

The Sadness and Hope of Wandering Chinese

Exploring Bai Xian Yong's Literature Work *Taipei People* and *New Yorker*

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Bai Xian Yong (1937~)¹, the founder of magazine *Modern Literature* and representative of LGBT literature writer in Taiwan, has been being well-known as a successful writer in Chinese speaking countries. The research about his literature has been done in various perspectives.

Born from a great General's family, spending the childhood under war fire, experiencing the "wandering" life as moving to Taiwan and the U.S. from mainland China, it is believed that there is extraordinary depth in his written stories. This thesis will focus on the idea of "Wandering Chinese" that inspired by Bai's thesis *The Wandering Chinese: The Theme of Exile in Taiwan Fiction* (1976).

"History is often silent," written by Lung Ying Tai (1952~) in the book *Big River, Big Sea—Untold Stories of 1949*². It describes the sacrifices and sufferings of people under historical events such as the second Sino-Japanese War and Chinese Civil War, had become silent past that fall on the death ears as thousands of lost lives. Meanwhile, Bai had an interview with the French newspaper *Liberation* and expressed his original intention of being a writer:

I write,
because I want to put into words,
the silent pain of the human soul³.

It is thought that Bai had put the pain of "wandering Chinese" into words through his famous literature work *Taipei People* and *New Yorker*. This paper aims to study about the wandering

¹ Taiwanese novelist, essayist, and dramatist. Being well-known from the literature work *Taipei People* and *Crystal Boy*, his books were translated in many foreign languages. Graduating in the English department of Taiwan University and "Writer's Workshop" in the University of Iowa, Bai had been teaching Chinese literature in University of California, San Diego for twenty-nine years.

² Y. T. Long, *Da Jiang Da Hai: Yi Jiu Si Jiu*. Commonwealth Magazine, Taipei 2009, p.26. (My translation).

³ Y. X. Deng, *Ta Men Zai Dao Yu Xie Zuo/Bai Xian Yong: Cha Zi Yan Hong Kai Bian*. Fisfisa Media, Taipei 2015.

experience of Bai and his family to understand their sadness. Then, the stories of *Taipei People* and *New Yorker* will be analyzed to see how the sadness were presented by the literature. Moreover, the idea of “hope” generated from the painful past will be explored from Bai’s life and his literature work.

1. Bai Xian Yong and Wandering Chinese

There are two meanings of the word “wander”(流浪): to walk slowly about a place without any purpose, and to walk away from the place where we should be. The idea of wander in this thesis relates to the second meaning and describes Chinese people who were pushed around with flow of life and faced the sadness of having no “root”.

The term “Wandering Chinese” (流浪中國人) originates from Bai Xian Yong's thesis: *The Wandering Chinese-The Theme of Exile in Taiwan Fiction*. In the paper, Bai Xian Yong describes the second generation of Taiwan Waishengren⁴ (外省人) writers as follows:

No matter how diversified their family backgrounds and geographical associations, the consciousness of these writers has been shaped by one overriding historical event: all have been dislocated, banished from their homeland and condemned, like their fathers, to live estranged on an unfamiliar shore⁵.

Although in Bai Xian Yong's essay, “wandering Chinese” refers to the second generation of Waishengren writers, the idea of “wandering Chinese” can be defined as Chinese people who are dislocated from their homeland and live in an unfamiliar environment. Moreover, the idea of “diaspora” has a similar meaning to “wandering”. Taiwanese Professor Li You Cheng made a clear summary of Chinese’s diaspora history as follow:

There have been records of Chinese overseas activities since the Ming Dynasty. However, Chinese emigrated in large numbers after the middle of the 19th century under the booming development of Western capitalism and colonialism. With the decline of the Qing dynasty, the following century witnessed the Xinhai Revolution, the Chinese War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, the civil war between Nationalist and Communist Party, the change of government and various political movements. Chinese migrated overseas voluntarily or

⁴ Waishengren, sometimes called mainlanders, who arrived in Taiwan from mainland China between the Japanese surrender in 1945 and the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949.

⁵ X.Y. Bai, *the Wandering Chinese: The Theme of Exile in Taiwan*, “the Iowa Review”, vol.7, no. 2/3, 1976, p.207.

involuntarily for a variety of reasons, with some eventually returning to their roots, and others blossoming overseas⁶.

Experiencing the historical events mentioned above, the life of Bai Xian Yong's father Bai Chong Xi is tightly connected to Chinese modern history. Bai Xian Yong and his siblings also travelled the path of "wandering" since they were children. In this chapter, the wandering experience of Bai Chong Xi, Bai Xian Ming (Bai Xian Yung's older sister) who had strong impact on Bai Xian Yong's view of the world, and Bai Xian Yong will be explored to understand their sadness.

1.1 The Wandering General—Bai Chong Xi

Bai Chong Xi (1883~1966) was born in a village of Guilin, Guangxi⁷. Under the Qing's rule, China faced internal and external problems during his childhood. He had revolutionary tendencies since graduating from Guilin Army Primary School. Therefore, when Sun Yat-sen raised the idea of Three Principles of the People: Democracy, Nationalism, and People's Livelihood, Bai Chong Xi was extremely moved. He joined the Xing Hai revolution resolutely and determinedly at the age of eighteen. Being against to the objection of parents, Bai Chong Xi secretly joined the "Guangxi Students' Dare-to-die Corps" to accompany the Northern Expedition⁸.

After the success of Xinghai Revolution, Bai Chong Xi received a complete military education at the third class of the Baoding Military Academy⁹. Then, he returned to Guangxi in 1917, where he met Li Zong Ren¹⁰ and Huang Shao Xiong¹¹ who shared the target of unifying Guangxi area. They were known as the "Three Luminaries of Guangxi". At the age of 30, Bai Chong Xi got to meet Sun Yat-sen and received great encouragement from him. During their conversation, Sun Yat-sen said to him that "I have no guns, no food, no rates, but only the Three Principles of Justice." Bai Chong Xi replied, "Sir, we do not need any material support from you, but only the faith of revolution."¹²

In 1926, Bai Chong Xi got his first major post in military affairs by being invited by Chiang Kai Shek to apply the Northern Expedition, as the Chief of Staff of the National Revolutionary Army. Making a marvelous achievement in this mission, Bai Chong Xi was known as an intelligent

⁶ Y. Lee, *Li San = diaspora*. Asian Culture Publishing Co., Ltd., Taipei 2013, p.27. (My translation).

⁷ Cf. X.Y. Bai, *Fu Qin Yu Minguo: Bai Chongxi Jiang Jun Shen Ying Ji*. China Times Publishing Company, Taipei 2012, p.6.

⁸ Cf. *ibidem*.

⁹ A military academy based in Baoding, during the late Qing dynasty and early Republic of China.

¹⁰ A prominent Guangxi warlord and Kuomintang (KMT) military commander during the Northern Expedition, Second Sino-Japanese War and Chinese Civil War. He served as vice-president and acting President of the Republic of China under the 1947 Constitution.

¹¹ A Chinese warlord who governed Guangxi as part of the New Guangxi Clique through the latter part of the Warlord era, and a leader in later years of the Republic of China.

¹² Cf. *ibidem*.

and brave general. However, while the power of Guilin Army had been rocketing, Chiang Kai-shek felt threatened and later the war of him and Guilin Army broke out. Bai Chong Xi then escaped to Vietnam with his wife for safety reason¹³.

Later, Bai Chong Xi found the way to be back to Guangxi secretly. In 1931 to 1937, he took the responsibility of developing Guangxi area. Inspired by Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles of the People", he successfully made Guangxi the "model province" in the 1930s that "impressed the whole country"¹⁴.

In 1937, Chiang Kai-shek needed the help of the Guilin forces for the Chinese War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. Li Zong Ren was appointed as the commander-in-chief of the Fifth Route Army, which brought a closure to the seven-year standoff between Guangxi and the Central Government¹⁵. During the war with Japan, Bai Chong Xi got excellent result with his superior intelligence and strength. He was called the "God of War" by the Japanese newspapers and was awarded the United States Medal of Honour by President Roosevelt. After the war, he became the big hero for Chinese people¹⁶.

Later, Bai Chong Xi was back to the battlefield again for the civil war between the Nationalist and Communist party in 1946 as the Minister of National Defense. Defeating the rival Lin Biao¹⁷'s in Northeast China, Bai Chong Xi wanted to continue the battle and clear the military of Communist while Chiang Kai-shek ordered him "return to Nanking" and not to participate in the war of Northeast China anymore. He dissuaded Chiang Kai-shek from splitting the Central military into two as predicting it will lead a huge defeat in the future. Later, this prediction became true. Since the Nationalist party kept losing in the civil war, even Bai Chong Xi had retreated back to Guangxi, where his men fought to the last man but had no chance of recovering anymore. He made the decision to follow National Government to Taiwan for staying with his "faith" until the end of his life. On 30 December 1949, he entered Taiwan from Hainan Island, starting the life of being a "wandering Chinese"¹⁸.

Two years before, he had already visited Taiwan for pacifying people under the February 28 incident. He ordered all military and police to stop killing and to make the trial open to the public. In addition, he appealed to the students who was involved in the February 28 incident to return to

¹³ Cf. *ibid.*, p.72.

¹⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p.85.

¹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, p.103.

¹⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p.108.

¹⁷ A Chinese politician and Marshal of the People's Republic of China who was pivotal in the Communist victory during the Chinese Civil War, especially in Northeast China from 1946 to 1949.

¹⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p.125.

school and resume their studies. Then, many Taiwanese's lives were saved, and people were very grateful to him¹⁹.

However, after moving to Taiwan, although Bai Chong Xi still owed the name as “first-ordered general” on the surface, he was being monitored and tracked at all times. This caused him extreme anger²⁰. Moreover, in 1954 March, during the National Assembly of the Republic of China, he was impeached by Dan Heng Jin²¹ for confiscating military funds and ignoring the military order during the Battle of Xu-Bang. Even though Bai Chong Xi had replied to all the questions and proved the impeachment was wrong, the rumors about him had spread deeply and widely²².

Despite these difficult experiences after his arrival in Taiwan, he still had strong faith in developing China. In July 1965, he wrote a letter to Huang Xu Chu²³, in which expressed his deepest concerns about China and his desire to return to his homeland to work for the people²⁴. Nevertheless, in December 1966, Bai Chong Xi suddenly died of a heart attack, ending his legendary life with regret of unfulfilled wish: going back to mainland China and bringing peace to the people.

At the end of Bai Chong Xi's life, he lost not only the glory of his past, his beloved homeland and company, but also the hope of bringing a peaceful and happy living to the “Chinese people” that he had pursued with his life at the very beginning. Experiencing all the ups and downs in life, when he became an old man sitting alone at home, he seemed to have lost everything. This profound loss, and the sadness he felt in the midst of it, has become one of the key themes of Bai Xian Yong's work *Taipei People*.

1.2 Wandering Lady—Bai Xian Ming

Bai Xian Ming, who suffered loneliness from being apart with the parents under war fire and desolate from her wandering experience, had a strong impact on Bai Xian Yong's view of the world and of huge influence on his writing.

Ranking the sixth among father Bai Chong Xi and mother Ma Pei Zhang's ten children²⁵, Bai Xian Ming was born in Guangxi in 1934, three years earlier than Bai Xian Yong. They had spent an innocent and happy childhood in Guilin as being good company to each other. Once when they were going back home from school by a rickshaw, the driver lost the balance and accidentally they rolled

¹⁹ Cf. X.Y. Bai, *Ba Qian Li Lu Yun He Yue*. China Times publishing Company. Beijing 2019, p. 42.

²⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p.45.

²¹ Politician of the Republic of China that represents Hubei.

²² Cf. *ibid.*, p.47.

²³ A politician during the Republic of China and one of the leaders of the New Guangxi clique.

²⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p.52.

²⁵ Cf. X.Y. Bai, *Shu You Ru Ci*. Guangxi Normal University Press, Guangxi 2015, p.35.

out and fell on the street. Before Bai Xian Yong could react, Bai Xian Ming burst out laughing, her cheerfulness infected Bai Xian Yong and made him also laughing. This had become his life-long memory²⁶.

However, the happy time of childhood soon came to an end. During the Sino-Japanese war, their houses, along with the whole Guilin city, was destroyed²⁷. Since then, Bai Xian Ming left her hometown Guilin and started the journey of “wandering Chinese” for escaping from war. After moving from Guilin to Chongqing, Shanghai, and Nanking, Bai Xian Ming settled in Hong Kong for a few years. According to Bai Xian Yong, Bai Xian Ming had already turned into a pretty fifteen-year-old young lady when they arrived Hong Kong²⁸. However, although Bai Xian Ming was in adolescent that needed caring and guidance from the family, especially female elders, she had no one to rely on and talk to. Their mother had followed Bai Chong Xi to Taiwan and the other two older sisters had already studied abroad to the U.S., Bai Xian Ming became the only girl at the family in Hong Kong²⁹. Bai Xian Yong often heard that she locked herself in the room, crying alone. During the turmoil and chaos of war, neither Bai Chong Xi nor Ma Pei Zhang got the chance of listening to Bai Xian Ming and to understand her tear. Bai Xian Yong pointed out that Bai Xian Ming could only hide her pain, fear, worries and loneliness under the image of a good girl. Also, Bai Xian Yong saw the inviolable pride in Bai Xian Ming covered by the timidity on the surface³⁰.

When Bai Xian Ming turned seventeen years old, she started the journey to the U.S. since parents thought she may follow her sisters’ path. The night before she left Taiwan, her brothers and friends held a farewell party for her. She “wore a long pink dress, with a blue satin sash around her waist”, Bai Xian Yong said at the night she found her sister had become such a beautiful lady³¹.

However, after going to the U.S., no one knows what exactly Bai Xian Ming had been through. Her only close friend of high school said that Bai Xian Ming had told her that she could not catch up with the study in the university³². Withdrawing gradually from the university, Bai Xian Ming often hide herself in the cinemas alone, refused to come out, eventually dropped out. An auntie lived in the U.S. told that Bai Xian Ming started eating without control and cut her hair messy with scissors³³.

²⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p.37.

²⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, p.38.

²⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p.40.

²⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p.42.

³⁰ Cf. *ibidem*.

³¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p.41.

³² Cf. *ibid.*, p.43.

³³ Cf. *ibidem*.

In 1955 when she was back to Taiwan, she was no longer the former Bai Xian Ming that brought extreme shock to Bai family. Bai Xian Yong described the image of her as follow:

When Sister Ming stepped out of the plane, we were shocked to see her whole body has changed its shape and doubled in size. Her skin became rough and waxy, eyes were dull and often laugh for no reason³⁴.

Later they discovered that Bai Xian Ming had the mental disease Schizophrenia, which brought shock and pain to every one's heart in the family. Although they loved and took good care of her for her illness and her kind personality, she had spent most of her time in Taiwan all alone. Once, when Bai Xian Yong asked Bai Xian Ming if she wanted to go to the U.S. again for travelling, she rejected by saying that "that place was too cold". Hearing Bai Xian Ming's answer, Bai Xian Yong thought that:

The winter in Boston probably scared her. The icy loneliness of the United States is as boundless as the vast expanses of the New World. There was no place for a failure. Sister Ming were very unhappy in the years of the U.S³⁵.

After the death of Ma Pei Zhang, Bai Chong Xi who lived at home in Taipei with Bai Xian Ming also passed away. Bai Xian Ming and her domestic helper Granny Luo supported each other and shared the housework, barely holding the family together.³⁶ While everyone was worried that will there be no one to take care of Bai Xian Ming if Granny Luo passed away, Bai Xian Ming had brought another shock to everyone by leaving the world in a sudden. In October 1982, Bai Xian Ming passed away at the age of forty-nine with a diagnosis of malignant hepatitis. During the treatment in hospital, she was received Intravenous therapy that cause her extreme pain. However, she still refused to show her pain and showed the inviolability of her dignity. When Bai Xian Ming was in a coma, she suddenly kept calling out: "Mum...Mum..." and "The journey is too long...I feel so cold..."³⁷

Bai Xian Yong recalled that Bai Xian Ming was such a kind and good person. Seeing Bai Xian Ming experienced such misfortune, Bai Xian Yong said it woke the compassion in his heart³⁸. In Bai Xian Yong's stories, there are many characters who are very kind but ends up having a

³⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p.45.

³⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, p.43.

³⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p.41.

³⁷ Cf. *ibidem*.

³⁸ Cf. *ibidem*.

miserable ending. It is thought that we can see the image of Bai Xian Ming from those characters, and they always arouse reader's sympathy.

Also, although no one knows the exact feelings she had when she was studying abroad in the U.S., what frightened her was not only the coldness she felt physically, but also the coldness she felt in heart from loneliness and anxiety. In *New Yorker*, the loneliness and anxiety of Chinese living in the U.S. is one of the main topics, it will be explained more in 3. Analysis of *New Yorker*.

1.3 The Wandering Writer—Bai Xian Yong

Same with Bai Xian Ming, the eighth child in Bai's family, Bai Xian Yong started his wandering journey since his was a child. While the family was moving to Chongqing during the war, Bai Xian Yong was diagnosed as having pneumonia and got put in quarantine for more than one year. During the quarantine, he was isolated to a small house on the hillside and found it very depressing. Recalling this memory from the age of nine, Bai Xian Yong said it brought him a deeper and sharper sense of pain that people suffered³⁹.

Along with Bai Xian Ming, Bai Xian Yong had spent his childhood moving to different places. Every time he moves, he faced the problem of adapting to a new environment. In terms of language, he mentioned that "once it was the language of Shanghai, once it was Cantonese, once it's the language of Taiwan," made he felt out of place everywhere⁴⁰. Also, what confused him was not only the language but also the image of the world. The perception of the world he made was repeatedly altered along the wandering journey.

Moreover, after moving to Taiwan, internally Bai Xian Yong experienced the dramatic change of his father's career and the situation of his family; externally, for the Taiwan society, it was facing the confusion and chaos as just finishing the colonial history and being ruled by a different government⁴¹. Under the confusion and struggle of identity, he was fascinated by literature and published his first article when he was fifteen-year-old.

In 1957, Bai Xian Yong started his study in the English department of Taiwan University, where he met many friends who have the same passion about literature, and they found the magazine *Modern Literature* together. Then, he stopped the journey of wandering alone but started finding the belongings of his heart from literature with his friends.

³⁹ X.Y. BAI, *Mu ran Hui Shou*, Wenhui Press, Shanghai 1999, p.15. (My translation).

⁴⁰ BAI, *Shu You Ru Ci*, op.cit, p.344.

⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p.97.

However, there was another challenging time came to his life. In 1963, Bai Xian Yong received a full scholarship to study at the writer’s workshop in the University of Iowa. While the other students who were excited about studying abroad to the U.S., Bai Xian Yong was in shock and sadness over the death of his mother Ma Pei Zhang. After the arrival to the U.S. for a few months, Bai Chong Xi also passed away. In such a short time, he had experienced extreme pain of losing his parents and the confusion in a totally new environment. During the first year in the United States, he said his mood was in such cold sadness⁴².

Living in the U.S., Bai Xian Yong mentioned he missed home so bad, for him, home is not an exact house, a place or anywhere, but every memory about China⁴³. On the other hand, seeing the home has been experiencing collapse since the eighteenth centuries, he was very worried.

Once, he watched a documentary about Chinese history and wrote his feelings as follow:

Since the death of Cixi, the Xinhai Revolution, the Northern Expedition, the Sino-Japanese war until the civil war, these historical moments had been presented in front of his eyes. The Nanking Massacre and the Chongqing Bombing were not only historical terms, but the bodies of Chinese people who had been ravaged, abused, split up and burnt, laid out on the piece of Chinese land which had been blackened by the blood and tears of suffering⁴⁴.

Going out from the cinema, he got lost in the New York city, looking at the crowd and flourishing streets, had no idea where he was. Having the deep worries of the destiny of his home and strong cultural nostalgia, he started writing the stories of *Taipei People* and *New Yorker*⁴⁵. Those stories will be explored in the following chapters to deepen the understanding about the sadness of him, Bai Chong Xi, Bai Xian Ming and the other wandering Chinese.

2. Analysis of *Taipei People*—Wandering Chinese in Taipei

There are a total of fourteen stories in *Taipei People*. The following table briefly lists out the year of publication and the main character in each story⁴⁶.

The Eternal Snow Beauty	1965	Yin Hsueh-yen	Social butterfly
A Touch of Green	1966	Verdancy Chu	Air Force wife

⁴² Cf. X.Y. Bai, *Ji Mo De Shi Qi Sui*. Guangxi Normal University Press, Guangxi 2010, p.314.

⁴³ Cf. X.Y. Bai, *Taipei Ren*. Guangxi Normal University Press, Guangxi 2010.

⁴⁴ BAI, *Ji Mo De Shi Qi Sui*, op.cit., 316.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ BAI, *Taipei Ren*. op.cit., p.316.

Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream	1966	Madame Ch'ien	Singer
New Year's Eve	1967	Brother Lai	Retired Veteran
The Dirge of Liang Fu	1967	Liang Fu	Soldier
The Last Night of Taipan Chin	1968	Taipan Chin	Dancer
A Sea of Blood-red Azaleas	1969	Wang Hsiung	Domestic helper
Ode to Bygone Days	1969	Mamma Lo	Domestic helper
A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars	1969	Chu Yen	Movie Director
Love's Lone Flower	1970	Dainty	Social butterfly
Winter Night	1970	Professor Yu	Professor
Glory's by Blossom Bridge	1970	Mr.Lu	Teacher
Autumn Reveries	1971	Madame Hua	Madame
State Funeral	1971	Li Hao-Jan	General

The characters of the fourteen stories, as analysed by writer Ou Yang Zi, were all born in Mainland China but all displaced to Taiwan by various reasons. Also, they all have a strong nostalgia of their past in hometown. In this chapter, the story *Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream* which represents the story of female protagonist, *Glory's by Blossom Brige* which represents the story of male protagonist, and the story *State Funeral* which has an overarching meaning will be studied to explore the sadness of the characters and how do they relate to the content of the previous chapter.

2.1 Analysis of *Wandering in the Garden, Waking up from a Dream*

Wandering in the Garden, Waking up from a Dream is written by Bai Xian Yong in 1966 in the way stream of consciousness⁴⁷. Madame Ch'ien, a singer of K'unshan opera whom was married General Ch'ien P'eng-chih is the heroine of the story. Following her mind of recalling the past from the present, readers got to experience the up and down of Madame Ch'ien's feeling and understand her sadness.

In the past, Madame Ch'ien was a young singing girl at the Moon Terrace by the Chin Huai River in Nanking. Her stage name is "Bluefield Jade⁴⁸", symbolizing she is as beautiful as jade. Having not only the beauty of appearance, Bluefield Jade was also a talented singer called "the All-

⁴⁷ A narrative mode or method that attempts "to depict the multitudinous thoughts and feelings which pass through the mind" of a narrator.

⁴⁸ Bluefield Mountain in Shensi Province is famous for its rare jade. In China, jade symbolizes spiritual essence.

knowing First Lady of opera⁴⁹”. Once, admiral Ch’ien P’eng-chih heard her singing of *Wandering in the Garden, Waking up from a Dream*⁵⁰, found himself unable to stop thinking about her after going back to Shanghai from Nanking. After getting married with Ch’ien, Bluefield Jade “was transformed overnight to a general’s lady.⁵¹” However, shihniang, the blind woman who was the wife of Bluefield Jade’s master, made a prophecy and said to her that “worldly glory, wealth, position—you shall enjoy them all, Bluefield Jade. Only it’s a pity you’ve got one bone in you that’s not quite right. It’s just your retribution from a previous life⁵².” Later, the prophecy became true that although Bluefield Jade had enjoyed the glory, wealth and position after the marriage, she eventually lost them all because of Ch’ien P’eng-chih’s death, ends up living alone in down south Taiwan. One day, Madame Tou (stage name: Fragrant Cassia), an old friend of Madame Ch’ien who used to sing the K’unshan opera at the Moon Terrace together, invited Bluefield Jade to her birthday banquet:

When Madame Ch’ien arrived at the Tou villa in the elegant Taipei suburb of Tien Mu, the road near the house was already packed on both sides with parked cars, most of them black official sedans. As her taxicab drove up to the gate, Madame Ch’ien ordered the driver to stop.⁵³

This is the first sentence of the story. Moving to Taiwan, Madame Ch’ien was no longer a wealthy general wife but a lonely woman who came to the banquet by taxi. On the other hand, Fragrant Cassia’s husband became big in the government, and she had risen to be the official Madame Tou. The glory of Madame Tou is contrasted with the abjection of Madame Ch’ien, emphasized her misfortune.

In the banquet, the guests were asking her to sing by complimenting her singing voice. She recalled the praise she got from Ch’ien P’eng-chih in the past: “my dear, I’ve heard the finest singers north and south, and I must say your voice ranks up there with theirs.” She remembered “in those Nanking days, when she herself gave opera dinners at Plum Garden, every time she got up to sing, her presence would hush the audience and hold it spellbound even before she uttered a note.⁵⁴”

Later, the guests started persuading Madame Ch’ien to drink the wine hua-tiao by saying: “how could you possibly lose your voice with a few cups of hua-tiao?⁵⁵” She recalled in the past, her

⁴⁹ BAI, *Taipei Ren.* op.cit., p.251.

⁵⁰ Scene Ten of The Peony Pavilion.

⁵¹ *Ibidem.*

⁵² *Ibidem.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.235.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.246.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.253.

sister red-red Rose had also said to her: “sister, let’s you and me drink bottoms up and be real pals for a while.⁵⁶”

“It’s over, my throat, feel my throat, is it quivering?⁵⁷”

With getting drunk, the past and present were constantly crossed in the consciousness of Madame Ch’ien. It turns out that in the past, after witnessing her lover snatched away and the side effects of alcohol, she had demonstrated the shame of “losing her voice” in front of the public. Back to the present, she refused the request to show off her singing voice and defended the only dignity she had left. At the end, the guests left the banquet one by one with their cars. Bai Xian Yong himself analysed that, wandering in the garden, when Madame Ch’ien woke up from the dream, she had lost everything. When she was “shivered”, she did not only feel the cold in her body, but also in her heart.

The sadness of losing everything is not only the fate of Madame Ch’ien, but also a metaphor. When Bai Xian Yong was writing the story, China was experiencing the disaster of Cultural Revolution. Seeing the destruction of traditional Chinese culture in the foreign media, he was terrified that it will be an end for Chinese traditional culture, especially the K’unshan opera which was completely banned. When Madame Ch’ien’s singing voice was hurt by the alcohol, it symbolized that K’unshan opera was getting huge damage.

Also, although Madame Ch’ien was totally different with Bai Xian Yong’s father Bai Chong Xi on the surface by having completely different gender and occupation, there are many overlaps in their images. While Madame Ch’ien was one of best singers in Nanking, Bai Chong Xi was called one of the greatest generals in China. He had also experienced the up and down of life as having the glory, wealth, position and losing them all after moving to Taiwan. As Madame Ch’ien has lost the singing voice that she was so proud of in the past, Bai Chong Xi also lost the military power by restriction from the government. The shame that Madame Ch’ien felt while losing the singing voice in front of the public, is exactly the feeling of Bai Chong Xi when he got defeated in the civil war. If life is like a dream, when he became a seventy-three-year-old man sitting alone at home, waking up, he would realize that he had lost everything in life. It is thought that the cold sadness felt in Madame Ch’ien’s heart is exactly the feeling of Bai Chong Xi in the last years of his life.

2.2 Analysis of *Glory’s by Blossom Bridge*

Glory’s by Blossom Bridge is published in 1970, four years later than *Wandering in the*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.246.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.266.

Garden, Waking up from a Dream. It was adapted into a film in 1998 in Taiwan and performed by actors of Taiwan, mainland China and Hong Kong. Same with the previous story, it presents the sadness of Bai's family and his worry about Chinese traditional culture.

Blossom Bridge is a bridge in Guilin, Guangxi. There was a famous rice-noodle shop near the bridge named Glory's. The narrator of this story is the granddaughter of the owner of Glory's. She opened a rice-noodle shop in Taiwan with the same name, after moving to Taiwan under the civil war. Losing the contact with her husband who was a soldier of nationalist party, she had to make living by herself and became the Boss-lady. There were many customers from Guangxi love eating the noodle there because it tasted like "home". Among all the customers, Boss-lady took special care of Mr. Lu, who also came from Guilin, was described as an a "polite, thoughtful, and educated gentleman."⁵⁸

Mr. Lu is the hero of the story. He was from a good family that his grandfather was Old Mr. Lu, the well-known philanthropist in Guilin, who had been a high official in Hunan Province, an Inspector General. There was a beautiful house he had, and boss lady had visited. However, when she mentioned it, he just had a light smile and said that "when we retreated from the mainland our own troops put the torch to it, burned it down to the ground"⁵⁹.

After moving to Taiwan, he was teaching Chinese at the Changchun Elementary School. He was a gentle and patient teacher to the young students that "every time they crossed the street, he'd stand in the middle of the intersection and spread out his arms to stop the traffic."⁶⁰ For the appearance of Mr. Lu, although his hair had turned gray early, "underneath there is the outline of what must have been a handsome face at one time"⁶¹.

Mrs. Ku, the landlady of Mr. Lu also said she'd never in all her born days seen such a well-behaved man. "Mr. Lu didn't eat much, didn't spend much, except for playing his Hu-ch'in"⁶² and singing a little opera, he didn't have any vices at all. He raised chickens with the money he earned this extra tutoring.⁶³ Seeing Mr. Lu as such a good man, the boss lady wanted to introduce the niece of her husband, Hsiu-hua to him. She was also from Guilin, with a very decent-looking and lost contact with her husband during war fire. However, when the boss lady prepared the dinner for them and talked about the idea for them to get marry, Mr. Lu said to boss lady gravely that "no more of this joking, please. I was engaged back on the mainland a long time ago."⁶⁴

Later, there came a time when Mr. Lu suddenly seemed on top of the world, a cousin of his in Hong Kong managed to get in touch with his fiancée, saying that he can made her to Taiwan if there

⁵⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p.191.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.192.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem.*

⁶¹ *Ibidem.*

⁶² Cf. *ibidem.*

⁶³ Cf. *ibidem.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.195.

are five thousand Taiwan dollars. Mr. Lu was so happy that he had the money with exact price from saving for fifteen years. However, unfortunately the cousin turned out to be a liar that pocketed all the cash. After this shock, Mr. Lu had a huge change from his appearance and behavior. He started messing around with the washerwoman Spring Mais who had a horrible reputation in town. He dyed his hair jet black that it was coarse stuck out from his head like wires. Once, when he found Spring Maid was balling a man in his room, it drove him extremely angry but eventually he got beaten up by Spring Maid and badly hurt.

One day, when Mr. Lu was leading a group of kids out of school, while the kids were jabbering and horsing around, Mr. Lu was mad as hell shouted “stop fooling around” to them. One girl broke out giggling instead of feeling scared and annoyed Mr. Lu. He slapped her face so hard that she lost her footing and ended up sitting on the ground. While the other teachers tried to grab him and haul him off, he was foaming at the mouth and screeching, “ I’ll kill her!”⁶⁵ Eventually, Mr. Lu died the next day in his desk while his fingers were still gripping his writing brush. Lady boss went to his room and noticed that “Hu-ch’in of his hanging on the wall, all covered with dust”⁶⁶.

From 2.1, we understand the sadness of wandering Chinese who lost the glory, position, and money. Mr. Lu also lost them after moving to Taiwan, but he could still behave well while having the hope in his heart that one day he can see her fiancée again. However, after being treated by his cousin, there is such a big damage to his heart as losing his hope. Bai Xian Yong did not describe his sadness by word, as even Mr. Lu could not explain himself well after having this shock but only cried in front of Boss-lady. Since there are the feelings that human cannot express well by words. But the huge change of Mr. Lu had presented the sadness and desperate in his heart, the sadness that can drive him crazy and to death. It is believed that many wandering Chinese could experience the same without being able to express it. Bai Chong Xi is one of them, losing the glory, position, money, power, also the dream which means the most for him as the fiancée means the most for Mr.Lu.

Moreover, we can see the image of Bai Xian Ming from Mr. Lu who was also patient and thoughtful, being such a good person but ended up experiencing a huge change of herself. The big difference between before and after of going to the U.S. represents the extreme sadness in her heart. When readers felt sympathy for the misfortune of Mr. Lu, they may understand what Bai Xian Yong had felt by seeing Bai Xian Ming’s tragedy.

Also, clues symbolizing “traditional Chinese culture” can be found in this story. The Boss-lady was a fan of Guilin Opera. Once, Mr. Lu was sitting on a stone bench under an elm tree in a park, “completely wrapped up in his Hu’ch’in.” The Boss-lady asked him to play *Hsueh Ping-kuei’s Homecoming to the Cave*, which brings out the allusion of the young wife Precious Bracelet who

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.205.

⁶⁶ Cf. *ibidem*.

waited eighteen long years for Hsueh Ping-kuei and got him back after all . Mr. Lu and the Boss-lady had also waited for a long time but their “Hsueh Ping-kuei” did not come back. The allusion exaggerated one of the sadness of the “wandering Chinese”: to be separated with beloved one. Besides, when Boss-lady saw the disfigured face of Mr. Lu, she recalled the memory of seeing a fifty-old-man performed a piece from *The Dream of the Red Chamber* called “Pao-yu Wails by Black Jade’s Coffin”. His face was covered with wrinkles and when he opened his mouth, there was a mouthful of black tobacco-stained teeth that made Boss-lady “feel sick at heart”. She recalled the memory since there was a similar feeling of seeing the hilarious appearance of Mr. Lu after his change. On the other hand, as Boss-lady found that after Mr. Lu’s death, “Hu-ch’in of his hanging on the wall, all covered with dust”, there was the metaphor of the demise of traditional culture. Bai Xian Yong has mentioned that in Chinese traditional culture, people have a persistent attitude toward love that “when it once begun it will never end, the lover may die for in and in love even the dead may revive”. Before, Mr. Lu had his persistence to wait for his fiancée and refused Hsiu-hua. Since choosing a messy relationship with Spring Mais, it alludes to the demise of traditional culture, just like the string that is “covered in dust”. The disappointment and pity that Boss-lady felt by seeing the falling of Mr. Lu were what Bai Xian Yong felt for the falling of Chinese traditional culture.

2.3 Analysis of *State Funeral*

Different from the above two stories, *State funeral* presents the connection between the content of story and the life of Bai Chong Xi directly. Since when Bai Chong Xi passed away, Chiang Kai-Shek asked the government to prepare a funeral on a scale of “state funeral”, it can be thought that the hero of the story, Li Hao-Jan, who was a four-star general represents the image of Bai Chong Xi.

Li Hao-Jan’s Fukuan⁶⁷ Ch’in I-fang is the narrator of the story, who followed General Li for many years, he stated that “only he, Ch’in I-fang—only he who has followed the General all those years knew about his headstrong ways.”⁶⁸ In the story, he appeared as a “old man”, “leaning on his staff, walked up to the gate” of the Taipei Metropolitan Funeral Hall. Standing and gazing at the late General’s portrait, “he pulled out his handkerchief, blowing his nose and wiping away his tears.”⁶⁹

Suddenly, he hurried over to a middle-aged man call him gently: “Young Master, it’s me, Ch’in Fukuan,” and his “wizened old face broke into a smile” that he recalled the memory of riding horse with him when he was a child. He wanted to tell the Young Master that, in the last years of the General, “he was not really at peace with himself. Once Madame was gone, the General was all by himself in Taiwan, he had felt very lonely.” However, the middle-aged man “had raised his head and

⁶⁷ Adjutant, a military officer who acts as an administrative assistant to a senior officer.

⁶⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p.302.

⁶⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 301.

given him a stare, his face expressionless, as if he had not quite recognized him”⁷⁰.

Later, he saw “two old men walking upside”, realized they were Commander Chang and Deputy Commander Yeh. He was surprised since Commander Chang had long been living in seclusion in Hong Kong, while Deputy Commander Yeh had been bedridden in the Taipei Veterans Hospital for many years. Ch-in recalled that in the past everybody called them “Commanders of the Steel Army”. Ch-in saw their memorial scrolls hanging side by side next to the door that mentioned: “Pillar a of the State! Your Genius will be remembered a thousand Autumns”, “Our Country, our Nation is split in two; How can we bear to see the unending Tragedy and Woe?”⁷¹

In the old days, the General once said with obvious pride, three fingers raised “Chang Chien, Yeh Hui, and Liu Hsing-ch’i”, “I’ve got myself three fierce warriors.” While Ch’in wondered where is Liu Hsing-ch’i, he saw an old Buddhist monk walked in with “such a sorrowful look on his face”⁷².

“General”, Ch’in uttered an involuntary cry.

“Ch’in I-fang—ah, the General—” As he spoke, the old monk’s voice choked, and his tears began to fall; hastily he touched the wide sleeve of his cassock to his eyes.

“The General, to me, he was so—” Shaking his head, the old monk sighed deeply and turned to leave⁷³.

Ch’in recalled that Liu was young, capable, and high in the General’s favor in the past. However, after the civil war, he had escaped all alone from Kwangtung to Taiwan that had been held captive for a year by the Communist Eighth Route Army. Seeing the suffering of Liu of his poor appearance, General Lee let out a long, deep sign and said:

“When we retreated to Kwangtung, I thought we could put up a last-ditch fight”.

“Chang Chien, Yeh Hui, and you—your divisions were all made up of our own Kwangtung boys; they’d been following me all these years; now that we had returned to Kwangtung, we’d be defending our own homes and villages; if we fought to the death, maybe we could still turn the tide. We never dreamed that the end would be such a debacle—”

“Tens of thousands of our own Kwangtung boys, all lost to the enemy; just to talk about it—ah—makes your heart ache.” And at last, two streams of tears started to flow down the General’s face⁷⁴.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.303.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.306.

⁷² *Ibidem.*

⁷³ Cf. *ibid.*, p.307.

⁷⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 309.

Bai Xian Yong used this conversation between Liu and Li to express the sadness of Bai Chong Xi. In the reality, Bai Chong Xi was defeated in Guangxi during the civil war, where his army fought to the last man. He experienced the grief of seeing countless soldiers that he cultivated died in front of him. The story expressed his deep regret and guilty of losing the war, the sore of seeing his subordinates' death. Also, it presents the strong connection between the generals and the sadness of their separation. For Bai Chong Xi, he worked with Li Zong Ren and Huang Shao Xiong which were known as the "Three Luminaries of Guangxi", shared many unforgettable memories in the battlefield including winning the Second Sino-Japanese War. However, they made different decisions during the civil war and end up faced different tragedies in their late years. It can be one of the causes of Bai Chong Xi's melancholy.

Eventually, Ch'in got into the hearse of General Li. "As the hearse was proceeding through the arch, an infantry company came marching along one side of the avenue." The commanding officer barked out the order: "Salute!", while all of a sudden Chin recalled the memory as follow:

The year the Anti-Japanese War was won and they had moved back to Nanking, the formal capital. The General had gone to the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum on Purple Mountain to pay tribute to the Father of the Country. (...) In front of the Mausoleum the military guard stood in formation, waiting. As they approached, a thunderous chorus burst out:

"Sa—lute—⁷⁵"

Bai Xian Yong suggested that the last sentence of the story, "salute", is to express the respect to his father and also to the Republic of China. Since the story had presented the sadness of the soldiers who spent their life to their faith as receiving the result of a "broken dream", it is believed that this "salute" was given to everyone who work hard for the country including but not limited to Bai Chong Xi.

When Bai Xian Yong visited the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum, he could not help tearing when he saw the plaque written "the world is for the public". There are not only Madame Qian, Mr. Lu, General Li, Bai Chong Xi... who had lost everything during the historical events, but all the Wandering Chinese who had hope and love for their homeland. However, as the Young Master had already forgotten Ch'in Fukuan, Bai Xian Yong was afraid that the suffering of old generation will be forgotten. Therefore, *Taipei People* was an elegy, a record of the sadness of the time, as he wrote inside front cover: "to the memory of my parents and the time of endless turmoil and anguish through which they lived."

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.312.

3. Analysis of *New Yorker*—Wandering Chinese in the U.S.

In *New Yorker*, published by Guangxi Normal University Press (2010), there are six stories: *The Story of Fallen to the Earth* (1965), *The Blame of the Fallen to the Earth* (1969), *Nocturne* (1979), *Bone Ashes* (1986), *Danny Boy* (2001) and *Tea for Two* (2003). The setting in which the characters are situated is shifted from Taiwan to the United States. While the stories of *Taipei People* tightly connect with the life of Bai Chong Xi who left the mainland China and spent the rest of his life in Taiwan, stories of *New Yorker* present the feeling of Chinese living in the U.S. which Bai Xian Ming and Bai Xian Yong experienced.

Compared to *Taipei people*, there is a longer time span of creation for *New Yorkers* which presents the change and growth of Bai Xian Yong's writing. Especially in *Bone Ashes*, the message about hope can be explored from the story. In this chapter, *The Story of Fallen to the Earth*, *Nocturne* and *Bone Ashes* that present various sadness of wandering Chinese will be explored.

3.1 Analysis of *the Story of Fallen to the Earth*

The original name of *the Story of Fallen to the Earth* in Chinese is “Zhe Xian Ji” (謫仙記), “Zhe Xian” means the fairy who was demoted to the human world, describes the life of heroine Li Tung. The narrator of this story Chen Yin is the husband of Li Tung's best friend Hui Fen, who watched the up and down of Li Tung's life. While the change of government and the decline of Chinese culture have led to the loneliness and confusion of overseas Chinese who are “rootless”, Li Tung experienced those feelings in the story and at the same time she embodies the destiny of China.

Li Tung was from a rich family of Shanghai, young and beautiful. Being the only child at home, she was happy and privileged as a fairy. Graduating from high school, Li Tung, Hui fen, and other two classmates started their journey to the U.S. for studying abroad. The four girls wore Cheongsam in red on the day leaving China, made a beautiful scene in the airplane that the other foreign passengers nodded and smiled at them. Li Tung's Cheongsam was the reddest one, she made fun of themselves saying that they were like the “Big Four” and she represented “China”.

Arriving in the U.S., she was still like a fairy that “became a celebrity in Wesleyan University and chosen as the “May Queen” because of her beauty and wealth. However, one day, she received the news that her parents were died while trying to move to Taiwan from China under the civil war. Suddenly, she lost her family and all the property at one night. Experiencing this huge shock, Li Tung could not eat and stayed in the hospital for a month.

The narrator, Hui Fen's husband Chen Ying first met Li Tung in his wedding. Saying Li Tung was “stunningly beautiful”. That night, she “wore a glittering satin Cheongsam. There was the design of maple leaves on it. They were as red as flame”⁷⁶. When she danced at the banquet, “she

⁷⁶ Cf. X.Y. Bai, *Niu Yue Ke*. Guangxi Normal University Press, Guangxi 2010., p.5.

tilted her head up, with her eyes dropped”, “her body swayed eagerly from side to side, as if a cobra was restrained by a magic flute, dancing as it was without her control and in pain that she was about to be separated.⁷⁷”

After the marriage with Chen Yin, Hui Fen suffered from severe insomnia. Chen Ying suggested moving to Buffalo where they could rest in a place with slower living tempo. Six years later, Hui Fen pointed out that she could not bear the boring life there anymore. Chen Ying agreed, and they moved back to New York with their daughter Lily. At the welcoming back party, they met Li Tung again. Chen Yin said he had never seen Li Tung looked so tired, losing her sparkle. She wore “a long dress in crimson that looked so dark under the light, seems like she was wrapped in an old velvet blanket.⁷⁸” At the night, when Lily asked what was in her hand, she took out the ring her mother passed to her and gave it to Lily.

The last time they saw Li Tung was on the car, Li Tung passed through them sitting in a gold car with a tall American-looking man behind her. One day when the other three excepts Li Tung were gathering, they received the news that Li Tung had died in the river of Italy. It brought them a huge shock. They took out a photo of Li Tung which she sent to them a few days before, written in the back:

Dear the U.K, U.S, and Russia,

This is the tower Pisa.

China⁷⁹.

In the photo, she was holding a black jacket in her hand with a proud smile, the Pisa tower in her back was like it almost cover her. After the gathering, Hui Fen cried bitterly in the car. Chen Yin felt “a deep and hollow sadness” in her cries. Looking at the scenery of streets from the car, he described: “I never imagined that one of the busiest streets in New York City, can become so empty and so lonely, on a Sunday morning.⁸⁰”

In Li Tung, there are similar images of Bai Xian Ming that they are both young ladies who moved to the U.S. after graduating from the high school, experienced a big change of family due to civil war, covered their sadness with pride that no one can realize before tragedy had happened to them. And for Hui Fen, she understands the suffering and anxiety of Li Tung that her death caused her extreme sadness. As Chen Yin pointed out she had similar personality with Li Tung that never showed her weakness to people easily. Bai Xian Yong, who is also the wandering Chinese experienced the confusion, loneliness and anxiety in the U.S. with a sensitive heart, he understands Bai Xian Ming’s desolate as Hui Fen understands Li Tung.

At the same time, the image of Li Tung is a metaphor. She represented China, so as the life of

⁷⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, p.17.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.17. (My translation).

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.22.

⁸⁰ Cf. *ibidem*.

her is the metaphor of destiny of the country. While Bai Xian Yong made a lot of description about her dress, the colour of red that was the strongest at the beginning but faded little by little and at the end there was a “black” jacket in her hand, symbolized the decline of the country. When Li Tung died, the feeling of the others was not only sadness but anxiety and emptiness of losing their root: the belonging of heart. As Bai Xian Yong has mentioned, when the characters started the experience of wandering, they are looking for a belonging for their heart⁸¹. For Bai Xian Yong, it considered as every memory related to China. But when the “memory”, the culture, the development of China is downing, the people cannot help but wandering in their soul.

3.2 Analysis of *Nocturnes*

Nocturnes was written in 1979, eleven years later than the previous story and three years after the end of cultural revolution in China. It exposed the torture that overseas intellectuals suffered physically and mentally during the extreme ten years. In the story, a couple was separated during the cultural revolution and reunited after twenty-five years. The hero still loved the heroine, but he had no way to get back into the relationship with her anymore. It can be thought that this sorrow of not being able to love, presents the feeling of Bai Xian Yong toward China.

The name of the story: *Nocturnes* by Chopin are the music heroine, pianist Lu Fang loved to play when she was studying in the U.S.. She met the hero Wu Zhen Duo, who later became a successful doctor in the U.S. when they were university student. They shared the big dream of going back to China and developing the country with what they studied abroad. There were two other friends, Gao Zhong Han and Liu Wei who always gathered together and shared the plan of developing China. Since Wu’s study in university took longer time than the others, three of them started their journey back to China earlier. However, later the cultural revolution began, and he lost the timing of going back, also the contact with three of them.

Twenty-five years later, he finally received Lu Fang’s letter and they would have a conversation at his house. There were excitement and happiness for him before their conversation. However, what Lu Fang told him brought him shock and silence. In 1967, during the Cultural Revolution, as a teacher of Western music, especially who had studied abroad, Lu Fang was considered as a “foreign slave” for the government. Her husband was sent down to the countryside in Hubei province and died there. Lu Fang was “completely isolated in Shanghai, unable to find anyone to talk to⁸²”. Their friend Gao Zhong Han also suffered and could not bear the cruelty, committed suicide eventually. The crematorium refused to take care of his dead body, his wife could only carry his body by herself that it broke apart on the way and scattered on the road. Hearing what they suffered in the cultural revolution, Wu confessed that in his heart there was the deep guilty for

⁸¹ Cf. *Ta Men Zai Dao Yu Xie Zuo/Bai Xian Yong: Cha Zi Yan Hong Kai Bian*, op.cit.

⁸² Cf. *ibidem*.

not going back to China. Also, in the U.S., he was so scared to hear any news about cultural revolution.

In the story, Wu presents the Chinese living overseas who suffered the guilty and sadness while Lu presents the Chinese who was back from overseas that suffered the pain under the Chinese revolution. The difference of memory and experiences brought them far away from each other. Although physically they were able to meet each other again, there were a large distance between them that they can never reach to each other again.

This is like the relationship between Bai Xian Yong and his hometown, he loves China so much but could not go back during cultural revolution, it brought him extreme guilty and worries. When he could finally go back, everything was changed. While Wu and Lu could not go back to the old time, Bai could not go back to the home that he loved. The sadness of Wu for missing Lu Fang and not being able to love her even she was in front of him, is like the feeling of Bai toward his homeland.

3.3 Analysis of *Bone ashes*

From the name of the story: *Bone ashes*, we can know that the content is related to death, which call back to *State Funeral in Taipei people*. However, Bai Xian Yong had written this story twenty years later, which presents some changes of his mind and the “hope” from his message.

The narrator is a young and successful Chinese engineer who lives in the U.S.. His father was a university teacher and suffered a lot under the cultural revolution, at the end died from illness. His older brother had been working for bringing back the dignity of his father and finally got to hold a funeral for him in Shanghai. For joining the funeral, he started the journey to China, but stopped by in Los Angeles for meeting the uncle Da Bo, who had been a soldier of Nationalist military, moving to Taiwan during war and later emigrating to the U.S..He did not know that there was a guest of Uncle, Da Bo’s cousin who used to be a famous democratic fighter, Biao Bo. Most of the story is formed by the conversation between three of them.

In this story, it summarized the sadness that wandering Chinese had experienced in different places during different times: The narrator’s father lost his life in the cultural revolution and his mother suffered missing her husband endlessly while the narrator lost his father when he was a kid. Da Buo worked so hard in the wars for protecting the country but ends up being treated badly while Biao Bo also suffered a lot by being abused from the government. And the end, both of them had the loneliness after the deaths of their wives.

Two of them had to fight each other due to the difference of political standpoint, and chose totally different roads in life. However, they eventually arrived at the same place. In the understanding of each other, they both shared the feeling of “giving such heart and blood, all for nothing” with tears. The setting that they were cousins but became rivals is brilliant in that it

symbolized these years Taiwan and China have been fighting against each other because of political standards, however they forgot that they were actually “family”. Experiencing all the changes in life, they finally realized that they had done much but forgot one important thing: before the difference of political standpoint and ideology, they are same “human being” and especially shared the same root. The life of human being is of most importance.

Also, at the end of the story, the narrator saw a dream of Da Bo being collapsed by many human bones. Da Bo cried out the narrator’s name: Qi Shen (meaning : born together, live together), symbolized that so many lives had been sacrificed in the wars and chaos in the past, he was almost covered by the heaviness of history and sadness of the dead. He called “Qi shen!”, symbolizes passing on the hope to the young generation.

Bai Xian Yong himself is also the young generation to his father that carried on his sadness. While Bai is calling the young generation to pass on his hope, at the same time he is also Qi Shen. He dreamt of his father calling him, and replied to his calling by writing down the suffering of people by literature. Therefore, his literature had been replying to the hope of Bai Chong Xi and passing on more hope to the youngsters at the same time. In the next chapter, it will be explained how he brought the hope to people by not only the stories but also other activities.

4. Hope for the Wandering Chinese

In the previous chapters, the sadness of wandering Chinese was studied from Bai’s family and his stories. In this chapter, the idea of hope generated from their sadness will be explored.

Bai Xian Yong once said in an interview that to remember the war happened in the past is to prevent the next war from happening in the future⁸³. Similarly, this thesis argues that to understand the sadness of wandering Chinese is to prevent people from suffering the same sadness. For Bai’s family and the characters, they either were pushed around with flow of life under different historical events or faced the problem of having “no root”. Experiencing the sadness of his own and witnessing the sadness of others, Bai Xian Yong found the answer of hope and expressed it in his story *Bone Ashes*: togetherness.

Similar to the idea of tree: while the branches go into different directions, they still connected to each other, Chinese people are connected with each other with their root despite the differences of political standpoint and ideology. Therefore, the hope, is for Chinese people from different regions to understand each other with taking care of the root. The root that considered as essence of Chinese

⁸³ Cf. *Taiwan Zuo Jia Bai Xian Yong Tan Fu Qin*, Voachinese, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7QfymSKgyXk>.

traditional culture for Bai Xian Yong. Also, it is of importance to pass on this hope generated from the sadness of old generation to the young generation. In order to achieve this idea, Bai Xian Yong put huge effort on the promotion of traditional Chinese culture Kun'shan opera (崑曲) *Dream in Peony Pavilion* (牡丹亭) and novel *the Dream of the Red Chambers* (紅樓夢). The following content will explore how the seed of hope was reflected in Bai's early activities and how it blossomed after the endeavors of The Youth Edition of *The Peony Pavilion* and literature lecture of *the Dream of the Red Chamber*.

4.1 The Seed of Hope—Bai Xian Yong's Early Activities

For Bai Xian Yong, there were the worries and love of Chinese traditional culture in the very beginning of his life⁸⁴. When he was a university student, he worked with his classmates of Taiwan University to create the magazine *Modern Literature* in order to inherit and promote traditional Chinese culture by combing it with Modern literature techniques introduced from the Western countries. In the group of *Modern Literature*, students were with various background that there were the second generation of both Waishenren and Benshenren⁸⁵. They experienced great friendship while working together and this presents the idea of “togetherness”.

Moreover, in 1966, he wrote the story *Wandering in the garden, waking from a Dream* while the name of it originated from a scene of K'unshan opera *The Peony Pavilion*. Also, in the story *Glory's by Blossom Bridge*, the characters and story of *the Dream of the Red Chamber* was mentioned. It shows Bai Xian Yong value these two traditional literatures since he was young.

4.2 The Youth Edition of *The Peony Pavilion*

The Peony Pavilion is a romantic tragicomedy written by dramatist Tang Xian Zu in 1598 for staging as K'unshan opera. Among all the traditional Chinese opera styles, Bai Xian Yong pointed out that K'unshan opera had the feature of North that with its tender sentiments. In *The Peony Pavilion*, love is the driving force that behind everything for Tang Xian Zu while it can traverse life and death, without limitation by time. The following lines presented this idea: “Love is of source unknown, yet it grows ever deeper. The living may die of it, by its power the dead live again. Love is not love at its fullest if one who lives is unwilling to die for it, or if it cannot restore to life one who has so died⁸⁶.” For Bai Xian Yong, this attitude toward love is so moving and beautiful that presents the essence of traditional culture.

⁸⁴ Deng, *Ta Men Zai Dao Yu Xie Zuo/Bai Xian Yong: Cha Zi Yan Hong Kai Bian*, op.cit.

⁸⁵ Cf. *ibidem*.

⁸⁶ X. Z. Tang, *The Peony Pavilion Mudan ting*, Indiana University Press, Indiana 2002.

Although K'unshan opera which originates from the South of China, it was liked by emperors from late Ming and gained popularity from the Imperial Court and the society, there was the decline of it since late 19th century⁸⁷. Moreover, it was almost completely banned during the cultural revolution. Experiencing a large time of fault, the first line professional artists were about to the age of retirement while it was difficult for the young artist and audience to catch up.

Worried about the development of K'unshan opera, Bai Xian Yong as the producer, worked with a group of scholars, artists, singers of K'unshan opera to produce a Youth version of the *Peony Pavilion* in 2003. Bai Xian Yong and his team had the target of combining the tradition to the modern, to put the *Peony Pavilion* into "a new life" under the foundation of tradition. In the process, they invited staffs from Taiwan who have brilliant techniques of the stage and performance, also the professional artists, musicians from mainland China who understand the essence of K'unshan opera. Bai Xian Yong was amazed that during the production, the staffs forgot the difference of political standpoint, but became one-hearted for a pure target: to save the opera and bring the proud of the traditional culture back. Under the effort of the teamwork, they received a great success⁸⁸.

From 2006 to 2016, the performances were held in mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the U.S. and Europe for over two hundred and sixty times while ninety percent of them were full in the cinemas. Moreover, sixty percent to seventy percent of the audiences were young people. Bai Xian Yong achieved his target that the young generation was able to get in touch with the beauty of traditional culture. Once, after the performance in Beijing, there were thousands of students waiting for him outside the cinema, saying "Dr. Bai, thank you so much for showing us such beautiful opera"⁸⁹. This brought him endless happiness.

In 2017, the student's version of *The Peony Pavilion* was produced in Beijing. University students who were interested in the performance and passed the auditions were taught by professional young artists of The Youth Edition of *The Peony Pavilion*. Bai Xian Yong was surprised that the students put enormous hard work and gave performance that close to the professional level. Their performance was reported by China Central Television and moved the society that it was rare to see a group of young people working with such passion for traditional Chinese culture. Later, they were invited by Hong Kong Chinese University and Taiwan University to give performance that received excellent review⁹⁰. As a result, it presented that the hope of togetherness can be achieved among Chinese speaking regions and can be passed on to the young generation.

⁸⁷ Deng, op.cit.

⁸⁸ Cf. X.Y. Bai, *Bai Xian Yong De Wen Yi Fu Xin*, Unitas Publishing Co. Taipei 2020, p.56.

⁸⁹ Deng, op.cit.

⁹⁰ Cf. Bai, *Bai Xian Yong De Wen Yi Fu Xin*, op.cit. p.60.

4.3 Literature Lecture of *the Dream of the Red Chamber*

The other representative of traditional culture for Bai Xian Yong is *the Dream of the Red Chamber*, one of the Four Great Classical Novels of Chinese Literature, written by Cao Xue Qin in the mid-18th century. He suggested this novel inherits the great tradition of Chinese literature, includes the poetry, lyrics of songs and novels. At the same time, it combines the three major streams of Chinese philosophy and religion: Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. Also, since it was written in the 18th century, the moment when traditional Chinese culture went from the strength to weakness, it functioned to make a summary of Chinese civilization.

Bai Xian Yong had been teaching *the Dream of the Red Chamber* in the U.S. for twenty-nine years. After his retirement, professor Zhang Shu Xiang of Taiwan University asked if he could teach again in Taiwan University, with saying: “This is such an important classic. However, the students nowadays do not have the patience to sit down and read such a thick book. Growing without a basic cultural foundation, what should they do in the future?” Bai Xian Yong was moved and started the Literature Lecture in Taiwan University from 2014 to 2015 for three semesters, having 150 classes in total. He read the book with the students from the beginning to the end in the way of close reading. The class material was later published as a book *Elaboration of the Dream of the Red Chamber from Bai Xian Yong* (白先勇細說紅樓夢). Once the programme of his lecture was posted on course selection website, there were already more than thousand applicants⁹¹.

In the book *the Renaissance of Bai Xian Yong* (白先勇的文藝復興), it is mentioned that the “core” of *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, is the sympathy in humans which can be called “heart”, that exists in every culture and religion. This heart related to great compassion of human being. It was an important idea connects to togetherness that while there is the same sympathy in everyone, the forgiving and understanding between people are feasible. From Bai Xian Yong’s lecture, students are able to get in touch to this important idea.

To conclude, the idea of hope blossomed through the endeavors of Bai Xian Yong and his teammates. It shows the possibility of togetherness and inheritance.

Conclusion:

In this thesis, the wandering experience of Bai’s family and their sadness were studied. It involved the melancholy of being forced to leave the beloved homeland, loneliness of being separated with family members and desolate of losing the root due to the decline of culture. These

⁹¹ Cf. Z.M. Huang, *Zi Li Hang Jian: Bai Xian Yong De Hong Lou Zhi Meng*. Wenweipo. Hong Kong 2016.

<http://paper.wenweipo.com/2016/10/04/WH1610040002.htm>.

feelings are vividly expressed in the stories of *Taipei People* and *New Yorker*. From this study, we were able to understand the struggles and pain of individuals under the flow of history.

Also, the hope of wandering Chinese generated from the sadness was studied. For Bai Xian Yong, there are two ideas about hope: togetherness and inheritance. Both ideas relate to the root of Chinese—traditional culture which advocate the importance of respect and love between people. Hope starts with knowing how to “live together” by understanding and respect, also passing on historical memory and the beauty of traditional culture to the young generation.

Moreover, although this thesis focused on the wandering experience of Chinese people, “wandering” and “hope” are important topics for people from every culture. Living in the time that wars and experience of diaspora are ongoing in different regions, this thesis wish to point out the importance of peace through studying the sadness presented by literature. It is hoped that the suffering experienced by many people will not just remain as dust as the forgotten past but as soil that contribute to improving the “present” and creating a better future.

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