From *A La-tzu Woman* to *Rain From the Sun*: A Discourse on Chinese Malaysian Literature in the Transnational Context and the Construction of its Canon

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Abstract   Chinese Malaysian Literature is not only made in Malaysia but there are a number of transnational literary productions which took place in Taiwan, Hong Kong and others places abroad. This research endeavors to discuss Chinese Malaysian Literature in the transnational context and the construction of its canon. By incorporating an actual subject (Li Yongping) and supplementing the research with the framework which combine the model of speech communication and model of transnational communication, this paper aims to make inferences on the evolution of Chinese Malaysian literary canon from its roots, and gradually deduce the basic elements in the process of canonisation. It highlights the phenomena of interaction between the different literary systems which cross-system, cross-boundary, and cross-context were also involved, and the relevant key medium in the encoding and transcoding processes. In the different stage of interaction, we can see that the relation between an addressee and an addresser is not simply a passive one, as both entities are able to mutually interact. By analysing the distribution of Li Yongping's works in a transnational context, these elements in the construction of Malaysian Chinese literary canon in Taiwan can be clarified.

Key words   Chinese Malaysian Literature; Transnational; Canon; Li Yongping

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Introduction

When did Malaysian Chinese literature start to take root in Taiwan? As two different cultural systems, how did the Malaysian Chinese literature and Taiwanese literature overcome geographical and cultural boundaries to produce more specific contact and communication? How did the canonisation of Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan came into its construction process? A discourse on the construction of canon can provoke deeper thoughts on these questions.

In order to sort out the canonisation process of Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan, the main theoretical framework of this paper will be drawing reference from Chang Han-liang's work, which involved the projection of Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication into Paul van Tieghem's model of transnational communication. Li Yongping [李 永 平], a Malaysian Chinese writer in Taiwan, will be the main case study. As a text always exists in a dynamic state to convey its message to different corners via different media, we can see from the complex perspective of polysystem that the relation between an addresser and an addressee[1] is not a simple one of influence, rather a complex dialogue or even a relation of mutual interference. The receipt of an addresser's message by an addressee is not merely for his (its) own practical needs, but is subjected to influence from various practical conditions such as cultural and political climate. By incorporating an actual subject (Li Yongping) and supplementing the research with relevant theories, we are better able to restore the actual communication phenomenon of a piece of work, and to observe the formation and construction of Malaysian Chinese literary canon abroad from a fresh perspective. During the process of literary communication in a transnational context, the phenomena of cross-system, cross-boundary, and cross-context were also involved, and the relevant key medium (could be a person, an event or an object) in the encoding and transcoding processes within the system serves as the focus of this paper.

The Phenomenon of Cross-cultural Literary Communication

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1   An addresser or addressee may refer to a person, an event or an object.

In the history of comparative literature, two relatively representative models of communication were invented. One as Paul van Tieghem's (1871-1948) model of transnational communication, while the other was Roman Jakobson's (1896-1982) model of speech communication.
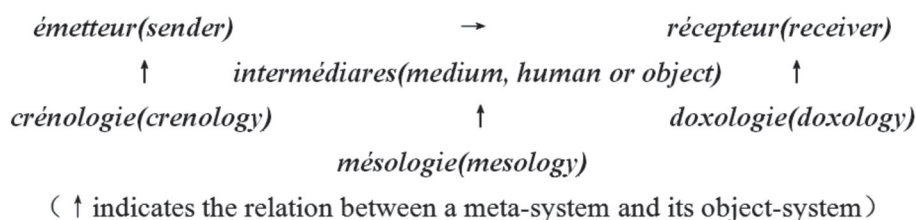
émetteur(sender) → *récepteur(receiver)*

↑ *intermédiares(medium, human or object)* ↑

crénologie(crenology) ↑ *doxologie(doxology)*

mésologie(mesology)

（↑ indicates the relation between a meta-system and its object-system）

Fig. 1: Paul van Tieghem's model of transnational communication

i．Paul van Tieghem's Model of Transnational Communication

In 1931, Paul van Tieghem illustrated the domain of comparative literature in his booklet titled *La Littérature compare* (*Comparative Literature*)[1], and Fig. 1 displays the results of Chang Han-liang's modifications on Paul van Tieghem's explanations (Han-liang 40). Paul van Tieghem believed that a relation in comparative literature is constituted by two "relata," where he addressed as sender (émetteur) and receiver (récepteur). A sender and a receiver merely represent two functions, as they could each be a person, an event or an object, such as a literary community or organisation, a piece of literary work, a literary genre, and etc. If we focus on the sender and study his (its) history of circulation in another space and time, our studies would belong to doxology (doxologie). Instead, if we choose to set our eyes on the receiver to explore his (its) origin of literature by tracing back the history, our studies would then belong to crenology. Perhaps we can also focus on discussing the role of an agent in the process of literary communication, and it would be known as mesology (4). However, such a model of communication was
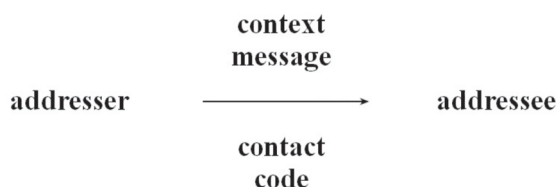
context
message

addresser ——————→ **addressee**

contact
code

Fig. 2: Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication

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1   The original text by Paul van Tieghem was written in French and the Chinese translation was adapted from: Van Tieghem, Paul. *Italic* Trans. Dai Wangshu. Changchun: The Commercial Press of Jilin Publishing Group Co. Ltd., 2009．

later criticised by American scholars and the new generation of French scholars for constituting only external relations and being unable to manage internal relations (40-41).

ⅱ．Roman Jakobson's Model of Speech Communication

Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication introduced 6 elements of language communication, namely addresser, addressee, context, message, contact and code. As compared to Paul van Tieghem's model of transnational communication,
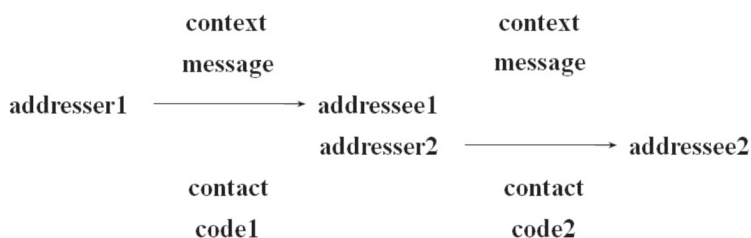
$$
\begin{array}{cc}
\text{context} & \text{context} \\
\text{message} & \text{message} \\
\text{addresser1} \longrightarrow \text{addressee1} & \\
& \text{addresser2} \longrightarrow \text{addressee2} \\
\text{contact} & \text{contact} \\
\text{code1} & \text{code2}
\end{array}
$$

Fig.3: Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication projected into transnational context

Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication was an attempt to manage the internal relations. Since speech serves as the object of literature, Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication can better manage the process between an addresser and an addressee. Such a process includes(1) a message that constitutes literature, (2) a contact between two entities, (3) a code that constructs message, and (4) a context produced by different national and cultural backgrounds. As Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication is hardly able to explain the differences between the communication of literature and other media, following his presentation on the 6 elements of the model of speech communication (addresser, addressee, context, message, contact, code), he immediately pointed out that the diagram (Fig. 2) was unable to reflect the dynamic nature and retroaction of a communication process. He then moved on to explain that a speech may differ from time to time, place to place, and man to man amidst a communication process, thus giving rise to 6 functions that are different, overlapping, and not exclusive at the same time (12).

Despite providing an approach to the construction of internal literary relations, Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication does have its limitations, as an actual communication process of literature or poetics is not always static. Rather, as a communication processes of literature or poetics tends to remain cross-boundary (nation, region, culture, and etc.) for a long period of time, it could be regarded as a long-term dynamic process. As such, Chang Han-liang's model of communication

(Fig. 3) that projects Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication into Paul van Tieghem's transnational context can fully depict the dynamic and changing process between various complex elements in a transnational communication.

Referring to the centre of Fig. 3, we can interpret the transformation of addressee 1 into addresser 2 as the linguistic boundary. The communication of a language system is shown on the left side, whereas another language system is shown on the right side. In fact, such a recurring communication process has transcended the linguistic boundary (5). If we can say that Roman Jakobson had utilised the 6 elements (addresser, addressee, context, message, contact, code) of his model of speech communication to construct an internal system of speech communication, the diagram revised by Chang Han-liang further developed it into a model of transnational speech communication, which has provided a detailed and accurate theoretical model for research on transnational literary communication phenomenon. This theoretical model contributes an approach to the construction of internal literary relations, and even though such internal relations are innate to each national literature, the construction of transnational internal literary relations becomes possible when we duplicate the same mechanism on various national literatures (14).

The Formation and Construction of Canon Abroad, Taking Li Yongping as an Example

The realisation of Malaysian Chinese literature's transnational context in Taiwan began since 1975, when Chi Pang-yuan[齐 邦 媛] and others compiled *An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Literature: Taiwan: 1949-1974/Vol.2, Short Stories*. In 1972, Chi Pang-yuan was invited to join the National Institute for Compilation and Translation as the Department Head of Humanities, where she hosted the "Taiwan Literature Translation Project." She was the editor-in-chief of the translation project, and other members include Yu Guangzhong[余光中], Wu Xizhen[吴奚真], He Xin[何欣], and John J. Deeney[李达三]. The outcome of this project was *An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Literature* published by the National Institute for Compilation and Translation in 1975. The anthology consists of a volume on poems and essays, and another volume on short stories, where poems, essays, and short stories published in Taiwan between the year 1949 and 1974 were selectively translated. It was distributed by the U.S.'s University of Washington Press, and was also the first anthology of contemporary Chinese (Taiwan) literature in English language. Such communication had in fact surpassed the linguistic boundary, as readers' message was constructed in the English code after translation, but not the one from the original Chinese work. Among the 17

writers who were selected, Li Yongping was the only Malaysian Chinese writer, and the following shows a hundred-word introduction on him that was included in the anthology:

> Li Yongping was born in 1947 in Borneo. He was enrolled in the Department of Foreign Languages at National Taiwan University after high school, where he worked as a teaching assistant in the department and as an editor of *Chung-Wai Literary Monthly* following graduation. His short story titled *A La-tzu Woman[* 拉 子 妇 *]* was published in the *University Journal* and was highly regarded.(Pang-yuan 435)

In Chi Pang-yuan's preface of the anthology, none of Li Yongping and *A La-tzu Woman* were mentioned. Yet, from this introductory paragraph, we can see that Li Yongping's "*A La-tzu Woman* was published in the *University Journal* and was highly regarded." Firstly, it clearly states that the story was noticed due to its publication in the *University Journal*. As *A La-tzu Woman* was published in the November 1968 edition of the *University Journal* under Yan Yuanshu's[颜 元 叔] recommendation, this testified to the influence of an addressee 1 to an addresser 1. Secondly, who was she referring to as the one who "regarded" *A La-tzu Woman* "highly"? Obviously, this person is likely to be Yan Yuanshu who had written *Comments on a La-tzu Woman* and published it on the same edition of the *University Journal*. If this argument is valid, we can once again prove the influence of Yan Yuanshu as an addresser 2.

When *A La-tzu Woman* was chosen for the *Selected Short Stories of the Year Fifty-Seven (1968)* compiled by Yin Di[隐地] and *An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Literature: Taiwan: 1949-1974/Vol.2, Short Stories* compiled by Chi Pang-yuan and others, these occasions symbolised great significance on the development of Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan. Being the first selection of "Novels of the Year" ever since the advent of Taiwanese literature, the *Selected Short Stories of the Year Fifty-Seven (1968)* had initiated the publishing mode of selection and compilation of "Anthology of the Year." The series was expected to be called off after the 1998's publication of *Selected Novels of the Year Eighty-Seven*, but Chiu Ko Publishing took over the publication and extended the series to date. Besides the selection of "Short Stories of the Year," the publishing house established by Yin Di had also planned for the publications of selection of "Poems of the Year" as well as "Literary Critiques of the Year" in 1983 and 1985 respectively. The former began with the *Selected Poems of the Year Seventy-One (1982)*compiled by Zhang Mo[张

默] and others, while the latter took a start with the *Selected Literary Critiques of the Year Seventy-Three (1984)* with Chen Xinghui as the editor-in-chief. Meanwhile, Chiu Ko published the selection of "Proses of the Year," and the *Selected Proses of the Year Seventy (1981)*compiled by Lin Xijia[林锡嘉] and others in 1982 was the first in the series.

It turned out that the judgement of the quality of a literary work depended on whether it was shortlisted as a Novel of the Year. Besides reflecting the development and trend of the Taiwanese literature at that time, the content of these novels formed an important segment in the construction of Taiwanese canon. Furthermore, the Taiwanese publishing industry started to become fervent in the publications of anthologies. Besides the above mentioned series, there were others like Avant-garde Publisher's "Selected Readings of the Year" which was based on a local appeal, Central Daily News's "Supplement Anthology," Zhishi Xitong Publisher's "Selected Science Fictions," Shi Yi Wen's "Selection of Chinese Poems," United Daily News's "Xiao Shuo Chao/Anthology of United Daily News Award-winning Novels," and etc. The inclusion of *A La-tzu Woman* into the anthologies of novels of the year was in itself an epoch-making achievement, and could be viewed as the beginning where Malaysian Chinese literature (novel) was officially recognised and anthologised by the local literary circle.

An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Literature: Taiwan: 1949-1974/ Vol.2, Short Stories (Chi Pang-yuan, et al.) was an important series of anthologies published by the Taiwanese National Institute for Compilation and Translation, and distributed by the U.S.'s University of Washington Press. The Taiwanese National Institute for Compilation and Translation was an organisation under the jurisdiction of Taiwan Ministry of Education, and was responsible for the edition and translation of academic and cultural books, textbooks as well as academic terms. Before Taiwan Ministry of Education allowed private publishers to compile and print textbooks in 1997, the National Institute for Compilation and Translation was the only supplier of Taiwanese primary and secondary schools' textbooks. After earning recognition from the Taiwanese academic circle and private publishers, the selection of *A La-tzu Woman* as one of the translated stories marked the first occasion whereby Malaysian Chinese novel in Taiwan was enlisted into the domain of Taiwanese literature by an official organisation, before it was subsequently translated and distributed to the Euro-American region as a part of Taiwanese literature. The communication process at this stage was the first time *A La-tzu Woman* had went through transnational communication in a different language. At this stage, a different context too had caused the message and code to undergo qualitative changes amidst the

communication process. The newly-derived code was no longer the previous code 1, code 2, or code 3, but a new code 4 where Fig. 3 continue to expand towards the right side.
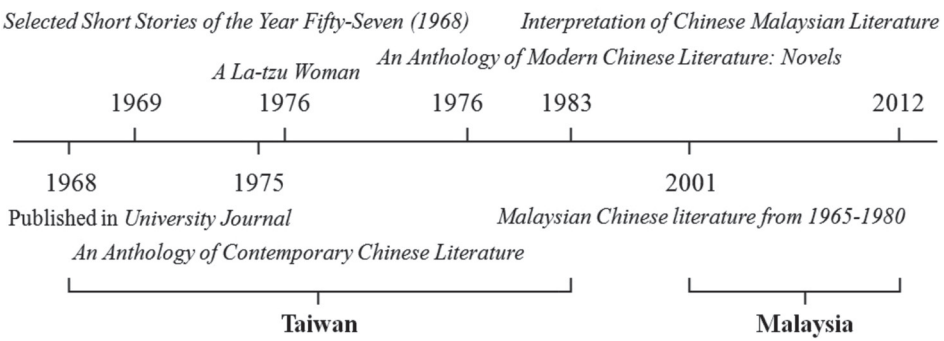
Selected Short Stories of the Year Fifty-Seven (1968)   *Interpretation of Chinese Malaysian Literature*

An Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature: Novels

A La-tzu Woman

| 1969 | 1976 | 1976 | 1983 | 2012 |

1968   1975   2001

Published in *University Journal*   *Malaysian Chinese literature from 1965-1980*

An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Literature

Taiwan   **Malaysia**

Fig. 4(a): The communication process (1968-2012) and contact of *A La-tzu Woman*

Year	Contact	Region
1968	*University Journal*	Taiwan
1969	*Selected Short Stories of the Year Fifty-Seven (1968)*	Taiwan
1975	*An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Literature*	Taiwan/U.S.
1976	*A La-tzu Woman*	Taiwan
1976	*An Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature: Novels*	Taiwan
1983	*An Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature: Novels*	Taiwan
2001	*Malaysian Chinese literature: Novels from 1965-1980*	Malaysia
2009	*An Anthology of Post-war Malaysian Sarawakian Chinese Novels from 1946-1970*	Malaysia
2012	*Interpretation of Chinese Malaysian Literature*	Malaysia

Fig. 4(b): The communication process (1968-2012) and contact of *La-tzu Woman*

During the communication process of *A La-tzu Woman*, the contact too had been changing continuously. Ever since its first publication in the Journal of University, the story was selected into important Taiwanese anthologies, translated and distributed to the Euro-American region, and even anthologised for publication. All these happened in Taiwan, till it eventually returned to Malaysia after 33 years in 2001, and was chosen for a local classical literary compendium known as *Malaysian Chinese literature*. After Fang Xiu[方修] compiled *A Compendium of Malaysian Chinese Literature*, *A Compendium of Malaysian Chinese Literature (Post-war)*, and *Selection of Malayan Chinese Literature*, the *Malaysian Chinese literature* was another literary compendium that was systematically planned to include important works of Malaysian Chinese literature during a specific period of time.

    A La-tzu Woman was published in page 129-135 of the *Malaysian Chinese literature: Novels from 1965-1980*. The bottom right hand corner of page 135 clearly stated, "Selected from *An Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature: Novels* published in Taiwan," which means the version adapted by *Malaysian Chinese literature: Novels from 1965-1980* was the one from the Chinese version of *An Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature: Novels* compiled by Chi Pang-yuan et al.in 1975 and published in 1976. As such, we can see that a literary communication is not only made up of the process from an addresser 1 to an addressee 1, and Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication cannot be applied to explain such a complicated communication phenomenon. As René Wellek once said, the research method from Fig. 1 to 3 presented a change from extrinsic to intrinsic approach. When we project Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication into a transnational context to observe the case of *A La-tzu Woman*, we can better understand cases like *A La-tzu Woman* that had went through the transnational communication phenomenon of achieving development abroad and returning to home country. Thus, such a case can be viewed as a classical case of Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan.

    The *Selected Short Stories of the Year Fifty-Seven (1968)* was first published in March 1969. It was subsequently published by Cactus Publisher, Jinxue Bookstore, Dajiang Publisher, and Shuping Shumu Publisher, before it was printed and distributed by Er-ya Press since 1981. The second edition was released on September 1984, and under conservative estimation, 5000 copies of this anthology had been printed between 1969 and 1989.On the other hand, *An Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature: Novels* had always been listed as one of the Chinese textbooks for Universities, and between the year 1976 and 1981, it was published in 4 editions by Shuping Shumu, before its publication was taken over by Er-ya Press since 1983. Statistics have shown that this book had already been published in 5 editions by the year 1987. Together with its English version in 1975, it was a conservative estimation that the book was produced in over 10000 copies from 1969 to 1989. If we compare these two numbers with the Taiwanese population at that time[1], we will be looking at a ratio of 1.5:2000, which is a very astonishing figure that can prove the widespread circulation of the two anthologies in Taiwan. *A La-tzu Woman* was selected into this anthology means it had already been included in the teaching materials of Taiwanese Colleges in as early as 1975. Yet, if we review the

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1   According to Taiwanese population statistics, Taiwan's population was 13,348,096 people in 1966, 17,968,797 people in 1980, and the figure went over 20 million to reach a total of 20,286,174 people after 1990.

circulation of *A La-tzu Woman* in Malaysia, it was only until 2012 (37 years later) that the story was selected into the *Interpretation of Chinese Malaysian Literature*, a teaching material involving text analysis and interpretation that was designed for the subject of Malaysian Chinese literature in higher education institutions in Malaysia.

The communication process of *A La-tzu Woman*, as clearly illustrated above, forms a classical case whereby the Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan radiates its influence from the centre of Taiwan. On a superficial level, it seems like a communication phenomenon of a single piece of work in overseas territory, but if we probe into the matter deeper, we actually wish to switch our perspective away from current research that are unable to see the wood for the trees, so as to gain a more thorough understanding on the cross-boundary interactions between two different literary systems. When we change the addresser 1 in Fig. 5 from Li Yongping's *A La-tzu Woman* to Malaysian Chinese literature, and the addressee 1 cum addresser 2 from Yan Yuanshu's *Comments on a La-tzu Woman* to Taiwanese literature, we will be able to see that, through various complex means, the influences brought about by addressee 1 cum addresser 2 will indirectly or directly affect the addresser 1 ahead and the addressee after. As presented in Fig. 5, the focus of this research lies on the textual construction and signification process, which is the process where a message is constructed through a code.

Li Yongping's *Rain From the Sun[日　头　雨]* is yet another widely-circulated novel after *A La-tzu Woman*, not to mention that its contact amidst the communication process was the greatest among the earlier Malaysian Chinese literary works in Taiwan, where the most frequent contact happened in Taiwan. After being awarded and selected into *An Anthology of United Daily News Award-winning Short Stories (1979)* and *Xiao Shuo Chao: An Anthology of the 4th United Daily News Award-winning Novels*(Xian, 3-23), *Rain From the Sun* was again chosen for the "Supplement of United Daily News's Compendium on 30 Years Literature: Novel, Vol. VI" after 2 years, and this particular volume was even named directly after *Rain From the Sun*[1], indicating the amount of recognition and attention it had received at that time. Henceforth, *Rain From the Sun* had frequently garnered favour from the Taiwanese academic and literary circles, including being selected into *Ying Wu Gu Li*(Joseph S. M. Lau, 1983), *A Compendium on New Generation Novels: Countryside*(Huang Fan, Lin Yaode, et al., 1989), *An Anthology of Contemporary Taiwanese Novels (1945-1988)* (Guo Feng et al.), *A Tutorial on Modern Taiwanese Literature: Novels*(Mei Jialing, Hao Yuxiang, et al., 2002), *The Canon of Twentieth*

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1   Supplement of United Daily News's Compendium on 30 Years Literature: Novel, Vol. VI, *Rain From the Sun*, Taipei：United Daily News, 1981, 39-56.

Century Taiwan Literature (Fiction), the Postwar Period, Vol. II (Xiang Yang, 2006), and *A Revised Edition of Tutorial on Modern Taiwanese Literature (Novels), Vol. I* (Mei Jialing, Hao Yuxiang, et al., 2015).

As Joseph S. M. Lau[刘绍铭], Mei Jialing[梅家玲], Hao Yuxiang[郝誉翔], and Xiang Yang[向阳] were scholars teaching in colleges, their selection criteria in compiling the anthologies can give us a hint on the academics' acceptance of *Rain From the Sun*, whereas editors like Guo Feng[郭枫], Huang Fa[黄凡], and Lin Yaode[林耀德] can reveal the recognition on this novel by the Taiwanese literary circle. The communication phenomenon of *Rain From the Sun* in Taiwan fully explained the enormous assistance Taiwan had provided for Malaysian Chinese literature. Be it active responses from readers and commentators, frequently-held literary awards, diversified publishing platforms or even the flourishing publishing industry, all these were practically unattainable conditions for Malaysian Chinese writers in Taiwan. Hence, Taiwan had offered them very attractive congenital conditions, which is why the Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan can achieve such growth and development.

In 1981, *Rain From the Sun* was translated into English and published in *The Chinese Pen* (Summer, 1981).This magazine that was distributed and sold in the U.S. allowed *Rain From the Sun* to go through transnational communication in a different language for the first time. In 1983, *Rain From the Sun* was once again translated and published in the U.S.'s *The Unbroken Chain: An Anthology of Taiwan Fiction Since 1926*. This stage was a very crucial segment in the communication process of *Rain From the Sun*, as it clearly depicted how a different context can cause the message and code to undergo qualitative changes before a new code was eventually derived.

In July of the same year, *Rain From the Sun* was selected in China's publication known as *A New Selection of Taiwanese Novels* (edited by Bi Shuowang). It was the first time this novel was being introduced to China readers, and its version in simplified Chinese was first presented to cater to the needs of local readers. From the brief author's biography printed on the final pages, we notice that Bi Shuowang, the addressee 2, was aware that the author was a Malayan overseas student. Nonetheless, he went on to include Li Yongping's *Rain From the Sun* in the anthology, showing that he agreed with affiliating *Rain From the Sun* to "Taiwanese novel," and such intention originated from the influence by addressee 1 and addresser 2. During this communication process, each of addressee 1 and addresser 2 was no longer an individual but a community consisting of a combined force contributed by the Taiwanese academic and literary circles. Such an invisible

force had resulted in positive effects and profound impact on the communication of *Rain From the Sun*. In fact, the impact can be seen from the subsequent anthologies that have included Li Yongping's *Rain From the Sun*, namely *An Anthology of Contemporary Taiwanese Novels from 1945-1990*(Guo Feng et al., 1992), *An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese Literature: Novels* (Li Guowen[李 国 文], 1999), and *A Compendium of Chinese Local Novels Vol. IV: Novels from 1977-2012*(Zheng Dianbo[郑电波], 2014). This shows that *Rain from the Sun* was gradually accepted as a "Chinese local novel" after its affiliation to "Taiwanese novel."

context　　　　　　context

message　　　　　　message

addresser1　────────▶　addressee1

（Li Yongping's *A La-tzu Woman*）　（Yan Yuanshu）

addresser2　────────▶　addressee2

（*Comments on A La-tzu Woman*）

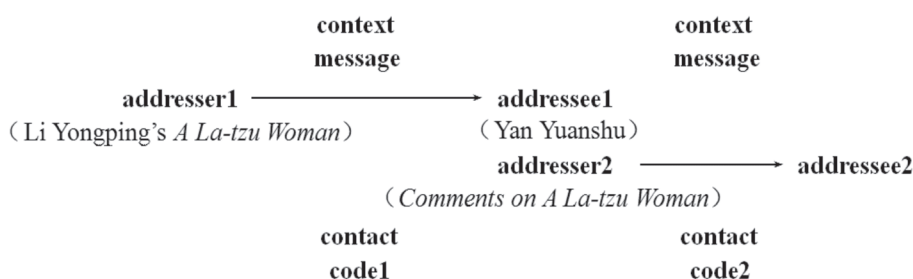contact　　　　　　contact

code1　　　　　　code2

Fig.5: Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication projected into transnational context in observation of the communication process of Li Yongping's *A La-tzu woman* in Taiwan

The Canonisation of *A La-tzu Woman* and *Rain From the Sun*

We may consider Li Yongping's *A La-tzu Woman* as the object of our discussion here. Indeed, addresser 1 could refer to a person or a piece of work, but in this paper, it refers mainly to a piece of work, which is *A La-tzu Woman*, whereas the message of *A La-tzu Woman* and code 1 that construct the message are constituted by the Chinese language in the Malaysian context. Most of the previous research placed their focus on addresser 1, as this is a more popular research method adopted by scholars. However, this paper plans to focus on the middle column of Fig. 5, which is made up of addressee 1 and addresser 2. *A La-tzu Woman* was composed in 1967 when Li Yongping left Borneo to study at the Department of Foreign Languages in National Taiwan University. As stated by Yan Yuanshu, "This short story was assigned to me by the editor-in-chief of the *University Journal* at that time." After reading the story, Yan Yuanshu asked for a meeting with this unknown student, and the original title of the short story, *An Aboriginal Woman's Blood[土 妇 的 血]*, was changed to *A La-tzu Woman* under Yan Yuanshu's suggestion. He too has recommended for the story to be published in the November 1968 edition

of the *University Journal*, along with his *Comments on A La-tzu Woman*. In fact, this process highlighted an objective truth, that is, the addresser 1 was inversely influenced by the addressee 1, when the original title of the short story was changed from *An Aboriginal Woman's Blood* to *A La-tzu Woman*. Therefore, we can see that the relation between an addressee and an addresser is not simply a passive one, as both entities are able to mutually interact. For this particular case, this is the first stage of communication.

The Malaysian Chinese writer Li Yongping is the author of *A La-tzu Woman*. The novel plays the role of addresser 1, and the Taiwanese scholar Yan Yuanshu plays the role of addressee 1. This second stage of communication has transcended national and linguistic boundaries, as both addresser 1 and addressee 1 used Chinese as a language medium, but during this transnational communication process, different context couldincur qualitative changes in the message and code, which means it was possible for code 1 at the bottom to turn into code 2 at the right side. As *A La-tzu Woman*'s code belongs to Li Yongping's personal language system that was derived from the 1960s' Malaysian Chinese literary language system, the fact that Yan Yuanshu read *A La-tzu Woman* and wrote his *Comments on A La-tzu Woman* shows that he, as the addressee 1, had apparently composed a new text which contains a code that no longer belongs to Li Yongping but Yan Yuanshu's personal language system that was derived from the 1960s' Taiwanese literary language system. Under such circumstances, Yan Yuanshu became both the addressee 1 and the addresser 2 in Fig. 5.

In the following section, we will discuss the third stage of communication by considering the example of *A La-tzu Woman* being included into the *Selected Short Stories of the Year Fifty-Seven (1968)* compiled by Yin Di in 1969. In his *Foreword to Selected Short Stories of the Year Fifty-Seven (1968)*(Di2), Yin Di wrote, "Among the authors of the 11 short stories in this selection, we have never seen only the names of Li Yongping and Li Ang. Strictly speaking, even with their above-standard works, if they are going to gain reputation as promising young talents in the novel circle, they must continue to advance their skills diligently. If they fail to produce more and better works, I am afraid their fate would just be like those geniuses who were blazing meteors at first, but vanished in the blink of an eye." Even without any prior knowledge of the author, Yin Di too had included the story into the *Selected Short Stories of the Year Fifty-Seven (1968)* as he deemed it "above-standard," so how did Yin Di came to his judgement on the "standard" of the story? Perhaps we can find the answer from Yin Di's brief comments written after every story in the selection. In fact, Yin Di's brief comments on *A La-tzu Woman*(Di150)in

the *Selected Short Stories of the Year Fifty-Seven (1968)* was a simplified version of Yan Yuanshu's *Comments on a La-tzu Woman*, thus we are able to deduce the following: As an addressee 2, Yin Di's understanding and recognition on *A La-tzu Woman* was apparently influenced by Yan Yuanshu's (addressee 1 cum addresser 2) *Comments on a La-tzu Woman*, and this had formed a new message through a new code 2. During the third stage of communication process, both the message and code underwent qualitative changes.

Fig.6: Roman Jakobson's model of speech communication projected into transnational context in observation of the communication process of Li Yongping's *Rain From the Sun* in Taiwan

It is noteworthy that in the structure as illustrated in Fig. 5, the position of addressee 2 is not permanently fixed, because during this stage, the possibilities of addressee 2 become very diverse, and Yin Di can only represent one of them. Such a process can be reciprocated infinitely, and the subsequent addressee 'N' can even decode a "text n" based on his personal understanding. Also, the addressee at this stage is able to return to any previous segment, hence the phenomenon of transnational literary communication can become extremely complicated. From code 1 to code 2, code 3 and infinity, it is possible for the process to keep on extending towards the right side, and this process is known as transcoding (Han-liang 6). If it can be said that the communication of *A La-tzu Woman* forms an embryo of Malaysian Chinese literature radiating its influence to other regions from Taiwan, then we can also regard *Rain From the Sun* as an important text that further developed the embryo and expanded it to more regions. *Rain From the Sun* was first published in the Supplement of Taiwan's United Daily News on 4 November 1978, but the communication process at this stage was unable to attract much attention. When this novel by Li Yongping managed to outshine the other 542 entries and was shortlisted as a finalist in the 4th United Daily News Short Stories Award, he started to arouse the judges' attention and discussion. The team of judges include almost all the influential persons in the Taiwanese academic and literary circles at that time, with

members like Zhu Yan[朱炎][1], Zhang Xiguo[张系国], Chen Ruoxi[陈若曦], and etc.

In the "4[th]United Daily News Short Story Award's Final Assessment Meeting Notes" (The editorial department of the United Daily News 5-47), *Rain From the Sun* triggered a much heated debate among the judges, as Chen Ruoxi, Ye Shitao, Zhang Xiguo, Zhu Yan, and others participated in different levels of discussions on this novel. Chen Ruoxi and Zhu Yan had especially high opinions of the novel, thus it was awarded the first prize of the 4th United Daily News Short Story Award. As this novel was the first piece of Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan that was offered the highest honour in the novel category of Taiwanese literary awards, such an award carried much significance in the progress of Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan. With that being said, this award was not merely an honour, but a representation of acceptance and recognition by the Taiwanese academic, literary circles and industry on *Rain From the Sun*. When the award-winning novels were anthologised and published, Zhu Yan wrote a specific review on this novel that was titled *Thoughts on Rain From the Sun* (The editorial department of the United Daily News 335-343).

The "4th United Daily News Short Story Award's Final Assessment Meeting Notes" and Zhu Yan's *Thoughts on Rain From the Sun* both belonged to the second stage of *Rain From the Sun*'s communication process. The latter occupied a very crucial segment in the process, as it played a pivotal role and produced profound impact. This was similar to Yan Yuanshu's *Comments on a La-tzu Woman*, but Zhu Yan became both the addressee 1 and addresser 2 (Fig. 6) during the communication process at this stage. Apparently, *Thoughts on Rain From the Sun* was a new text composed by Zhu Yan as an addressee 1. This had turned into a code marked by Zhu Yan's personal language system. Thus, we can see that at this stage of communication, a different context had caused the message and code to undergo qualitative changes, whereby code 1 was transformed into code 2. Zhu Yan's *Thoughts on Rain From the Sun* allowed Li Yongping's work to once again being placed into the 1970s' Taiwanese literary language system after 11 years, and this signified a momentous achievement by the Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan.

As *Rain From the Sun* is a novel full of suspense, it can either become an independent and complete short story, or a novel. In 1986, *Rain From the Sun* was eventually made into a book together with another 11 short stories to form an integral whole, and this book was named *Jiling Chronicles[吉陵春秋]*, one of the

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1   At that time, Zhu Yan was the director of the Taiwanese Institute of American Culture, Academia Sinica, and a professor at the Department of Foreign Languages, National Taiwan University.

100 Best Chinese Novels of the 20th century selected in 2006.

Conclusion

Tee Kim Tong[张 锦 忠] once said, "The two primary constructive elements of the formation of literary canon are logic and discourse. Selection is a fundamental approach to the formation of canon and also a specific phenomenon of literary canonisation. The following illustrates several means of constructing a canon by applying the principles of selection: (1) anthologies, (2) compendiums, (3) literary awards and composition competitions, (4) textbooks, (5) translation" (153-154). By analysing the distribution of Li Yongping's novels in a transnational context, these elements in the construction of Malaysian Chinese literary canon in Taiwan can be clarified. Granted, the Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan is ready to fulfill the basic conditions of canon construction. During the distribution process of Li Yongping's novels, people like Yan Yuanshu and Zhu Yan who were on the positions of addressee 1 and addresser 2 had provide clear answers to the interpretive community that was indispensable to the formation of canon.

Not only that the *Jiling Chronicles* set an important milestone in the progress of Malaysian Chinese literature in Taiwan, it was also a significant piece of classical work in the history of Malaysian Chinese literature. In 1986, the traditional Chinese version of *Jiling Chronicles* was published in Taiwan and honoured with the Prize of Recommendation during the 9th China Times Literary Award. The sudden appearance of this book disrupted the Taiwanese literary circle a little, as Yu Guangzhong made an exception by writing a preface for a novel as a poet, Long Yingtai[龙应台] wrote a monograph on it, and Wang Dewei[王德威], a Harvard professor and scholar of modern Chinese novel, described it as a "small-scale wonder." As the book received much recognition and commendation from various great scholars in Taiwan, it was also widely favoured by local readers. In less than a year the book was published, it was already releasing its 5th edition, and this testified to the widespread influence it had caused among the literary circle at that time. Four different versions of *Jiling Chronicles* is currently available, namely the traditional Chinese version published by Taiwan's Hung-Fan Bookstore, the English version published by the U.S.'s Columbia University in 2003, the Japanese version published by Japan's Jinbun Shoin in 2010, and the simplified Chinese version published by China's Shanghai People's Publishing House. This shows that the book remains a strong presence to date.

The fact that *Jiling Chronicles* has never been published in Malaysia gives rise to a problem that is very much worth pondering. This is certainly beyond a matter

of quality of work. It is understood that the distribution process of *Jiling Chronicles* in Malaysia is rather complicated, because even as the book can be found in Malaysia's bookstores, it is either the Hung-Fan version or the Shanghai People's version imported from Taiwan and China respectively. Undoubtedly, this represents the return of Malaysian Chinese literature to its hometown after achieving certain results in a place that can better nurture its development, and despite the arduous journey, the unyielding and indomitable spirit of Malaysian Chinese in developing their literature was aptly reflected.

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