

A Journey to the Heart of Darkness: The Mode of Travel Literature in Lu Xun's Fiction

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SUMMARY

This article examines fourteen out of the twenty-five short stories in Lu Xun's *A Call to Arms* and *Wandering*, which exhibit a travel structure; these stories divide into three main types, namely: (1) a journey to one's native land, (2) a visit to a remote town, and (3) a walk in the village street. The first category is autobiographical and uses first person narrative while the second and the third use a more objective, reporting style with third person narrative. Most of the travellers act as observers on unfamiliar trips of strange happenings, decadence in society and a diseased people. The stories of the first category reflect old Ching, the past society, the old intellectuals while the other two depict the start and illusions of China's Revolution.

KEY WORDS

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A Call to Arms
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"New Fiction"
China's Revolution

travel literature
Wandering
Chinese literature
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classical Chinese novels



I. LITERATURE AS A MODE OF TRAVEL

When I was a visiting scholar at the University of California at Berkely last year, I discovered an interesting book in the Doe Library entitled, *The Literature as a Mode of Travel*. Consisting of five essays, an introduction and a postscript, the book was designed to illustrate ways in which travellers and travel books have extended knowledge, enlarged ideas, and contributed to imaginative literature. I am particularly intrigued by the relationships between travel literature and fiction.¹ When it is related to Chinese literature, many opportunities lie open for research in this field.

Professional travellers and good writers alike are great explorers. They love to penetrate deep into remote lands, societies and forests to yield up their secrets. They possess the spirit of curiosity and discovery. They will use their practiced, and professional eye to observe the customs and culture of the people. Regardless of the nature or lifestyle witnessed, both professional travellers and writers will utilize their observations to depict defects in their own societies, cultures, and people. All writers are, in fact, travellers and explorers. Not only do they tour the many societies and countries, but they also explore the hearts of men in order to discover and understand the ugliness of the human soul.

Professional travellers, good writers, and great explorers are no different from one another. They record their thoughts and depict sceneries as they experience them. Travel literature

is usually autobiographical and thus especially meaningful for the reader. However, as such, literature is an integration of the traveller's subjective and objective viewpoints; thus, travel accounts evoke diverse focuses and perspectives. Some have a theme on nature, others record customs, while others depict religion.

Hence, the voyages of Western explorers and travellers have inspired many a playwright and poet. Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton have often assimilated the traveller's theme into their works. Byron also has introduced the traveller's theme into his poem, *Childe Harold*.²

For centuries, Western prose fiction and travel literature have mutually influenced each other. If we were to compare travel literature with romance fiction of the Elizabethan period, we would find that the romantic fictitious style has substantially influenced travel literature.³ Similarly, Mark Twain's (1835-1910) piece, *Roughing It* (1871), has been viewed by Western critics, as a specific type of travel literature—an adventurous encounter. Through exaggerated humour, Twain has disguised travel literature in his satirical classic.⁴

Today, much of the West's prose fiction is built upon the plan of a journey—either by land or sea, either domestic or foreign. The journey may be fictitious or factual. Since Daniel Defoe's (1660-1731) *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Jonathan Swift's (1667-1745) *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), it has been a tradition for travel literature to influence contemporary literature.⁵ In the twentieth century, more and more prose fictions are built upon a journey. My personal favorites are Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, both of which use vivid images of a journey to explore, illustrate and signify the human spirit and its development.⁶

Many classic Chinese novels have successfully transformed travel literature conventions into the means for significant literary expression. Wu Chengen's (1500?-1582?) *Journey to the*

West is a typical example. Lu Xun's favorite Qing Dynasty works also show evidences of travel literature. Among such works are Wu Jingzi's (1701-1745) *The Scholars*, Liu E's (1857-1900) *The Travels of Lao Can*, and Cao Xueqin's (1715-1763) *A Dream of Red Mansions*. The influence of travel literature is more apparent and stronger in the former two works.⁷ For example, the opening passage of *A Dream of Red Mansions* explains that its author writes with a worthy purpose. Hoping to enlighten the readers, Cao introduces the "erotic journey." This is why Jia Baoyu is led to the Land of Illusion to "initiate him in the pleasures of the flesh." Therefore the author assimilates the traveller's theme in his narrative.

In *A History of Twentieth Century Chinese Fiction and Changes of Narrative Modes in Chinese Fiction*, Chen Pingyuan has extensively dealt with how Chinese classical writers drew the themes of travel literature into fiction, especially the "New Fiction" of the late Qing period. He points out that since ancient times, travel literature as a genre, has been admired by many scholars, who themselves often employ this literary style at some point in their career. However, pure travel literature has been transformed, as travel themes have become popular among fiction writers. Novelists have drawn great inspiration from travel literature. Some have taken advantage of the genre to strengthen the distinctiveness and delicate features of the natural landscape. Others have used it to disguise themselves in characters as innocent tourists on unfamiliar journeys, whose new experiences enable criticism of particular societies. Characters have become a witness of history, observing the sufferings of people, and the corruption of the upper class. They depict the writer's encounter of societal changes and supplement the missing parts of history. Even if the transcripts are but fictitious records, the results would nevertheless be the same.¹⁰

Chen Pingyuan in his above studies focuses his analysis

on how travel literature affects the narrative modes of late Qing novels. Besides successfully depicting the sufferings of the people and supplementing the missing parts of history, he also points out that the most important achievement of introducing travel themes into novels is to restrict the narrator's point of view. Just as true travel accounts are largely autobiographical, novels with traveller's themes are usually written in first-person narration. In other words, the novelist links together the characters, events, and actions to the eyes, ears, and foot-steps of the traveller.¹¹ Late Qing travel theme novels, such as *The Travels of Lao Can*, *Strange Events of the Last Twenty Years*, *A Flower in the Ocean of Sin*, and other works of the New Fiction, are held in high esteem by Lu Xun. Vladmir Semanov's *Lu Xun and His Predecessors*¹² is an in-depth study of Lu Xun's views on these novels.

In a paper on how contemporary Chinese literature portrays itself, Lee Qufan analyzes the travel literature of Yu Dafu, Shen Congwen, and Ai Wu. He concludes that the theme of the solitary traveller, wandering on a journey in search of the meaning of life and society, can be found in a large number of fictional and nonfictional works of the May Fourth Period.¹³ Chen Pingyuan, in his analysis of late Qing fiction, has also noted that the novels of the May Fourth Period have often drawn on the travel theme, especially the theme of the returning traveller:

The writers of the May Fourth Period have also written novels similar to travel literature, using themes like 'the home coming traveller' — an intellectual who has travelled far and long returning to his homeland witnessing its decadence and feeling despaired. . . .¹⁴

Among the works belonging to his category, is Lu Xun's short story, "My Hometown," which is discussed in the later part of this article.

The mutual influence between travel literature and Chinese literature is a complicated yet interesting subject. I hope that one day someone will conduct an in-depth study in this area. The introduction of the travel theme into Chinese literature is obvious, as has been demonstrated by Lee Oufan and Chen Pingyuan; but this also is a complicated topic. Due to the limited space, the article will only examine some stories collected in Lu Xun's *A Call to Arms* and *Wandering*. The aim is to show how the May Fourth writers use the plot of a journey to depict the darkness of society, and the sufferings of the people. Travel literature specifically limits the writer's story to what the traveller sees or hears. It injects reality into fiction, and acts as a web to tighten the plot and limit the narrative point of view. The focus of this article is to study the different types of journeys, and the meaning of the travel. This article will only consider some basic issues, in order to reaffirm the successful transformation of travel literature conventions, into a means for significant literary expression. More specific questions—such as those concerning the particular sources influencing Lu Xun's works—are beyond the scope of this paper, and hence will not be addressed.

II. I WOULD GO UP AND DOWN TO SEEK : LU XUN'S VIEW ON TRAVEL LITERATURE

Before Lu Xun wrote the stories included in *A Call to Arms* and *Wandering*, he was already very interested in travel literature. For example, he translated Jules Verne's (1828-1905) adventure stories, *From the Earth to the Moon* and *Voyage to the Centre of the Earth* in 1903, and *Les Aventures du Capitaine* in 1904. In a brief critique on *From the Earth to the Moon*, Lu Xun himself remarked:

The author makes use of fiction to predict the progress of the world, and express his imagination.

Other elements such as scientific knowledge, human feelings, the sorrow of parting and the happiness of reunion, and adventurous experiences can be found in the fictional works. Sometimes satire, irony and social implications are also hidden in the stories.¹⁵

Lu Xun was especially attracted by the mode of travel literature, in which the reader is presented with satirical attacks and human feelings. For this reason, he fell in love with classical Chinese legendary accounts and novels which centered upon the plan of a journey:¹⁶

Through the power of fiction, especially the dramatic story of human beings, no matter being realistic or imaginary, fictional works provide a source of interesting entertainment and enlightenment to the people. The common people may have never heard of *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*, *History of Three Kingdoms* and other classics, but they are familiar with legendary figures and historical figures such as Zhou Yu, Zhu Geliang. This is due to the influence of novels *Flower in the Mirror* and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. . . .

Studies of Chinese classical literature by Lu Xun and other scholars, show that Lu Xun highly recommended works, such as *The Scholar* and *The Travels of Lao Can*. Writing fiction became the means by which he exposed the social illness and the sickness of Chinese souls. Like many writers of the late Qing period, Lu Xun continued to be obsessed with the educational function of literature and championed it as an instrument for national reform. Lu Xun even testified that he chose literature as his career because he believed it to be a more effective weapon than science or politics to fight lethargy, cowardice, and ignorance. He said his motive for writing was "to expose the disease and draw attention to it so

that it might be cured. . . . ”¹⁷

The title of Lu Xun's first short story "Remembrances of the Past" (1911), indicates the writer's early recognition that fiction writing could be a journey into the past.¹⁸ In the preface to *A Call to Arms* (1923), he explains that his subject matters were recollections which he "cannot forget completely."¹⁹ Lu Xun's first collection of essays, *Dawn Blossoms Plucked at Dusk*, was originally entitled *Recollections of the Past*. In the preface written for this collection, he says: "These ten pieces are records transcribed from memory."²⁰ In *Wandering* (1926), Lu Xun introduced his work by quoting a few lines from *Li Sao*:

In the morning, I started from my way to Cang Wu
 In the evening I came to the Garden of Paradise
 I wanted to stay a while in those fairy precincts,
 But the swift moving sun was dipping to the West.
 I ordered Xihe to stay the sun-steeds not go in.
 Long, long had been my road and far far was the
 journey,
 I would go up and down to seek my heart's desire.²¹

In a short article entitled "Preface to Select Writings of Lu Xun," Lu Xun talks about the publication of *Wandering*. Here again he quotes the following two lines from *Li Sao* to express his purpose in writing fiction:

Long long had been my road and far far was the journey;
 I would go up and down to seek my heart's desire.

It is obvious that Lu Xun considered his fiction to be a journey into old China and her social problems. Hence, most of his works were based on his childhood life in Shaoxing. He sought the symptoms of the diseased China and the heart of darkness of the Chinese people. He admits in "How I Wrote

the Stores," "So my themes were usually the unfortunates in this abnormal society. My aim was to expose the disease and draw attention to it so that it might be corrected."²² In addition, he wrote to draw out the "souls of the silent people." Hence, he even explored the very souls of the people of China.

III. THE MODE OF TRAVEL LITERATURE IN LU XUN'S STORIES

Many of Lu Xun's stories are built upon the plan of a journey. There are three main types, namely: a journey to the native land, a visit to a remote town, and a walk in the village street. The following three tables show how successfully Lu Xun has hidden the themes of travel literature in his stories:²⁴

Title of Story	Stories about Journeys to the Native Land
"Kong Yiji"	---- "The wine shops in Luchen are not like those in other parts of China... twenty years ago..."
"My Old Home"	---- "Braving the bitter cold, I travelled more than seven hundred miles back to the old home I had left over twenty years ago."
"Village Opera"	---- "... I could not have been more than eleven or twelve. It was the custom in Luchen where we lived: for married women who were not yet in charge of the household to go back to their parents' home for the summer At such times I always went with her to stay in her parent's house. It was a place called Pingchiao Village, not far from the sea, a very out-of-the-way little village on a river...."

"The New Year's Sacrifice" ----- "New Year's Eve of the old calendar seems after all more like the real New Year's Eve; for, to say nothing of the villages and towns, even in the air there is a feeling that New Year is coming. From the pale, lowering evening clouds issue fragment flashes of lightning, followed by a rumbling sound of firecrackers celebrating the departure of the Hearth God; while, nearer by, the firecrackers explode even more violently, and before the deafening report dies away, the air is filled with a faint smell of powder. It was on such a night that I returned to my native place, Luchen. Although I called it a native place, I had had no home there for some time, so I had to put up temporarily with a certain Mr. Lu, the fourth son of his family...."

"In the Wine Shop"----- "During my travels from the North to the Southeast I made a detour to my home, then so S-. This town is only about ten miles from my native place, and can be reached in less than half a day by a small boat. I had taught in a school here for a year I looked for several old colleagues I thought I might find, but not one was there...."

"The Misanthrope"----- "One autumn I stayed at Hanshishan with some relatives also named Wei, who were distantly related to him...."

"Largely out of curiosity, perhaps, on my way back I passed his house and went in to express condolence...."

"I wandered between Shanyang, Licheng and

Taiku for more than half a year, but could find no work, so I decided to go back to S-...."

The above six stories all recount past journeys of returning natives. Of these, "Kong Yiji," "My Old Home," and "The New Year's Sacrifice," are the most typical and comprehensive works with this theme returning native. Another example is "Village Opera," with the Pingchiao Village bearing resemblance to the Anchiao Village of Lu Xun's mother. In the story, it is the homeland of I's mother. The other two stories, "In a Wine Shop" and "The Misanthrope," each describe a traveller's meeting a long forgotten friend on the way back to his native town. In his writing, Lu Xun continues to draw upon his own childhood experiences in his own native town, because this town itself represents the doomed mode of Chinese existence. The village, which is backward and feudalistic, symbolizes the larger Chinese society.²⁵

The stories in the second group are those dealing with travel into small towns and cities. Although the settings in these stories are not necessarily based upon Lu Xun's own home village, many of the towns and cities depicted are apparently drawn from the reservoir of his memory. Examples of such stories include, "The True Story of Ah Q" and "Storm in a Teacup."

Title of Story

Stories about Small Towns and Cities

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|---------------|--|
| "An Incident" | ---- "Six years have slipped by since I came from the country to the capital. During that time I have seen and heard quite enough of so-called affairs of state...." |
| "Storm in a | ---- "Although Sevenpounder lived in the village, |

Teacup” he had always wanted to better himself ... he ... every morning from Luchen to town, and came back in the evening....”

“The True Story of Ah Q” ----- “Ah Q, again, had a very high opinion of himself. He looked down on all the inhabitants of Weichuang Moreover, after Ah Q had been to town several times, he naturally became more conceited, although at the same time he had the greatest contempt for town people....”

“Weichuang did not see Ah Q again till just after the Moon Festival that year. Everyone was surprised to hear of his return....”

“..... the revolutionaries were going to enter town and the successful provincial candidate had come to the country to take refuge....”

“The Divorce” ----- “As Chuang Musan and his daughter Aiku stepped down into the boat from Magnolia Bridge Wharf....”

“Not to town ... We’re making a trip to Pang Village....”

The travel theme is evident in “An Incident,” “Storm in a Teacup” and “The Divorce.” The writer opened each of these stories with prologue depicting reminiscences of the traveller. Except for “An Incident,” all of the above stories do not use the first person narrative. Perhaps it is because of this that the narrators do not take the towns as their hometowns, despite the fact that the Luchen in “Storm in a Teacup” appears as his hometown in “My Old Home” and “Village Opera.”

A superficial reading of “The Story of Ah Q” will not reveal evidence of the travel theme, as it is well concealed

within the plot. Lu Xun develops the plot by portraying Ah Q going into town and then returning to Weichuang, while the revolutionaries enter the town and the gentry seek refuge in the country. In Chapter Two, Ah Q begins to feel pride in the fact that he has travelled to the city several times. In Chapter Six Ah Q returns to Weichuang, surprising everyone. In Chapter Seven, the arrival of a member of the gentry in a boat causes much uneasiness in Weichuang. The story reaches its climax in Chapter Eight, when the revolutionaries enter the town, and finally to the anti-climax in Chapter Nine when Ah Q is dragged into town for execution. It is easy to understand why Lu Xun keeps his characters in intense constant action.

The setting for the third group of stories is a street scene in a small, unknown town. Although the journey is the shortest of the three, it does not detract from the author's portrayal of what is seen, heard and felt.

Title of Story	Stories about the Street Scenes
"A Madman's Diary"	---- "Tonight there is no moon at all, I know that this bodes ill. This morning when I went out cautiously, Mr Zhao had a strange look in his eyes, as if he were afraid of me, as if he wanted to murder me. There were also seven or eight others, who discussed me in a whisper...."
"Medicine"	---- "... so he went out into the street. In the darkness nothing could be seen but the grey roadway..." "The customers walked in Old Chuan's teahouse." "Xia Yu's and Hua Xiaochuan's mothers walked to the cemetery outside the West Gate."

- “The Eternal Lamp” --- San Jiaolian, Fang Ting, Zhuang Qiguang and several other young men broke the curfew and visited the teahouses often to drink and chat. The story depicts what the group see and hear during journeys to the teahouse, the temple and the living room of Siye.
- “A Warning to the People” --- On what is seen and heard on a road to the most generous part of West town.

After stepping out of his feudal-minded family into the public, the madman in “A Madman’s Diary” finds out that the masses want to harm him. “Medicine” and “The Eternal Lamp” are basically dramas with their plots respective in three different stages. Backgrounds from three different places imply that there are three different journeys. “A Warning to the People” is a sketch and depicts what is seen on a journey.

In the three types of journey stories mentioned above, ‘Stories of Returning to the Native Land’ are not only autobiographical, realistic, and full of local colour, but they also possess the fundamental conventions of traditional travel literature. These stories are also sentimental and lyrical as the childhood events portrayed reflect the writer’s own experiences. On the other hand, with the exception of “An Accident,” the second group of stories utilizes the third rather than the first person narrative, and thereby takes on a journalistic style. The third group is even more journalistic.

A Call to Arms and *Wandering* contain altogether twenty-five short stories, fourteen of which have the travel literature structure mentioned above. The other works, such as “The Comedy of the Duck” (鴨的喜劇), also imply the travel theme. Because many of his stories are built around the plan of a journey, his main characters spend most of their time

travelling. Therefore we may conclude that regardless of whether the influence of travel literature on Lu Xun's writing is faint or strong, it is nonetheless apparent.

IV. JOURNEYS SET TO EXPLORE THE SICK SOCIETY AND THE DARK SOULS

Symbolism pervades Lu Xun's six stories of returning natives. 'I' revisits towns such as Luchen, Pingchiao Village and S-town—all epitomes of Chinese villages in the past. The natives returning to their hometowns signifies Lu Xun's urge to reacquaint himself with the traditional Chinese village, and perhaps, even with the old Chinese society as a whole. In "Kong Yiji," the Prosperity Tavern is a microscopic version of Luchen. The tavern represents Chinese society; the drinkers symbolize the people of China—a drunken mass. Customers of the tavern are clad in long-sleeved and short-sleeved shirts to differentiate their social ranks. The working class people are enemies of the landlords and scholars. They have a common characteristic: their love of drink. They remain in a drunken stupor, either voluntarily or by pressure from society, never to awaken to face reality. Kong Yiji should feel depressed, as he has been rejected by society for being an old style intellectual. However, the jeers and sneers of the people only represent the stupidity and ignorance of the Chinese masses. Such was the tragedy of both old China and its people.

The journeys described in "My Hometown" and "The New Year's Sacrifice" have similar symbolic meanings. They reflect the decadence, ignorance and degeneration of the villages, and illustrate the sick Chinese society and the deceased souls of its people. In the journeys described in "In the Wine Shop" and "The Misanthrope," there are two anti-feudal intellectuals. One is Lu Weipu, who makes his living by teaching the Confucian classics; the other is Wei Lianshu, who dies a tragic death after giving into society's feudal forces. With these

stories, the author attempts to dig out the darkness of the souls of Chinese intellectuals. The S-town visited by the 'I,' represents the Chinese intellectual community's uncertainties and anxieties as it gropes in the darkness during the trips. The only place in China, in which Lu Xun detects hope and happiness is Pingchiao Village in "Village Opera." However, Pingchiao Village is only a recollection of the past—the innocent and happy child and the kindhearted Old Man Liuyi have vanished. The good opera and delicious beans also have become extinct. This happy journey is different from the other five, as the 'I' is only touring the hometown in a dream and is blinded to the dark side of the society. In the other trips, there is always a comparison of the past and present.

Chinese society and the Chinese soul are to be found not only in remote villages, but also in towns, cities and streets. Thus, Lu Xun has created stories about journeys through towns, cities and streets. In the former, the stories focus would be on both the city and town. For example, the 'I' in "An Incident" travels from the town to the city of Beijing. Sevenpounder in "A Storm in a Teacup" travels from Luchen to the city everyday, and brings with him news and rumours of revolution. Ah Q in "The True Story of Ah Q," has travelled to and from Weichuang to the town. Aiku in "The Divorce" has travelled from her village to Pangchuang. These works are very different from the stories based on the return of a native. The former emphasize intellectual and revolutionary matters.

The streets and lanes in Lu Xun's fiction are usually the places of extortion and the execution of the revolutionaries. In the aforementioned stories, we can see how Ah Q is dragged into the town, and exhibited in public before finally being executed. The intellect 'I' of "An Incident" feels remorse and regret after he witnesses the moral character of a rickshaw man on the road. Stories focusing on trips to the streets illustrate the scenes in these streets. For instance when going for a stroll, the madman imagines the masses treating him as

an enemy whom they intend to eat. In addition, Xia Yu in "Medicine" and the unidentified person in "A Warning to the People" both faced execution in the streets. Finally, the youths of "The Eternal Lamp" run into the streets, chasing a hero who wants to blow the eternal lamp out. These incidents and the streets are symbols and representations of the changing Chinese society.

Thus, the above examples can be classified into two categories: return of the native and journeys to towns and cities. The former reflect the old China, the past society, the old intellectuals, while the latter depict the start and illusions of China's Revolution.

V. CONCLUSION

The beginning of this article quotes *The Literature as a Mode of Travel*, a book about the relationship between fiction and travel literature. Many of Lu Xun's stories build upon the travel theme. The first category using the return of a native, is autobiographical and employs first person narrative. The second and third categories use the more objective and contemporary reporting style of third person narration. Most of these travellers identify with the characters in the novels of the late Qing period. They act as observers on unfamiliar trips. They witness strange happenings, decadence in society, and a diseased people. These observers, e.g. 'I' in "Kong Yiji," "An Incident," "In a Wine Shop" and "The Misanthrope," suggest missing parts of history. However, their relationship with the main characters or main events is not that of an innocent party. For example, the 'I' in "The New Year's Sacrifice" is an important member of a big clan. Also, the 'I' in "My Hometown," "Village Opera" and "A Madman's Diary" evolves from an innocent observer to an active participant. In view of this, Lu Xun's stories with travel conventions are even more similar to travel literature by contemporary writers when we

compare Lu Xun's works with *Random Notes of Xiang Xi* by Shen Congwen and *Notes on the Trip to the South* by Ai Wu.²⁶ The narrative and themes are quite similar. Of course, in Lu Xun's stories, the literary techniques are more complicated and superior.

Lu Xun's expertise as a short story writer can be seen in his simple, short, yet symbolic writing style. His portrayals of journeys to hometowns, along streets, and through landscapes, all meet the constraints of a short story. The traveller in Lu Xun's stories is not like the adventurous Monkey God in *A Journey to the West* or the traveller Lao Can who is constantly on the move. The movements of his travellers are strictly restricted to the street and the farthest is to return to the hometown.

Lu Xun's stories meet the criteria of travel literature, as in extending one's knowledge and enlarging one's ideas. Lu Xun often stresses that his main motive for writing fiction is to "expose the disease and draw attention to it so that it might be cured." In addition, he comments: "I want to write about the degeneration of the higher class and the unfortunate sufferings of the lower class and continue to expose them through short stories. My motive is to highlight these questions to the readers."²⁷ Hence, Lu Xun uses his stories to emphasize and expand the thoughts, as well as extend knowledge. His focus is on the "diseased old society," and his aim is to find a "cure for it."²⁸ Travel literature of both the West and China uses what is seen or heard along a journey to reveal a diseased society and the degenerating people. Such literature includes Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Li Ruzhen's *Flowers in a Mirror* and Liu E's *The Travels of Lao Can*. This has been studied in depth by scholars of Lu Xun for more than seventy years.

The Literature as a Mode of Travel also emphasizes that in good travel literature, the writers use their personal views and experiences to write an account filled with great ideas.

Therefore, writers of travel literature often introduce symbolic images of a certain country or place. For example, Thailand is the hometown of gods, and cherry blossoms represent Japanese patriotism. The most surprising revelation after studying Lu Xun's works is the outstanding, striking and symbolic images in his stories. Some examples are Luchen, Jiguang Village which represent the ignorant, the backward, the conservative and the superstitious. Prosperity Tavern and Old Chuan's Teahouse and its guests are reflections of the selfish, uncaring, unrealistic, diseased and class-conscious society. If we were to compare Lu Xun to modern writers of travel literature, Lu Xun would come forth as a photographer who has taken detailed shots of landscapes and sceneries. Luchen's is a microscopic view of a Chinese village. Teahouses and taverns are likewise closer views of the Chinese society. With such photographs, the images in Lu Xun's stories are more complete and concrete. It is exactly because Lu Xun's stories have this visual advantage that artists choose to put on canvas the landscapes he describes. Lu Xun's works are undoubtedly the most prominent and most sought after by fine artists.²⁹

Notes

¹ Warner Rice and W.T. Jewkes (eds.), *The Literature as a Mode of Travel* (New York: New York Public Library, 1963). I found the following three articles are most interesting: Warner Rice, "Introduction: The Literature and Travel Books," 7-12; W. T. Jewkes, "The Literature of Travel and the Mode of Romance in the Renaissance," pp. 31-52; F. Rogers, "The Road to Reality: Burlesque Travel Literature and Mark Twain's *Roughing It*," 85-100.

² See Warner Rice, "Introduction," *Ibid.*, 7-12.

³ See N. T. Jewkes, "The Literature of Travel and the Mode of Romance in the Renaissance," *Ibid.*, 31-52.

⁴ F. Rogers, "The Road to Reality: Burlesque Travel Literature and

Mark Twain's *Roughing it*," 85-100.

⁵ Warner Rice, "Introduction," *Ibid.*, 8-9.

⁶ For references, see Bruce Harkness (ed.), *Conrad's Heart of Darkness and the Critics* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1960), James Baker and Arthur Ziegler Jr. (ed.), *William Golding's Lord of Flies: Text, Notes and Criticism* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1964).

⁷ V. I. Semanov, *Lu Hsun and His Predecessors*, tr. Charles Alber (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1980) 75-119. This is a study of the influence of late Qing fiction on Lu Xun's works.

⁸ Wong Yoon Wah, "The Parallelism Between Aristotle's and Two Chinese Novelists' Principles of Catharsis," *Essays on Chinese Literature: A Comparative Approach* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1989) 137-149.

⁹ Chen Pingyuan, *A History of Twentieth Century Chinese Fiction* (二十世紀中國小說史), Vol. 1 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 1989) 226-246; Chen Pingyuan, *Changes of Narrative Modes in Chinese Fiction* (中國小說敘事模式的轉變) (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publisher, 1988) 196-203.

¹⁰ Chen Pingyuan, *A History of Twentieth Century Chinese Fiction*, 236-39.

¹¹ Chen Pingyuan, *Changes of Narrative Modes in Chinese Fiction*, 196-201.

¹² V. I. Semanov, *Lu Hsun and His Predecessors*, *op. cit.*, 42-74.

¹³ Leo Lee, "The Solitary Traveler: Images of the Self in Modern Chinese Literature," in *Expressions of Self in Chinese Literature*, ed. Robert Hegel and Richard Hessely (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985) 282-321.

¹⁴ Chen Pingyuan, *Changes of Narrative Modes in Chinese Fiction*, p. 203.

¹⁵ Lu Xun's Chinese translations of Jules Verne's (1828-1905) *From the Earth to the Moon* (1865) and *Voyage to the Centre of the Earth* (1864) are now collected in *The Complete works of Lu Xun* (魯迅全集), Vol. 11 (Beijing: People's Literature Publisher, 1973); Lu Xun's translation of *Les Aventures du Capitaine Hatteras* in manuscript

has been lost.

¹⁶ See Lu Xun's "A Note on *From the Earth to the Moon*" (月界旅行辨言) in *Lu Xun's Essays on Creative Writing* (魯迅論創作) (Shanghai: Shanghai Wenyi Chubanshe, 1983) 339-340.

¹⁷ "Preface to Lu Xun's Own Selection of Works" (自選集自序), in *Lu Xun's Essays on Creative Writing*, 49.

¹⁸ There are a number of articles devoted to this short story, see, for example, Jaroslav Prusek, "Lu Hsun's 'Huai Chiu': A Precursor of Modern Chinese Literature," *The Lyrical and the Epic: Studies of Modern Chinese Literature*, ed. Leo Lee (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1980) 102-109.

¹⁹ *Selected Works of Lu Hsun*, tr. Yang Xiangyi and Gladys Yang (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1956), Vol. 1, p.1. Other quotations from Lu Xun's stories are taken from this English translation.

²⁰ Lu Hsin, *Dawn Blossoms Plucked at Dusk*, tr. Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1976) 2.

²¹ *Ch'u Tz'u: The Songs of the South*, tr. David Hawkes, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962) 28.

²² *Lu Xun Selected Works*, Vol. III, tr. Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press 1980) 261.

²³ Lu Xun, "Preface to Russian Translation of the True Story of Ah Q," (俄文降本<阿Q正傳>序文), in *Lu Xun on Creative Writing*, *op. cit.*, 9.

²⁴ The following quotations from Lu Xun's stories are taken from the translations by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang in *Selected Works of Lu Hsun*, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*

²⁵ I have explored the symbolic meaning of this aspect of Lu Xun's theme of "return of the native" in an article entitled "A Study of the Auto-Biographical Elements and the Antithesis Structure in Lu Xun's 'My Home Town' (論魯迅<故多>的自傳性與對比結構), *Collected Papers on Chinese Studies* (學業論文集刊), Vol. III (Singapore: Department of Chinese Studies, National University of Singapore, 1990) 243-270.

²⁶ Leo Lee, "The Solitary Traveler: Image of the Self in Modern Chinese Literature," *op. cit.*, pp. 294-306.

²⁷ Lu Xun, "How I Wrote the Stories," *Lu Xun Selected Works*,

Vol. III, *op. cit.*, 261.

²⁸ "Preface to Lu Xun's Own Selection of Works," in *Lu Xun's Essays on Creative Writing, op. cit.*, 49.

²⁹ Feng Zikai 豐子愷, for instance, has sketched almost all characters and important scenes of Lu Xun's stories, see *Feng Zikai's Paintings of Lu Xun's Fiction* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang People's Publisher, 1982).