Edition' as a special feature in July 1913, was strengthening its character as a magazine for translation and introduction of foreign literature. The interaction with the *Kamen* group and the stimulation of information and knowledge gained from the study group likely fueled Akutagawa's enthusiasm to present his research findings and his eagerness to contribute to the Irish Literature Edition. During this period, Akutagawa's letters also reveal his burgeoning pride as a researcher of Synge, as he writes, 時々山宮さんと話をする アイアランド文学を研究してゐるひとりで僕をシング (小山内さんにきいたらシングがほんとだと云つた) の研究家にきめていろんな事をきくので こまる (*Sometimes I talk with Mr. Yamamiya, and as someone studying Irish literature, people have decided that I am a Synge scholar (Mr. 小山内 Koyamauchi told me that Synge is correct) and they ask me various things which troubles me.*) (Akutagawa,2008: 131). This suggests that Akutagawa not only had a significant interest in Synge but also saw himself as a dedicated scholar in the field.

In the April 1914 issue of *New Thought Wave* it is noted that 柳川は山宮と共にアイアランド文学研究会の一員としてシング研究に没頭 (Yanagawa, along with Yamamiya, has immersed himself in the study of Synge as a member of the Irish

Literature Study Group’ (from ‘Fellow Members’ News’)). Furthermore, an article states:

山宮柳川の肝煎にて、愈々愛蘭文学号を来々月（六月号）に発行致すべく目下準備中に有之候。同人以外にては小山内蒸氏、松浦一氏、吉江孤雁氏初め、愛蘭文学研究会の西係、日夏、松田の諸氏、柴田柴庵氏、服部嘉香氏、灰野庄平氏其他愛蘭文学に造詣ある諸氏の評論を載せ、出来るだけ完全なるものとなす心算に御座候。

(Through the efforts of Yamamiya and Yanagawa, preparations are currently underway to publish the Irish Literature Edition in the coming months (for the June issue). Besides the members, Mr. Koyamauchi Mushi, Mr. Mura Ichishi, Mr. Yoshie Kyogan, and others from the Irish Literature Study Group, such as Saijo, Natsu, and Matsuda, as well as Mr. Shibata Saian, Mr. Hattori Kako, Mr. Haino Shohei, and other scholars versed in Irish literature, are planned to contribute their critiques, with the intention of making it as complete a work as possible’ (from the Editor’s Desk)) (Akutagawa, 2008: 132).

This indicates that Akutagawa demonstrated a high level of enthusiasm and commitment in the study and dissemination of Irish literature, particularly the works of John Millington Synge. He not only thoroughly read and deeply researched Synge’s works, but also actively participated in the ‘Irish Literature Study Group’ alongside Yamamiya and others, dedicating himself to the study and promotion of Synge’s works

and to the contexts within which they were produced. In his correspondence, he mentioned that he had finished reading Synge's *Deirdre of the Sorrows* and expressed high praise for the work, reflecting his deep understanding of Synge's writings. Furthermore, Akutagawa contributed translations and introductory articles to magazines such as *New Thought Wave*, showcasing his proactive involvement in promoting Irish literature. His request for additional materials the day after the first study group meeting highlights his ongoing enthusiasm and research drive. Overall, Akutagawa Ryunosuke displayed significant passion and motivation in the study and dissemination of Irish literature, actively engaging in scholarly exchanges and translation efforts, and gaining recognition and status in this domain.

シング紹介 (*Introduction to Synge*), by Akutagawa Ryunosuke, discusses his work, alongside that of W. B. Yeats, is noted for containing many excerpts copied and translated from Maurice Bourgeois' *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre* (London: Constable, 1913). This points to the question of originality and the manner of distancing from sources lying between translation and introductory writing of Akutagawa during this period, providing a reference for considering Akutagawa's awareness of these issues, as well as by confirming similarities and differences between *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre* and the *Introduction to Synge*, it is possible to explore Akutagawa's concerns about Synge.

Nevertheless, almost the entire *Introduction to Synge* is a translation of *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre*, giving the impression of being a copy rather

than a ‘reference’ (Suzuki, 2014). The first part is a biographical description of Synge, and the latter half discusses Synge’s wandering life, almost entirely matching the account by Bourgeois. The relationship between the two is clear, so this thesis will refrain from citing examples for the faithfully translated biographical description in the first half and will instead list specific examples from the latter half, which focuses on Synge’s wanderings and where Akutagawa added phrases and points of divergence, to explore Akutagawa’s understanding and interpretation of J. M. Synge.

Images of ‘Wanderlust’

彼は既に、止み難い性情の促すまゝ、に、半生に亘るべき放浪の旅に上つてゐたのである。誠に彼の心には、何物も職束す可らざる永久の憧憬があつた、恰もイェーツが「虚無の郷」の主人公 *Paul Ruttledge* をして云はしめた如く（同戯曲、序幕参照）大空の下に限り無く続いてゐる路を見る毎に彼のたましひは、直に無窮を思慕するの情に動かされずにはゐられなかつた、彼のこの *Wanderlust* は同じ’*Nostalgia for the Nowhere or the Anywhere*’に苦められた *George Borrow* の生涯を連想せしめる。

(He was already on a ceaseless journey of wandering, driven by an irresistible temperament. Indeed, in his heart, there was an eternal longing that nothing could bind, just as Yeats had Paul Ruttledge, the protagonist of ‘The Land of Heart’s Desire’, express every time he saw the endless road under the open sky, his soul

was moved by a yearning for the infinite. This Wanderlust reminded one of the life of George Borrow, who was also tormented by the same 'Nostalgia for the Nowhere or the Anywhere'. (Akutagawa,1993:52)

This roving, adventurous life was further conditioned by Synge's natural tendencies: for he always had something of the 'scholar gypsy' temperament, and the irresistible Wanderlust, the nostalgia for the Nowhere or the Anywhere that had possessed men like George Borrow and Lafcadio Hearn, was in his blood (Bourgeois, 1913:12)

Although the context is almost the same, the 'Wanderlust' (a propensity for wandering) stemming from 'The nostalgia for the Nowhere or the Anywhere', which can be said to be a keyword in the *Introduction to Synge*, is quoted, as it is in the original text as a part of Synge's 'temperament'. What is interesting is that it points out an 'eternal longing' and 'a yearning for the infinite' in Synge's heart – motivations for his wandering life, which are not mentioned in John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre. This adds a somewhat idealistic motive to Synge's wandering. Furthermore, regarding his wandering:

シングが熱心な *Borrovia* であつたのは元より怪しむに足りないが、独り此放浪を愛する点のみでなく、*Borrow* のヂブシイに対する興味とシングの鑄掛に対する同情とは、著しく類似した点がある、けれども彼の此放浪を愛する性情は *Borrow* を除いても猶他に一人、恐らくは彼よ

りも更に大なる詩人を連想せしめる、それは外でもない、不二山と歌

磨との国に其飄

浪の晩年を過ごした *Lafcadio Hearn* 其人である、そしてシングは又ハー
ンの所謂 '*fiery prose style*' の、最、誠実なる質賛者の一人であつたと云は
れてある。殊に彼の激賞したのはハーンの *Of Moon-desire* の一節である

(後略)

(It is beyond doubt that Synge was an ardent Borrowian, not only in his love for wandering but also in his interest in gypsies akin to Borrow's and his empathy towards casters, which has remarkable similarities. However, his nature of loving wandering, apart from Borrow, makes one think of another poet, perhaps even greater, who spent his wandering later years in the land of Mount Fuji and Gamahara - Lafcadio Hearn himself. And it is said that Synge was one of the sincerest admirers of Hearn's so-called 'fiery prose style'. In particular, he greatly admired a passage from Hearn's Of Moon-desire (the rest is omitted) (Akutagawa, 1977: 28-29).

An interesting parallel might be established between Borrow and Synge: both had a wandering youth and travelled widely on the Continent; both were highly gifted linguists; and Borrow's interest in gypsies was not unlike Synge's partiality to tramps and tinkers. Synge was an ardent Borrowian. (Bourgeois, 1913:12). Synge greatly

admired Hearn's 'fiery prose style', and praised immensely – immoderately, even – the passage in *Of Moon-desire* (Bourgeois, 1913:13)

In this section, the text incorporates the footnotes from pages 12 and 13 of *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre*, which discuss the commonalities between George Borrow, Lafcadio Hearn, and Synge. However, by omitting the mention of Borrow's talent as a linguist, it places a stronger emphasis on the aspect of their wanderings. In the case of Hearn and Synge, while the title of the passage that Synge 'greatly praised' is cited in English, Akutagawa adds descriptions not found in *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre*, such as Hearn spending his wandering later years 'in the land of Mount Fuji and Gamahara', and being 'an even greater poet'. This adds to the portrayal of Synge as a 'poet' with a 'nature loving wandering', and by paralleling Hearn as a wandering poet, it seems intended to elicit a sense of closeness among Japanese readers.

かくしてシングは、飄零の旅程に上つた、其郷国愛蘭土を去つた作家は彼のみではない、オスカア・ワイルドもそれである、バアナアド・ショウもそれである、ジオルヂ・ムーアもそれである、バトラア・イエエツもそれである（中略）、愛蘭土人は愛蘭土に居る限り何事も為し得ない、もし何等の成功を博さうとするならば、彼等は先、一步を祖国の外に投じなければならぬのである。愛蘭土の地主が倫敦に居を定めるのも、農民が亜米

利加合衆国に移住するのも、芸術家が其郷土の外にカナアンの楽土を望むのも、皆同じ理由に過ぎない、シングも亦実に其一人であつた。

(In so doing Synge was also following the tradition of literary absenteeism which has set in with most of the modern Irish writers-Oscar Wilde, Mr. G. B. Shaw, Mr. George Moore, Mr. W. B. Yeats. (.....) The general belief is that an Irishman cannot prosper at home; to succeed he must go abroad. Hence, the very same instinct which causes the Irish landlord to reside in London, which incites the Irish peasant to leave the 'ould sod' for good at the earliest opportunity and emigrate to that Land of Heart's Desire yclept U.S.A., sends most Irishmen of note out of their native country, and is, in particular, responsible for the well-nigh general exodus on Irish artists and men of letters). (Bourgeois, 1913:13-14)

In this passage, the order of the authors' names is copied exactly as in *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre*, and the following sentence, 'The general belief is that an Irishman cannot prosper at home; to succeed he must go abroad', is translated *verbatim*. However, what is notable is that in the final sentence of the quoted passage from *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre*, the word 'exodus', which has connotations of departure or migration stemming from the Exodus of the Bible, has been changed to a phrase that evokes a positive image, also rooted in Christianity, 'seek the Promised Land of Canaan'.

As has been discussed, Akutagawa extracts parts related to Synge's 'wandering' and adds his own interpretations, such as 'eternal longing' and 'affection for the infinite', which are not present in the original text. In the *Introduction to Synge*, the descriptions

of the background of Irish emigration from the end of the 19th century, including the potato blight leading to the Great Famine, the issue of absentee landlords, and the exodus of capable individuals due to political, economic, and historical problems, are replaced with vocabulary like ‘longing’, ‘affection’, and ‘promised land’. This shifts the focus to the poet’s internal desire for wandering. There are omissions, rearrangements, and splicings between *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre* and the *Introduction to Synge*, and although it is not entirely plagiarism since the writings of Bourgeois are cited as references.

Excerpts from *Introduction to Synge* and *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre* reflect Akutagawa’s interests at the time. It appears that for Akutagawa, the motivation for Synge’s wandering – described with concepts like ‘eternity’ and ‘the promised land’ indicating an internal longing for the outside world – was a significant and revealing characteristic of the writer. This internal aspect might have been perceived by Akutagawa as essential in portraying the distinctiveness of Synge as a writer.

弘法大師御利生記 (**Kōbō Daishi’s Miraculous Birth Story**) and **The Well of the Saints**

These two plays share a common theme: the miraculous restoration of sight to a blind person by a monk or a saint. This comparison provides insight into how Akutagawa’s reception of Synge influenced his own creative work. In the collection of Akutagawa’s old books at the Museum of Modern Japanese Literature, there is a copy of the original *The Well of the Saints*, with a completion date noted as August 7th, 1913. This confirms that Akutagawa had read the work before writing *Kōbō Daishi’s Miraculous Birth Story*.

At that time, Akutagawa was particularly interested in Irish literature, especially Synge. In addition to *The Well of the Saints*, five other Synge's works in Akutagawa's collection – *The Tinker's Wedding*, *Riders to the Sea*, *The Shadow of the Glen*, *Deirdre of the Sorrows*, and *The Aran Islands* – have recorded reading dates ranging from October 7th, 1913, to July 1st, 1914. Although there are no annotations in *The Playboy of the Western World*, it is considered a potential source for his work 鼠小僧次郎吉 (*Nezumi Kozō Jirokichi*) (中央公論 *Chūō Kōron*, 1920) and likely was read by him.

The Well of the Saints is a three-act play, first performed in 1905 at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. The play is a dark comedy that explores themes of illusion, reality, and the nature of beauty through the story of a blind couple who gain sight only to become disillusioned with each other and the world around them (Foster, 1997). The plot revolves around Martin and Mary Doull, a blind couple who beg for a living. Praised by the villagers as 'the most beautiful man and woman in the seven eastern states', a lie they believe, they sit at a crossroads, joking with each other, content and cheerful in their ignorance. But one day, a saint restores their sight with holy water from the well of saints, and they are shocked to discover their true appearance and are disillusioned by the sight of their own ugliness, the hardship of labor, and the cruelty of the villagers. Their newfound sight causes conflict, ultimately leading them to prefer blindness over the harsh realities they face. This narrative is a reflection on how people often choose comforting illusions over uncomfortable truths (Synge, 1905).

On the other hand, *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story* features a family of five living in the mountains. Content and happy with their lives, they gather around the hearth with their blind father. One day, they invite a traveling monk seeking shelter from a snowstorm into their home and offer him a meal. The monk reveals to them that their home, located in a remote area and thought to be satisfactory, is actually in a state of miserable poverty. The monk, revealing himself to be 空海³³ (*Kūkai*), performs a miracle and cures the father's blindness. However, upon regaining his sight, the father becomes dissatisfied with his house and way of living, unsure of which state was truly happier, and even grows to disdain looking at his wife's face. Both plays revolve around

³³ Kūkai, also known posthumously as Kōbō Daishi, was a distinguished Japanese Buddhist monk, poet, and calligrapher from the Heian period. Born in 774 into an aristocratic family in the Sanuki Province, Kūkai demonstrated early intellectual promise and initially pursued studies in Confucianism at a university in Nara.

However, his academic interests shifted towards Buddhism, leading him to China where he studied esoteric Buddhism under the guidance of the Buddhist master Huiguo (Hakeda, 1972). Upon his return to Japan, Kūkai founded the Shingon school of Buddhism, introducing esoteric practices that involve mantras, mudras, and mandalas. This school distinguished itself from other Buddhist practices in Japan by its complex ritualistic approach and emphasis on mystical elements (Abe, 1999). Beyond his religious contributions, Kūkai significantly influenced Japanese culture through his artistic and literary works. He is credited with creating the kana syllabary, which greatly impacted Japanese writing systems and literacy. His contributions to poetry and calligraphy are also highly regarded, marking him as a key figure in the cultural development of the Heian period.

Kūkai's legacy in Japan is profound. Named Kōbō Daishi posthumously, his teachings continue to be a significant part of Japanese Buddhism. His mausoleum at Mount Kōya remains a major pilgrimage site, underscoring his lasting impact on Japanese religious and cultural landscapes (Abe, 1999). His works and teachings are not only a subject of reverence but also of ongoing study, reflecting his enduring influence on Japanese history and beyond.

the theme of regained sight leading to disillusionment, but they explore this theme in distinct contexts and with different implications for their characters.

It has been curtailed that expect the theme, in both works, the characters – a saint

in one and a traveling monk in the other – perform miracles that restore sight to the blind. However, the arrival of these holy figures and their miracles, rather than enriching the lives of the characters, confronts them with the realization that their previously content lives in blindness were merely illusions crafted by their imagination. The overarching structure of both plays is strikingly similar, consisting of three major elements: first, the satisfaction in a state of blindness; second, the visitation of a traveling monk (or saint) and the miraculous restoration of sight; and third, the subsequent disillusionment with reality upon regaining sight. However, except for the similarities on the plotting construction, there are detailed differences between the two plays, this thesis will combine the details, including dialogues and plots setting, of these two plays to conclude the differences in the following part.

Blindness and Insight

In *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story*, the characters include a blind old man (the father), his elderly wife, their son around thirty years old, their daughter-in-law about twenty-five years old, and their four-year-old grandchild. Kōbō Daishi, or Kūkai, is a visiting character. The setting is described as a poor household in the mountains, with four family members – the father, mother, son, and daughter-in-law sitting around a hearth, the daughter-in-law holding the grandchild on her lap. The house has a window at the front and a door on the left, both closed, indicating a self-sufficient and enclosed space on a snowy afternoon.

This setting of a secluded and self-contained environment in *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story* has a notable parallel to the setting of *The Well of the Saints*, which takes place in a lonely, mountainous district in the east of Ireland, one or more centuries ago. Both settings are remote, isolated from the bustling life of communities, and enveloped in a natural environment that further emphasizes their seclusion. This similarity in setting forms a crucial backdrop to the unfolding of the central themes in both plays: the contrast between the imagined world and the harsh reality that confronts the characters upon regaining their sight.

In the opening scene of *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story*, the family of five gathers around the hearth, observing the blizzard outside and contemplating the plight of travelers crossing the mountains. Their dialogue reveals a sense of contentment and gratitude for their current life, despite the challenges they face:

[父]さう云ふ人の事を考へるとかうしてゐられるのは仕合せだよ 己が眼が見えなくなつてから 今年でもう十年になるが それでもどうにか其日の暮しが立ててゆかれるのだからね何と云つても天道様ほど難有いものはないよ」

([Father] When I think about such travelers, I feel blessed to be here like this. It's been ten years since I lost my sight, but somehow we've managed to make ends meet every day. There's nothing more difficult than the will of Heaven.)

[悴]私も何時でも難有いと思はないことはありませんよ、阿父さんや
阿母さんが御丈夫なだけでも勿体ない位ですのに十年この方楽に暮せ
ない事は一日だつて無かつたのですからね

([Child] I too never think that we have had a hard time. It's more than enough that father and mother are in good health. We haven't had a single day in these ten years that we've lived uncomfortably.)

[母]まつたくだよ 嫁は出来るし孫は生まれるし それが又 皆無病なのだから
こんな仕合せな事はないよ

([Mother] Absolutely. We have a good daughter-in-law, and a grandchild was born, and everyone is healthy. There's nothing more blissful than this.)

[嫁]この上不足を云つては 罰があたりますわね

([Daughter-in-law] 'It would be wrong to complain of any shortage now.')

(Akutagawa, 1977:42)

These lines reflect a deep acceptance of their situation and a profound appreciation for the simple joys of life, such as family and health. This dialogue sets the tone for the play, highlighting the family's sense of satisfaction and completeness in their current state, unaware of the change that the visit of Kōbō Daishi will soon bring to their lives. The scene effectively contrasts their perception of happiness in blindness with the impending disillusionment they will experience upon regaining sight.

In *The Well of the Saints*, the adaptation to and satisfaction with blindness can also be gleaned from the couple's dialogue. Synge's depiction of the blind couple in *The Well of the Saints* is more complex and not as straightforward as the blind father in the Japanese work *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story*. In *The Well of the Saints*, it is the couple who are blind, and Synge intentionally sets them up as a reference group. Although the husband constantly agrees with his wife and acknowledges the various benefits of blindness, he is not truly satisfied with being blind. He still very much desires the opportunity to regain his sight, whereas his wife is resolutely against it.

MARTIN DOUL – [a little plaintively.] – I do be thinking in the long nights it'd be a grand thing if we could see ourselves for one hour, or a minute itself, the way we'd know surely we were the finest man and the finest woman of the seven counties of the east (bitterly) and then the seeing rabble below might be destroying their souls telling bad lies, and we'd never heed a thing they'd say.

.....

MARY DOUL. If you weren't a big fool you wouldn't heed them this hour, Martin Doul, for they're a bad lot those that have their sight, and they do have great joy, the time they do be seeing a grand thing, to let on they don't see it at all, and to be telling fool's lies, the like of what Molly Byrne was telling to yourself.

.....

MARTIN DOUL – [sadly.] – It's the truth, maybe, and yet I'm told it's a grand thing to see a young girl walking the road.

MARY DOUL. You'd be as bad as the rest of them if you had your sight, and I did well, surely, not to marry a seeing man it's scores would have had me and welcome – for the seeing is a queer lot, and you'd never know the thing they'd do. [A moment's pause.]

.....

MARY DOUL. Let you put the pith away out of their sight, or they'll be picking it out with the spying eyes they have, and saying it's rich we are, and not sparing us a thing at all.

.....

MARTIN DOUL – [rather contemptuously.] – You're always hearing queer wonderful things, and the lot of them nothing at all; but I'm thinking, this time, it's a strange thing surely you'd be walking up before the turn of day, and not waiting below to look on them lepping, or dancing, or playing shows on the green of Clash.
(Synge, 2018:256-260)

From the selected excerpts, Mary and Martin are very distrustful of those who can see. They believe that sighted people are often dishonest and prone to lying. They think that sighted people frequently fail to appreciate beautiful things and even deliberately deny their existence. This sentiment is particularly evident in Mary, who is very dissatisfied with sighted people. She believes they like to belittle others, doubts their sincerity, and feels very fortunate not to have married a sighted person, firmly believing it was a very wise choice.

Martin, on the other hand, fantasizes that if they could see, they would confirm that they are remarkable individuals, capable of surpassing the negative evaluations and rumors surrounding them. However, he also expresses some hesitation and doubts the value that sight might bring, feeling that even if they could see, it might not change their life circumstances.

In *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story*, the miraculous restoration of sight by the traveling monk leads to a significant shift in the characters' perception, resulting in disillusionment. The following dialogues illustrate their reaction:

[父] うん わしも眼があいたのが合せだか眼くらだつたのが合せだかわからなくなつたよ (自分を見て) どうだ このなりのきたなさは

(*[Father] 'Hmm, I can't tell if it was better when I was blind or now that I can see. (Looking at himself) How filthy I look.'*)

[子] 私もこんな酒を始終のんでゐる人間が世の中にあるのだと思ふとつくづくこんな所で獵師してゐるのが嫌になつてしまひましたよ

(*[Child] 'When I think that there are people in the world who drink such sake continuously, I feel deeply disgusted with hunting in such a place.'*)

(嫁 何か云はうとして止める 再 沈黙)

(*The daughter-in-law starts to say something but stops. Then, silence follows.*)

.....

[父] これが己の家か これが己の妻子か 己はもうばあさんの顔を見るのもいやになつた

(*[Father] 'Is this really my house? Are these really my wife and children? I've become sick of even looking at my old lady's face.'*)

[母] おやお前さんは妙な事を云ふね

(*[Mother] ‘Oh, what strange things you’re saying.’*)

[父] 妙な事を行つたのがどうした

(*[Father] ‘What’s so strange about what I did?’*)

[母] お前さんはそんな事が云へた義理かよ (泣き声になる 又孫がはげしく
泣き立てる)

(*[Mother] ‘How can you say such things?’ (Her voice breaks into tears. The grandchild also starts crying loudly.)*)

[父] あゝ眼くらの昔が恋しくなつた

(*[Father] ‘Ah, I miss the times when I was blind.’*)

[子] (独り語のやうに) 此処に ゐちやあ駄目だ

(*[Child] (As if talking to himself) ‘It’s no good staying here.’*) (Akutagawa, 1977: 253-254)

These reactions indicate a stark contrast to their previous contentment. The father, upon seeing his own appearance, questions whether his blindness was indeed a blessing, as he now confronts his unkempt state. The child, too, becomes disenchanted with his lifestyle upon realizing there are other ways of living. The change in the family members’ attitudes towards the father’s blindness shifts with the father’s own attitude.

Before the father went blind, life was quite comfortable for all family members. However, when the father regained his sight and began to question his surroundings, the family members also started to doubt their environment. This unique shift in attitude among the blind person's close ones is fundamentally different from the villagers in Synge's *The Well of the Saints*.

In *The Well of the Saints*, the villagers' attitude towards the blind couple changes significantly. Initially, they are accommodating and understanding, as evidenced by:

TIMMY – [hot and breathless, wiping his face.] – You've good ears, God bless you, if you're a liar itself; for I'm after walking up in great haste from hearing wonders in the fair.

TIMMY – [huffed.] – I was coming to tell you it's in this place there'd be a bigger wonder done in a short while (Martin Doul stops working) than was ever done on the green of Clash, or the width of Leinster itself; but you're thinking, maybe, you're too cute a little fellow to be minding me at all.

.....

TIMMY – [officially.] – They are, holy father; they do be always sitting here at the crossing of the roads, asking a bit of copper from them that do pass, or stripping rushes for lights, and they not mournful at all, but talking out straight with a full voice, and making game with them that likes it.

.....

BRIDE – [who is looking in at door from right.] – Look at the great trembling Martin has shaking him, and he on his knees.

TIMMY – [anxiously.] – God help him... What will he be doing when he sees his wife this day? I'm thinking it was bad work we did when we let on she was finelooking, and not a wrinkled, wizened hag the way she is.

MOLLY BYRNE – [sitting down in Mary Doul's seat and tidying her hair.] – If it's vexed he is itself, he'll have other things now to think on as well as his wife; and what does any man care for a wife, when it's two weeks or three, he is looking on her face? (Synge, 2018: 265-267)

After regaining their sight, Martin and Mary begin to express dissatisfaction and criticism towards their surroundings, demonstrating their independence as complete individuals. At this point, they are seen as threats and unwelcome people. This is especially true when they decide to become blind again. The villagers, particularly Timmy, who had previously been quite friendly and accommodating towards them, even resort to threats, displaying significant aggression. In the end, when the blind couple decides to head south, Timmy hurls the most malicious curses at them.

MOLLY BYRNE. Let you keep away from me, and not be soiling my chin. [People laugh heartily.]

BRIDE – [pulling away her shawl.] – I'm not your wife, and let you get out of my way. [The People laugh again.]

MARTIN DOUL – [raising his stick and driving Mary Doul back towards left.] – Let you keep off from me now if you wouldn't have me strike out the little handful of brains you have about on the road.

.....

TIMMY. That's the truth, Mary; and if it's choosing a willful blindness you are, I'm thinking there isn't anyone in this place will ever be giving you a hand's turn or a hap'orth of meal, or be doing the little things you need to keep you at all living in the world.

.....

THE PEOPLE. Go on now, Martin Doul. Go on from this place. Let you not be bringing great storms or droughts on us maybe from the power of the Lord. [Some of them throw things at him.]

.....

TIMMY. There's a power of deep rivers with floods in them where you do have to be lepping the stones and you going to the south, so I'm thinking the two of them will be drowned together in a short while, surely. (Synge, 2018: 271-273)

This emotional and attitudinal state is highly dramatic, possessing a theatrical quality that is more characteristic of Western drama compared to the setting by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke. In contrast, the setting in Japanese Noh theatre is more restrained and subtle.

In *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story*, there is a significant emphasis on the moment of regaining sight. When the traveling monk performs the miracle, light floods into the previously dimly-lit space by the hearth, creating a moment filled with 'brilliance.' This portrayal suggests a brief but intense moment of enlightenment and realization.

[僧] (略) 仏の慈悲は丁度三月の雨のやうに善根の芽をふいてゐるす
べての衆生の上にそゝがれるものだ。

(僧 孫を嫁の手に渡して 合掌する 家の中に光明がさす 遠くに箏
篳の音がきこえる 空から花が降る) お前さんたちが空海に供養した水
は甘露に変わった 空海に供養した飯は醍醐に変わった これは空海が一飯の
徳に酬いのではない 三方の諸仏が善人に供養をするのだよ (僧合掌
をやめる 家の中が元のうす暗さにかへる 円光丈は消えない)

*([Monk] (abridged) 'The Buddha's compassion is poured upon all sentient beings,
nurturing the sprouts of good roots, just like the rain of March.'*

*(Monk hands the grandson to his daughter-in-law and joins his palms together;
light shines into the house, the distant sound of a koto is heard, flowers fall from
the sky) 'The water you offered to Kūkai has turned into sweet dew, the rice you
offered to Kūkai has turned into supreme nectar. This is not just Kūkai rewarding
a single meal's virtue, but all the Buddhas from three directions bestowing offerings
upon the virtuous.' (Monk stops joining his palms; the house returns to its original
dimness, the halo does not disappear)) (Akutagawa, 1977: 271)*

The insertion of the scene where the monk speaks of the Buddha's compassion, likening it to the rain of March that nourishes the sprouts of good roots, is significant in *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story*. This scene, with its imagery of light filling the house,

the distant sound of a koto, and flowers falling from the sky, creates a momentary glimpse of a paradisiacal vision for the entire family, not just the blind father.

This mystical experience, where the monk explains how the water and food offered to Kūkai have transformed into heavenly substances, is a pivotal moment. It temporarily transforms the humble home into a space of divine light and beauty. However, as the monk ends his prayer, the house returns to its original dim state, and the circular glow (halo) does not disappear, indicating a lingering spiritual presence. This scene adds a significant dimension to the story. Unlike *The Well of the Saints*, where the focus is on the individual disillusionment of the blind couple after regaining sight, especially before the saint starts to cure the blind couple, he waved them back:

SAINT – [solemnly.] Laus Patri sit et Filio cum Spiritu Paraclito Qui Suae dono gratiae miseratus est Hiberniae....

MARTIN DOUL – [ecstatically.] – Oh, glory be to God, I see now surely.... I see the walls of the church, and the green bits of ferns in them, and yourself, holy father, and the great width of the sky. (Synge, 2018: 254)

In *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story*, the whole family, including the son who was not blind, experiences disillusionment. This broader impact emphasizes that the awakening from blindness – both literal and metaphorical – represents an end to illusions and a harsh confrontation with reality. This setting directly leads to a completely different ending for *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story* and *The Well of the Saints*. In *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story*, it is the son, a sighted member of

the family, who leaves, having witnessed the birth of the miracle and the extraordinary phenomena that accompanied it. In contrast, in *The Well of the Saints*, it is the blind couple themselves who head south, while the other villagers gather around the saint and proceed to the church to celebrate Timmy's wedding.

Synge's use of religious rituals to restore physical wholeness as a means of testing human nature—imbued with powerful dramatic conflict—had a significant impact on Ryūnosuke Akutagawa, a Japanese writer similarly fascinated by moral dilemmas that reveal the complexities of human character. Akutagawa absorbed Synge's artistic elements but selectively overlooked the deeper reflection on society and religion that permeates Synge's works. This omission, influenced by Akutagawa's own class position and limited socio-political awareness, led him to neglect one of the most vital and creative aspects of Synge's artistry: the nuanced critique of society and religion embedded in his dramatic narratives.

菊池寛 (Kikuchi Kan and Synge)

Kikuchi Kan (1888-1948), a distinguished Japanese novelist, playwright, and publisher, significantly influenced modern Japanese literature. His extensive body of work and the founding of 文艺春秋 (*Bungei Shunjū*) (a leading literary magazine) marked him as a pivotal figure in Japanese cultural history. Kikuchi's contributions span various genres, reflecting his deep insights into human nature and societal issues. His literary oeuvre

includes novels, short stories, plays, and essays. His novels, such as 父帰(*Father Returns*), 恩讐の彼方に (*Beyond Love and Hate*), and 真珠夫人 (*The Pearl Lady*), are celebrated for their rich narrative and complex character development. His stories often delve into themes of human emotion, morality, and social critique, presenting a nuanced view of Japanese society (Nishikawa, 2000). Kikuchi's writing style is versatile, blending humor and seriousness, which has garnered both popular and critical acclaim. Kikuchi Kan also made significant contributions to Japanese theatre. His plays, such as 大臣と実業家 (*The Minister and the Businessman*), showcase a unique blend of traditional and modern elements. These works critically examine contemporary issues like power dynamics and the ethical dilemmas faced by individuals in society. Kikuchi's dramatic works are notable for their insightful dialogues and compelling narratives, which reflect his broader literary themes (Kurata, 2001).

Kikuchi Kan's influence on modern Japanese literature is profound. His works have inspired generations of writers and readers, contributing to the richness and diversity of Japanese literary tradition. Beyond his literary achievements, his role in establishing *Bungei Shunjū* has had a lasting impact on the publishing industry and literary culture in Japan. Kikuchi's efforts helped nurture literary talent and provided a crucial platform for intellectual and cultural exchange (Tanaka, 2003).

Like this thesis has mentioned in the former chapter, the introductory articles of the fantastical aspects of Irish literature have been published in *New Thought Wave* and *The Holy Grail* in which Kan Kikuchi also grasped its ‘運動的側面’ (activist side)

as a form of resistance against England. Due to Kikuchi's efforts to counter the 'literary centralisation' in Tokyo by promoting a 'literary revival' in Osaka and Kyoto, he focused and get influenced by J. M. Synge. The following part this thesis will utilise 屋上の狂人 (*The Madman on the Roof*) (New Thought Wave, 1916) by Kikuchi and Synge's 聖者の泉 (*The Well of the Saints*) (Synge, 1905) to explore the reception and interpretation on Synge by Kikuchi.

The excerpt highlights Kikuchi's enthusiasm for the burgeoning art scene in Osaka and his aspirations for a cultural renaissance in the region, contrasting with the established literary scene in Tokyo. This shows his broader vision for a decentralized and diverse literary culture in Japan, not confined to the capital. The passage offers a glimpse into the formative years of Kikuchi's literary career and his contributions to the early 20th-century Japanese literary landscape.

イエーツ氏の愛蘭劇場は愛蘭土の伝説、思想、風習の上に培はれたる特異なる美花であつて全欧の劇界に魔杖持てる妖女の如く驚異と奇蹟とを与へた。それはイエーツ氏やグレゴリー夫人の霊筆によつて幽玄清浄なるケルト思想が美しい芸術の器に盛られたからであるが然かもその郷土的背景があるに非ずんばどうしてあれ程迄ハイマートクンストの芸術的高調に達する事が出来よう。郷土芸術、それは最も生命口漲れるものではあるまい

か、偉大なる背景を持つた芸術、それは最も力強い芸術ではあるまいか。

私は大阪と云ふ個性ある都会を背景とした芸術の創始を望んで止まない、

東京ばかりが芸術の揺籃でもあるまい。

(Mr. Yeats' Irish Theatre is a unique and beautiful flower cultivated upon the legends, thoughts, and customs of Irish soil, like a sorceress wielding a magic wand in the world of European theater, bestowing wonder and miracles. This is because the ethereal and pure Celtic thought was gracefully encapsulated in the form of beautiful art through the spiritual pen of Mr. Yeats and Lady Gregory. However, without its local backdrop, how could it have reached such artistic heights, akin to Heimat Kunst? Local art, isn't it the most vibrant with life? Art with a grand backdrop, isn't it the most powerful? I ardently wish for the initiation of art that takes the city of Osaka, with its unique character, as its backdrop; Tokyo should not be the only cradle of art.) (Kikuchi,1993:142)

This viewpoint advocates for a decentralization of cultural production, recognizing the potential in different locales to cultivate their own distinctive artistic identities and contributions which reflects a broader cultural movement that values local distinctiveness and diversity in artistic expression.

Kikuchi envisions the Irish National Theatre Society, formed in 1903 with W.B. Yeats as a central figure, which later evolved into The Irish National Theatre, commonly known as The Abbey Theatre, as a model for the 'Osaka Art' movement he advocates.

He believes ‘大阪人が悪いのではなくして、文壇口中央集権的傾向が悪いのだ’
(*the reason why the current ‘Osaka Art’ scene remains subdued is not due to the people of Osaka, but rather the centralized, Tokyo-centric tendencies of the literary world*) (Kikuchi,1993:151). Kikuchi argues that the capital of a country and the center of its literary world do not necessarily have to be one and the same. He asserts that ‘真に生命のある芸術品は自己口郷土を描く郷土人の手に依つて生まるゝ’ (*true art, brimming with life, is created by the people of the land, depicting their own localities*) (Kikuchi,1993:153). Just as Yeats and Lady Gregory consciously broke away from British influence to cultivate a unique Irish art through The Abbey Theatre in Dublin, initiating the Irish Literary Revival, so Kikuchi argues that the current Tokyo-centric situation should be challenged. He advocates for the establishment of ‘Osaka Art,’ breaking away from the centralized control of the literary world in Tokyo. He emphasizes that the geographical center of political power should not necessarily dictate the cultural and artistic heartbeat of a nation. By challenging the centralization of the literary world in Tokyo, Kikuchi is calling for a cultural shift that allows for the flourishing of diverse, localized art movements across Japan, similar to the Irish Literary Revival in Dublin. His stance is a call for embracing regional characteristics and talents in the broader tapestry of national culture.

There are significant similarities between his work *The Madman on the Roof* and Synge’s *Riders to the Sea*. Kikuchi’s text is set on 瀬戸内海の讃岐に属する島 (*An*

island off the coast of Sanuki in the Inland Sea), and its depiction of village and family life rich in local color might have been influenced by Synge's *Riders to the Sea* which set on 'an island off the west of Ireland'. While the seas evoked by the Seto Inland Sea islands and an island off the west of Ireland differ greatly in the images they conjure up, the English translation likely emphasized the commonality in the settings of Kikuchi's and Synge's plays. Kikuchi and Synge share similarities, not only in their backgrounds, but also in their depiction of the 'everyday experiences' of 'common people' from the regions,

The Madman on the Roof, first published in 1927, focuses on the young man's family, who struggle with the societal stigma attached to his behaviour. The villagers view him with fear and suspicion, believing him to be a harbinger of bad luck. Through interactions and conflicts within the family, the play gradually reveals that the 'madman' possesses a pure heart and a profound love for nature. His unconventional way of understanding and expressing himself challenges the family's and the villagers' notions of normalcy and madness' (Kikuchi, 1927).

In *The Madman on the Roof*, the eldest son, 義太郎 (*Gitaro*), climbs onto the roof and claims to see 「金毘羅さん³⁴の天狗さん³⁵の正念坊さん³⁶が雲の中で踊つとる。緋の衣を着て天人様と一緒に踊りよる」 (*Konpira, Tengu, Shōnenbō in the clouds, dancing. He's wearing scarlet and dancing with the celestial beings*) (Kikuchi, 1993). One day, news arrives that a 'miraculous being', a 'priestess of Konpira', has come to the island from the outside world to perform miracles. The family decides to cure Gitaro's madness by smoking him out as instructed by the priestess. However, his brother 末次郎 (*Suejiro*) objects, continuing as follows:

³⁴ Konpira (金毘羅さん) refers to the Japanese god of sailors and seafaring, enshrined at Kotohira Shrine (Kotohira-gū) in Kagawa Prefecture on the island of Shikoku. The shrine is colloquially known as 'Konpira'. It is a significant Shinto pilgrimage site, particularly revered by fishermen and those involved in maritime activities. Annually, numerous visitors come to pray for safe voyages and household safety.

³⁵ Tengu (天狗) are legendary creatures found in Japanese folklore, often depicted as red-faced humanoids with long noses or as creatures with bird-like features. They are considered mountain gods or spirits and are known for their martial prowess and magical abilities. In various stories and legends, Tengu can be tricksters, but they can also serve as martial arts masters and protectors.

³⁶ Shōnenbō (正念坊さん) is a term that typically refers to a virtuous and focused monk or ascetic practitioner. The word 'shōnen' signifies righteousness and concentration, while 'bō' is an honorific for a monk. Thus, 'Shōnenbō' could denote a monk known for his righteous practice and mindfulness. The specific meaning might vary depending on regional and cultural contexts.

[末次郎]兄さんが此の病気で苦しんどるのなら、どなゝ事をして癒して上げないかんけど、屋根へさへ上げといたら朝から晩まで喜びつゞけに喜んどるんやもの。(中略) それに今兄さんを癒して上げて正気の人になつたとしたらどんなもんやろ。二十四にもなつて何も知らんし、イロハのイの字も知らんし、ちつとも経験はなし、おまけに自分の片輪に気がつくし、日本中で恐らく一番不幸な人になりますぜ。夫がお父さんの望ですか。何でも正気にしたら、えゝかと思つて、苦しむために正気になる位馬鹿なことはありません。

(Suejiro: If my brother is suffering from this illness, we should do whatever it takes to heal him. But if we just let him stay up on the roof, he's happy from morning till night. (...) And what if we cure him now and he becomes sane? He's twenty-four and knows nothing, not even the first letter of the alphabet, has no experience, and he'll start to be aware of his own deficiency. He'll probably become the most miserable person in all of Japan. Is that what father wants? To make him sane just for the sake of it, to suffer for being sane, is the most foolish thing.) (Kikuchi, 1993: 232)

Suejiro asserts that his brother is happy precisely because he is a 'madman'. He stops the smoke ritual and drives away the shrine princess. At the end of *The Madman on the Roof*, life returns to its usual routine. Gitaro climbs onto the roof as always and sees a

vision: 「末見いや、向うの雲の中に金色の御殿が見えるやろ、ほら一寸見
い! 綺麗やなあ」 (*Suejiro, can you see it? There's a golden palace in those clouds
over there. Look, just a bit! Isn't it beautiful?*) 「金色の夕日の中に義太郎の顔は
或る輝きを持って居る」 (*Gitaro face holds a certain radiance in the golden
sunset*). Seeing his brother in this state, Suejiro feels a twinge of the sorrow of the sane
and responds), 「あゝ見える。えゝなあ」 (*Yes, I can see it. It's wonderful*)
(Kikuchi, 1993), as if acknowledging that his 'mad' brother is indeed happier. Hearing
this, Gitaro, in a state of joy, calls out again to his brother: 「ほら! 御殿の中から、
俺の大好きな笛の音がきこえて来るぜ! 好え音色やなあ。」 (*Look! I can
hear the sound of my favorite flute from within the palace! What a beautiful sound*)
(Kikuchi, 1993). At the end of the play, 「父母は母屋の中にはいつてしまつて狂
せる兄は屋上に、賢き弟は地上に共に金色の夕日を見つめて居る」 (*while
their parents have gone inside the main house, the mad brother is on the roof, and the
wise brother is on the ground, both gazing at the golden sunset*) (Kikuchi, 1993) This
illustrates that although the brothers are in their respective appropriate places – Gitaro
on the roof and Suejiro on the ground – they are both looking at the same 「金色の夕
日」 (*golden sunset*), suggesting that they are both content.

The primary themes in *The Madman on the Roof* revolve around the perception
of madness versus happiness, societal norms versus individual freedom, and the

question of what constitutes a meaningful life. Gitaro's contentment in his world contrasts starkly with societal expectations of sanity and productivity, challenging the readers to reconsider the value and definition of sanity. In a similar vein, Synge's *The Well of the Saints* deals with themes of illusion versus reality, societal expectations and the nature of happiness. Both plays critique societal norms, and question the conventional definitions of happiness and sanity. They highlight the conflict between societal expectations and individual happiness, exploring the themes of perception, reality, and the pursuit of personal freedom.

These two works parallel each other in how they portray the intrusion of external authorities into small villages, attempting to convert the 'mad' to 'sane' or the 'blind' to 'sighted.' However, while both seem to represent a transition from one state to another, the concepts of madness versus sanity and blindness versus sightedness are fundamentally different. Synge's work presents villagers who can see, and a blind couple, without any inherent opposition or exclusion; it merely showcases different ways of perceiving the world due to physical limitations. This conflict lacks inherent, sharp exclusivity and can even suggest coexistence. Such a setting challenges the constant personal and societal perceptions.

In contrast, sanity and madness are not just about physical limitations or different perspectives but involve a judgment of right versus wrong. These states are inherently and irreconcilably exclusive. Moreover, in certain viewpoints, the mad may be truly sane, and the sane might be the most mad. This setup can transform into a challenge

against established social norms. The challenge to cognition and standards serves the diverse creative purposes of the authors, each harboring distinct political philosophies.

Furthermore, Kikuchi Kan's portrayal of a savior differs significantly from Synge's. In *The Madman on the Roof*, the savior is the priestess of Konpira, a nondivine figure with little influence in Japanese religion. Japan, as a polytheistic nation, deeply respected nature worship, believing that everything in nature possesses spirituality worthy of respect and protection. According to the Association of Shinto Shrines, as of 2021, there are approximately 80,000 to 100,000 shrines across Japan, dedicated to millions of deities (Association of Shinto Shrines, 2021). Notable deities include Amaterasu (the Sun Goddess), Susanoo (the God of Sea and Storms), Kagutsuchi no Mikoto (the Fire God), and the progenitors Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto.

Unlike Akutagawa, who chose the famous Buddhist master Kūkai, or Synge, who used saints – figures of significant importance in Christianity, revered as models of faith and representatives of heaven – Kikuchi Kan chose an inconspicuous priestess as the savior. This choice reflects his intent to make the judgment between sanity and madness less authoritative and more open to challenge. Unlike Synge's saint, who derides the blind couple's lives, the priestess in *The Madman on the Roof* does not judge the brother's actions. She does not even have the chance to treat the brother as the exorcism is stopped by the younger brother before it begins. This act of preventing the cure through another's intervention is a subversive breakthrough compared to Synge's *The Well of the Saints*.

Kikuchi Kan presents a brother immersed in ‘happiness’; villagers who deem this ‘madness’; and a neutral younger brother who acts as an observer. The villagers’ autocracy and interference, juxtaposed with the brother’s ‘happiness’ in his world, tilt the neutral brother’s balance towards his brother. It seems Kikuchi Kan positions himself as the younger brother, observing the state of the older brother against the villagers’ opposition. This represents his critique of inherent biases, discrimination, and the rigid administrative system of Japanese society.

西條八十 (Saijō Yaso and Synge)

Saijō Yaso (January 15th, 1892 – August 12th, 1970) was a prominent Japanese poet, lyricist, and scholar. Born in Tokyo, he studied at Waseda University where he cofounded the literary magazine 聖盃 (later *Kamen*). His first poetry collection, 砂金 (*Sand Gold*), published in 1919, established him as a Symbolist poet. Saijō furthered his studies in France at the Sorbonne, where he interacted with notable poets like Paul Valéry. After returning to Japan, he became a professor at Waseda University. Saijō is well-known for his contributions to popular music, writing lyrics for many hit songs including 東京行進曲 (*Tokyo March*), 青い山脈 (*Blue Mountains*), and 蘇州の夜 (*Soochow Serenade*). He served as the president of the Japan Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers (JASRAC) after World War II and was a member of the Japan Art Academy from 1962. Saijō’s legacy includes discovering the ill-fated children’s poet 金子みすゞ (*Kaneko Misuzu*) and being a representative poet of the Taisho era. (Uemura, 2003)

Saijō Yaso's engagement with Irish literature and his role in the Irish Literature Study Group highlight the early 20th-century Japanese intellectuals' interest in Western literary movements, particularly in the context of national identity and cultural independence. This interest was part of a broader trend where Japanese writers and scholars sought to understand and incorporate Western literary and cultural ideas into their own work, reflecting the global dynamics of the time, including the impacts of World War I and the shifting borders and national identities in Europe.

In 1915, Saijo Yaso submitted his graduation thesis titled *A Study on Synge's Plays* and graduated from Waseda University. In later years, he reminisced about the unique challenges he faced, noting:

「セルト族の文芸復興として評判の高かったアイルランドの劇作家、ジョン・ミリングトン・シングの作品の特質をテーマとして長い卒業論文を書いた。だが、なにしろ邦訳などはひとつもなかった時代で、全作品を読み、かつ論ずるのには、長い日月がかかった」 (*I wrote a lengthy graduation thesis on the characteristics of the works of John Millington Synge, an Irish playwright highly reputed for his contribution to the Celtic literary revival. However, it was a time when not a single work of his was translated into Japanese, and it took a long time to read and discuss all his works.*) (Saijō, 1991:17)

In the first issue of *The Mask* (1915-16), Saijo's essay titled *Synge's Art as the Embodiment of Daydreams* was published. This compelling essay is believed to be the outcome of the graduation thesis he submitted to Waseda University. He argued that

「ケルト民族がもともと世にあらはれた当時から、すでに持つてみるおほらかな、悠久をおもふ空想的な傾向」、「樹木に心ありとし、月明の丘に妖精の舞踊を夢みた所謂空想のための空想」 (*the Celtic people possess two main characteristics. The first characteristic, according to Saijo, has been an inherent part of the Celts since their early appearance in history, marked by a grand and ancient inclination towards fantasy – fantasizing for the sake of fantasy itself, imagining sentient trees and fairy dances on moonlit hills*) (Saijō, 1991:29).

The second characteristic Saijō Yaso identifies in the Celtic people, based on the words of Ernest Renan, is that 「ケルト民族の歴史は一つの長い輓歌である。ケルト民族はその追放、その海上の逃亡を今もなほおもひだす」 (*the history of the Celtic people is one long elegy. The Celts continue to remember their expulsions and their maritime flights*) (Saijō, 1991). He describes them as a 「悲しき逃亡の民族」 (*sadly fleeing people*), not only in reference to past events but also highlighting the contemporary situation of Irish peasants who 「現時の愛蘭土の農民たち」「故国の

自然の荒廃と、その地主たる英国貴族の圧制に耐えず、陸続として亜米利加や濠州の新世界へと移住しつ、ある」 (*continue to migrate to new worlds in America and Australia, unable to endure the desolation of their homeland's nature and the oppression of British nobility landlords*) (Saijō, 1991:58-63). This characteristic is represented by John Millington Synge, whose art embodies 「現実の悲しきままに彼等自らが強ひてわれとわが造つた白日の夢」 (*the sad reality they themselves are forced to create in their daydreams*) (Saijō, 1991:63), and 「彼等が苦き現実に於ては到底みたされざる熾烈な慾求を、せめては其処に実現せんとして遙かりアルを超へた想像の世界を捜め行つた」 (*the intense yearning they could never satisfy in their bitter reality, seeking instead to realize it in a world of imagination far beyond reality*) (Saijō, 1991:64).

Saijō's analysis suggests that Synge's works serve as a testament to the Celtic imagination's power to transcend the harsh realities of Irish life through the creation of an imagined world where the desires and dreams, unfulfilled in reality, can find expression and realization. Synge, in Saijō's view, captures the essence of the Celtic spirit's resilience and its inclination towards creating a refuge in the fantastical, a space where the grievances and struggles of the Irish people are transmuted into narratives that celebrate their enduring spirit and rich cultural imagination.

This perspective on Synge's art and its representation of Celtic characteristics provides valuable insights into the broader themes of exile, longing, and the escape into fantasy that pervade Irish literature. Synge's ability to intertwine the real and the imagined, drawing upon the lived experiences and hardships of the Irish peasantry while elevating these into the realm of the poetic and the fantastical, marks a significant contribution to the Celtic Revival and its efforts to reclaim and celebrate Irish identity and heritage.

Saijō's exploration of these themes through his engagement with Synge's work highlights the depth of his understanding of Irish culture and literature, and his appreciation for the ways in which these works reflect the complexities of Irish history, the beauty of its landscapes, and the resilience of its people. Through his studies, Saijō not only contributes to the appreciation of Irish literature in Japan but also underscores the universal appeal of stories that speak to the human capacity for imagination and the creation of beauty amidst adversity.

Saijō Yaso contrasts the artistic approaches of W.B. Yeats and John Millington Synge, highlighting how Yeats, who 「従来のロマンティズムを内部に枉げた不可思議の国の『紅き HANRAHAN』を急ぎ呼び戻して、今度は不可見の世界に走らせた、——さうしてそこに象徴主義をみとめた」 (*recalled the mysterious country of 'Red Hanrahan,' a figure distorted within conventional Romanticism, and then sent him rushing into the invisible world, thereby recognizing symbolism*), differs sharply from Synge, who 「美しき夢を惜気も無く棄て、波けふる海上の一孤

島アランに去つてからは、只管冷静なる農民の観察者となつた」 (*abandoned the beautiful dream without regret and became a calm observer of peasants after moving to the solitary island of Aran in the stormy sea*) (Saijō, 1991:72-74).

Saijō appreciates Synge's ability to recognize that 「無知野蛮な農民のうちにも、ある奇異な小さき夢がやさしく醸されてあるを認めた。それはイエーツ、A・E等の人々に見る蒼穹の星の光に濡れた夢ではなく、大地の匂いに包まれた夢であつた」 (*even among the ignorant and barbaric peasants, there are gently brewed strange little dreams. These are not dreams drenched in the light of stars in the firmament seen by people like Yeats and A.E. (George William Russell), but dreams enveloped in the scent of the earth*) (Saijō, 1991:75). He values the dreams Synge discovered as 「彼の周囲の作家たちのひとしく趁ふ、架空な、虚無の影像よりは遙かに貴く」 (*far more precious than the fictitious, void images pursued by his contemporaries*) (Saijō, 1991). According to Saijō, the most vivid aspect of Synge's work 「全般に亘つて、何よりもまづ鮮やかな色彩をなしてゐるのは、この夢、この農民の想像性」 (*is this dream, this imaginative power of the peasants*), arguing that Synge might truly be 「彼こそは真に、夢対現実のストラググルを永遠に続けゆく愛蘭土農民の、好個の象徴であつたのではあるまいか」 (*the perfect symbol of the Irish peasant, who eternally continues the struggle between dream and reality*) (Saijō, 1991:77-80).

Synge's work, rooted in the real and often harsh experiences of the Aran Islands' peasants, offered Saijō a more tangible and relatable form of artistic expression. It underscores a transition in the appreciation of Irish literature from the idealized and mythic to the concrete and social, highlighting the value of ordinary people's lives and dreams as worthy subjects of literary exploration.

In Saijō Yaso's journey through poetry creation, his second collection 見知らぬ愛人(*The Unknown Lover*) (Kōransha, 1922) includes a poem titled 墓(*Grave*), which draws inspiration from John Millington Synge's travel writing about the Aran Islands. The poem reflects on a scene described at the beginning of Synge's account, where several stone pillars marked with the names of unknown deceased stand, recounting the recurring shipwrecks and burials on the island. 'Grave' evokes the image of a baby's 「小さく、白き、二枚の歯」 (*small, white, two teeth*), reminiscent of 「かのシン
グが / 涙ぐみつつ通りしといふ / 寂しき愛蘭土の / 濱邊の墓を偲ばしむ。」
(*the lonely graves by the shore / that Synge passed by with tears*) (Saijō, 1991:80), linking to the desolation of the Aran Islands' shores, the harshness of the islanders' lives, and further associating with Synge's wanderings through Irish rural and fishing villages. This poem embodies more than mere whimsy, encapsulating a profound poetic essence.

Saijō's progression reveals that as he delved deeper into the study of Irish literature, he began to view the art of Yeats and others as 「所謂空想のための空想」 (*fantasy for the sake of fantasy*), contrasting sharply with the 「現実の悲し」 (*real*

sorrow) and 「苦さ」 (*hardship*) found in Synge's portrayal of the 「小さき夢」 (*small dreams*) and 「農民の想像性」 (*imaginative power of the Irish peasants*), which Saijō came to regard as essential expressions in art.

In 1914-1915, Saijō published *ボヘミアの詩人より* (*From Bohemian Poets*), which shows his interests ranging from Synge and Irish literature to Czech poetry. He states:

私がゆくりなくチェック族の詩に親んだのは、四五年前の事である。
其当時私は熱心な愛蘭土文学研究者であつたが、奥太利帝国に隷属している彼等チェック族が、絶えず暴戾な独逸種の貴族の圧迫を受けて、悲憤の涙を呑み、折あらば自己種族の独立を謀らうとしてゐる姿が、恰度かの愛蘭人が英国人の地主富豪の為に虐げられ、日夜自治制の建設を夢みてゐるのとひどく似通つてゐるので、好奇の心を動かされ、それから五六の材料を聚めてみたのであつた。

(My fondness for the poetry of the Czech people occurred quite unexpectedly about four or five years ago. At that time, I was a passionate researcher of Irish literature. The Czechs, subjugated under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, were constantly oppressed by the brutal Germanic nobility, swallowing tears of sorrow and anger,

and plotting for their ethnic independence whenever possible. This situation closely resembled the plight of the Irish, who were oppressed by British landlords and aristocrats, dreaming day and night of self-governance. This piqued my curiosity, leading me to gather materials on the subject). (Saijō, 1991:101)

Here, ‘the Czech people’ placed under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the suppression of the Czech revolutionary movement in Prague in 1848, including the prohibition of Czech language use and the enforced use of German, present cultural and political oppression. Saijō was drawn to their plight because it mirrored the Irish situation under British rule, seeking autonomy and independence. Saijō’s interest in poetry born from oppressed ethnic groups striving for independence is evident.

Saijō Yaso’s transition from studying Irish literature to translating Czech poetry underscores his broader engagement with colonialism and the struggle for national identity. Saijō’s interest in Czech poetry, spurred by similarities with the Irish struggle, reveals the universality of colonial oppression and the resilience of oppressed people. Through his translations, Saijō not only introduced Japanese readers to Czech literature but also to the universal themes of resistance against imperialism and the pursuit of national identity:

デヨーヂ・ムーアは嘗て愛蘭語に就てかう云ふ事を云つた。「吾人の希望する所は英語を一般語として使用し、我国語（愛蘭語）を未来の文藝のミ

一ディアシムとして、一般的使用及びヂアーナリズムから保留して置くことである。今後の五十年間に英語は十八世紀の拉典語の如く腐朽してしまふであらう、さうして単に商業語、又は新聞用語だけに制限されてしまふであらう」と。

(George Moore once said about the Irish language, ‘What we desire is to use English as a common language, while preserving our national language (Irish) as the medium for future literature and arts, keeping it aside from general use and journalism. In the next fifty years, English might decay as Latin did in the eighteenth century, becoming restricted only to the language of commerce or for journalistic purposes). (Saijō, 1991: 87)

今や独逸語の權威が漸く失はれんとする時、永い間土に埋もれてゐたチェック族の言葉から、果実に似た新鮮な匂のする唄を聴かうと期待するのも亦楽しい事ではないか。

(Now, as the authority of the German language gradually fades, wouldn't it be delightful to anticipate songs with a fresh scent, reminiscent of fruits, emerging from the Czech language, long buried under the soil?) (Saijō, 1991:101)

Saijō's analysis and translations illuminate the interconnected roles of literature, language, and national identity in the struggle against colonial or foreign domination.

The Irish literary revival aimed to rejuvenate Irish culture and language as a means of

reaffirming national identity, similar to efforts in Czech literature to celebrate Czech language and identity amidst the Austro-Hungarian Empire's decline.

He also noted that, in addition to language and literature, forms such as songs can be used to express ideas of independence and reshape national identity. He stated:

アイルランド民が数世紀の間、英国政府の圧制の下に在つて、毫もその目的の志を翻へさず、今ではアイルランド共和国建設の地歩に達してゐることに見ても私はこれらの鬱勃たる国民的精神の背後に、どれだけ彼等が常住口に絶たざる歌謡の力が作いてゐるかを考へずにはゐられないのである。幻想無ければ民衆死すと或る詩人は云つたが、これと同じ意味に於て民謡なければ民衆死すと云ふことが云はれるであらうと思ふ。何故とならば民謡なるものは一国の民衆の悩み、乃至あくがれの唯一の発露であり、さうしてかうした悩みや、あくがれの無い民族が決して永久に生き行くことは無いと想はれるからである。

(Even as the Irish people have been under the oppression of the British government for centuries without ever reversing their purpose and have now reached the foundation of the Republic of Ireland, I cannot help but think about how much the power of their ever-present songs has contributed to this burgeoning national spirit. A poet once said, 'Without fantasy, the people die,' but in the same vein, it could be said, 'Without folk songs, the people die.' This is because folk songs are the sole expression of a nation's people's troubles and yearnings, and it seems that

a nation without these troubles or yearnings will never truly live on). (Saijō, 1991:88)

This discussion highlights Saijō's understanding of folk songs not merely as cultural expressions but as vital components in the struggle for national identity and independence. Saijō aligns music with the broader movements of nationalism and liberation. His insights into how folk songs articulate collective experiences, aspirations, and resistances contribute to the understanding of music as a powerful medium for political and social mobilization.

Since that, Saijō critiqued the 催馬樂 (*Imayō*), considered the origin of Japanese folk songs, as merely imitating Chinese songs, and expressed anticipation for a day when 'true national aspirations and frustrations' would emerge from the general populace, inspired by the calls for a resurgence in folk songs from the poetic community. Saijō awaited the creation of new songs that reflected 「真実の国民的憧憬、乃至鬱悶の歌声」 (*true national aspirations and frustrations*), rejecting the influence of Chinese folk songs on Japanese ones in favor of establishing a national identity through music.

At this point, Saijō's patriotic political expression is vividly reflected in his essays and newspaper articles. His admiration for Irish and Czech literature, particularly for Synge, was predominantly because he saw in Synge's literary expression a hope for discovering the independent national characteristics of the Japanese Yamato people.

After all, Japan had been influenced by Chinese civilization, especially Confucianism, for centuries. This influence permeated various aspects, including writing, religion, customs, and even clothing and cuisine, which was something from which Saijō, as a proponent of a strong Japanese empire, was keen to break away. This perspective aligns with the views of Chinese May Fourth scholars and many political figures in the Irish dramatic movement. However, Saijō's political views began to diverge significantly from these ideas. In fact, from the standpoint of this text, his views became completely deviant and disregarded basic narrative ethics.

In June 1920, Saijō published 'The Massacre at Nikolayevsk' in the *Yomiuri Newspaper*:

ああ、かくして、忘れがたきは

五月二十四日の夜半ぞ!

黒龍の水も逆まけ! 月も泣け!

萬里の異域に棄てられた哀れなるわが同胞の血は

最後の一滴まで搾りとられて風腥き河畔の砂を赭黒に染めたのだ!

(中略)

娘よ、

せめてはこの玩具の赤き木片をたかく積んで、

血の墓になぞらへよ、さうしてその佛を永く永く胸に秘めよ。(中略)

斯も迂愚なる為政者の群の下に

かくも冷やかなる國民の環親のうちに、

六百の同胞の貴き生命が

一片の変穉のやうに簡易に失はれ去つたことを、-

さうしてかのアルメニヤ人の虐殺にもました

名も無き血の行為が

恬然と、何等の反省もなしに行はれた

恐ろしいこの民族の曙の時代のことを。- おそらく未來の孫等は小

さな首を傾げ、この奇蹟に似た時代を信じないに違ひない、しかもや

がて動かすべからざる事實を覺るときかれらは愛らしき目を瞑らせ兩

の手をふり絞つて昔の人類の愚さを、無智を、酷薄を、恥知らずを罵

り嘆くであらう!

(Ah, thus, the unforgettable night of

May 24th!

Even the waters of the Heilong River reversed their course!

Even the moon wept!

The pitiful blood of my compatriots, abandoned in a foreign land thousands of miles away, was squeezed out to the last drop, staining the sandy banks by the stench-filled river a dark red. (Interpolation)

My daughter, at least stack these red pieces of toys high, mimicking a grave of blood, and forever, forever keep this Buddha in your heart. (Interpolation)

Under such foolish rulers, within such cold-hearted citizenry, the precious lives of six hundred compatriots were lost as easily as a piece of straw – and that nameless act of bloodshed, even worse than the Armenian massacre, was carried out calmly, without any reflection, in the dawn of this terrifying era for the nation. –

Perhaps the grandchildren of the future will tilt their small heads, doubting this era that resembles a miracle, yet, when they come to recognize the undeniable truth, they will narrow their lovely eyes and clench their fists, cursing and lamenting the folly, ignorance, cruelty, and shamelessness of humanity in the past!). (Saijō, 1991: 153-155)

The Massacre at Nikolayevsk, is a poem that commemorates the incident where Japanese residents were killed by partisans in Nikolayevsk, Russia, from March to May 1920. Through this work, Saijō not only mourns the loss and suffering of his compatriots, but also critiques the broader context of indifference and inhumanity that

allowed such tragedies to occur. The comparison with the Armenian massacre underscores the global scale of such violence, and the collective responsibility to remember and learn from these dark chapters of history. This poem, with its vivid imagery and emotional depth, serves as a powerful reminder of the human cost of conflict and the enduring need for compassion and understanding in the face of historical atrocities.

However, this massacre was not as Saijō described in his poem, where he portrayed the Japanese military and civilians as victims of 非道の虐げ (*inhuman oppression*) by 敵の勢 (*enemy forces*) and their 「異域に棄てられた哀れなるわが同胞の血は / 最後の一滴まで搾りとられ」 (*pitiful blood of my compatriots, abandoned in a foreign land thousands of miles away, was squeezed out to the last drop*) (Saijō, 1991). By choosing the word ‘squeezed out’, Saijō creates a discursive space that portrays the Japanese residents in Siberia as if they were the oppressed. In reality, Japan’s Siberian Intervention from 1918 to 1922 was an intervention in the Russian Civil War. Along with their Allied powers, Japan supported the anti-Bolshevik White Army, hoping to weaken the Soviet regime through this intervention and expand its influence and power in the Far East. After the Red Army took control of Nikolayevsk, Japanese troops and local Japanese residents became targets of the Bolshevik Red Army. From April to May, the Red Army began arresting and massacring Japanese soldiers

and civilians. Records indicate that over 700 Japanese, including soldiers and civilians, were killed.

Saijō's work completely overlooks Japan's war criminal actions of intervening in another country's civil war for its own national interests, and instead portrays Japan as a thoroughly oppressed and pitiable victim. This narrative was intended to stir patriotic feelings among the Japanese populace, as evidenced by his poem's conclusion that 'true tears' will surely be shed over the dead of Nikolaevsk.

This utilization of literary narrative to 'reshape history' reveals the multifaceted nature of historical memory and the ways in which literature can reflect and shape the understanding of past events. This juxtaposition of different perspectives – between the oppressor and the oppressed; between the aggressor and the victim – illuminates the multifaceted nature of historical memory, and the ways in which literature can both reflect and shape the understanding of past events. While New Historicism insists that narrative is history and history is narrative, historical narratives should adhere to basic ethical standards and not fall into historical nihilism or the extreme view that 'history is a girl that anyone can dress up'.

Saijō's militaristic political views became particularly evident during Japan's involvement in World War II. During this period, he produced numerous patriotic and propagandist works that were used to support and justify Japan's imperialistic endeavors. On September 18, 1931, the Manchurian Incident erupted, and in December of the same year, Saijō's lyric 起てよ国民 (*Arise, Nationals*) was released by Victor.

The first verse goes, 「天神怒り地祇恚る / 咄、何者の暴虐ぞ / 満蒙の空風暗く / ひるがへる胡砂血に赤し」 (*The heavens rage and the earth deities are furious / Who dares commit such atrocity? / The skies over Manchuria and Mongolia darken / The sands blood-red in the horror of spilled blood*) (Saijō, 1991). The second verse continues, 「高粱靡く満州は / 想へ再度の戦に / わが忠勇の将卒が / 屍に換へし土地なるぞ。」 (*The sorghum rustles in Manchuria / Think again of the battle / Where our loyal and brave soldiers / Turned into corpses for this land*) (Saijō, 1991). It follows with, 「いま暴民の靴さきに / 踏みにじられて神州の / 国威危うく墜ちんとす。」、「天地に恥ぢぬ權益を / 蹂躪するは何奴ぞ。」 (*Now trampled under the boots of the mob / The dignity of our divine nation / Faces the brink of ruin*). 「天地に恥ぢぬ權益を / 蹂躪するは何奴ぞ。」 (*Who dares trample upon our rights / That do not shame heaven and earth?*) (Saijō, 1991: 157).

「東京朝日新聞」 (*The Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*) reported in a special edition on September 19 that 「十八日午後十時半奉天郊外北大営の西北側に暴戾なる支那軍が満鉄線を爆破、我鉄道守備隊を襲撃」 (Saijō, 1991) (*At 10:30 PM on the 18th, near the northwest of Beidaying on the outskirts of Shenyang, the treacherous Chinese army blew up the Manchurian Railway line, attacking our railway guards*), describing it as 「支那側の計画的行動」 (*a premeditated act by the Chinese side*).

Saijō incorporates this narrative directly into his poem. Thus, describing the ‘Chinese army’ as 「暴戾」「暴民」 (*barbarous and mob*), while portraying the Japanese side in terms of 「血に赤し」「屍」「踏みにじられて」「蹂躪」 (*blood-red, corpses, trampled upon, and trampled*) (Saijō, 1991), is a style repeated in Saijō’s later works. Following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in July 1937, Saijō released 北支の風雲 (*The Storm Clouds over North China*) (Columbia, September 1937), with the first verse stating, 「闇に鳴る鳴る銃声は / あれは北支那、盧溝橋 / 卑劣未練な支那兵が / 開討など>は小癩なり」 (*The gunfire roars in the dark / That’s North China, Marco Polo Bridge / The cowardly, pitiful Chinese soldiers / Their offensive is but a minor irritation*), and concludes with, 「進め、皇軍、膺懲は / 東洋平和の為なるぞ」 (*Advance, Imperial Army, for the punishment / Is for the peace of the East*) (Saijō, 1991:158).

The poem 通州の虐殺 忘るな 七月廿九日! (*Do Not Forget the Massacre in Tungchow, July 29!*) (*Shufu no Tomo*, 1937), later in 戦火にうたふ (*Singing in the Flames of War*) (Nihon Bookstore, 1938), inspired by the Tungchow Incident on July 29th, 1937, repeats the same form and vocabulary as *The Massacre at Nikolaevsk* in response to it being reported as the second Nikolaevsk Massacre.

(略)二百に余るわれらの同胞が、——武器も持たぬ無辜の同胞が、——
支那軍隊の手で無残に虐殺された、(中略) おお! 西欧に聞くバルトロメ
オの虐殺にも優るその悪逆よ、残忍よ、天人共に宥さざる鬼畜の横道よ、
二十世紀の白日の下にあるまじき、無恥無慙の血染の妖怪画よ、(中略)
泥靴に踏躪られた無辜二百の英霊よ、いつの日か、安けき天に還る? (中
略)
娘よ、涙の中に緊く記憶せよ、この昭和十二年七月廿九日を、おまへの
子、孫、曾孫に語り聴かせよ、かかる鬼畜に似たる蛮族を隣邦に持ちた
る或る時代の垂細垂の恥しき、汚はしき歴史を。——

*((Excerpt) Over two hundred of our compatriots,—innocent compatriots
unarmed,—
were brutally massacred by the Chinese military, (Interpolation)
Oh! Even surpassing the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew in Western Europe
Such wickedness, cruelty,
An act intolerable by gods and men alike, a diabolical atrocity,
A shameless, brazen blood-soaked specter, not to be seen under the daylight
of the twentieth century, (Interpolation)
The innocent spirits of two hundred, trampled under muddy boots,
When shall they return to the tranquil heavens?*

(Interpolation)

My daughter, remember firmly amidst tears,

This July 29, of the twelfth year of Shōwa,

Tell your children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren,

Of the shameful, filthy history of Asia in an era,

When we had such beastly barbarians for neighbors.—). (Saijō,

1991:160-161)

This narrative strategy, framing the Chinese military as ‘barbarous’ and ‘monstrous’ while lamenting the Japanese victims in a deeply emotional and nationalistic tone, is characteristic of Saijō’s work during this period. The poems serve as a potent reminder of the era’s complex socio-political dynamics, illustrating how literary and artistic expressions were employed to navigate and reflect upon national trauma, historical memory, and the construction of identity amidst conflict.

When studying and translating the poetry of oppressed nations like Ireland and Czechoslovakia, Saijō Yaso was inspired by their resistance under the banner of patriotism. He saw their works as expressions of a struggle for independence and national identity. However, during wartime Japan, he created songs and timely poetry also under the guise of ‘patriotism’, but these works turned towards supporting and justifying Japanese imperialistic rule.

While Saijō's earlier translations and admiration for Irish and Czech literature focused on themes of resistance and the quest for freedom, his later works during the war utilized similar language to portray Japan as a victim. For instance, by using terms like 'squeezed out' to describe Japanese suffering, he depicted Japan as an oppressed entity, masking its imperialist nature and creating an image of powerless citizens. This narrative inverted the actual power dynamics, employing the forms of Irish and Czech poetry to serve Japan's wartime propaganda. This manipulation fundamentally distorted the essence of the Irish and Czech literature he once admired. These works originally aimed to voice freedom, national independence, and self-respect against oppression, but Saijō repurposed these themes to bolster Japanese war efforts, thereby undermining the original intent of these literary forms.

Conclusion

This chapter is lengthy and covers a wide range of topics, but it fundamentally revolves around a single theme: how the Japanese academic community translated, adapted, and understood Synge and his works. To comprehensively explain this topic, it was necessary to address it from multiple perspectives.

Firstly, this chapter clarifies that Japan did not only translate the works of Synge but also engaged in a holistic introduction of the Irish Dramatic Movement, including its objectives, processes, and key writers. Subsequently, this chapter provides a detailed explanation of the political purposes behind the Japanese academic community's introduction of the Irish Dramatic Movement. This explanation centers on Japan's need

to demonstrate its burgeoning national strength following the Meiji Restoration, and to secure its place among the Western powers. Ireland's unique status offered Japan a model to draw from, bringing the politically charged Irish Dramatic Movement into the Japanese academic spotlight.

Having elucidated the relationship between Japan and the Irish Dramatic Movement from a broad political perspective, this chapter then narrows its focus to one of the dissertation's central themes: the interpretation of Synge. As one of the pioneers of the Irish Dramatic Movement, Synge naturally received widespread attention. Through extensive data collection, the chapter lists the performance records of Synge's plays in Japan over six to seven decades, affirming this point. However, this politically motivated admiration did not entirely align with Synge's own creative and political intentions.

To explore this discrepancy, this chapter employs the Prague School Scholars' three-phase model of nationalist movements to analyze the initial resistance and eventual acceptance of Synge's works in Ireland. This analysis reveals that the Japanese academic community was particularly attracted to the interpretations of Synge's works by Irish nationalists. These interpretations, which rooted Synge's works in Irish folklore, language, and tradition, deeply resonated with Japanese scholars, especially those with strong nationalist aspirations. They hoped to use Synge's creative methods to unearth the essence of Japanese national character, seeking to free Japan from centuries of influence by Chinese and Western cultures.

This chapter concludes by focusing on three of the most renowned Synge scholars in Japan: Akutagawa Ryunosuke, Kikuchi Kan, and Saijou Yasō. It provides a detailed analysis of their understanding and adaptations of Synge. Among these three, Akutagawa Ryunosuke is depicted as the most intellectually pure, representing a segment of Japanese scholars whose research focused on literary creation and criticism, as well as on religious and philosophical reflection. For them, translating and adapting Synge's works served their literary purposes. Certainly, the purpose of such literary creation was undoubtedly connected with the society of the time. However, Ryunosuke Akutagawa was not a writer with a strong political inclination. Instead, he focused more on criticizing and satirizing the turbulent society of Japan, the degradation of human values, and the collapse of morality. Due to the limitations of his class perspective and worldview, while criticizing the dark aspects of society, he attributed the root of these problems to an abstract concept of inherent human evil. He consciously overlooked the roles of political systems and government decisions.

Kikuchi Kan, on the other hand, is shown to have political ambitions aimed at revitalizing Japanese regional and local cultures. He sought to challenge the traditional class order, and saw the adaptation of Synge as a means to satirize the entrenched cultural hegemonic classes. Saijou Yasō, however, represents the broader nationalist camp in Japan. With Japan's growing national strength, this group aimed to acquire more resources through colonialism to secure their position in the Western bloc. Their militaristic ideology inherently lacked moral justification, thus they distorted the

purpose of the Irish Dramatic Movement as represented by Synge. They utilised Synge's depictions of the common people to mislead the public, diverting attention from Japan's aggression and instead inciting outrage over the suffering of Japanese soldiers and civilians due to resistance from the colonized.

These three perspectives on Synge encapsulate the political and cultural context of early 20th-century Japan, laying the groundwork for the next chapter's discussion on the connection between Guo Moruo and Synge.

Chapter 5 The Reception of Synge by Guo Moruo

This chapter will first analyze why Japanese writers made such adoptions, exploring the creative motivations behind these choices and the various cultural, religious, and political factors in Japan that influenced them. As a student who studied in Japan, Guo Moruo was deeply influenced by these writers. Initially, he was profoundly moved by them, as their creative concepts, rooted in cultural and religious backgrounds similar to those of China, resonated more with him. However, after his interest was piqued, his political philosophy diverged from that of these Japanese intellectuals. Unlike other more radical May Fourth scholars from China, he did not have such strong political intentions. In the third chapter, there is a similar analysis where I will draw retrospective comparisons, examining why he did not fully accept Japan's adaptation of Synge but instead re-read Synge and introduced his original work to China.

Therefore, the intention of this chapter is to combine Guo Moruo's evolved political philosophy from 1910 to 1930 to uncover how Guo Moruo resonated with the combined influence of Synge himself and the Japanese scholars' interpretation of Synge. Based on this foundation, Guo Moruo inherited and transcended Synge's work, adapting it to suit China's national conditions and his own literal ideas.

The creative intentions of interpretation of Synge by Japanese scholars

Both reception aesthetics and intertextuality theory have conducted in-depth analyses of the transformations of literary texts, including novels and dramas, in their dissemination across different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. According to Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser, the meaning of literary works is not fixed but is generated by readers within specific historical and cultural contexts (Jauss, 1982; Iser, 1978). Within this framework, Japanese scholars, when adapting Synge's works, took into account the horizon of expectations of Japanese readers, and made corresponding adjustments to the original texts. Through meticulous translation and adaptation of Synge's works, they resonated with Japanese readers. This adaptation not only preserved the literary value of Synge's works but also endowed them with new cultural significance, enabling them to be understood and accepted within Japanese society.

Julia Kristeva emphasizes that any text is generated against the background of other texts, forming a 'mosaic of quotations' (Kristeva, 1980). Within this framework, the introduction of Synge's works into Japan effectively constituted a dialogue with Japanese literary traditions and cultural contexts. Japanese scholars, when adapting Synge's works, were evidently influenced by local theater and traditional literature. In their adaptations, they achieved intertextual interaction and re-creation. By combining the social critique and character portrayal in Synge's works with Japanese rural culture, they imbued these works with new meaning within the Japanese cultural context. This adaptation not only reinterprets Synge's works but also responds to the realities of Japanese society.

In the following section, this chapter will first analyze the deeper reasons behind the adaptations of Synge's dramas by Ryunosuke Akutagawa, Kikuchi Kan, and Saijo Yaso.

Attitude towards Blindness – Religious and Philosophical Beliefs

Japanese religious culture is a blend of Buddhism and Shintoism. Buddhism, introduced from China in the 6th century, has profoundly influenced Japan's philosophy, art, and social structure, particularly regarding suffering (Williams, 1989). The core Buddhist teachings, including the Four Noble Truths (suffering, its origin, cessation, and the path to its cessation) and the concept of karma, emphasize that all life is filled with suffering, which originates from ignorance and desire. Through practicing and understanding Buddhist principles, individuals can transcend suffering and achieve Nirvana. This perspective has shaped the Japanese view on life, death, and suffering, often fostering an attitude of acceptance and transcendence in the face of hardship (Reader, 1991).

Given this cultural background, physical limitations such as blindness may be seen as a pathway to transcend the material world and reach a higher state of consciousness. In Japanese literature, blindness is often portrayed positively, especially in works exploring Buddhist ideas, like *The Tale of the Heike*. Such works reflect the Buddhist doctrine of 'seeing one's true nature'. Even in physical blindness, characters can 'see' the truth of the world through inner spiritual practice and understanding of Buddhist teachings. This positive attitude towards blindness demonstrates the profound Buddhist understanding and transcendence of life's sufferings.

In contrast, Western culture, particularly in Synge's Ireland, is significantly influenced by Christian teachings, which emphasize bodily wholeness and the value of vision differently. In Christianity, bodily and sensory integrity is viewed as God's gift, and the restoration of sight is often seen as a miracle and a sign of God's grace.

Therefore, Akutagawa's simplification of the blind character settings in Synge's work reflects the Japanese cultural context. In Japan, the concept of blindness carries a more spiritual and transcendent significance, influenced by Buddhism. This stands in contrast to the Western, particularly Christian, view where physical and sensory wholeness is highly valued. This cultural and religious backdrop likely influenced Akutagawa's interpretation and adaptation of Synge's characters, focusing more on the inner spiritual journey rather than the physical affliction itself.

Disability: Cultural Attitudes Towards Reality and Fantasy

In traditional Japanese aesthetics, concepts such as 侘寂(*wabi-sabi*) emphasize the appreciation of imperfection, transience, and incompleteness. This aesthetic is rooted in Buddhist teachings, particularly the deep understanding of impermanence, which holds that all existence is temporary and incomplete (Koren, 1994). In this cultural context, people are encouraged to accept the imperfections of real life and to find deeper beauty and meaning within these imperfections.

Wabi-sabi is not just an aesthetic concept; it is also a way of life and philosophy that influences daily life and artistic creation in Japan. In Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's

works, including not only *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story*, but also *Rashomon*, *The Nose*, and *Youth and Death*, one can see how he incorporates elements of wabisabi into the depiction of characters and plots. Especially when dealing with characters' predicaments and inner worlds, Akutagawa displays a profound understanding and acceptance of the imperfect state (Ueda, 1995). Restoring sight in his works often serves to allow the protagonist to more deeply recognize the perfection within imperfection. In contrast, Western culture, particularly in Synge's works, often depicts the conflict between reality and fantasy as the tension between individual self-awareness and societal expectations. In Western philosophy and psychology, individualism and the realization of personal potential are highly valued, influencing how cultural products handle the concept of reality.

In Synge's *The Well of the Saints*, the blind couple's disappointment with the real world after regaining their sight highlights the sharp conflict between reality and fantasy. Their experience symbolizes the confrontation with the gap between ideals and reality and the psychological impact of this disparity on individuals (Greene, 1996). This cultural attitude towards facing reality reflects the emphasis in Western culture on individual challenge and growth, as well as how individuals should adjust their expectations and values when confronted with real-life difficulties.

Attitudes towards sight – The Relationship between Society and the Individual

In Japanese culture, collectivist values dominate, emphasizing social harmony and the prioritization of group interests. This cultural backdrop encourages individuals facing personal challenges, such as blindness, to seek harmony with society rather than highlighting personal difficulties (Sugimoto, 2010). The roots of this attitude can be traced back to Japan's feudal social structure and the Confucian emphasis on loyalty and obligation.

In literary works, this collectivist culture is often portrayed through characters' introspection and acceptance when facing difficulties. For instance, Japanese literature frequently depicts how characters achieve a more harmonious state within society through inner cultivation and self-sacrifice. This cultural tendency is not only evident in modern literature but is also deeply rooted in traditional Japanese theater and poetry (Varley, 2000).

In contrast, Irish and broader Western cultures place a greater emphasis on individualism, focusing on how individuals position themselves within society, and explore ways to confront and overcome personal misfortunes. Western literary works often use individual challenges as a lens to examine broader social and existential issues (McDonald, 1997). In Synge's *The Well of the Saints*, the protagonists' struggle to adapt after regaining their sight serves to explore broader societal and personal issues, such as the conflict between reality and ideals and the sense of isolation individuals feel within society.

This emphasis on individual challenges reflects the importance of self-actualization and personal rights in Western culture. Within this cultural framework, literary works often depict how individuals seek personal growth and self-fulfillment by challenging existing social norms (Hall, 2002).

Since Kyoto became the capital of Japan in 794, it has served as the cultural, political, and religious center of the country. As the residence of the emperor and the seat of successive ruling institutions, Kyoto has accumulated a rich cultural heritage and traditional arts, symbolizing Japanese culture. However, the Meiji Restoration of 1868 marked the beginning of Japan's modernization and Westernization. The political center of Japan shifted from Kyoto to Tokyo, which gradually became the new center of power and economic activity. Despite this shift, Kyoto remained the center of traditional culture.

After the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese government actively promoted the construction of a nationwide railway network. By the Taisho period (1912-1926), the railway had connected most major cities and local towns in Japan (Railway History of Japan, 1920). This significantly facilitated the movement of people and the exchange of cultures, allowing local cultures to be more widely disseminated and exchanged. The spread of the telegraph and the flourishing of newspapers accelerated information dissemination. Local news and cultural events could quickly reach all corners of the country, increasing people's awareness and understanding of local cultures (Yoshino, 1992).

Furthermore, the Taisho Democracy movement promoted the development of local autonomy. Local governments gained more autonomy in cultural affairs and began to emphasize and protect local cultural heritage and traditions. The Japanese government also implemented various regional revitalization policies, providing financial support and cultural projects to promote local cultural development. For example, the Ministry of Education (now the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology), established cultural preservation and promotion funds to support local cultural activities and research. These measures led many scholars to call for breaking the traditional order that placed Kyoto's orthodox culture at the core (Irokawa, 1985).

Moreover, the cultural movement of the Taisho period was characterized by a break from traditional forms and an exploration of modernity and diverse expressions. Writers, artists, and intellectuals sought to break free from the constraints of traditional Japanese culture and explore new forms of expression, often influenced by Western ideas. This period saw the emergence of various literary and artistic movements, including naturalism, romanticism, and proletarian literature (Havens, 2006).

Kikuchi Kan (1888-1948) was a prominent writer during the Taisho and early Showa periods. He grew up in Japan after the Meiji Restoration, and personally experienced Japan's modernization process. He studied at Tokyo University and was active in Tokyo's literary circles. Kikuchi, along with other intellectuals and thinkers, engaged in intense debates about the future direction of Japanese society. They explored

new ideologies, including socialism, anarchism, and feminism, challenging established norms and proposing alternative visions for Japan's future. This intellectual dynamism fostered a more dynamic and diverse cultural landscape (Weisenfeld, 2000).

Folklores to Serve Militarism

In the early Showa period, Japan was undergoing a series of significant political and social transformations. From the late 1920s to the early 1930s, Japan's economy was severely impacted by the global Great Depression, exacerbating domestic political instability. The influence of the military gradually increased, and nationalist and militarist ideologies began to permeate society (Duus, 1998). With the rise of militarism in the 1930s, the state implemented various policies to strengthen military influence and promote national mobilization. This period saw a profound impact on literature and the arts, with many writers being required to produce works that aligned with state ideologies, supporting militarism and expansionist policies (Yoshimi, 2005).

Saijo Yasō, having experienced social turmoil and political indoctrination, gradually came to embrace militarist thought, believing that writers had a duty to support the nation's policies and war efforts through their literary works. He believed that by creating heroic characters and promoting patriotism, he could enhance national cohesion and fighting spirit (Havens, 2006). Furthermore, loyalty and obedience have long been important values in Japanese culture. Saijo Yasō's works emphasized these traditional values, aligning with the state's ideological needs. Through his literary works, he showcased the importance of personal sacrifice and collective honor, attempting to

integrate traditional culture with modern military needs (Weisenfeld, 2000). By deeply embedding literary works in the lives of the people, delving into folk stories, and utilizing Synge's creative methods to achieve his political objectives, Saijo Yasō resonated with the real lives of the Japanese populace. This approach was more effective in mobilizing patriotic sentiment.

Whether it is Ryunosuke Akutagawa's adaptation of Synge's works based on Japanese beliefs and philosophical reflection; Kikuchi Kan's metaphorical adaptation breaking through traditional culture and order; or Saijo Yasō's militaristic adaptation, these are all inevitable processes of domestication and transformation in the dissemination of literary works. Exploring the roots of these transformations is fundamental to understanding the resonance between writers. After examining the origins of the resonance between Japanese writers and Synge, this thesis will further investigate the reasons for the resonance between Guo Moruo, a writer who studied in Japan, and Synge.

The influences of Japanese Irish study scholars on Guo Moruo

Guo Moruo, along with a group of Chinese scholars studying in Japan, experienced Japan during both its economic upturn and during the global economic crisis, spanning from the early Taisho period to the early Showa period. Guo Moruo went to Japan for his studies in 1914, at the beginning of the Taisho period. This period is considered relatively free and open in Japan, with the gradual implementation of constitutional politics and significant influence from Western thought, leading to the emergence of

many new ideas and literary movements. During this time, he actively participated in literary creation and cultural exchanges, befriending many Japanese and Chinese intellectuals and gaining a deep understanding of Japanese culture and social dynamics (Chen, 1981). His literary style during this period was heavily influenced by Romanticism.

However, the early Showa period saw Japan transition from Taisho democracy to militarism. With the ascension of Emperor Showa, Japanese society gradually shifted towards conservatism and militarization, the political environment became tense, and nationalist and militarist ideologies began to spread widely (Gordon, 2003). Guo Moruo remained in Japan during the early Showa period and witnessed the shift from the relatively liberal Taisho period to the tense atmosphere of the early Showa period. During this time, he continued his literary work with a growing focus on political and social issues, and his literary style gradually shifted towards critical realism with strong political overtones. In 1927, he returned to China and actively engaged in revolutionary activities. His experiences and the ideas he absorbed while studying in Japan had a significant impact on his political and literary activities upon his return (Tamura, 2001). In his correspondence with Tian Shouchang in 《三叶集》 (*The Collection of Three Leaves*), Guo Moruo discusses the Trilogy ‘白桦派’ (*Shirakaba-ha*) by Arishima Takeo. He later expressed in his writings on Japanese literature that he had a considerable understanding of the works of Japanese literary figures such as Mori Ōgai,

Natsume Sōseki, Kunikida Doppo, Ryūnosuke Akutagawa, Jun'ichirō Tanizaki, and Haruo Satō. In his memoirs, Tian Han repeatedly mentioned:

芥川的作品常常探讨人性的复杂和社会的矛盾，这与郭沫若对现实主义和社会批判的兴趣相契合。郭沫若在其后来的创作中，也展现了对人性深刻的洞察和对社会问题的关注(*Akutagawa's works often explore the complexities of human nature and societal contradictions, which align with Guo Moruo's interest in realism and social criticism. In his later works, Guo Moruo also demonstrated a profound insight into human nature and a focus on social issues*) (Tian Han, 1956). 郭沫若回国后创作的《屈原》、《虎符》等剧作，体现了他对戏剧形式和内容的探索，受到了菊池宽现实主义戏剧的影响 (*Guo Moruo's plays, such as Qu Yuan and The Tiger Tally, created after his return to China, reflect his exploration of dramatic form and content, influenced by the realism of Kikuchi Kan's drama*) (Tian, 1956: 173).

These references indicate that Guo Moruo had a deep understanding of Japanese scholars who promoted the Irish dramatic movement, maintaining long-term correspondence with one or two of them. The creative philosophies of these writers

played a crucial role in shaping Guo Moruo's literary ideology during his time in Japan. They also served as bridges through which he learned about the Irish dramatic movement and the works of Irish writers. Consequently, his connection to the Irish dramatic movement and Synge was mediated through the lens of Japanese scholars' interpretations, making his and his fellow May Fourth scholars' engagement with Irish literature a form of 'third-hand contact'. This forms an intriguing landscape involving Synge – the Irish nationalists – Japanese scholars – and May Fourth scholars, including Guo Moruo. To clarify the complex and multifaceted relationship between Guo Moruo and Synge, this chapter will explore the influence of Japanese scholars specializing in Irish studies and their introduction of the Irish dramatic movement on Guo Moruo.

The Influence of Japanese Scholars' Adaptations of Synge's plays on Guo Moruo During the Early Taisho Period

When discussing Guo Moruo's political philosophy, it is noted that in the early period of his studies in Japan, he was a relatively conservative progressive scholar. This seemingly contradictory set of adjectives becomes quite understandable when applied to him and the era in which he lived. Consequently, his literary creations reflected his political philosophy, displaying a general style that was filled with passion, individual liberation, and a strong focus on social realities. His works expressed a fervent pursuit of freedom, nature, beauty, and love, while also showcasing his resistance to traditional constraints and his embrace of new ideas.

Guo Moruo criticised the dark aspects of society, denouncing the moral decay and the collapse of social order. He observed that most young scholars of the time were patriotic, but that their patriotism lacked revolutionary fervor. At that time, he yearned for a powerful state and a unified government, believing that only such a foundation could ensure the well-being and happiness of the people. He aspired to freedom and democracy, but did not deeply contemplate that the guarantee of democracy and freedom lies in the reform of the political system.

He attacked the hypocrisy of contemporary scholars and the ignorance of the masses, believing that the people needed enlightenment. He focused on the suffering of the people, hoping to awaken them to the injustices in society. However, he hesitated to challenge the social system and the ruling elite responsible for these injustices, partly because he himself was a member of the elite class. This period of his life was marked by significant limitations in his perspective.

This perspective closely aligned with the literary views of Japanese scholars represented by Ryunosuke Akutagawa. Akutagawa's adaptations of Synge's dramas were deeply influenced by the socio-political context of Japan, which similarly sought to address societal issues through literature while often refraining from direct confrontation with the political system. Both Guo Moruo and Akutagawa shared a literary approach that combined a keen awareness of social issues with a tendency to critique moral and ethical decay, rather than directly targeting political structures.

By examining the adaptations of Synge's works by Japanese scholars, we can better understand the influences on Guo Moruo during his formative years in Japan. These adaptations likely resonated with his own struggles to reconcile his passion for social justice with his position within the societal hierarchy, thereby shaping his early literary and political outlooks.

Indeed, this creative perspective stems from the traditional cultural psychology of both Chinese and Japanese nations. Both countries belong to agrarian civilizations primarily based on rice farming. The agricultural production method, which is rooted in crop cultivation, objectively demands harmonious coexistence and cooperative social relations within families and tribes (Cheng, 1996). Unlike Western cultures that emphasize individualism and personal endeavor before considering interpersonal relationships, Chinese and Japanese cultures have, from the outset, focused on maintaining psychological interdependence and harmonious relationships. To sustain stable and harmonious interpersonal relationships, common moral standards are required to regulate and constrain individual thoughts and actions.

It can be said that ethics and morality are the core of the ideological systems of Eastern nations, represented by China and Japan. Both cultures tend to absolutize moral issues, and in traditional Chinese and Japanese psychology, evaluations of people and events often result in starkly opposing conclusions – good or bad, virtuous or evil, right or wrong, black or white. People are extremely sensitive to moral issues and tend to judge individuals and events based on personal moral qualities, weighing interpersonal

conflicts on the scales of ethics and morality (Suzuki, 1989). This cultural mindset, which favors moral judgment over social analysis, subtly influenced both Guo Moruo and Ryunosuke Akutagawa, two writers deeply steeped in traditional culture.

As literary figures with a strong poetic temperament, Guo Moruo and Akutagawa had a much keener and more advanced perception of their times and society compared to ordinary people. They responded more intensely to the moral crises of their contemporary society, often expressing their concerns and unease in their works. This sentiment reflects a consciousness of the social challenges of their era. They recognized the dark aspects of their social environment that hindered societal progress and endangered human advancement. On one hand, they deeply felt their social responsibility, which bolstered their confidence in self-realization; on the other hand, they keenly perceived the crises of disharmony surrounding them. Driven by this sense of responsibility, they were eager to eliminate social crises. When their ideals were obstructed by adverse external environments, making realization difficult or impossible, they became acutely aware of the severe discord and inconsistency between themselves and their surroundings. This dissonance resulted in an inability to realize their selfworth, leading to feelings of anxiety, indignation, and unrest, thus giving rise to a consciousness of social suffering. This consciousness often appeared in their works, reflecting their limitations and focusing on humanitarian concerns. Their works frequently explored moral and ethical dilemmas, individual versus collective, right

versus wrong, survival versus death, all imbued with the authors' intense intellectual and emotional engagement.

Ryunosuke Akutagawa was renowned for his concise writing style, vivid psychological portrayals, and profound philosophical reflections, which significantly influenced Guo Moruo. During his time in Japan, Guo Moruo read many of Akutagawa's works and learned how to express complex thoughts and emotions through succinct and powerful language (Hirakawa, 1990).

Drawing on the creative approaches found in Synge's dramas, Ryunosuke Akutagawa integrated elements such as 'wanderlust', 'illusion versus reality', and 'human nature and morality' into his subsequent works. This influence is evident in stories like *The Nose* and *The Spider's Thread*, where Akutagawa employed Japanese folklore and myths to explore themes of 'illusion versus reality' and 'social moral deviation'. This approach significantly inspired Guo Moruo's later literary creations. Moreover, Synge and Akutagawa's method of using local myths and folklore for allegorical storytelling profoundly influenced Guo Moruo's most important poetry collection, *The Goddesses*.

Many poems in *The Goddesses* exhibit a style shaped by myth and legend, with the imagery of 'goddesses' and 'the sun' unraveling their mysteries. For example, in the opening poem *The Rebirth of the Goddesses*, the goddesses recreate the sun as a female deity:

- 新造的太阳，姐姐，怎么还不出来？

- 她太热烈了，怕她自行爆裂；还在海水之中浴沐着在！

(– The newly created sun, sister, why has she not yet emerged?)

- *She is too passionate, afraid of bursting herself; still bathing in the sea!)*

(Guo Moruo, 1982:4)

In the Chinese mythological system, whether it is the ancient myth of the Golden Crow (solar bird), which consists of the nine sons of the heavenly emperor, or the Taoist deity Taiyang Xingjun (True Light Universal Luminary Lord) who governs the sun, these are typically male figures. Beyond religious tales, in Chinese folk customs, the sun symbolizes life and energy, representing ‘Yang’ (positive) energy, the primary source of vitality in the universe. The rising sun signifies the revival of all things, and such symbolic imagery, in a long-standing patriarchal society, is naturally assumed to be male, embodying ‘masculine energy’.

This is also why Japan uses the sun flag as its national flag, heavily influenced by Chinese culture, where the ‘sun’ (日) symbolizes the sun. The character ‘日’ is both Chinese and a part of the Japanese writing system influenced by Chinese characters.

Guo Moruo was undoubtedly aware of this traditional setting. The only explanation for his deviation is the influence of Japanese writers like Akutagawa Ryunosuke, who creatively incorporated Japanese mythology into their works.

In ancient Japanese mythology, many of the primordial deities were female. The earliest Japanese texts recording the history, religion, mythology, and literature of ancient Japan, such as the 《古事记》 (*Kojiki*) and 《日本书纪》 (*Nihon Shoki*), describe the creation of the Japanese islands and ancient clans. During the time when heaven and earth were first divided from chaos, the gender of the seven generations of deities that appeared in Takamagahara was not yet clearly defined. By the time of Izanagi and Izanami, they engaged in the act of creation around the heavenly pillar, giving birth to Awaji, Shikoku, Kyushu, Sado, and other islands, forming the Japanese archipelago. This mythological narrative underscores a cultural reverence for women, symbolizing forgiveness, benevolence, light, and peace. Such ancient myths foster a linkage between the veneration of female deities and the worship of the sun, embodying the cultural consciousness of sun worship and female divinity.

The veneration of the sun goddess, integrated with Japanese cultural identity and reflected in the works of Japanese writers, naturally influenced Guo Moruo during his time in Japan. His vision and range of thought, along with his cultural consciousness, were subtly shaped by this immersion. The depiction of the sun as female in *The Rebirth of the Goddesses* aligns with the symbolism of Amaterasu, the sun goddess in Japanese

mythology, representing love, forgiveness, and extending to democracy and peace, opposing despotism.

The Influence of Japanese Scholars' Adaptations of Synge's Drama on Guo Moruo During the Late Taisho and Early Showa Periods

During the reign of Emperor Taisho, Japan implemented a relatively liberal constitutional government, a period often referred to as 'Taisho Democracy'. During this time, party politics and the parliamentary system gradually developed, creating a relatively open social atmosphere (Duus, 1998). In the late 1920s and early 1930s, the military's influence increased, gradually taking control of national policy. By the 1930s, Japan embarked on a path of foreign expansion and aggression, with militarism on the rise (Gordon, 2003). Additionally, during the late Taisho period, Japan experienced rapid economic growth and accelerated industrialization. However, the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake and the 1929 global economic depression severely impacted the Japanese economy. Despite continued industrialization efforts in the early Showa period, Japan's economic situation became unstable due to the global economic environment and increasing domestic military expenditures (Hunter, 1989).

During the late Taisho period, writers enjoyed a free and diverse creative environment, focusing on social realism and exploring human nature. They used literature to reflect social issues and conduct profound social critiques (Keene, 1998). In contrast, the early Showa period saw writers' creations influenced by nationalism and militarism, emphasizing patriotism and collectivism. Many writers used their works to

propagate state ideologies, encouraging people to dedicate themselves to the nation and the war effort (Yoshimi, 2005). Literary creation was strictly controlled, and many works were used to justify war and promote nationalist sentiments (Gordon, 2003).

The transitional period from the late Taisho to the early Showa eras witnessed Japan's significant shift from the liberal and open 'Taisho Democracy' to the conservative and militarized early Showa period. This transition also brought changes to writers' creative styles, from the free and diverse social criticism of the late Taisho period to the nationalistic propaganda and restricted creation of the early Showa period. This transition reflects the profound changes in Japanese society during different historical periods.

During this period, Japanese writers often incorporated strong elements of nationalism and social critique in their works. This significantly influenced Guo Moruo's literary style, shifting it from a heavy romanticism towards political metaphor and eventually to a focus on political revolution. For instance, Kikuchi Kan's adaptations of Synge's plays, which satirized class rigidity, emphasized local cultural revitalization, and depicted the conflict between the new and the old, resonated with Guo Moruo's political views following the New Culture Movement.³⁷ By this time, Guo

³⁷ The New Culture Movement was a significant ideological and cultural reform movement in modern Chinese history, lasting approximately from 1915 to the mid-1920s. This movement had a profound impact on Chinese society, politics, and culture. The New Culture Movement advocated the abolition of feudal ethical codes, particularly

Moruo had begun to awaken politically. He was no longer the early writer who criticized society but avoided addressing the deeper issues of Western imperialist aggression or the chaotic warlord politics in China. Influenced by these Japanese literary politicians, he now began to employ political metaphors, such as using the relationship between Korea and Japan to implicitly criticize the relationship between China and Japan. Due to the oppressive rule of Duan Qirui's³⁸ government, and Guo Moruo's need for government support as a student, he was subjected to censorship and could not directly discuss Chinese government policies. Nevertheless, his political aspirations needed expression, leading to works like *The Shepherd's Lament*, which used Korea to satirize China.

criticizing Confucianism. It promoted the dismantling of traditional hierarchical and family systems, opposed old morals and old rituals, and championed personal freedom and equality (Chen, 1919).

³⁸ The Duan Qirui government refers to the regime led by Duan Qirui during the period of the Beiyang Government of the Republic of China. The Duan Qirui government had two periods of rule: the first from 1916 to 1920, and the second from 1924 to 1926. During its rule, although the Duan Qirui government attempted to achieve national unity and progress through centralization and modernization reforms, it employed high-pressure measures that resulted in political despotism, economic exploitation, and severe social control. While these high-pressure policies maintained short-term stability to some extent, they ultimately exacerbated social conflicts and increased public discontent, failing to achieve lasting stability and reform goals. (Chen, 1982)

By the early Showa period, as Japanese militarism fully rose and Japanese writers collectively veered to the right, emphasizing nationalism, state authority, military power, and traditional values, Guo Moruo could no longer contain his inner turmoil. Disregarding the support from the Chinese government and the restrictions from state censorship, he felt compelled to express his thoughts directly. During this period, Japanese writers like Saijo Yasō used folk elements from Synge's works as political tools for propaganda, aiming to awaken a militaristic revival among the Japanese people by highlighting the suffering of the lower classes. Influenced by this extreme nationalism, Guo Moruo began to see himself as synonymous with the nation and the nation as synonymous with himself. He published numerous critical articles in newspapers and magazines targeting the Chinese government and Sino-Japanese relations, calling on all Chinese people to stand up against tyranny and invasion. His literary creations at this time were centered on strong nationalist ideas, taking the prosperity of the nation as his personal mission.

Guo Moruo's works also began to adopt realist techniques, focusing on realistically portraying social phenomena and people's living conditions. He aimed to use literature to reveal social contradictions, criticize feudal remnants and colonial oppression, and call for social change. Additionally, influenced by the Japanese scholars' interest in the Irish dramatic movement, which emphasized historical events to evoke national pride and promote national spirit, he also created numerous works based on historical themes. Through the depiction of historical events and figures, he expressed

his reflections and critiques of contemporary society. During this period, his literary style exhibited a combination of romanticism, realism, and revolutionary fervor.

However, even while residing in Japan and being profoundly influenced by Japanese academia, Guo Moruo did not limit himself to solely accepting the influence of Japanese scholars. While absorbing the essential spirit of literary and social transformation from Japanese scholars, he also actively sought to enrich himself with the essence of various Western intellectual movements. The interpretation of Irish literature and Synge by Japanese scholars did not entirely align with his literary objectives or fully resonate with his political philosophy. This discrepancy set the stage for his later direct engagement with Synge's works – understanding, translating, and interpreting them firsthand. Otherwise, he could have easily opted to directly translate the Japanese adaptations of Synge by writers such as Ryunosuke Akutagawa, Kikuchi Kan, and Tsubouchi Shoyo, considering that English was not the strongest suit for this group of Chinese scholars studying in Japan. Xulu Chen mentioned in *Modern Chinese History* (1982) that Guo Moruo and his contemporaries who studied in Japan generally had limited English proficiency. They primarily relied on Japanese for academic research and communication. Although they had a basic understanding of English, it was insufficient for conducting in-depth research and translation of English literature independently. This further explains why Guo Moruo and others initially preferred to engage with and translate Japanese translations and adaptations by Japanese scholars when studying Western literature, including Irish literature. Later historical records

indirectly confirm that when Guo Moruo introduced Synge's works, he translated directly from the English originals rather than the Japanese versions. To achieve this, Guo Moruo worked diligently to improve their English proficiency. This point indirectly supports the deduction of this thesis to a certain extent.

Subsequently, this thesis will use historical materials and Guo Moruo's collected letters to trace his engagement with Irish drama and his interactions with Synge.

More direct connections with Synge

Looking back at the history, the vigorous May Fourth Neo-literature Movement made many students set their eyes on western civilization and determined to '救治中国政治上、学术上、思想上一切的黑暗' (*'cure the darkness of politics, academics and thoughts in China'*) (Chen Duxiu, 1919: 14) by virtue of engaging with the advanced democratic thoughts of the west. Guo Moruo, who was far away in Japan, also paid close attention to domestic current affairs, became familiar with his bosom friend Zong Baihua, and then got acquainted with Tian Han through his frequent reading of 《时事新报·学灯》 (*Journal of Current Affairs – Learning Lamp*). Guo Moruo was able to come to know Synge, and this was also the result of the communication of these three writers.

In 1914, Guo Moruo crossed the east to Japan. With the dream of '以医救国' (*'saving the country with medicine'*), he started his study. However, he gradually lost

interest in medicine and became obsessed with literature after witnessing the flourishing cultural trend during The Taisho Era (1912-1926) in Japan. Since the end of 1919, Guo Moruo's poems such as 《鹭鸶》 (*Cormorants*) and 《浴海》 (*Bath in the Sea*) and so on, were published in *Learning Lamp*, and had repeatedly contribute to *Learning Lamp*, therefore, he established a good friendship with the chief editor Zong Baihua. In his 《创造十年》 (*Creating Decade*), Guo Moruo recalls:

使我创作欲爆发了的，我应该感谢一位朋友，编辑《学灯》的宗白华。我同白华最初并不相识，就由投稿的关系才开始通信……那时候，但凡我做的诗，寄去没有不登，竟至《学灯》的半面有整个登载我的诗的时候。

(I should thank a friend, Zong Baihua, the editor of Learning Lamp. I am not familiar with Baihua at the beginning, and the relationship between us just starts by the contribution..... At that time, as long as the poems I sent to contribution which were done by me, the Learning Lamp would adopt unexceptionally and surprisingly, there even existed some time when my poems took up half side of the 'Learning Lamp'). (1982:68)

At the early 1920, Guo Moruo met Tian Han who was studying in Japan through Zong Baihua's introduction. In a letter to Guo Moruo in January 3rd, 1920, Zong Baihua mentioned that:

我有个朋友田汉，他对欧美文学很有研究。他现在东京留学..... 我很愿你两

人携手做东方未来的诗人，你若愿意抽暇去会他，我可以介绍

(I have a friend, Tian Han, who is very knowledgeable about European and American literature. He is now studying in Tokyo... I would like you both to be the poet of the east in the future. If you would like to meet him at your leisure, I can introduce you.) (Guo Moruo, 1982:176)

From this point then, Guo Moruo and Tian Han began to communicate, and left 《三叶集》 (*The Three Leaves*) to witness their connection. Through this collection of letters, scholars can interpret the views of the three young people on various issues such as life, love and literature. It was through these letters that Tian Han first mentioned Irish literature and Synge to Guo Moruo. In a letter sent to Guo Moruo on February 29th, 1920, Tian Han first mentioned Neo-romanticism and Synge in detail:

英国方面如以爱尔兰最盛(In the British, Ireland tops the list).....John Millington Synge 的 (John Millington Synge's *The Well of the Saints, The Playboy of the Western World, Riders to the Sea, Deirdre of the Sorrows*, etc. (Guo Moruo, 1982:178)

What needs to be noticed is during that time, the knowledge of Irish literature spread in Japanese literary circles, and the plays of Synge were performed in Japanese theatres. Thus although as early as 1920, Tien Han was influenced by Synge and recommended him to Guo Moruo, in fact it was not until October, 1921, that Tian Han actually reading the works of Synge, and his diary 《蔷薇之路》 (*The Road of Roses*) recorded his contact with Synge. On October 23rd, 1921 of his diary, Tian Han mentioned that he was going to pick up a reserved book that day, 书为爱尔兰薄命作家 *John Synge* 的剧曲集, 中有 *Riders to the Sea* 一篇,

近世一幕剧中的名作

(*A play by John Synge, an Irish-born short-lived writer, with Riders to the Sea in it, a famous work among recent one-act plays*). (Tian, 2000)

Later, on October 26th of his diary, Tian Han mentioned again that

上午读完 *John Synge* 的 *Riders to the Sea*, 拟费数日力译之, 拟其名为《入海之群骑》

(*After reading John Synge's Riders to the Sea in the morning, I planned to spend several days translating them into the name 《入海之群骑》*) (Tian, 2000)

After receiving Tian Han's recommendation, Guo Moro wrote a poem 《胜利的死》 (*The Triumphant Death*) for many days in October in order to commemorate the sacrifice of Terence MacSwiney, the Irish independent general who fought against British rule. In the poem, he wrote:

可敬的马克司威尼呀!/可爱的爱尔兰的儿童呀! 自由之神终会要加护你们, 因为你们能自相加护, 因为你们是自由神的化身故!

*(Respectable MacSwiney!
Lovely Irish children!
The god of freedom will defend you,
Because you can defend yourselves, Because
you are the god of freedom!)* to express his
sorrow). (Guo Moruo, 1982:362)

Therefore, it is not difficult to speculate that as early as March 1920, Guo Moruo had some contact with Irish literature and Synge, and also had a continuous interest in Ireland. Guo Moruo (1982) once mentioned:

爱尔兰文学里面, 尤其约翰沁孤的戏曲里面, 有一种普遍的情调, 很平淡而又很深湛, 颇象秋天的黄昏 时在洁净的山崖下静静地流泻着的清泉.....这是有点近乎虚无的哀愁, 然而在那哀愁的底层却又含蓄有那么深湛的慈爱。

(There is a general sentiment in Irish literature, especially in the plays of John Synge, which is very plain but also deep, rather like a spring quietly flowing under a clean cliff in the autumn dusk..... This seems a bit like the almost empty sadness, however in the bottom of that sadness, such deep benevolent affections are implicated). (Guo Moruo, 1982:367)

At the beginning of the contact with Synge, Guo Moruo was experiencing the transformation from being a medical student in the Kyushu Imperial University to becoming the person who insisted on the literary creation and started to regard ‘文以救国’ (*utilizing literary creation to enlighten Chinese*) as his motto. He recalled the reasons why he took to the road of literature:

文艺正是摧毁封建思想、抗拒帝国主义的犀利的武器，它对于时代的革新，国家的独立，人民的解放，和真正的科学技术等具有同样不可缺乏的功能。因此，我可以心安理得地放弃我无法精进的医学而委身于文艺的活动了。

(literature and art are the sharp weapon of destroying feudal ideology and resisting the imperialism, and they have the identically indispensable function as the real science and technology and so on to the innovation of the time, national independence, and the liberation of people. Therefore, I felt at ease to give up medicine which I could not improve and devote myself to literary activities.) (Guo

Moruo, 1948:369)

Since then, Guo Moruo continuously published in *Learning Lamp*. From 1919 to 1920, he had published dozens of new poetry, including 《凤凰涅槃》 (*Nirvana of Phoenix*) 《地球，我的母亲》 (*Earth, My Mother*) 《日出》 (*Sunrise*) 《天狗》 (*T'ien Kou*), and with Tian Han, Yu Dafu, and others, he founded The Creation which started arguments with the dominant literary research association at that time to promote the concept of 'for art'.

In April 1924, Guo Moruo graduated from Kyushu Imperial University and returned to China with his family. However, he returned to Japan in April of the following year due to the difficulty of finding work, and the failure of the early activities of the literary research institute that he had co-founded. At the end of September, with his wife and children, he moved to the village of Saga county. During this period, he spent nearly two months translating 《社会组织与社会革命》 (*Social Organization and Social Revolution*) by Hajime Kawashange, a famous pioneer in the study of Marxism in Japan, and he successively translated 《处女地》 (*Virgin Land*) by Turgenev, and created 《行路难》 (*Difficult Journey*), which completely analyzed his mood in the

past years. In the last article of Guo Moruo's works collection 《行路难》 (*Difficult Journey*), Guo Moruo wrote:

为了找到一个安静的写作地点，曾经在佐贺县的熊野川温泉过着赁居生活的事情，长达数十个月之久。

(In order to find a quiet place to write, I used to live in the hot springs of Kumanogawa in Saga Prefecture for dozens of months). (Guo Moruo, 1982:373)

In his diary 《行路难·新生活日记》 (*Difficult Journey: A New Life*), Guo Moruo wrote that: ‘十月三日，朝浴，屋前读 Synge 戏曲三篇’ (‘On the 3rd of October, in front of the house, read three pieces of Synge's plays’) (Guo Moruo, 1982: 327), indicating that in the autumn of 1924, he had carefully read Synge's drama collection. In November of the same year, he and his family returned to live at 44 Huanlong Road, Shanghai. In early December, at the invitation of Gu Jun Society, he and Zhou Quanping went to Yixing, Jiangsu Province to investigate the war disaster in Jiangsu and Zhejiang. Through this trip, Guo Moruo got in touch with the reality of the Chinese countryside, and witnessed the miserable life of the general public, then finally realized that ‘要把头埋到水平线下，多过活些受难的生活，多领略些受难的人生’ (*we should bury our heads below the horizon, and live in a suffering life, and experiencing more*

miserable lives’) (Guo Moruo, 1982:356). In early December 1924, Guo Moruo and his colleagues went to Yixing, Jiangsu Province for an investigation, and for the first time they came into contact with the withering situation in the Chinese countryside. After returning to Shanghai, he began to translate Synge’s plays. At the beginning of his short story 《亭子间中的文士》 (*The Intellectuals in the Pavilion*), which was published on January 21st, 1925, he mentioned that in the pavilion room of the small foreign-style house, ‘他在译读爱尔兰文人 Synge 的戏曲集’ (*he was translating the collection of plays of the Irish writer Synge*) (Guo Moruo, 1982:386).

According to the end of the article, the novel was finished on the afternoon of January 7th. Therefore, in early 1925, Guo Moruo was already involved in the translation work of the collection. At the end of May, he wrote the 《译后》 (*Posttranslation*) for the completed the collection of plays, which was compiled and finished in late 1925, and published in The Commercial Press in February 1926.

Even ‘沁孤’ (*Ch’ in Ku*) translated by Guo Moruo is widely known before the currently common translation ‘辛格’ (*Hsin Ko*) for the Chinese translation of Synge. Before that, Chinese academic circles could not agree on the translation of Synge’s name. As early as July 1919, Mao Dun (2001) introduced ‘赛音齐’ (*Sai Yin Ch*) in 《近代戏剧家传》 (*The Biography of Modern Playwrights*), and later referred to it as ‘山音基’ (*Shan Yin Chi*) in 《近代文学的反流 – 爱尔兰的新文学》 (*In the Backflow*

of Modern Literature – New Literature in Ireland) (192: 60). Ye Chongzhi (1926) published an introduction to Synge on the subject of 《辛额》 (*Hsin O*). It was not until Guo Moruo translated the entire six plays of John Synge that the argument about the correct names of the translation was settled.

Undoubtedly, 1924 is an important year for the writer Guo Moruo. It marked the significant moment when he changed from a romantic visionary to a realistic revolutionary. More importantly, in the autumn of that year, he formally read Synge and began to translate him. This roughly encapsulates the entire process through which Guo Moruo became acquainted with Irish literature and Synge. Naturally, given that these events occurred a century ago, historical records are incomplete, and the authenticity of the collected letters is subject to verification. Correspondence and autobiographical writings often carry strong personal emotions and subjective perceptions, and there is even the possibility of memory errors regarding events and locations. Despite the need for further verification of authenticity, we can still sense the emotional temperature from a century ago through these writings. It is evident that the May Fourth scholars were very excited and deeply moved by their contact with the Irish dramatic movement. This intense engagement undoubtedly had a significant impact on the literary and artistic concepts of the May Fourth scholars. Guo Moruo, for instance, who had spent five years in contact with Irish literature while involved in the translation of Synge's works, experienced a crucial period of ideological change in his life during those five years. The transformation of literary and artistic thoughts within him as an individual, and

within his intellectual framework, undoubtedly has a deep connection with his translation of Synge's plays.

Before analyzing the specific influence that Synge had on Guo Moruo's creative concepts and literary style, we must understand why Guo Moruo and his fellow May Fourth scholars chose not to directly translate the adapted Japanese works, such as *The Madman on the Roof* or *The Nose*. Instead, they spent more time translating the original English versions of Irish dramas. Understanding the reasons behind this choice is crucial to uncovering Guo Moruo's motivations for inheriting and adapting Synge's works.

The reasons why Guo Moruo re-read J.M. Synge

The May Fourth scholars, represented by Guo Moruo, were able to access numerous authors involved in the Irish dramatic movement thanks to the significant contributions of Japanese writers who introduced these works to Japan. Particularly noteworthy are the diverse adaptations of Synge's dramas by Japanese scholars. Although these adaptations altered Synge's original plays, making their presentation in Japan different from the original, it was precisely this initial exposure to the adapted versions that made it easier for Guo Moruo and others to accept the Irish dramatic movement.

Japan and China share similar cultural backgrounds, both being part of the Confucian cultural sphere. The May Fourth scholars, deeply influenced by Confucian and Taoist cultures, retained some traditional conservative thoughts despite being progressive youths of their time. This was especially true for those who studied in Japan.

Even as Japanese society became more open and liberal during the Taisho period, the millennia-old feudal and hierarchical political and religious systems still profoundly influenced it. Fortunately, the influx of Western ideas during the Taisho period allowed Japanese scholars to adopt Western literature and thought with a more open mindset.

However, at that time, China was a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society with a repressive and insular social atmosphere. During the late Qing Dynasty, the Qing government advocated ‘师夷长技以制夷’ (*learning advanced techniques from the West to counter the West*), focusing on learning Western technology rather than ideology. Political reform was never an easy concept to propose in China. The religious, familial, and rural elements in Synge’s dramas were not readily acceptable to the May Fourth scholars. Even though scholars like Guo Moruo, as mentioned in his collected letters, were among the impoverished and marginalized individuals in China, those who could study abroad on government scholarships in the early 20th century were not commoners, and their literary focus was not on the lower classes.

Several factors contributed to the adaptations by Japanese writers like Ryunosuke Akutagawa and Kikuchi Kan, who explored themes of religion, faith, social values versus personal values, and class rigidity. These adaptations served as essential intermediaries for Guo Moruo and others to engage with the Irish dramatic movement. Additionally, Saijo Yasō’s political interpretations opened new perspectives for Guo Moruo and his peers regarding the political engagement of literature. However, the vastly different political environments between China and Japan from the early to

mid20th century led to distinct ideological paths. Simply adopting Japanese scholars' political ideas was not suitable for China's unique political context. Thus, it was necessary for Guo Moruo and others to further engage with the Irish dramatic movement directly, drawing more appropriate elements suited to China's national conditions.

National Status and the Political System

Following the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan rapidly achieved modernization. During the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, Japan defeated Tsarist Russia, elevating its international standing. The victory not only bolstered Japanese self-confidence but also prompted the Western powers to reevaluate Japan, recognizing it as a significant global force (Keene, 2005). Japan joined the Allies in World War I, and further solidified its international position at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, gaining territorial and economic benefits. As a victorious nation, Japan's influence in international affairs was significantly enhanced (Duus, 1998). In 1920, Japan became one of the founding members of the League of Nations, marking its critical role in international politics.

In the late 19th century, the Qing Dynasty faced internal strife and external threats, with frequent invasions by foreign powers and domestic uprisings. Following the Opium Wars, the Qing Dynasty was forced to sign a series of unequal treaties, severely compromising national sovereignty and territorial integrity (Chow, 1967). The 1911 Xinhai Revolution overthrew the Qing Dynasty and established the Republic of China. However, the newly established Republic was politically unstable, with limited central

control over the provinces (Chen, 1982). From 1912 to 1928, during the Beiyang government era, China experienced political turmoil, with warlords dividing the country. The central government's authority was repeatedly challenged, making national unity and stability difficult to achieve (Chow, 1967). During the Paris Peace Conference, China faced diplomatic setbacks, leading to the May Fourth Movement. This movement marked the strong dissatisfaction of Chinese intellectuals with the national status quo, and spurred the New Culture Movement, advocating for science, democracy, and opposition to feudal rituals and the old culture (Chow, 1967). The New Culture Movement fostered the liberation of thought and called for social reform, but politically and economically, the Republic of China still faced significant challenges (Schwarcz, 1986). Japan's initiation of the Mukden Incident in 1931, and subsequent occupation of the three northeastern provinces of China further weakened the Republic of China's sovereignty and international standing (Gordon, 2003). In contrast to Japan's gradual ascent in national power, the Republic of China faced internal and external crises, leaving the country fragmented and on the brink of collapse.

Such a stark disparity in national status made the direct importation and adaptation of the Irish Dramatic Movement by Japanese scholars, as practiced by Guo Moruo and other academics, ill-suited to the realities of China. During that period, nearly all translation activities and cultural movements in China were intertwined with politics, embodying the political demands of various nationalists. This was particularly true for the translation of the works of the Irish Dramatic Movement, which, despite its

inherent political connotations, could not simply resonate through literary techniques alone to overcome the substantial challenges faced by the May Fourth scholars. These scholars took significant risks to publish journals and stage plays amidst tumultuous times.

Ryunosuke Akutagawa's approach of deliberately ignoring his own class background, overlooking a decaying political system and a corrupt national structure, and sympathizing with the lower classes through a perspective of tragic compassion and romantic sentiment in his adaptations appeared profoundly out of touch and pretentious in the context of a China plagued by internal strife and external threats. Such philosophical and life-value-seeking literary concepts failed to resonate fundamentally with the lower masses and thus could not achieve Guo Moruo and others' goals of using literature to promote social progress and reform in China.

After the establishment of the Republic of China, the Beiyang warlords gradually seized national power. Ostensibly, the Beiyang government functioned as the central government; however, in reality, it was fragmented by regional warlords, resulting in significant political instability. The political system during the Beiyang period was nominally a republic but substantively ruled by warlords (Chow, 1967). In 1912, the provisional constitution of the Republic of China was promulgated, establishing a republican system. Yet, the political landscape became more chaotic with Yuan Shikai's autocratic regime, and his failed attempt to restore the monarchy. The Duan Qirui government adopted a repressive policy, using military force to suppress opposition in

an attempt to centralize power (Chen, 1982). In 1928, the Nationalist Government was established in Nanjing, marking the beginning of the Kuomintang rule in China. The Nationalist Government sought to achieve national unification through centralization, yet it faced significant challenges from regional warlords and Japanese aggression (Schwarcz, 1986). Meanwhile, Japan had already established a constitutional political system and parliamentary system during the Taisho era, which facilitated the development of democratic politics to some extent. Although Japan shifted towards militarism in the early Showa period, it retained some forms of constitutional governance (Gordon, 2003; Chen, 1982). While the May Fourth Movement promoted ideological liberation and social transformation in China, the oppressive political environment and autocratic governance hindered societal change (Schwarcz, 1986).

Without a constitutional system and legislative mechanisms to protect basic human rights, freedoms such as speech and assembly were virtually non-existent under the oppressive centralized government in China, rendering society effectively voiceless. Kikuchi's adaptations, representing a stronger political metaphor, aligned with the themes of the May Fourth Movement, advocating the breakdown of traditional conservative notions and class rigidity. However, such Japanese writers as Kikuchi lacked revolutionary zeal in their adaptations. Kikuchi's focus on local culture and breaking away from the cultural dominance of Kyoto aligned with the interests of the majority of the Japanese bourgeoisie and were actively promoted by the Japanese government. In stark contrast, China's needs were different; they were not driven by

industrial development requiring the flourishing of local economies to further national progress. The most pressing issues in China included a decayed system, rigid class structure, and more critically, the fragmentation by warlords, with no strong central government. The May Fourth scholars aimed to awaken a populace submerged in this morass. This awakening could not be achieved merely through appeals; it necessitated revolution, resistance, and even bloodshed.

Unlike Japan during the Taisho era, which experienced rapid industrial growth, China's economic condition was dire due to prolonged internal conflicts and foreign invasions. During the Beiyang government era, China was engulfed in continual warfare and social unrest with warlords dividing the country. This turmoil led to a decline in agricultural production, stagnation in industrial development, and severe damage to infrastructure (Chen, 1982). Moreover, economic aggression by Western powers intensified, with China's economic resources being plundered and markets controlled. The establishment of concessions and treaty ports rendered China economically passive and subordinate (Chow, 1967). After the establishment of the Nationalist Government in 1928, efforts were made to advance economic reconstruction and modernization. Although some progress was achieved during the 'Nanjing Decade' (1928-1937), the overall situation remained hampered by internal strife and external aggressions (Schwarcz, 1986). The onset of full-scale resistance against Japan in 1937 further plunged the Chinese economy into distress. The war devastated most of the

industrial and agricultural infrastructure, leading to economic collapse and severe hardships for the populace (Hunter, 1989).

The economic base determines the superstructure; so when basic survival becomes the predominant issue, literary works that are introspective, circuitous, and require prolonged and repeated engagement, akin to life's parables, become valueless to a population struggling to survive. During such times, the May Fourth scholars needed to employ more direct, vigorous, and dramatically conflicting, even bloody and violent texts to realize their political and literary goals. A revolutionary spirit was indispensable.

Religion and Personal Experience

Confucianism, as the core of traditional Chinese culture, remains deeply ingrained in Chinese society despite frequent modern social transformations, influencing everyday life and social behavioral norms (Chow, 1967). However, during the May Fourth Movement and the New Culture Movement, intellectuals fiercely criticized Confucianism, which they saw as a feudal orthodoxy impeding societal progress. They advocated for science and democracy, called for the abolition of superstition, and opposed feudal religious ideologies (Schwarcz, 1986), promoting the replacement of traditional religious beliefs with science and rationality to drive social modernization and ideological liberation (Chow, 1967).

This likely explains why figures like Guo Moruo did not alter *The Well of the Saints*, widely praised among Japanese scholars, as this work, infused with religious ceremonies, was not aligned with the aspirations of the New Culture Movement. Influenced by the ideas of this movement, adaptations such as *The Well of the Saints* and subsequent Japanese works like *Kōbō Daishi's Miraculous Birth Story*, *The Nose*, and *The Madman on the Roof*, which use religious miracles to provoke deep reflection, were no longer included in the creative materials of the May Fourth scholars. It is important to note that in Guo Moruo's *The Goddess*, there is extensive use of mythological motifs, which is fundamentally different from the adaptations by Japanese writers and Synge's original purposes. The former merely seeks to use religious miracles to create an absolute space for discussing other philosophical issues, while the latter aims to reshape myths, imbuing them with a new spirit of the era and social significance. This cultural reshaping is intended to reinterpret traditional culture from a modern perspective (Chen, 1981). Characters and stories from mythology are endowed with symbolic meaning, used to express the pursuit of freedom, love, beauty, and nature, as well as criticism of the old system and old ideologies (Tamura, 2001). This use of symbolism and metaphor does not contradict the core ideas of the New Culture Movement but rather extends and deepens its spirit. Through cultural reconstruction, it aims to promote national awakening and societal progress (Chow, 1967).

The emotional bond between Guo Moruo and Anna catalyzed his reflections on the exclusivity and limitations of extreme nationalism. As a Japanese woman with

modern ideas, Anna had a positive influence on the development of Guo's thoughts. Through interactions with Anna, he was exposed to a broader array of Japanese modern thoughts and Western culture, thereby enriching his intellectual framework and broadening his perspective (Hirakawa, 1990). Moreover, the intimate relationship within this transnational marriage made him realize that people from different ethnicities and cultures could establish deep emotional connections and trust through communication and understanding, a perspective which starkly contrasted with the divisive and exclusionary ideas of extreme nationalism (Chen, 1981). By engaging with Anna and her family, Guo gained a more in-depth understanding of Japanese society and culture; this direct and personalized contact led to a more complex and enriched perception of Japanese culture and its people (Chen, 1981). This cross-cultural family life enabled him to transcend a singular nationalist perspective, recognizing the importance of mutual understanding and exchange between different cultures.

This shift was instrumental in his movement away from narrow nationalism towards a more expansive internationalist outlook (Tamura, 2001). These personal experiences and emotional connections intertwined with his literary and ideological development, becoming a crucial factor in his rejection of extreme nationalism. Furthermore, his firsthand experiences in Japan, witnessing the rise of Japanese militarism and the aggression against his homeland, shifted his alignment from an initial resonance with the fervent nationalism represented by Saijō Yaso to a reflective embrace of internationalism. From a national perspective, militarism was incompatible

with the basic national condition of China, which includes the co-development of multiple ethnicities; from Guo Moruo's personal perspective, it was incompatible with the political views of the May Fourth students, who, having undergone the baptism of the New Culture Movement and the May Fourth Movement, represent China's new forces.

The differences in national conditions between China and Japan, combined with personal experiences like those of Guo Moruo, led to a determined effort to directly engage with and translate Irish drama. For Guo, his complex personal experiences and romantic literary tendencies resonated with various elements in Synge's works, aligning with his political philosophy, life philosophy, and artistic creation. Incorporating China's national circumstances and his own experiences, he adapted and appropriated elements from Synge's works that aligned with his political philosophy. The following sections will elaborate on Guo Moruo's inheritance and transcendence of Synge, illustrating how Synge and his works underwent another transformation during their eastward journey to China.

Guo Morou's Adoption and Adaptation of Synge

After returning to Shanghai, Guo Moruo began to translate Synge's plays, during which he successively created 《湖心亭》 (*The Pavilion in the Middle of the Lake*); 《一个伟大的教训》 (*A Great Lesson*); 《〈塔〉序引》 (*The Introduction to the Pagoda*); all of which showed his strong revolutionary faith. He realized:

作家把由内在或外在的条件所激起的倾向，反射出来，由其本身的节奏便可以使受者起着同样的反射。但更进一境，把内在的或外在的条件如实地，或由作家的能动精神而加以剪裁渲染地再现出来，那不用说也可以得到同样的或更进一步的效果。

(The writer reflects the tendency aroused by internal or external conditions, and its own rhythm can cause the recipient to reflect in the same way. But to go further and reproduce the inner or outer conditions as they really are, or as they are tailored and rendered by the writer's active spirit, it goes without saying that the same or further effect can be obtained.) (Guo Moruo, 1982:347)

Thus, Guo Moruo completed his transformation from romantic thinker to that of realistic thinker. The Irish writer Synge, as a representative figure on the stage of Abbey Theatre during the Irish Renaissance Movement in the early 20th century, became something of a role model for him, as Synge had focused on the rural life of the Aran Islands in the west of Ireland, and reflected the poverty and hardship of the farmers to show the perseverance and unyielding nature of ordinary people under difficulties. Undoubtedly, this is in line with Guo Moruo's national aspiration and literary pursuit, and more importantly, it is consistent with his literary view that: ‘这个虚伪的、无情的、利己的、反复无常的社会是值得改造的’ (*this hypocritical, ruthless, egoistic and*

capricious society is worth reforming) (Guo Moruo, 1926), and here was reforming impetus which could be expressed through realistic drama. Therefore, the introduction of Synge's plays to China is not only a cultural practice of Guo Moruo's literary and artistic thoughts, but also an expression of his recognition of Synge's literary and artistic thoughts and of how these would become a major influence on his own writing.

Guo Moruo's fondness for Synge has made him the first and only Chinese writer to fully translate Synge's plays. Since the publication of 《约翰·沁孤的戏曲集》³⁹ (*Dramatic Works of J. M. S.*) in 1926, many scholars, such as Ye Chongzhi, Tian Han, Zhao Jingshen and Lu Xun, have published articles on Irish literature and on Synge successively, which promoted the further translation of Irish literature in China.

Guo Moruo was influenced by the mainstream ideology of the May Fourth period. Before the May Fourth Movement, Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren began to translate and introduce the works of writers from oppressed nationalities. After the establishment of the Literary Research Society, modern progressive translators began to translate and introduce the literature of persecuted nationalities in a more systematic and comprehensive manner. In his article, *Reflections on the Year and Plans for the Next Year*, Shen Yanbing, editor-in-chief of the *Monthly Novel*, said,

³⁹ . 《 》 is the book title mark used to enclose the title of a book or an article in China.

‘我觉得翻译文学作品和创作一般地重要，而在尚未有成熟的‘人的文学’之邦象现在的我国，翻译尤为重要；否则，讲以何者疗救灵魂的贫乏，修补人性的缺陷呢’

(‘I think that translating literary works is as important as creating them, and that translation is especially important in a country that has not yet matured into a ‘human literature’, like our country now; otherwise, what can be said to heal the poverty of the soul and mend the defects of humanity? Otherwise, what can be said to heal the poverty of the soul and mend the defects of human nature?’) (Chen, 1989)

The importance attached to the translation of the literature of the oppressed nations, and realist literature by the leading figures of the literary world of the May Fourth Movement provided a historical opportunity for the translation of Irish drama. At the same time, the strong will of the Irish people to resist colonial rule, and their passion for nationalism also met the theme of the Chinese people’s struggle for national independence and liberation before and after the May Fourth Movement.

The fact that the proponents of the new literature of the May Fourth Movement attached such importance to Irish modern drama is inextricably linked to the similarities between the two countries in terms of the characteristics of the times and their literary background. In 1801, the British government incorporated Ireland into its own territory in the Act of Union, thus beginning another phase of the Irish national liberation

movement. By the end of the Nineteenth century, the growing tide of national emancipation led to the Irish Cultural Renaissance. It was through the efforts of Irish playwrights that the Irish modern theatre achieved its remarkable success during this Renaissance. In the midst of a burgeoning theatre scene, the Irish people's national consciousness was brought to the forefront, and many sections of society and groups demanded independence from foreign colonial rule and eventually The New Constitution was adopted in 1937. We can see from the successful adaptation of Irish modern drama to the domestic turmoil, that when the content of a play focuses on the national traditions and spiritual life of a nation, it is easier to evoke a sense of national pride and independence in the nation. And it is not by chance that a writer accepts various literary influences. Only literature that is in keeping with the demands of their time and close to their creative personality can be absorbed and drawn upon by the mass of people, though as already noted, some aspects of Synge's work were quite controversial. The strong patriotic sentiments and national passions that characterise contemporary Irish drama have deeply infected Chinese playwrights.

New Culture Movement and Literary Revolution in The May Fourth movement in China was also a literary renaissance, a product of the political struggle against imperialism and feudalism in modern China. The advocates of the literary renaissance in both countries shared the literary aim of promoting the patriotic ideology of democracy and freedom. These shared literary ideals and impassioned patriotic

enthusiasm were the basic reasons for the resonance of the May Fourth translators with Irish modern drama. As Taofen Zou put it,

‘爱尔兰斗争史是用鲜红热血写成的，是无数战士粉身碎骨造成的……我们不幸生在受帝国主义践踏的中国的人们，对他们不禁汹涌着同情、兴奋和惭愧的情绪。’

(The history of the Irish struggle is written in bright red blood, and is the result of the broken bones of countless warriors... We who were unfortunate enough to be born in China, trampled by imperialism, cannot help but feel a surge of sympathy, excitement and shame for them.) (Tian, 2015:189)

Guo Moruo saw in the Irish nation the same sentiments of national independence and people's liberation that he felt. Joseph Dinshaw, a British comparative literary scholar, once made the analogy that seeds of all influences may land, yet only those that fall on land where the conditions are right will be able to germinate, and each seed will in turn be influenced by the soil and climate in which it takes root, or, to put it another way: the grafted shoot will have to receive the rootstock (Zhang, 1982).

The ‘soil and climate’ which are necessary for such an influence during the May Fourth New Culture Movement were determined by the form of the literary revolution and coincided with its development. In the presence of a powerful ruler, the question of how to arouse the national self-respect of the masses, and how to enlighten the nation,

was an important and inescapable responsibility for Irish playwrights and aspiring Chinese scribes. The return of Irish national culture and national identity, to which the Irish modern drama ultimately pointed, was also a great force in igniting the creative passion of Chinese dramatists.

The dramatic creators, translators and advocates of this period believed that ‘social progress is based on the spirit of the people’, and that ‘through the reflection of society in the theater, we can nurture and promote the upward spirit of creation’ (Jian, Xu: 2005). Hu Shih, Chen Duxiu, Fu Sian and others respected and introduced Ibsen’s plays, with their strong focus on social problems, and valued the new plays for the enlightenment of the people. It was at this time that such outstanding plays as 《名优之死》 (*The Death of a Famous Girl*), 《三个叛逆的女性》 (*Three Rebellious Women*), and 《泼妇》 (*The Shrew*) were born, and these plays laid the literary foundation for Chinese drama. Around 1924-1930, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal plays began to be staged, and playwrights with the ideal of saving the fate of the nation tried to change China’s semi-colonial and semi-feudal situation and its ignorant and backward national image through the National Drama Movement.

They admired Irish plays, especially those of W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, and John Synge. It can be said that the translation of a large number of Western plays, including Irish plays, was both an active cultural choice of advanced revolutionary intellectuals during the New Culture Movement, and a historical coupling. Among various Irish playwrights, Guo Moruo exhibited the deepest empathy with Synge, justifying his

recognition as the foremost scholar of Synge studies in China without any dispute. He examined Synge's plays from the perspectives of class and nationality, believing that Synge wrote with sympathy and love for the '下流阶级' ('*lower classes*') and that Synge's plays were always filled with '一种对人类幻灭的哀' ('*a kind of sorrow for the disillusionment of mankind*') (Guo Moruo, 1982). According to Guo Moruo, '爱尔兰人有哀愁文学，而也有富于民族解放的英勇精神，谁能说两者没有关系呢？' ('*the Irish have a literature of sorrow and a heroic spirit rich in national liberation, and who can say that the two are not related?*') (Guo Moruo, 1979). Here, the relationship Guo Moruo refers to can be understood as the relationship between national oppression and national resistance, and Synge uses his play to interpret the national oppression suffered by the Irish, as well as the strength of resistance accumulated by this oppression. His profound admiration for Synge and the nourishment he drew from Synge's plays significantly influenced his dramatic expression. The primary impacts of this influence can be elaborately discussed in three main aspects.

The Imagery of the Wanderer

Wandering and vagrancy have always been seen as a spiritual experience and a cultural manifestation in the view of western culture. Ever since Adam and Eve were expelled from paradise for stealing the forbidden fruit, and ended up wandering into misery and

death, the history of human literature has had a very strong and deep sense of wanderlust from beginning to end. Wandering is often viewed as a positive choice, a means for individuals to pursue self-discovery, challenge the unknown, and resist societal constraints. For instance, Homer's *Odyssey* narrates the protagonist Odysseus's protracted journey home after the Trojan War, which is not merely a geographic expedition, but also a voyage of spiritual growth and self-realization. In Romantic literature, wandering becomes a symbol of opposition to industrialized society and a quest for personal freedom. Lord Byron, in *Don Juan*, crafted an anti-heroic figure, using Don Juan's wanderings to express dissatisfaction with social norms and the pursuit of individual liberty. American author Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* integrates the concept of wandering with the spirit of rebellion in modern society, depicting the journey of 20th-century American youth in search of self-identity and freedom. In the early twentieth century, Irish writers and even Western writers were fond of wandering and often portrayed wandering characters in their works as a way of demonstrating their desire for novelty and the excitement and exuberance of an expanded life force.

Chinese writers, on the other hand, have a very different mentality towards wandering. They do not like to wander, because in ancient China, with its thousands of years of civilisation, the cultural spirit of patriarchy and human decency is constrained, and the notion of ancestral and family values is deeply rooted. The concept of home, of living and working in peace and contentment, makes the Chinese people afraid of migration and separation. As long as the country is safe and secure and there is no

shortage of food and clothing, the Chinese will not choose to wander. Being a wanderer in another country means a difficult journey ahead with the possibility of hunger and cold. Besides, the Chinese are advocates of filial piety, and it is not convenient to do one's filial duty as a child if one is too far away from home. In Chinese literature, themes of wandering and vagrancy are often linked with the impermanence of life, patriotic sentiment, and individual destiny. Ancient literati, driven to wander by political disillusionment, wars, and life's necessities, frequently portrayed this experience in poetry and prose as a sentiment of melancholy and sorrow.

For instance, the Tang Dynasty poet Du Fu wrote in 《秋兴八首》 (*Autumn Meditations*): ‘无边落木萧萧下， 不尽长江滚滚来。 (*Endless fallen leaves drift sorrowfully down, the relentless Yangtze River rolls on*’. This verse captures the loneliness and helplessness of being adrift, while also expressing a longing and helplessness for his homeland. Moreover, wandering in Chinese literature also carries a connotation of seeking a sense of belonging. The wandering of ancient literati was not just a geographic movement but also a quest of the soul, as they aspired to find a place of spiritual respite in their travels. This search is particularly evident in the pastoral poems of Tao Yuanming, who depicted the hermit lifestyle to express his yearning for peace and tranquility. Western writers often depicted the activities of life itself during wanderings, thus demonstrating their heroic performance, while Chinese writers were accustomed to writing about nostalgia and the present sorrow of parting, which was also a vehicle for them to express their boredom and resentment towards wanderings.

But by the May Fourth period, this spiritual situation had changed quite markedly:

‘中国现代作家们无论兴致如何，生活环境怎样，是激进的革命者，还是重在表现主观的象征主义者，几乎都在自己的心弦上奏响过游子的哀歌，几乎都乐于把自己想象成一个在感伤的独行的漂泊者’

(Modern Chinese writers, regardless of their moods and life circumstances, whether they were radical revolutionaries or symbolists with an emphasis on subjective expression, almost all played the wanderer's dirge on their own heartstrings, and almost all were happy to imagine themselves as solitary wanderers on a sentimental journey.) (Tan, 2000:78)

Following the May Fourth Movement, wandering and vagrancy were no longer merely symbols of personal fate's tragedy but were increasingly endowed with meanings of social critique and individual liberation. Lu Xun, in his story 《故乡》 (*Hometown*), depicted the protagonist's disillusionment and aimlessness upon returning to his hometown. This sense of displacement not only reflected the individual's predicament but also unveiled widespread issues in societal transformation. Through these images, Lu Xun criticized the rigidity of feudal society and the suppression of individual freedom. Wandering and vagrancy also gradually became symbols of intellectuals' pursuit of self-identity and modernity. Yu Dafu's novel 《沉沦》 (*Sinking*)

describes the loneliness and confusion of a student abroad, reflecting the modern intellectual's struggle between tradition and modernity, and between the individual and society. Yu Dafu's portrayal of the protagonist's inner world reveals the complexities of modernity, and the inevitable challenges in the individual's quest for self. The imagery of wandering and vagrancy also demonstrates a fusion of realism and romanticism. Mao Dun's 《子夜》 (*Midnight*) portrays the wandering lives of the working class and intellectuals, reflecting the real conditions of society's underclass and the hardships during times of change. Simultaneously, Xu Zhimo's poetry uses romantic strokes to depict the individual's wandering and uncertainty in the pursuit of freedom and love, filled with yearning for ideals and beauty.

In these dark and stifling times, the strong patriotic spirit of the Irish dramatic movement seems to have given the Chinese playwrights, who were bearing the burden of the times and pursuing their spiritual home, a spiritual hankering for their lives, and they have taken on the burden of the times, which is no longer pale and feeble, but has a heavy historical value. The Irish dramatic movement was like an energetic and vibrant life form that had brought a strong heat to the modern Chinese dramatic scene.

Guo Moruo, as the great literary figure of modern China, after decades of studying in Japan, struggled to find his roots in his culture and life, leaving his soul tormented by the journeys left Japan, and returned China. But he continued on his wandering path in spite of the hardships, because he was concerned with the safety of his country and the fate of his nation, for the cause of justice and progress, and for the sake of his own

inner world, which was tormented by the suffering of his nation. He willingly embarked on this wandering path, continuously exploring and explaining to people a whole new set of perspective ideas about the truth of the times, the pursuit of art, and the culture of excellence. It was because Guo Moruo consistently heeded his inner call, and made wandering and searching his mission in life, that the Chinese literary scene of the May Fourth period was endowed with a spirit of progress, inquisitiveness and a never-failing cultural spirit (Zhang, 2018).

It was precisely this strong inner need and this attitude of inquisitiveness that made him more receptive to the influence of Western culture, and allowed it to penetrate his marrow and spiritual structure, thus influencing his mode of thinking, ideology, aesthetic standards and other intrinsic qualities. He meticulously analysed and compared Western literature with Chinese literature, and then used Western literature as a reference point to reflect on his own country's literature, as well as to learn something of the essence of Western literature. Guo Moruo introduced Western literature into Chinese literature, transforming it from classical to modern. In the face of oppression and existential crisis, the Chinese people at large were also able to persist in studying the essence of Western literature that gave him spiritual support, thus changing the traditional Chinese image of the wanderer and giving life to it in the modern sense.

After finishing the translation of Synge's drama, spurred on by the case of a pair of injured twins in The May 30th Massacre,⁴⁰ and having witnessed the brutality of some British and Indian constables who were bullying pedestrians, Guo Moruo wrote 《聂嫫》 (*Nieh Ying*), namely, the fourth and fifth act in five-act historical drama 《棠棣之花》 (*Shadbush Flower*), which is one of his most representative works. 《棠棣之花》 (*Shadbush Flower*) originated from the story of assassin Nieh Zheng in the Spring and Autumn Period (B.C.770-B.C.476), which tells about the assassination of knighterrant Nieh Zheng as he went to kill the Duke Ai of Han and Xia Lei, the prime minister. After succeeding in killing them, Nieh Zheng destroyed his face and died because he did not want others to take revenge on his family by being able to recognize him. However, his twin sister Nieh Ying was not afraid of death and claimed her brother's corpse and then committed suicide.

《聂嫫》 (*Nieh Ying*) is one of the most brilliant of the two acts which specifically portray the heroic undertaking of Nieh Ying who came with Chun Gu, a girl who sells wine to the kingdom of Han, and then both killed themselves beside the corpse of Nieh

⁴⁰ On May 30th, 1925, more than 2,000 students in Shanghai distributed leaflets, and gave speeches in the leased territory to protest against the capitalists of Japanese cotton mill who suppressed workers strike, and killed the worker Gu Zhenghong, and to call for resuming the leased territory. However, more than 100 students were arrested by the British patrols. In that afternoon, more than 10,000 people gathered at the gate of the police office on Nanjing Road in the British concession, and demanded the release of the arrested students, and Shouted slogans such as 'Beating Down the Imperialism'. British patrols opened fire, and killed 13 people on the spot, seriously wounded dozens of people, and arrested more than 150 people.

Zheng after learning about Nieh Zheng's death. Guo Moruo's Nie Ying carefully handles the dialectical relationship between historical and artistic authenticity, which utilizes the '虚构的故事' ('*fictional story*') to glorify '棠棣之花' ('*those realistic shadbush flowers*') of The May 30th Massacre. '一个血淋淋的纪念品' ('*A bloody souvenir*') (Guo Moruo, 1986) of the Chinese people's struggle against imperialism. It is easy to see how Guo Moruo drew on Synge's play in his historical tragedy *Nie Ying*. In terms of one of the most outstanding characters in the play, 盲叟 (*blind old man*), Guo Moruo admitted that was inspired from Synge's drama:

《聂嫈》的写出自己很得意，而尤其得意的是那第一幕里面的盲叟。那盲目的流浪艺人所吐露的情绪是我的心理之最深奥处的表白。但那种心理之得以具象化，却是受了爱尔兰作家约翰沁孤的影响。

(I was so proud of writing 《聂嫈》 (*Nieh Ying*), and particularly proud of the character 盲叟 (*the blind old wanderer*) in the first act. The sentiment expressed by the blind wanderer is the deepest expression of my mind. But the visualization of this expression was influenced by the Irish writer John Synge.) (Guo Moruo, 1982:391)

Obviously, this recollection of Guo Moruo is a clear proof of the connection between his creation and Synge's drama. The character of 盲叟(*the blind old wanderer*) is described as being:

年六十以往，悲惨社会中之人生经历者。人类社会中有无形的一种正义与同情心，此人即其综合之象征

(*Sixty years old or so, an experienced person in the miserable society. There is an invisible kind of justice and compassion in human society, and this person is the symbol of both integration*). (Guo Moruo, 1982: 397)

Of course this naturally reminds people of the strolling player in *In the Shadow of the Glen* by Synge. There are similarities in these two characters, just as scholar Zhong Dehui (1984) points out:

在辛格的《峡谷的阴影》中，有一个流浪汉，他给人们带来了爱和希望，他是辛格心中的‘救赎者’。《聂婪》中的那个老盲流浪汉，像一只信鸽一样，将英雄事迹传播到整个地区，在人们心中点燃了反抗暴政和暴力的火焰，你可以在这个角色身上找到作者相同的希望和理想。

(In 'In the Shadow of the Glen' by Synge, there is a tramp who brings love and hope to people, and he is the 'redeemer' in the mind of Synge. the old blind wanderer in Nieh Ying, like a carrier pigeon, carries the heroic deeds through all the region round about, and spreads the fire of fighting against despotism and violence in people's minds, and you can find the same hope and ideal of the author on this character). (Zhong,1984)

Therefore, whether considering the blind old wanderer in 《聂嫫》 (*Nieh Ying*) and the tramp in *In the Shadow of the Glen*, both implicate the author's ideal. Both of them embody the author's faith of life.

Although the blind old wanderer is disabled and lives in a hard life, he has a heart of kindness, justice and hope. The blind old wanderer in *Nieh Ying* exclaimed:

虽然我们在路上不免日晒雨淋的辛苦，我们有时候又免不掉要饥，免不掉要寒，但是四处听得些可歌可泣的故事来，或者在山林里走的时候，或者睡在那儿的桥下听着河水流着的声音的时候，我们就和小鸟儿的唱出歌来一样，无心无意便把它编成曲子，那时候真是再开心没有的呢。

(Although we may on the hard way and be sun-scorched and rain-drenched , and sometimes will not free to hunger; no free to cold, we still hear some stories which move the readers to praises and tears, or when walking in the mountain forests, or

sleeping under the bridge while listening to the flowing sound of the river, we will hum as little birds, and compose it into a song unintentionally. No time later can be comparably happy.) (Guo Moruo, 1982:402)

The tramp is also like this, he tells Nora the beauty of life outside the valley and guides her get rid of the suffering and helpless situation.

NORA *What good is a grand morning when I'm destroyed surely, and I going out to get my death walking the roads?*

TRAMP *You'll not be getting your death with myself, lady of the house, and I knowing all the ways a man can put food in his mouth.... We'll be going now, I'm telling you, and the time you'll be feeling the cold, and the frost, and the great rain, and the sun again, and the south wind blowing in the glens, you'll not be sitting up on a wet ditch, the way you're after sitting in the place, making yourself old with looking on each day, and it passing you by. You'll be saying one time, 'It's a grand evening, by the grace of God,' and another time, 'It's a wild night, God help us, but it'll pass surely.' You'll be saying –*

TRAMP *{At the door.} Come along with me now, lady of the house, and it's not my blather you'll be hearing only, but you'll be hearing the herons crying out over the black lakes, and you'll be hearing the grouse and the owls with them, and the larks and the big thrushes when the days are warm, and it's not from the like of them you'll be hearing a talk of getting old like Peggy Cavanagh, and losing the hair off you, and the light of your eyes, but it's fine songs you'll be hearing when the sun goes up, and there'll be no old fellow wheezing, the like of a sick sheep, close to your ear. (Synge, 2018: 284)*

It can be seen that the image of blind old wanderer is created from the characters of Synge's plays. Guo Moruo provides a thorough analysis of Synge's plays, he wrote,

‘在爱尔兰文学里面，尤其约翰沁孤的戏剧里面，有一种普遍的情调，很平淡而又很深湛，颇像秋天的黄昏在洁净的山崖下静静地流泻着的清泉’

(In Irish literature, especially in the plays of John Synge, there is a general mood, very plain and very deep, rather like a clear spring flowing quietly under a clean cliff at dusk in autumn) (Guo Moruo, 1982:365)

This is ‘日本的旧文艺里面所有的一种‘物之哀’颇为相近’ (*‘quite similar to the ‘Mono no aware’ of the old Japanese literature’*), however, ‘在哀愁的底层却又含蓄有那么深湛的慈爱’ (*‘at the bottom of the sorrow is a deep love’*). It is through the blind man that Guo Moruo expresses this ‘很平淡而又很深’ (*‘very plain and very profound’*) mood. In the first scene of *Nie Ying*, the blind man carefully tells the story of Nie Zheng in a slow and subdued tone, using the soothing and long sound of his zither and Yu'er's song. But this does not mean that the blind man despairs of reality or of humanity; for him, like the rest of the ‘下流阶级’ (*‘lower classes’*), has ‘相互间的爱情’ (*‘mutual love’*) in his heart. (Guo Moruo, 1926) Guo Moruo thought that ‘只有真正地理解得深切慈悲的人，才能有真切的救世情绪’ (*‘only those who have truly understood deep compassion can have a true sentiment of salvation’*). At the

same time, Guo also recognised that the Irish had a different understanding of salvation and suffering from that of Buddhism. Buddhism, which ‘以有生为苦蒂，导人归于寂灭’(‘takes life as a suffering and leads people to silence’), is a ‘消极的办法’(‘negative approach’) that has proved impractical for two thousand years. The Irish, on the other hand, used literature to express their sorrow while at the same time being filled with the heroic spirit of national liberation. To demonstrate the close connection between the literature of sorrow and the spirit of the nation, Guo Moruo cites the great battle of the Japanese general 乃木希典 (*Nogi Maresuke*) during the Russo-Japanese War and his sorrowful Chinese poem – 《金州城外》⁴¹(*Outside Jinzhou*)

山川草木转荒凉，十里风腥新战场。

征马不前人不语，金州城外立斜阳。

*(Mountains and rivers turn desolate, the vegetation withers,
For ten miles the wind carries the stench of a fresh battlefield.
War horses hesitate, and the soldiers remain silent,*

⁴¹ In Japanese history, ‘Jinzhou’ refers to the Jinzhou District of Dalian City in Liaoning Province, China. Jinzhou has significant military importance due to its strategic location. General Nogi Maresuke, a prominent figure in the Japanese Army, led his forces to attack and capture Jinzhou during the Russo-Japanese War, as part of the Battle of Port Lvshun. Jinzhou District is situated at the southern tip of the Liaodong Peninsula, making it a crucial geographical location and a necessary gateway to Port Lvshun. During the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese forces needed to secure Jinzhou to advance towards Port Arthur. Therefore, Jinzhou’s strategic importance was particularly evident during the conflict.

Outside the city of Jinzhou, they stand in the slanting rays of the setting sun.)
(Guo Moruo, 1979: 223)

In this poem, Guo Moruo sees that ‘他之所以能够有叱咤三军的力量’ (‘*he was able to have the power to reign over the three armies*’) because ‘心中有十分深切的哀愁’ (‘*there was a very deep sorrow in his heart*’) (Guo, 1979:223). It is clear that the image of the blind man portrayed by Guo Moruo in *Nieh Ying* carefully is based on his understanding of Synge’s plays. The protagonists of Synge’s plays are sorrowful, but at the same time compassionate and powerful. The blind man goes from ‘pity’ to ‘respect’ for Nieh Ying and Chun Gu, and determines to spend the rest of his life spreading their spirit, and this is a sublimation of the ‘love’ in his heart. This spiritual journey is also the deepest expression of Guo Moruo’s heart.

The shadow of the blind man can be seen in the tramp in *In the Shadow of the Glen*. In his translation of 《约翰沁孤的戏曲集》 (*The Collected Plays of John Synge*) , Guo Moruo writes: ‘爱的力量他（约翰·辛格）是极端的尊重着的。《谷中暗影》里面那个浮浪人，便是他这个世界中的救世主，虽然是消极的，但也不容你不消极’ (‘*The power of love he (John Synge) respected in the extreme. The wanderer in In the Shadow of the Glen is the saviour of his world, which, though negative, does not allow you not to be negative*’) (Guo, 1982:403). In *In the Shadow of the Glen*, the Wanderer wanders around, his heart is full of sadness. But when he witnesses Nora’s

unhappy married life, he feels compassion for her, and in a moment of desperation, he steps up to the plate and bravely lends a helping hand. He wants to get Nora out of the ‘*damp pit*’ and out of the ‘*panting old man*’ who is ‘*like a sick sheep*’. He will take her to a place where the larks and the paintbrush call, and where Nona can say, ‘*Ah, what a night*’ (Synge, 2018:286-291).

Just as the Wanderer took Nora away and gave her a new lease of life, so the blind man spent the rest of his life singing about Nie Ying and Chun Gu, perpetuating their spirits on earth with the sound of his own zither. It is evident that Guo Moruo had an insight into the compassion in Synge’s bland but profound world, and the national spirit of resistance to oppression that is transformed by that compassion. Moreover, in *Nieh Ying*, apart from the blind man who turns his grief into strength and transforms the compassion in his heart into the motivation to move forward, Nie Ying and Chun Gu are so grief-stricken that they go forward to their deaths without reluctance, so that Nie Zheng’s heroic deeds can be carried forward, allowing the power of justice to permeate the land.

Through an analysis of the behavioral representation of the blind man in Guo Moruo’s adaptation, influenced by the tramp figure in Synge’s *In the Shadow of the Glen*, this thesis concludes that it was Synge’s creative philosophy that inspired Guo to subversively adapt the traditional Chinese imagery of the wanderer – typically depicted as dirty, lowly, and lazy – into a literary figure embodying noble ideals and deep compassion, understanding profound benevolence and love, and filled with strength.

Perpetuation of Romanticism

This thesis has previously detailed the diachronic development of Guo Moruo's political philosophy, illustrating how his views evolved in response to changes in both Chinese and international contexts. Initially an impassioned student, Guo harbored patriotic sentiments yet hoped for the emergence of a strong central government from within the warlord factions to lead the nation toward prosperity. This progressed to employing political metaphors to satirize the warlord government and encourage public uprising for freedom, and then to explicitly aligning with nationalist camps advocating for bloody revolution, culminating in a reflection on extreme nationalism and an adherence to internationalism. Similarly, Guo Moruo's literary creative philosophy transformed alongside shifts in his political philosophy, moving from initial Romanticism to later Realism. However, it is important to note that Romantic elements continuously permeated his work throughout these transitions. This consistent literary style can also be attributed to the influence of Synge's drama, which exemplifies a subjective Romantic expression centered around his personal ideologies. Synge's plays are not merely objective reproductions of real life, but profound expressions of an idealized life. This idealism is particularly evident in Synge's historical plays, where emotional idealism integrates distinctly within the narrative.

Synge's play *Deirdre of Sorrows* invokes the story of Deirdre, the magical beauty of Western European legends of sorrow and sentimentality. In Synge's historical play, however, we are presented with a new image of the Princess Deirdre, imbued with the

writer's subjective ideas. Despising the existing life of the nobility, Synge's Princess Deirdre wanders the wilderness, living in poverty and loneliness for the freedom and love she desires. When she learns that her lover has been murdered by the king, she is outraged and chooses to die with him, martyring herself for her love and successfully defeating the king's treacherous plan to force her into marriage. In Synge's play, Deirdre is clearly not the same as the legendary Deirdre, but is given a brave and strong personality in the drama. Although Synge's play still maintains a sad atmosphere, we feel more of the image of Deirdre as a fierce woman in pursuit of freedom and happiness, a tender and lingering love to which Synge gives more passion, and a fierce Deirdre who becomes a symbol of Synge's quest for a better life.

Guo Moruo adopted the distinctive creative philosophy of Synge, and arguably that of the majority of playwrights involved in the Irish Dramatic Movement. As William Butler Yeats (1983) elucidated in his exposition of their dramatic creation theory, '*We have the privilege of naming the creations in our heads after historical figures*', which Guo extended into his own writing perspective of '借古人的说自己的话' (*speaking one's own words through the ancients*) (Tian, 1957). In his view, the creation of historical dramas fundamentally serves to express the playwright's ideals. As playwrights, particularly of historical plays, they should infuse their thoughts and emotions into their works, viewing ancient figures and events through a contemporary lens: '以我观史, 史中有我' ('*To see history through myself, and to see myself in history*') might encapsulate his attitude toward historical events and characters. In Guo

Moruo's 《棠棣之花》 (*The Flower of T'ang-ti*), we observe his frequent use of 'borrowing the bones of the ancients' to convey his reinterpretations of history and project his fervent pursuit of an ideal life. Based on the 《刺客列传》 (*Assassins' Chronicle*), *The Flower of T'ang-ti* portrays Nieh Zheng as a hero willing to sacrifice himself for freedom. According to 《史记·刺客列传》 (*Records of the Grand Historian: Biographies of the Assassins*), Nieh Zheng was originally a butcher living in poverty. Discontented with the oppression by the king of Han,⁴² he fled to Qi. Yan Zhongzi, persecuted by Han Kuai and seeing his family nearly destroyed, sought out Nieh Zheng, hoping he would avenge him. Grateful for Yan Zhongzi's recognition and trust, Nieh Zheng agreed to this request. The primary motive for Nieh Zheng's assassination of Han Kuai can indeed be attributed to the ethos of '士为知己者死' ('*a man dies for those who appreciate him*'). In *The Flower of T'ang-ti*, Guo elevates this act to the noble virtue of sacrificing one's life in vengeance for one's country.

Guo Moruo and Synge both infused their works with personal emotions, and although they extensively drew upon historical events and figures, they often injected their own strong personal ideals and values into their dramas. Most often, they utilized their rich imagination to depict more self-centric historical characters, frequently blending fiction and imagination as artistic techniques. Yeats (1989) once stated, 'Writers create their images partly from tangible, real experiences and partly from

⁴² Han and Qi are the name of countries in the Warring States Time (B.C. 475-B.C. 221)

dreamlike, imaginative sources' (Yeats, 1989). This idea aligns with Yeats's notion that creativity emanates from both reality and fantasy, merging the tangible with the ethereal to forge compelling narratives. Clearly, the 'dreamlike' here refers to the writer's imagination and creativity. Guo Moruo and Synge not only adapted from their nations' histories but also reflected on their own subjectivity and ideals, often drawing from different historical events and figures to create new plays with their own subjective coloring. Guo Moruo once said:

‘《棠棣之花》只借些历史上的影子来驰骋我的创造的手腕罢了。没有什么比将自己的情感和激情注入角色的灵魂更为辉煌的了’ (*In The Flower of Tang-ti, I merely borrow some historical shadows to exercise my creative wrist. There is nothing more splendid than pouring one's own emotions and passions into the soul of a character*) (Guo Moruo, 1959:7)

If Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* is compared with Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, many similarities can be observed in themes, subject matter, and plot handling between the two plays. However, Nora in *A Doll's House* challenges traditional marriage and gender roles, reflecting Ibsen's critique of gender inequality in Norway and the broader context of Europe. His works often explore the conflict between the individual and society, especially the tension between individual freedom and societal expectations. In

The Shadow of the Glen, although Nora also displays dissatisfaction with traditional lifestyles, her rebellion is more focused on the pursuit of personal emotions rather than on challenging the broader social institutions. Synge leans more towards Romanticism, emphasizing emotional authenticity and a return to natural essence. His works tend to explore personal inner freedom and emotional expression, rather than overt social reform. Set in a deep, gloomy glen, an old, indifferent husband and a young, beautiful wife live together like strangers. Synge seeks to unveil the mysteries of the human spirit, displaying a longing for the unknown world of freedom and the pursuit of a vibrant emotional life. Synge's drama focuses on the delicate portrayal of the spiritual world of characters, adept at revealing the undercurrents of their emotions.

Inspired by Synge, Guo Moruo continued to expand this romantically-colored critical realism in his subsequent historical drama creations. Reflecting social realities through the spiritual world of individuals, and expressing rejection of the existing society and aspirations for a beautiful future through human spiritual agony. This is vividly demonstrated in Guo Moruo's historical play *Qu Yuan*, written during the Anti-Japanese War in 1942. *Qu Yuan* tells the life story of Qu Yuan, the great poet of the Chu state during the Warring States period. As an official and poet of Chu, Qu Yuan dedicated his life to the prosperity of the state and the happiness of its people. Ostracized for advocating reforms and opposing corruption, he was eventually exiled. During his exile, he composed many poems expressing his love for his country and his pursuit of ideals. Ultimately, unable to realize his political ambitions and facing the peril of his

nation, Qu Yuan drowned himself in the Miluo River. The contradiction and struggle between national interests and personal ideals are central themes of the play. His loyalty and ideals, unable to be realized in reality, reflect the helplessness and tragic fate of individuals in a corrupt and dark political environment.

Symbolist Creative Techniques

Symbolism emphasizes the subjective experiences and inner worlds of individuals, focusing on human spiritual and psychological states rather than the depiction of objective reality. This subjectivity imbues the works with a personal hue and a sense of mystery, often employing mysticism and metaphors to convey thoughts that are invisible or difficult to express directly. For example, themes such as the soul, death, and love are explored through dreams or mystical imagery. This creative method is fully realized in Synge's *Riders to the Sea*. On the surface, it may appear to be a work of realism or even naturalism, but it is not. The story is set on an isolated island surrounded by the sea, with a setting in a small kitchen stocked with everyday necessities of the island's residents, such as fishing nets, oilskins, and spinning wheels; the characters are ordinary fishermen, and the plot revolves around the daily lives of fishermen: men going out to sea and women doing household chores at home. Life at sea is unpredictable, and the threat of death looms constantly. The entire drama narrates the daily lives of fishermen, wherein these seemingly mundane scenes are rich with symbolic meaning.

Riders to the Sea tells the tragic story of the island's Maurya family, whose husband and six sons are successively swallowed up by the sea inexorably. But their courage to challenge the sea reflects the human spirit of struggle against all odds. At the very beginning, the context of the whole play is set out: the sea and the isolated island. The sea is not portrayed in a very concrete way in the play, but through the fate of the seafarers, we can feel its powerful force that swallows everything. The wind howls, the waves roll, the sea is treacherous and dangerous which threaten the lives of the lonely islanders. The sea is a symbol of nature; the isolated island is a symbol of mankind, and the relationship between the sea and the isolated island is a symbol of the relationship between nature and mankind. Man is surrounded by nature and cannot be separated from it, praying for its survival, but at the same time fighting against it all the time, in order to resist its aggressions and thus fight for one's own survival. But mankind is so small and impotent in the face of nature, which is capable of overcoming everything, that man often offers his life as a sacrifice to nature. The fact that all the men of Maurya's family are buried at the bottom of the sea certainly suggests the cruelty of the struggle and the doomed fate of mankind. In addition, the fishing nets and spinning wheels are placed together on the stage with the coffin boards. The spinning wheel is a necessary tool for fishermen, while the coffin board is for the dead, a symbol of the death of life. The juxtaposition of the two here undoubtedly demonstrates that death is part of the fishermen's daily life, that it cannot be avoided, and that in the fishermen's case, it can come at any time, making it seem so unusual. The juxtaposition of life and

death is the whole human condition. The story of a family on an island is but a moment in the long history of the world, and the struggle between man and nature has never ceased and will continue. But it is also these ordinary representatives of men who fight the waves with flesh and blood, who die generously, while women who endure the hardships of life and the pain of the spirit with a soft but never weak resilience, and face the death with men with equanimity and courage of another kind.

If we think of the context of Synge's work, we can see that from a symbolic and postcolonial perspective, the sea was the embodiment of the cruel colonial rulers of the time, the very forces of reaction that oppressed the Irish nation. The sea is a violent, ferocious and raging force that threatens the lives of the island's fishermen and hinders their production and development. Even so, Maurya's family did not give in to such a powerful and unconquerable sea, for they were the embodiment of the whole Irish nation. Whether they are grandfathers, fathers or the younger generation's men or women, they are strong and fearless in their struggle against the sea. This is, at one level, the profound meaning of the play. All meaning is implicit, and Synge does not impose his intentions on the audience with superficial symbolism and artificial imagery, but rather implies profound morals through realistic characters and ordinary lives. Synge's blend of realism and symbolism is a perfect interpenetration in this play.

This highly artistic writing style profoundly influenced Guo Moruo at the time, leading him to create the poem *Morning Light* in 1928. In this poem, Guo Moruo portrays a scene

‘清晨，阳光普照着大地，在温暖的朝阳的召唤下，蚌壳精慢慢的觉醒，它终于挣脱了蚌壳的束缚，热情洋溢的投入到阳光的怀抱中。’

(The sun shining on the earth in the early morning, and at the call of the warm sunrise, the spirit of clams slowly awakens, finally breaking free from its shore shell and throwing itself enthusiastically into the embrace of the sun.) (Guo Moruo, 1959:34)

The images and settings in this play possess typical symbolic meaning. The spirit of clams is the symbol of the awakened youth of the May Fourth movement. The sunrise is a symbol of the spirit of that times in China, while the shells of clams are a symbol of the feudal dictatorship. The scene in which the shells of the clams are thrown into the sea and dance in the rising sun symbolises the excitement and ecstasy of the Chinese playwrights at the developments of the time. Guo Moruo considers *Morning Light* to be his first small attempt to learn Western symbolism, which later developed into an important artistic device in his playwriting.

Guo Moruo often ties his realistic feelings and realistic ideals to the symbolic allegory he is trying to present, showing profound real-life content. His passionate affirmation of socialist thinking and positive aspirations in the early May Fourth movement are well reflected in the play 《孤竹君之二子》 (*The Two Sons of the Lone*

Bamboo King) (Guo, 1959). The play's protagonist, Bo Yi, abandons his position as king of the Lone Bamboo State and travels to a deserted place. Here, Bo Yi's escape is a symbol of spirituality, and is not presented as a specific plot point. The Lone Bamboo State, from which Shu Qi and Bo Yi flee, is a symbol of the ugly reality of society in Guo Moruo's eyes, while the deserted place to which they come is the ideal world that he envisions. Guo Moruo's utilizing of symbolism in this play has become more skillful, with the depiction of the characters, the natives '黄衣蒙面裹身、耳上垂大铜环' ('*wrapped in yellow clothes and wrapped around their bodies, with large brass rings in their ears*'), symbolising the ancient people of China. The words and actions of Shu Qi and Bo Yi, who long to escape from the 'present world', are a fierce attack on the decadence and darkness of the real world, while the natives' quest for a life of freedom and equality and genuine love for one another is a reflection of the author's own hopes for the future world. In addition, the brothers Shu Qi and Bo Yi are symbols of the petty-bourgeois intellectuals of the May Fourth movement, showing their progressiveness and weakness, but also implying a spirit of severe self-criticism. It is easy to see that Guo's early plays are often shrouded in such a rich veil of symbolism and embody a progressive, positive ideological tone. Although Guo's symbolism is said to have been learned from the Symbolist plays, it is undeniable that his symbolic imagery is closer to that of Ireland's Synge, clearer, more singular and with a very obvious and easily grasped moral.

Guo Moruo once said: ‘真正的文艺是极丰富的生活由纯粹的精神作用所升华过的一个象征世界’ (*‘True literature is a world of symbols sublimated by the purely spiritual action of a very rich life’*) (Guo, 1981). As an artistic expression, symbolism is a way of expressing the combination of the phenomenal world and the unknown world. Symbolism therefore also has a very clear mystical dimension. After carefully studying Synge’s plays, Guo believes that in Synge’s writing: ‘每部剧作里面都有一种幻灭的哀情流荡着，对人类幻灭的爱情，对现实的幻灭的哀情。’ (*‘there is a disillusioned sorrow flowing, a disillusioned love for humanity, a disillusioned sorrow for reality’*) (Guo, 1981). He also tried to inject this ‘disillusioned sorrow’ into his own theatre, and in 1922 he produced 《月光》 (*Moonlight*) (Guo, 1959), a play. The subtitle of *Moonlight* is ‘献于陈慎侯先生之灵’ (*‘Dedicated to the Spirit of Mr. Chen Shenhou’*), which shows that it is a tribute to his deceased friend.

Moonlight presents the spiritual journey of a doctor fighting a lonely battle with reality. Guo Shuruo chooses the last journey of the protagonist’s life to show the ‘disillusioned sorrow’ of his inner world. Guo places the protagonist’s life in a poetic illusion in which he is free from the heavy mental oppression that dark reality imposes on him, and also from the mental anomalies caused by the surrounding scenery are deflated by the illusion. Finally, the doctor sank quietly into the world of moonlight. At this point, he recalls his childhood and his hometown under the moon, and in this realm, his pulse finally stops beating. The development of the protagonist’s inner emotions

becomes the main internal driving force of the play, and the dark forces that cause his tragedy recede into the background of the play. The shadows of the sycamore trees outside the window also become a symbol of a dark reality in the subjective vision of the protagonist, thus creating a mysterious atmosphere.

The creative philosophy and techniques Guo Moruo inherited from Synge's plays had a profound impact on him, such that even setting aside the notions of political philosophy, if Synge's plays could transcend time and space to appear directly before Guo, he would undoubtedly find resonant elements within Synge's unique creative methods. However, during that era, art and politics were conjoined elements, reflecting each other inseparably. Chinese scholars, faced with the internal and external crises of a fragmented nation, did not prioritize art for art's sake; this context underlines why this thesis has argued that without the Irish and Japanese nationalists' interpretations of Synge, there would not have been the serendipitous discovery and fervent translation by scholars like Guo Moruo who studied in Japan, nor the emotional resonance with Synge's literary creation that transcended time and space. It was indeed due to the involvement of politics that Guo was not satisfied with merely the realistic elements presented in Synge's plays; like his Japanese contemporaries, he performed creative translations and adaptations of Synge's plays that were aligned with China's national conditions and his own political philosophy.

Infusing ‘Revolutionary Elements’

In the chapter discussing Guo Moruo’s political philosophy, it was mentioned that his 1921 work *The Lament of the Shepherd* used Korea as a metaphor for China, satirizing Sino-Japanese relations through the lens of Korean-Japanese interactions. In the 1922 piece 《黄河与扬子江的对话》 (*Dialogue Between the Yellow River and the Yangtze River*), he displayed direct political resistance, calling for the awakening and struggle of the people. The rapidly changing political situation in China led to a significant transformation in his political philosophy within just one year.

The founding of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921 marked a new stage in the Chinese revolution. Between 1921 and 1922, Guo Moruo encountered and embraced Marxist thought, gradually realizing the importance of proletarian revolution and beginning to express support and a call for revolutionary struggle in his works. Additionally, the flourishing of the international communist movement in 1921, particularly the success of the Russian October Revolution, had a profound impact on Chinese revolutionaries. Inspired by these international events, Guo Moruo recognized the importance and urgency of revolutionary struggle, which became the root cause of the dramatic shift in his literary direction.

This shift in creative concept is evident in his translations of Synge and subsequent works, which imbued Synge’s literary image with a unique ‘revolutionary’

aspect in its Chinese dissemination – an aspect absent in the interpretations by Japanese scholars and Irish nationalists.

In Guo Moruo's translation of Synge's plays, there is an image that appears repeatedly: the '棠棣花' (*shadbush flower-'T'ang-ti flower'*) which was translated from furze in Synge's plays. In fact, the shadbush flower can be only found only in China and Japan. Therefore, in Synge's Chinese translation, the image of '棠棣花' ('*T'ang-ti flower'*'), which is a specially adapted translation and has been repeatedly used, has to be understood as the foreshadowing of Guo Moruo's original play 《棠棣之花》 (*The Flower of T'ang-ti*). Guo Moruo adapted 'furze' in the original Synge's play into T'angti' (*shadbush flower*) which has a special meaning in both China and Japan which this thesis believes he did a creative translation to express his political philosophy.

In 《约翰·沁孤的戏曲集》 (*Dramatic Works of J. M. S.*), the image of '棠棣花' appears in both Guo's translation of *The Playboy of The Western World* and *The Well of The Saints*. This image appears twice in *The Playboy of the Western World*. One is that Shawn Keogh tells Pegeen about his discovery of Christy Mahon, and another one occurs when Mahon describes his previous rakish life to Pegeen. These corresponding original passages from Synge's plays are as follows:

SHAWN – [going to her, soothingly.] – Then I'm thinking himself will stop along with you when he sees you taking on, for it'll be a long night- time with great

darkness, and I'm after feeling a kind of fellow above in the **furzy** ditch, groaning wicked like a maddening dog, the way it's good cause you have, maybe, to be fearing now. (Synge, 2018: 135-136)

CHRISTY. *I did, God help me, and there I'd be as happy as the sunshine of St. Martin's Day, watching the light passing the north or the patches of fog, till I'd hear a rabbit starting to screech and I'd go running in the **furze**. Then when I'd my full share I'd come walking down where you'd see the ducks and geese stretched sleeping on the highway of the road, and before I'd pass the dunghill, I'd hear himself snoring out, a loud lonesome snore he'd be making all times, the while he was sleeping, and he a man 'd be raging all times, the while he was waking, like a gaudy officer you'd hear cursing and damning and swearing oaths.* (Synge, 2018: 153)

In the translation of *The Well of the Saints*, the image of '棠棣花' also appears in two places. one appears when Martin Doul and Mary Doul describe the benefits of blindness, and another one occurs when the saint shows perplexity when Martin Doul refused his help.

MARTIN DOUL. *I'm smelling the **furze** a while back sprouting on the hill, and if you'd hold your tongue you'd hear the lambs of Grianan, though it's near drowned their crying is with the full river making noises in the glen.* (Synge, 2018: 114)

SAINT. *And did you never hear tell of the summer, and the fine spring, and the places where the holy men of Ireland have built up churches to the Lord? No man isn't a madman, I'm thinking, would be talking the like of that, and wishing to be closed up and seeing no sight of the grand glittering seas, and the **furze** that is*

opening above, and will soon have the hills shining as if it was fine creels of gold they were, rising to the sky. (Synge, 2018:120)

Furze, also known as Gorse, is a common shrub that typically grows in Europe and North Africa, particularly in the rural and wild areas of the United Kingdom and Ireland. Due to its ability to thrive in barren soils and harsh climate conditions, and its capacity to bloom for most of the year, Furze symbolizes hope and resilience in Western culture, conveying a spirit of positivity and optimism in adversity. British poets and writers frequently depict this plant in their works to enhance the realism and symbolic meaning of the scenery. For instance, in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, Furze is described in the wilderness to symbolize the desolation of the environment and the tumultuous fates of the characters.

When Guo Moruo translated Furze, he likely encountered significant challenges given that Furze is native to Europe and is considered an invasive species in other regions, such as China. According to the Scientific Database of China Plant Species (DCP), Furze was cultivated in large areas near Chengkou district, Sichuan province, originally introduced by French missionaries near churches. French missionaries established many churches in Sichuan province between the 1860s and 1880s, conducting agricultural experiments and introducing European plants. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, missionary activities became more frequent, and they often introduced European plants near churches to improve the local environment or conduct

agricultural experiments. Guo Moruo translated Synge's play around the 1920s, and as a native of Sichuan province, it is highly probable that he was aware of the Chinese name for Furze. Even if he did not know the exact Chinese name, his choice to translate Furze as 'T'ang-ti Flower', a plant only cultivated in China and Japan, demonstrates his creative translation efforts to adapt Synge's play to serve revolutionary purposes.

In ancient Chinese poetry and literature, the T'ang-ti Flower is often used to symbolize brotherly affection. In 《诗经·小雅·棠棣》 (*The Book of Songs: Minor Court Hymns: T'ang-ti*), T'ang-ti, there is a verse that reads: ‘棠棣之华，鄂不韡韡。凡今之人，莫如兄弟。死丧之威，兄弟孔怀。’ (*The T'ang-ti Flowers are radiant. Among all people today, none are like brothers. In the face of death and mourning, brothers are deeply compassionate*). This verse describes the beauty of the T'ang-ti flowers and uses it to symbolize the harmonious relationship between brothers. Thus, in Chinese culture, the T'ang-ti flower primarily represents deep affection and harmonious coexistence between brothers.

However, in Guo Moruo's context, the T'ang-ti flower does not embody this idealized traditional value. Guo Moruo's translation of Synge's plays occurred before he wrote *The Flower of T'ang-ti* but the naming of the T'ang-ti flower reflects the values he consistently upheld during that period. Therefore, we can find clues in *The Flower of T'ang-ti* that support the idea that Guo Moruo creatively used the T'ang-ti flower to translate 'furze', imbuing Synge's play with a revolutionary essence.

In the historical drama *The Flower of T'ang-ti*, Guo Moruo explores the conflicts and brotherly relationships among the princes of the Jin state during the Spring and Autumn period. This brotherly relationship is not merely harmonious but is interwoven with power struggles, betrayal, and complex interpersonal dynamics. By using the symbol of the T'ang-ti flower, Guo Moruo reveals the complexity of historical brotherly relationships, encompassing both harmony and conflict, reflecting the multifaceted nature of human relationships and political struggles. This naming also allows Guo Moruo to reflect on and critique traditional values, highlighting the significant gap between reality and ideals. This reflection indirectly critiques social injustice and corruption, calling on people to examine and resist unfair phenomena. Although the T'ang-ti flower traditionally symbolizes harmony, in Guo Moruo's works, it can also be endowed with new symbolic meanings, representing resistance to power and oppression. In *The Flower of T'ang-ti*, the conflicts between brothers represent a challenge and resistance to power structures. Through this naming, Guo Moruo seems to metaphorically allude to those who maintain resilience and a spirit of resistance under oppression, reflecting his pursuit of justice and freedom. During the tumultuous period in China, marked by internal and external troubles, the T'ang-ti flower conveyed the message of fighting against imperialism, feudalism, and all forms of injustice, symbolizing the struggle for freedom and equality.

Guo Moruo applied the T'ang-ti flower, imbued with the virtues of the new era, to Synge's *The Well of the Saints* and *The Playboy of the Western World*. Firstly, because

both plays feature furze, and more importantly, because both plays allowed Guo Moruo to find themes of resistance and critique against the old order and old world. This creative translation endowed Synge's plays with meanings beyond satire and criticism in the context of contemporary China, encouraging resistance and even revolutionary struggle.

The Revolutionary Trajectory of the Storyline

In *The Flower of Tang-ti*, beyond the revolutionary nature expressed through the creative translation of 'literary imagery', there exists another more striking and poignant element that underscores Guo Moruo's deliberate intent to steer Synge's play towards a revolutionary direction.

According to Guo, the mood of life of this class in Synge's writing seems to be '一种宿命性的悲剧 ('*a kind of fatalistic tragedy*'), which Synge '体会到了这种悲剧, 但不知道如何来消灭这种悲剧的根源' ('*experienced but did not know how to eradicate the root of this tragedy*'). According to Guo Moruo, '这是旧现实主义的局限性' ('*this was the limitation of the old realism*'), and if Synge had gone further '便是反抗统治阶级' ('*to rebel against the ruling class*'), he would have gone from a '灰

色的沁孤' ('grey Synge') to a '红色的沁孤' ('red Synge').⁴³ So, there is something unique about the creation of *Nieh Ying*, that is, while drawing on the realist elements of Synge's play, he breaks out of their limitations. The tramp saves Nona, but there are many more 'Nona's struggling in the 'wet pit', and in this sense the wanderer is 'negative'. Unlike the tramp, Nieh Ying and Chun Gu transform their brotherhood and love into a fearless spirit, sublimated into faith, which they defend at the cost of their own lives. At the end of her life, Chun Gu uses her last strength to accuse the soldiers defending the city of the sins of the king of country of Han and its prime minister, saying:

‘韩国人穷得只能吃豆饭藿羹，就是因为有国王，我们生下来是一样的
人，但做苦工的永远做着苦工，不做苦工的便有人在我们头上身居高
拱。’

*(The people in country Han are so poor that they can only eat beans and rice and
patchouli because there is a king, and we are born the same people, but those who
do the hard work will always do the hard work, and those who don't will have
someone in a high arch over us). (Guo,1948:23)*

⁴³ The color red, symbolizing the color of blood, acquired new significance during the period of internal and external strife in China. It came to represent revolution, embodying the spirit of advancing courageously, breaking all constraints, and overthrowing the old order and the old era.

‘我们的血汗成了他们的钱财，我们的生命成了他们的玩具。’

(Our blood and sweat have become their money, our lives have become their toys).

(Guo Moruo, 1948: 23)

Chun Gu's accusation moved the soldiers on the defensive, and they went on to kill the three sergeants and shouted in union, ‘我们做强盗去！我们做强盗去！……’ (*Let's be robbers! Let's be robbers!'*) (Guo Moruo, 1948:24). It is not difficult to see how Guo Moruo's portrayal of Chun Gu transcends the limitations of Synge's old world. Chun Gu's defiance of the ruling class reflects that when Guo inherited Synge, he interpreted and adopted Synge's plays into a new looking which cater more for the needs of the developing revolutionary situation of the new China. The portrayal of Nieh Ying and Chun Gu is the embodiment of his full creative freedom to overturn the established cases of history and he is able to ‘把古代精神翻译到现在的体现’ (*‘interpret the ancient spirit into the present’*). The political atmosphere of *Nieh Ying* is ‘以主张集合反对分裂为主题，这不用说是参合了一些主观的见解进去的’ (*‘based on the theme of the pro-assembly and anti-secessionism, which needless to say is a mixture of subjective opinions’*) (Guo Moruo, 1986:384). As the new China

entered the primary stage of socialism, when *Nieh Ying* was staged again on 7th May 1958, Guo modified the end of the play so that Chun Gu would not die, and ‘春，将同人民永在’ (*‘Chun will live forever with the people’*) (Guo Moruo, 1948:24). As can be seen, although Guo Moruo’s historical play *Nieh Ying* is written on a historical subject, it has a strong sense of reality.

Similar plot elements also appear in other historical dramas by Guo Moruo, such as 《王昭君》 (*Wang Zhaojun*). This play centers on the famous historical figure Wang Zhaojun from the Han Dynasty, and tells the story of her being selected for the imperial harem, later sent to the frontier for marriage with the Xiongnu due to a defaced portrait by a court painter. This historical drama inherits Synge’s theme of wandering. The heroic wanderings of the protagonists, Wang Zhaojun and Mao Shuju, are characterized by their resolute rejection of Emperor Yuan’s pleas to stay and their determined departure from the country towards the desert. This contrasts sharply with Synge’s characters’ disillusionment and fearful ignorance of the future, as Guo’s protagonists display courage and immense spiritual strength in breaking free from mental constraints. The story of Wang Zhaojun reflects the class contradictions and oppression in feudal society, emphasizing the necessity of women’s liberation. It critiques the constraints and exploitation of women in feudal society, and expresses support for the elevation of women’s status. This redefinition and empowerment of female roles, calling for social and political reform, embodies his revolutionary thinking.

Additionally, in his play 《柱下史入关》 (*Under-Pillar Officer Enters the Pass*), Guo Moruo articulates through the character Laozi the reflections on life after wandering:

‘我以为跑到沙漠里便可以表示我的高洁，我在这种行为中可以收莫大的利得，殊不知我反倒折了一头牛，还几乎断送了我的老命’，‘回到人间去，认真地过一番人的生活来’ (*I thought fleeing to the desert would demonstrate my purity, that I would gain great benefits from this behavior. Little did I know I would lose an ox and almost lose my life,* and *Return to the human world, and live a proper human life*) (Guo Moruo, 1986:323).

The sense of wandering in his works is imbued with a passion for breaking free from constraints, bursting forth with tenacious vitality. This positive, transformative vitality bestows a ‘revolutionary’ nature on his characters. This revolutionary trajectory of the storyline is Guo Moruo’s creative adaptation of Synge. He infuses Synge’s works with a ‘red’ brilliance on the stage of Chinese history.

Conclusion

In the process of cultural transmission, any intermediary (including individuals, groups, and nations), will actively or passively select, eliminate, discard, and manipulate the

transmitted materials based on their own needs, understanding, and nature (Maguire & Matthews, 2012). For Guo Moruo and other Chinese students studying in Japan, from the moment they crossed the sea to study, they already had a clear subjective intention: to understand more about the Western world and advanced Western science and culture through Japan as an intermediary. Therefore, they would subjectively perceive, learn, and absorb what they wanted to study, intentionally ignoring parts that did not align with their political philosophy and creative thinking.

At that time, Japan was a relatively prosperous, upward-moving, and vibrant emerging capitalist country, in a stage of vigorous development. It was the best medium for the fermentation and dissemination of Western literature and cultural ideas. However, this transmission could not escape the effects of cultural mutation. The playwrights of the Irish dramatic movement, upon reaching Japan, were also influenced by the rich cultural atmosphere of the late Taisho and early Showa periods in Japan. Thus, the Western literature and cultural ideas that Guo Moruo and other Chinese students encountered were mediated within a specific environment and context, essentially second-hand materials presented through the Japanese cultural lens.

This mutated culture and thought had a significant impact on Guo Moruo and the other students studying in Japan at that time, influencing the trajectory of Chinese drama thereafter. It is important to note that, within the Japanese cultural context, neither the Irish dramatic movement nor other Western movements entirely aligned with the cultural context and fundamental conditions of China at the time. Consequently,

Chinese scholars, including Guo Moruo, would seek to trace back to the original texts, hoping to find more nutrients to absorb. In other words, a third or even fourth level of cultural adaptation and mutation would emerge. This explains why Synge's works and dramatic ideas, upon crossing the seas to China, took on the colors of reform and revolution, and Synge's literary imagery transformed into the 'red' Synge.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

From the late 19th century to the early 20th century, Irish writers living on the westernmost island of the Eurasian continent engaged in a literary renaissance to revive and promote Irish national culture, literature, and arts. This movement aimed to break free from the cultural constraints of British colonialism, reshape Irish national identity, achieve cultural independence, and strengthen national consciousness. This, in turn, fostered the Irish nationalist movement, promoting social and political transformation in Ireland.

Simultaneously, on the easternmost edge of the Eurasian continent, Japan, despite the poor communication and limited high-speed transportation of the early 20th century, began to adopt the achievements of the Irish Literary Revival through Japanese students studying in Europe. These students gradually introduced the revival's influence back to Japan, sparking the New Theatre movement, which shared similarities with the Irish revival in its quest to rediscover traditional culture and seek a new national identity for modern Japan.

During the promotion of the New Theatre movement in Japan, another nation—China—also sent students to Japan. These Chinese students, akin to their Japanese counterparts studying in Europe, were profoundly influenced by Japanese academia. It

was during this period that the destinies of China and Ireland intersected, laying the foundation for the introduction of Irish literature into China.

To elucidate these intricate and subtle connections, this study focuses on the translation and transformation of John Millington Synge's literary imagery in Japan. By examining the political and philosophical shifts of Guo Moruo during his time in Japan, including his absorption and rejection of Japanese literary ideas, this thesis compares Guo's adaptations of Synge's works to explore the metamorphosis of Synge's literary imagery in China. Through detailed analysis and argumentation, the following conclusions are drawn:

Through the analysis of works published by Guo Moruo before and after his studies in Japan, as well as collections of his correspondence with friends and family, it can be discerned that Guo Moruo's political philosophy during his time in Japan can be divided into three stages.

In the initial stage, he was a fervent, patriotic student studying in Japan. He expressed dissatisfaction with the warlord-dominated government of the Republic of China but, constrained by his level of understanding, did not fully grasp the fundamental causes of China's poverty and weakness. He placed his hopes on the emergence of a powerful warlord government capable of unifying China and restoring its strength. His awareness of the true sources of the people's suffering was limited, and he harbored illusions about the stabilization of China's political situation to ensure his basic living conditions while studying in Japan. The works from this period reflect a deep concern

for the country and its people, offering a critique of human nature and a veiled criticism of societal decay and government corruption.

As political tensions escalated and Sino-Japanese relations grew increasingly precarious, Guo turned to be a passionate youth, as patriotic fervor intensified in him. His criticism extended beyond human nature and societal decay to a growing recognition that the root causes of societal corruption were warlordism and imperialist exploitation. During this phase, he came into contact with Marxist thought, deepening his empathy for the working class. This empathy transformed from the bourgeois compassion for the oppressed to a fierce denunciation of the chaotic warlord governments and the parasitic colonial imperialism. His literary works from this time became direct, biting, and satirical, infused with a strong humanistic concern aimed at awakening the Chinese people's resolve to resist. These works served as vanguard pieces advocating for reform.

In the final stage, Guo Moruo transcended typical nationalism, reflecting on the dangers of extreme nationalism by using the brutality of Japanese militarism as a cautionary example. He called for internationalism, opposing the warlord fragmentation that kept China impoverished and weak and rejecting all forces that perpetuated oppression and inequality. Externally, he did not blindly reject foreign influence, but sought to unite all possible forces to resist aggression with a more elevated, advanced, and just stance. His works during this period continued to carry revolutionary fervor, yet beneath this radicalism lay a rich emotional internationalism.

He opposed militarism, imperialism, and feudalism, advocating for embracing the world, reform, and revolution. He promoted learning from the West and excavating the East, embodying an inclusive approach with a singular commitment: to achieve China's rebirth through reform and revolution.

The dissemination of Synge in Japan, facilitated by Japanese academic translation and adaptation, presented a different Synge compared to the interpretations by Irish nationalists. The Japanese academic adaptations of Synge can be categorized into three distinct types, each corresponding to the differing political philosophies of three groups of Japanese scholars. The first category is represented by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, who, rooted in the old Japanese bourgeoisie, exhibited boundless sympathy for the lower classes. His literary creations leaned towards philosophical contemplation, exploring themes such as human nature, death, and life. Akutagawa's adaptations of Synge tended to utilize folk stories to delve into deeper philosophical reflections. This group of scholars deeply influenced Guo Moruo during his period of intense romanticism, focusing on human nature and critiquing societal decay and moral corruption. They displayed profound sympathy for the suffering of the lower classes but were often powerless due to their own class limitations. Akutagawa's adaptations of Synge undoubtedly facilitated Guo Moruo's exposure to Synge, as Akutagawa's integration of Japanese religious and philosophical elements with different aspects of Synge's works provided a cultural bridge between the two. Given the many parallels between Chinese and Japanese cultures, this made Guo Moruo's encounter with Western literature more accessible.

The second category is represented by the emerging bourgeoisie, epitomized by Kikuchi Kān. This group, driven by new productive forces and relations, was eager to develop local culture and economy, aiming to break through class barriers. Their adaptations of Synge involved using his narrative core, shifting themes from philosophical reflections on human nature to challenges against traditional concepts and established classes. They utilized Synge's creative ideas to explore Japanese folklore and local culture, with the artistic goal serving their political objective— developing Japan's regional economy and fostering new productive forces across the nation.

The third category consists of scholars like Saijō Yaso, who endorsed militarism. For them, Synge was no longer a literary figure but a tool for political purposes. These two politically motivated literary approaches significantly influenced Guo Moruo during his realist phase, leading him to express his political views more prominently in his literary works.

The influence of these Japanese scholars provided Guo Moruo with both the opportunity and interest to engage with Synge's works. However, due to the differences in national contexts between China and Japan, he opted to directly translate Synge. Despite this, he remained influenced by Japanese academic circles, making it inevitable that his political philosophy would impact his literary translations and adaptations. Thus, Guo Moruo made modifications to Synge's works to align with his political beliefs and the Chinese context. For instance, he creatively translated the term "furze" in Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* to "棠棣花" (*Tang-ti flower*), a plant unique to Japan and China

with rich cultural connotations. Additionally, when borrowing the “wanderer” character from Synge’s plays, he infused it with the political and cultural symbolism of social critique and individual liberation resonant with the May Fourth Movement youth. These changes transformed Synge’s literary imagery in China from its original “gray” tones to a revolutionary “red”, imbued with reformist and revolutionary significance.

In conclusion, this thesis provides a comprehensive analysis of the pathways through which Synge’s plays were translated and disseminated in China. Previous research has largely focused on Guo Moruo’s student years in Japan or the reasons behind Japan’s introduction and adaptation of the Irish theatrical movement. Few scholars have connected these two aspects, detailing how Guo Moruo, upon arriving in Japan, engaged with the literary and artistic ideas of Japanese writers and used this interaction as a springboard to connect with the Irish theatrical movement. This thesis, therefore, fills a gap in the research on dissemination pathways.

Additionally, this thesis introduces a diachronic study of Guo Moruo’s political philosophy during his time in Japan to analyze the dissemination pathways, which is another innovative aspect of this thesis. Previous scholars have mostly conducted fragmented studies of Guo Moruo’s political philosophy, analyzing it in the context of one or two specific works, without providing a systematic diachronic study. Therefore, this argument offers a more comprehensive view of the impact of political circumstances on a writer’s literary creations.

Furthermore, this thesis examines the transformation of Synge's literary imagery in China, addressing a gap in previous scholarship. Earlier studies have primarily focused on the influence of Synge on Guo Moruo's literary creations, with only a few mentioning the shortcomings and limitations Guo Moruo identified in Synge's works. However, none have analyzed the cultural imagery transformation in his adaptations from the perspective of "domestication" caused by the translator's political interests and the political environment of the receiving country. Therefore, this thesis also fills a gap by contributing to the research on the overseas dissemination of Synge's cultural imagery.

However, due to the limitations posed by the passage of time and the Cultural Revolution in China during the 1960s and 1970s, a significant amount of historical material and books were purged, resulting in a severe lack of objective historical records. Consequently, much of the supporting evidence in this thesis relies on collections of letters between Guo Moruo and his family, correspondence between Guo Moruo and other writers, and the memoirs of other authors. Both letters and memoirs possess a high degree of subjectivity, which may impact on the analysis of the author's works. Furthermore, the scope of this study is somewhat broad, as it examines the dissemination and transformation of a literary imagery, a complex and expansive research topic. Therefore, this thesis adopts a focused approach by examining Guo Moruo's resonance with Synge. While this methodological choice keeps the research manageable, it also presents a limitation. Guo Moruo cannot fully represent all aspiring

Chinese youth of his era. Also, relying solely on his adaptations to assert the transformation of Synge's literary imagery in China may not be entirely convincing. There were contemporaneous young scholars with different political philosophies who also adapted Synge, and although their work was not mainstream, yet it still contributed to the richness of Synge's literary imagery in China.

Due to these limitations, future scholars can further investigate and address these gaps. By delving deeper into historical materials, scholars can provide more comprehensive historical context for this period. Additionally, conducting systematic comparative analyses of other writers who also translated and adapted Synge during the same period could yield a more nuanced and multifaceted understanding of Synge's literary imagery in China.

In summary, this thesis explores the transformation of Synge's literary imagery through the lens of a single writer's political philosophy, personal experiences, and the characteristics of his era. By analyzing Guo Moruo's translation and adaptation of Synge's works, the thesis investigates how these processes led to changes in Synge's literary imagery. In the early 20th century, China was undergoing significant social and political upheaval. Through his selection and adaptation of Synge's works, Guo Moruo expressed his passion for national and social transformation. Synge's works, with their distinctive Irish cultural elements and depictions of the lives of the lower classes, resonated with Guo Moruo's focus on the lives of the people and social change. Guo Moruo was not only a literary figure but also an active political activist. Through his

literary creations and translations, he introduced the critical spirit and rebellious consciousness of Western literature to China, inspiring his compatriots to reflect on the current state and pursue social change. This choice reflects his humanitarian concerns and his desire to use literature as a means to promote political change.

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