

The may-fourth generation of modern chinese writer

Literature



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The May-Fourth Generation of Modern Chinese The word “ modernity” was hardly used in the study of the English language of the Chinese literature prior to 1989. Since the field is described as modern, this appears ironic. Nevertheless, it denotes the ideological nature in the way in which modernity in China is thought of, particularly in the West as well as China (Lu 35). It is partly because of the fact that the May Fourth Movement that has caused the imbalance between modernization and Westernization has been disregarded for a long time. All discussions of Chinese culture through the 1980s are described by its response to the West as well as the introduction of Western themes (Chen 295-296).

In the course of the 1980s, Orientalism by Edward Said was being discussed by Chinese literature scholars. Regardless of whether one agreed with the arguments given by Said or not, Orientalism captured the historical nature of cross-cultural academic scholarship. Some people saw what the implications of Said’s work on the cultural studies in China were, and they felt that there were a lot of Western aspects in the project of Orientalism. Whether or not the May Fourth Movement was an Orientalist project, the assumptions of the May Fourth generation have affected the views of Western scholars regarding modern Chinese literature. Therefore, modern literary studies in China can be explained as double Orientalist (Farquhar 32).

Nevertheless, this field has grown too confrontational in the 1990s and beyond. The differences are embedded within the research trends. Many scholars are fascinated by the writers who are less known, gender, literary modernism, visual arts performance, unusual literary genres and regional and dialectic literature (Jameson 54). These studies are mostly done with the

aim of interrogating, discrediting, reconsidering or pure ignorance of the canon-making in modern China. This recognized the authority of the tradition of May Fourth, mainly its realist as well as revolutionary legacies (Chen 298-302).

As a result, this has created a stimulating diversity of newly discovered matters that writers have overlooked in Chinese adverts, illustrated magazines, fashion trends and others. There have also been new approaches inclined by Marxism in the West, new historicism and literature sociology (Dafu 17). A majority of these new marvels have placed themselves as critics of the received canon as well as the approaches that have previously prevailed. Mostly in the study of modern culture in China, interesting challenges have been issued regarding the conventional geography of recent literature in China with little sources from Taiwan. This attracts scholars to Hong Kong's culture including the numerous roles played by the Chinese diaspora to enable the creation and dissemination of Chinese culture (Farquhar 45).

Some of the factors that attract scholars include their subject matters regarding film and literature, their progressive recognition of the importance of modern culture in China as well as the roles they play as producers of the culture. There is a possibility of discussing Chinese American literature as well as motion picture within the culture of China, particularly the modern culture of China. Another way that Chinese literature could be studied is as a diverse assemblage of American literature. Ha Jin, who was a Chinese immigrant in the US, won the National Book Award in 1999 for his initial writings of original English. This gives scholars a hint regarding the shifting

cultural demography of the Chinese community living in the US as producers and consumers of culture. However, after overcoming the barriers of the national borders in China, scholars should be wary not to slip into cultural essentialism (Chen 305-311).

Works Cited

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