

Chapter 2

An Overview of Chinese Literary History

This chapter presents an overview of the major Chinese literary histories (CLH) and anthologies compiled in the East and the West. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, literary historians have never ceased rewriting Chinese literary histories. Why do we need new literary histories? What is the underlying mechanism of literary historiography? The answers to these questions seem not that easy. Chinese literary history was first written in Japanese by Japanese sinologists. Much effort has also been made in the field of Chinese literary histories and anthologies compiled in English, beginning with Herbert Allen Giles' *A History of Chinese Literature* in 1901. The bloom of rewriting Chinese literary histories in China leads to our exploring into the critical issues of literary historiography. Therefore, the new approaches to rewriting Chinese literary history deserve a thorough investigation.

Practically, the aim of this research is to reflect on the different practices of rewriting Chinese literary history in the East and the West.

1. To categorize as completely and accurately as possible the different systems and modes of the major histories and anthologies.
2. To distinguish in each work the accomplishments, limitations, institutional traditions, and literary history scholarship.
3. To discover and analyze the continuous interaction between literature and the multiple elements—political, social, economic, intellectual, artistic, etc., in the realm of literary history.
4. To explore the problems and methods of researches of literary history and make contributions to the paradigm of literary history studies.

In this chapter, [Sect. 2.1](#) examines the definitions of literary history. [Section 2.2](#) is related to Chinese literary histories compiled in Chinese. [Section 2.3](#) is concerned with the Chinese literary histories compiled by the Japanese sinologists. [Section 2.4](#) deals with Chinese literary histories compiled by the Western sinologists (mainly in English). [Section 2.5](#) gives an overview of literary histories and anthologies.

2.1 Definitions of Literary History

Despite the familiarity of the term “literary history”, it harbors an often unrecognized ambiguity. Morize defined the work of literary history as “an attempt to comprehend historically and critically” (Morize 1912/1922: 4).¹ He classified 12 problems in literary history researches: Questions of bibliography, Questions of criticism of the text, Questions of interpretation and of explanation, Questions of versification, Preparation of a critical edition, Questions of date and of chronology, Questions of authenticity and of attribution, Questions of sources and of origins, Questions of the formation and the transformation of a work, Questions of biography, Questions of success and of influence, Relations of the history of literature with the history of ideas and of civilization. These questions have touched upon the principal fields in literary history studies.

According to the Wikipedia definition, “The history of literature is the historical development of writings in prose or poetry which attempts to provide entertainment, enlightenment, or instruction to the reader/hearer/observer, as well as the development of the literary techniques used in the communication of these pieces.”² In this light literary history is about the evolution of literary works and their techniques.

According to Fokkema,³ “It cannot be denied that the large histories of literature, written by single authors and encompassing literary production from its very first manifestations up to contemporary times, belong to the past, and most probably will not make a come-back. Apparently the age of Gervinus, Taine, De Sanctis, Symonds, Lanson and TeWindel is over” (Fokkema 1987: 24). The different approaches towards literary historical studies are pertinent to literary historiography. Literary historiography here refers to the theoretical and methodological approach towards literary history. “The large histories of literature” mode of literary historiography has been abandoned. The reasons for this can be attributed to a change in the conception of the object of literary history and doubts about the validity of scientific explanation with respect to literature. This method is viewed as the scientific or positivist historiography. In brief, literary historiography refers to the study of theoretical and methodological approaches of literary histories.

Mario J. Valdés advocated the notion of “comparative literary history”, “the primary reason for the continued debate about literary history is that as a history of histories, not of events, it is a metahistory that has not yet fully developed its methods, aims and parameters....Comparative literary history is the disciplinary

¹ Morize (1922). Note: G. Cohen’s definition. “*Une Chaire nouvelle de langue et de littérature françaises à l’Université d’Amsterdam*,” *Revue internationale de l’enseignement*, October 15, 1912.

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_literature.

³ Fokkema 1987. Note: Literary History: A Comment on Some Problems in Literary Historiography [A]. pp. 24–42.

model for this history of histories” (Valdés 1992: 3). Valdés further elaborated on the three fundamental levels of operation of literary texts: “at the semiotic level where there is a sign system as a formal cause; at the semantic level of historical reflection involving both the historicity of the text and author as well as that of the readers; and, finally, at the phenomenological level as the reading experience of individuals. Most national literary histories concentrate on aspects of the second level and ignore both the first and the third levels. They do so by substituting a positivistic consideration of textual issues for the full analysis of literary form and by taking strict normative interpretations in place of the dynamic phenomenon of reading literature.” (Valdés 1992: 3) Here “comparative literary history” is a notion in contrast to “national literary history”. The former deals with texts at all three levels, while the latter focused on the semantic level only; the comparative mode of literary history is a history of communicative developments, while the national mode is a result of facile pseudo-objectivism and historicism. To sum up, comparative literary history is the making of a metahistory that responds to texts as form, as historical reflection and as reading experience. It is a network of inter-relationships discerned by the historian in the making of a common past for the tradition.

According to Lee Patterson,⁴ “On the one hand, its commonsense meaning refers to an immanent or *intrinsic* history of literature, a narrative account of either literature as a whole or of specific modes (poetry, drama, fiction), genres (epic, comedy, pastoral), or forms (complaint, sonnet, ode), that covers either a broad sweep of historical time or confines itself to one of the chronological periods into which the cultural past has been typically divided. In this sense, literary history is simply the history of literature. Yet the term also describes a critical practice concerned not with the history of literature as a self-contained cultural activity but with the relation of literature, as a collection of writings, to history, as a series of events. The goal of this *extrinsic* approach is to specify the forces that caused, governed, entailed, or were expressed by literary texts—what made them what they were rather than something else—and the routes by which these forces exerted their influence upon literature. While virtually all literary study must participate in both kinds of activity, the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic is nonetheless useful both theoretically and historically. For although each practice can be present in the same work of literary history, and while each approach has always had its adherents, the mainstream of literary studies over the last hundred years or so has tended to move first from the extrinsic to the intrinsic and then back again” (Lentricchia and McLaughlin 1995: 250). Patterson has generalized the binary approaches of literary history: intrinsic and extrinsic. Literary history originated with the nineteenth century extrinsic historicism. In the first half of twentieth century it has been dominated by intrinsic Russian formalism. This kind of distinction between nonliterary and literary approaches was dichotomatized as

⁴ Lentricchia and McLaughlin (1995). Note: Chap. 18 “Literary History” was compiled by Lee Patterson.

“extrinsic” and “intrinsic”. The modes of literary history changed with the *geschehen* or intellectual history.

According to *The Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism*, “the phrase *new literary history* comes from the title of a journal founded in 1969 by Ralph Cohen and intended as a forum for work intended to rethink the problems endemic to the discipline of literary history, which had fallen into disrepute during the height of the New Criticism in the forties, fifties, and early sixties. This project, itself temporarily sidetracked by the emergence of Deconstruction in the seventies, returned to prominence in American literary criticism during the eighties with the advent of various forms of New Historicism. Although the phrase can potentially cover a wide variety of critical efforts, it applies generally to forms of historical study that focus on works of literature but reject the tendency of older works of literary history to treat literature as if it existed in a closed aesthetic sphere, cut off from other aspects of history and culture” (Childers and Hentzi 1995: 209).

Literary history—according to a recent specialist encyclopedia—is a “[t]emporally articulated complex of texts and text corpora (works) as well as the account of them in a synchronic and diachronic perspective, often under inclusion of other forms and expressions (other symbolic forms) as well as actions related to literature” (Schönert 2000: 454–455).⁵ So here the range and scope of literary history is broadened. Per Erik Ljung added two points to this definition, “First, ‘the account of them’ always has a historicity of its own. And, second, the writing of literary history is interwoven with other discourses and practices surrounding it, such as research, education, and cultural politics.” (Ljung 2006: 30)⁶ Ljung highlighted the historicity and interrelationship between literary history and other factors.

“The concept of literature as we know it came into existence, roughly speaking, during the course of the eighteenth century. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries already saw the beginnings of the writing of literary history—the history of national European literatures, the history of European literature as a whole and, at least from the 1830s onwards, the world history of literature. A considerable number of such world histories were produced as early as in the nineteenth century, especially in Germany but also elsewhere, and the genre has continued on the European continent.” (Pettersson 2006: 3)⁷ Thus the earliest form of literary history occurred in Germany in the eighteenth century, and the primitive form of national literary history was gradually developed in the nineteenth century. According to Anders Pettersson, “The expression ‘literary history’ may refer to literary-historical reality itself—the actual history of literature—or to the branch of literary research devoted to its study. A work of literary history is an account of a larger or smaller portion of literary history.” (Pettersson 2006: 22)⁸ Pettersson

⁵ Schönert (2000).

⁶ Ljung (2006).

⁷ Pettersson (2006).

⁸ Ibid.

proposed the idea of transcultural literary history. It means, “literary studies which transcend the borders of a single culture in their choice of topic.” (Pettersson 2006: 1) In his view, there is the need for a global perspective in literary studies. Our understandings of studies of the national literature will definitely be enriched by a culturally, temporally and geographically broader perspective.

Two Chinese scholars Ge and Wen (2001) advocate the notion of Morphology of literary histories. There are three types of literary histories. The first is the literary history proper, e.g., the ontological literary history, which lays the basis for the other two types. The second is the empirical literary history, e.g., the studies and rewriting of the literary history. It refers to the research that the literary historians investigate, analyze and describe the literary history proper using literary historical theory. The third is literary historical theory, e.g., the interrelations of factors in literary history. It is the theoretical framework of literary history as an independent field (Ge and Wen 2001:1). The third type is referred to as literary historiography in this research. Numerous attempts have been made in rewriting Chinese literary histories for over a century. This research will investigate the different perspectives of the literary histories compiled in the East and the West. A survey of the literary histories will contribute to the theoretical paradigm of the literary historical studies.

In 1901 the English sinologist Herbert A. Giles wrote *A History of Chinese Literature* in English. Out of the influences of the nineteenth century national literary histories in Europe, Chinese literary histories first originated via Japanese sinologists, written in Japanese. Then Chinese scholars wrote Chinese literary histories in imitation of these early works. So the very beginning of Chinese literary history is characterized with a transnational and trans-cultural perspective. In fact the Chinese literary historical studies among the Western sinologists have a relatively long tradition. Literary historians of different cultural backgrounds have their own conceptual apparatus and angle of approach. An overview of the major literary histories in different languages and cultures will help reveal their respective underlying purposes, different points of views and modes throughout the temporal span. In principle, there is no authoritative literary history, but a comparative survey will lead us to a better understanding of literary historiography and its paradigms. These investigations will also shed light on some of the theoretical problems of literary historical studies: the paradigms of literary historiography, its approaches, and empirical implications on writing Chinese literary histories. The transcultural approach will help in making theoretical reflections on literary historiography.

In order to blaze a trail through the immense bibliographical forest, the literary histories will be categorized and examined in different groups and stages. The division will clarify the process of development in literary history for over a century. It will also bring out clearly every period of transition and transformation of literary historical studies. It is intended that this comparative research will open new horizons for rewriting Chinese literary histories.

2.2 Literary Histories Compiled by Chinese Scholars in Chinese

The different stages of Chinese literary histories are grouped under the following heads:

- Stage 1: The Hybrid Mode of Western Form and Chinese Categories;
- Stage 2: The Evolution Theory Based Mode;
- Stage 3: The Socio-Political Determinism Mode;
- Stage 4: The New Perspective Mode.

2.2.1 *The Hybrid Mode in the First Stage: 1904–1919 (the May Fourth Movement)*

Stage 1: The Hybrid Mode of the Western Form and Chinese Categories

In the first stage, writing Chinese literary history originated with “Literature” as a subject in the institution of universities at the turn of the twentieth century. The social turmoil and the intellectual revolution of the time had great impact on Chinese scholars. They intended to change the traditional “*wenxue*” or “literature” by using the modern Western national literary history. Writing literary history was closely associated with national identity and the modern university institution from the very beginning. A group of pioneering scholars attempted to write *a History of Chinese Literature* respectively. The term “literature” is both an old and a new one in the Chinese context. It has been readdressed from a new perspective of literary history. The earliest works are generally imitations of the *History of Chinese Literature* by Japanese sinologists and European sinologists. In this period historians reviewed literature with a hybrid nature, mixing the traditional categories of Chinese *wen* (文) and the Western term “literature”, borrowed from the Japanese translation. The Chinese *wen* is a combination of *jing*, *shi*, *zi*, and *ji*. The function of *wen* is *wen yi zai dao* (文以载道)—Writings are for conveying truth or morality. On the other hand, the mainstream of literature in the West in the early nineteenth century is romanticism and then realism (Table 2.1).

There have long been disagreements and controversies over the origin of Chinese literary history. Zheng Zhenduo (郑振铎) said that the first Chinese literary history was written in English by Giles, published in 1901, and the first Chinese literary history by the Chinese scholar was attributed to Lin Chuanjia, published around 1904 (the 30th year of Guangxu Reign). We have to contend with a certain number of manuscripts, printed or published, variant editions of the same work, and some unobtainable information, and lost materials. Scholars who feel that Huang Ren’s *Chinese Literary History* is the earliest include: Wang

Table 2.1 The first stage of chinese literary histories

Author	Year of publication	Title	Publishing house	Notes
Dou Jingfan (窦警凡)	Written in 1897 and Printed in 1906	历朝文学史		
Lin Chuanjia (林传甲)	Written and printed in 1904/1910	中国文学史	武林谋新室	Reprinted by 台北:学海出版社 in 1986
Huang Ren (黄人)	Written and printed in 1905/1926	中国文学史	国学扶轮社	Reprinted in 1926 with modification of Wang Wenru (王文濡即王均卿)
Wang Mengzeng (王梦曾)	1914 (民国3年)	中国文学史	商务印书馆	Reprinted in 1925
Zeng Yi (曾毅)	1915 (民国4年)	中国文学史	上海 泰东图书局	Reprinted in 1923 (民国12年) 5th edition
Xie Wuliang (谢无量)	1918 (民国7年)	中国大文学史	上海中华书局	Reprinted in 1927 (12th edition)

Yongjian (Wang 1989), Sun Jingyao (Sun 1991) and Wang Zuoliang (Sun 1991)⁹, etc.

“From *Preface to Chinese Literary History* by Hu Yunyi in 1930s to *Studies on Chinese Literary History* by Liang Rongruo in 1960s, it had always been mistakenly assumed that *A History of Chinese Literature* by Lin Chuanjia (1910) was the first history written by Chinese scholars. With the publication of *A Revolutionary Literary Historian Huang Ren in Xinhai Revolution (The Revolution of 1911)* by Qian Zhonglian in 1981, it was stated that Huang Moxi (Huang Ren)’s *A History of Chinese Literature* was the first Chinese literary history. It was pointed out that Moxi’s *Chinese Literary History*, in print of 29 volumes, was an unprecedented book in the realm of Chinese literary history” (Wang 2000: 204–205).

According to *The Guidelines* drafted in 1902 (the 28th year of Guangxu Reign), sponsored by Zhang Baixi (张百熙): *The Chartered Guidelines* of the Imperial Capital University (*jing shi da xue tang* 京师大学堂, later known as Peking University) was designed in imitation of the Japanese System. It has seven disciplines: politics, literature, physics, agriculture, engineering, business and medicine. Under literature, there are seven subjects: classics, history, logic school of Confucianism, different schools of thought, anecdote studies, lexicology and taxis, and foreign philology (Dai 2002: 7).

The curriculum system was established in the institutional model of the Western university. However, the outline for literature still falls into the range of the traditional Chinese categories of *wenzhang* (文章) and *xueshu* (学术). Lin Chuanjia’s *History* was compiled in accordance with the *Guidelines*.

⁹ Wang Zuoliang presented a paper entitled *The Pioneers of Chinese Literary Histories* at the Sino-US Conference on Comparative Literature.

Lin Chuanjia (1877–1912)’s *Chinese Literary History* was first published in 1904 and reprinted in 1910 by Wu Lin Mou Xin Shi (武林谋新室), composed of 77,000 characters. According to the Introduction, “There are 16 chapters, each consisting of 18 sections. The book has 288 sections in all. Each chapter is an independent narrative. Each section has a title, similar to the categorization in *Zi Zhi Tong Jian* (《资治通鉴》, *Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government*). The *Guidelines* of the Grand School said that Japan has a *History of Chinese Literature*, so we can compile a history of our own in imitation and teach this course. According to the syllabus of Waseda University in Japan, there is a book of Chinese literary history. Chinese literature is essential in the national education. The Beijing National School does not include Chinese literature in its required curriculum and it has been excluded from the optional courses (Lin 1904/1910: xxiv). As Lin said, “He spent half a year compiling the *History* as the course book for the Imperial Capital University” (Lin 1904/1910: xxiv). He stated at the beginning, “This book is intended to imitate the Japanese scholar Sasagawa Rinpu’s Chinese literary history. We will compile the Chinese classics in collaboration with other scholars. It will serve as models for compositions. It is the responsibilities of the faculty to design a course book for students” (Lin 1904/1986:1).

The first three chapters are the three elements of *Xiao Xue* (小学) in traditional Chinese philology, including “Characters, Phonology and Semantics (*xungu*)”. They are entitled accordingly “*guwen* (古文), *jiewen* (韵文), *xiaozhuan* (小篆), *bafen* (八分), *caoshu* (草书), *lishu* (隶书), *nanbeichao shu* (南北朝书), *Tang yihou zhengshu* (唐以后正书)”, “*gujin yinyun zhi bianqian*”(古今音韵之变迁), “*gujin mingyi xungu zhi bianqian*” (古今名义训诂之变迁). The next three chapters are about composition: “*guyi zhihua weiwen, jinyi cizhang weiwen, guanyu shiyun zhi shengjiang*” (古以治化为文、今以词章为文、关于世运之升降), “*xiuci licheng cida eryl eryl wei wenzhang zhiben*” (修辞立诚辞达而已二语为文章之本), “*gujing yanyouwu yanyouxu yanyouzhang wei zuowen zhifa*” (古经言有物言有序言有章为作文之法). Then came “*qunjing wenti*” (群经文体), “*zhouqin zhuanji zashi wenti*” (周秦诸记杂史文体), “*zhouqin zhuzi wenti*” (周秦诸子文体), “*Shi Han Sanguo sishi wenti*” (《史》《汉》《三国》四史文体), “*zhushi wenti*” (诸史文体). These four chapters are arranged according to genres, examining each genre throughout the dynasties. Then they are followed by “*hanwei wenti*” (汉魏文体), “*nanbeichao zhi sui wenti*” (南北朝至隋文体), “*tang song zhijin wenti*” (唐宋至今文体). The last two chapters are concerned with “*piansan guhe jinfen zhijian*” (骈散古合今分之渐) and “*pianwen youfen Han, Wei, Liuchao, Tang, Song siti zhibie*” (骈文又分汉、魏、六朝、唐、宋四体之别). Every section (篇) is focused on an independent topic as an organic body (*jishi benmo zhiiti*, 纪事本末之体) and every chapter (章) is a brief summary of the content (*tongjian gangmu zhiiti*, 通鉴纲目之体). Both the form and content of Lin’s *History* are followed with his Chinese categories. This arrangement is different from the nineteenth century national literary histories in the West. However, a thread line across the whole book is “evolution”, whether it to be the evolution of characters or phonology, semantics, genre, etc. In Lin Chuanjia’s book, there is little on the Wei, Jin

and Northern and Southern Dynasties, even less on Tang and Song. For Tang, there is only Han Yu but no poets. Lin still conforms to the traditional Chinese categories. The result is that it is not a continuous literary history. The structure is a presentation of separate categories, *Zhuzi* (诸子), no poetry; *Guwen* (古文) first and then *Piantiwen* (骈体文) all through; Tang poetry, Tang prose and Tang stories.

In conclusion, Lin's *History* can be categorized in the encyclopedic mode. It sketches the evolution of different elements in Chinese literature in the broad sense, combining the content of Chinese philology and literary theory with the narrative form of the European literary history. It is used as course books both for general purposes (*gonggongke*, 公共科) and for literature majors (*fenlei ke wenxue*, 分类科文学). Zhou Xinglu summarized the characteristic of Lin's *History* as "utilitarianism" (*zhiyong*, 致用), or, "Though the Chinese literary historians take different approaches now, they deal with the issues of Zhou and Qin in the light of the current policies. In this way, we know that the talent of studying history and the way of reading history are all intended for being utilitarian" (Zhou 2003: 136). It served the university educational system in the early twentieth century.

From 1900 to 1901 (the 26th Year of Guangxu Reign, 光绪二十六年庚子, *gengzi*), the American missionary David L. Anderson (孙乐文) founded *Dongwu University* (东吴大学堂) in Suzhou (苏州).¹⁰ Dongwu University was under the sponsorship of The Methodist Episcopal Church, South (美国基督教监理会). The first President D. L. Anderson was a liberal-minded American scholar. He "called for showing respect for the Chinese characters and Chinese teaching pedagogy." (Wang 2000: 36) Later, he hired Zhang Taiyan (章太炎), Huang Ren (1866–1913) (1902), Jin Hechong (金鹤冲) as Professors of literature. (Tang and Tu 1998: 4) Zheng Yimei (郑逸梅) referred to Huang's *History* as "an unprecedentedly wonderful work, proclaimed to be the first Chinese literary history" (Tang and Tu 1998: 8). From 1904 to 1907, Huang Ren wrote *The Chinese Literary History* as the course book for Literature at Dongwu University. The *princeps*, that is, the original edition was printed in 1907. It consists of approximately 1,700,000 characters, including the appendixes of major authors in different dynasties. It was used for the university course book exclusively, not officially published, so it was not circulated in the market and is rarely seen at present.

Later, it was published by Guoxue Fulun Press (国学扶轮社) until 1926 with the modifications of Wang Wenru (王文濡/王均卿). *The History* consists of 30 volumes, with the first four volumes (*bian*, 编) being "General Introduction" (*zonglun*, 总论), "Rough Introduction" (*lüelun*, 略论), "Categories of Literature" (*wenxue zhi zhonglei*, 文学之种类) and "Separate Introductions" (*fenlun*, 分论). The other 26 volumes are basically evaluation of writers and collections of the major works, ranging from Pre-Qin to the end of Ming Dynasty. The first four chapters prove to be the essence of the whole book, representing Huang Ren's

¹⁰ On June 24th, 1901, Soochow (苏州) University was registered as "Central University of China" in the state of Tennessee in the US, and changed to Soochow University in 1908.

literary historical perspective. In “General Introduction”, he explains the “Purposes of literature”. In “Separate Introductions”, he elaborates on the definitions of literature by quoting from the latest theories from Europe, US and Japan, e.g., *An Introduction to English Literature* by Pancoast, Hutcheson Macaulay Poshett’s *Comparative Literature*, etc., (Tang and Tu 1998:17).

Huang’s *History* is divided into four periods: From Pre-Qin to the Western and Eastern Han: the Prime Period; From the Western and Eastern Jin and the Six Dynasties to Jin and Yuan: the Glorious Period; the Ming: the First Obscure Period; the Qing: the Second Obscure Period. His periodization is unusual in that it is not a process of development but of decline. He makes an association between the dictatorship of the monarch and literature, e.g., the more severe the monarch dictatorship is, the less developed the literature is. For example, Pre-Qin is the Prime Period because the monarch dictatorship has little influence on literature.

In Conclusion, Lin Chuanjia’s *History* was finished and printed earlier than Huang’s, while the latter is more sophisticated than the former. Huang’s *History* is over 20 times longer than Lin’s. As for the publication date, Lin’s *History* is the earlier one. As for maturity, Huang’s *History* can be regarded the first *History* with regard to its length and scope. It is also greatly influenced by the Western literary theories. On that basis he elucidates on Chinese literary history in his own independent framework. Huang has made great contribution to the purposes, categories, definition, and periodization of Chinese literary history. Compared to this, Lin’s *History* is based on dynastic history. In summary, these two earliest *Histories* are used in two universities in the North and South of China around the same time. The earliest literary histories represent a hybrid nature of Chinese “wen” and the Western literary history.

As for the definition of literature, Huang says, “The name of *wenxue*, originated from the Confucianism subject. It refers to *The Collection of Poetry* or *Records of Rites*, nothing more than that. It seems to be different from the concerns of contemporary literary scholars. ...Therefore, in terms of form, there are different categories of *jing*, *shi*, *zi*, *ji*; in terms of function, there are distinctions of *cizhang* and *kaoju*” (Tang and Tu 1998: 66). Huang quoted the Japanese scholar Daejeon Ota (大田善男)’s *General Theory of Literature* (《文学概论》), “*wenxue* is literature in English” (“文学者, 英语谓之利特拉大。”) The definition was given by Henry Spackman Pancoast in his *An Introduction to English Literature* (《英吉利文学史》). Huang commented:

“The term *wenxue* has two layers of meaning. (1) In the broad sense, it refers to books, derived from *Litera* in Latin, such as records, narratives, manuscripts, classics, etc. According to this definition, irrespective of its content or significance, all the books produced by the people can be called the national literature. (2) In the narrow sense, literature has its own distinctive features. According to the latter definition, literature has its morals, e.g., it aims to express feelings, emotions, and imaginations and entertain people” (Tang and Tu 1998: 67).

Based on the examination of the Western and the Chinese definitions, Huang Ren finally gave his own definition of literature, which has six features: “first, literature is aimed to *entertain people* while having morals; second, literature is

comprehensible to readers; third, literature has its *techniques of expression*; fourth, literature *describes emotions*; fifth, literature is about *historical and scientific facts*; sixth, literature is intended to express *immortal beauty*” (Tang and Tu 1998: 16). This can be regarded as the earliest definition by a Chinese literary historian.

Secondly, the beginning of the Chinese literary history is also related to the construction of the Chinese national identity. At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, Chinese intellectuals attempted to boost the national morale by education and knowledge. At the end of the Qing Dynasty, one of the most influential works was *Evolution and Ethics* (《天演论》) by Thomas Henry Huxley (赫胥黎) (1825–1895) translated by Yan Fu (translated in 1896 and published in 1898). At that time, the Chinese nation was imperiled since China was defeated in the Jiawu Marine War (甲午海战). During the transition from the Late Qing to the Early National Republic Period (*minguo*), the Chinese society was in great turmoil in all aspects, particularly in political and intellectual spheres. The message “Survival of the fittest, natural selection” aroused great patriotism and concerns for national integrity among the Chinese people. The early historians were anxious to represent the 5,000 year Chinese literary tradition in the new Western form. They wanted to produce *A History of Chinese Literature* by the Chinese people. The progressive intellectuals began to seek for national enlightenment by literature and the national literary history. Huang Ren made a statement on the function of literary history: “Literary history does not serve as a reference only for literary scholars. Any nation that intends to make progress in civilization cannot predict the future without knowing the history. Likewise, they cannot have a clear vision of the current results without tracing the distant reasons. Therefore, other national literary histories trace the reasons in the past in order to analyze the evolution of literature. Our national scholars should stick to these principles” (Tang and Tu 1998: 39).

Zeng Yi’s *A History of Chinese Literature* was published in 1915 (民国4年). Zeng went to Japan for study (癸丑东渡) and contemplated the decline of modern characters and thoughts. The purpose of writing Chinese literary histories is to promote the national integrity. The historian has a clear definition of literary history. “Therefore, literary history is to select the different schools with the occurrence of characters, differentiate the dynasties and genres, categorize works and list them with their biographical accounts” (Zeng 1905: ii). The guiding principles are that “The evolution of literature is related with the spirit of the age. The underlying causes include academia being the basis, thoughts being the fountain, and politics being the tonic” (Zeng 1905: ii). He translates the Japanese Chinese literary history and adopts the documents in Japan. However, he is not satisfied with the Japanese work and is determined to compile a literary history of his own. The first level division is arranged into five categories chronologically—*shanggu* (primitive, 上古) literature, *zhonggu* (medieval, 中古) literature, *jingu* (pre-modern, 近古) literature, *jinshi* (modern, 近世) literature, with introductions in each category. This categorization is in imitation of the Japanese model.

Xie Wuliang’s *The Grand Chinese Literary History* was published by Zhonghua Book Company (中华书局) in 1918, consisting of 10 volumes,

approximately 420,000 characters. Xie is also influenced by *An Introduction to English Literature* by Pancoast. He proposed that literature in the broad sense “combines the meanings of the two characters and includes all the written documents”; while literature in the narrow sense “is aimed to express emotions and entertain the readers” (Xie 1918:1–4). He also compiled the *History of Chinese Women Literature*, published by Zhonghua Book Company in 1916 (民国5年). The adaptor of Huang Ren’s *History* Wang Wenru wrote a preface to Xie’s *History*. He said “Huang Ren’s work is too sophisticated and ended with Ming. Xie’s *History* is better organized” (Xie 1918: i–ii). Xie’s *History* follows the categorization of *shanggu* (上古 From *wudi*, Five Emperors to Qin), *zhonggu* (中古 From Han to Sui), *jingu* (近古 From Tang to Ming) and *jinshi* (近世 Qing). These are preceded with an introduction to the definition of literature, the origin and evolution of sinograms, the tendency of literature, and the characteristics of the Chinese literature. He also classified four kinds of literature: the Creative literature (beginning), the Mimic literature (since Zhou and Qin), the National literature (Tang and Song), and the Popular literature (Song and Yuan). This classification is based on the spirit of the Chinese literary trends. He elucidated the characteristics of the Chinese characters and literature. “*liubie* (流别), *zongpai* (宗派), *falü* (法律), *jishi* (纪事), *zaping* (杂评), *xuzhuang* (叙传), *zongji* (总集)” are the seven elements related to the literary history based on the traditional Chinese theory.

In summary, first, the earliest Chinese literary histories in the first stage are influenced directly or indirectly by the *Sino Literary Histories* by the Japanese sinologists. Lin Chuanjia’s work is in imitation of the *Sino Dynastic Literary History* by the Japanese scholar, Sasakawa Rinpū (笹川种郎《支那历朝文学史》). In addition, there are Zeng Yi’s *Chinese Literary History* (1915), Xie Wuliang’s *The Grand Chinese Literary History* (1918), Wang Jianyu (汪剑余)’s *Chinese Literary History* (1925), Gu Shi (顾实)’s *Chinese Literary History* (1926), Lu Xun (鲁迅)’s *Gist of Han Literary History manuscript* (1926). According to Sun Jingyao (孙景尧), Lu Xun, Zeng Yi and Gu Shi spent years in Japan as overseas students. And Hu Yunyi (胡云翼) argues that Zeng Yi’s *History* was a translation from Kenkichirō Kojima (儿岛献吉郎)’s *An Outline of Sino Literary History* (《支那文学史纲》). Liang Rongruo (梁容若) comments on *The History* by Gu Shi, a law graduate from a Japanese University, “This book is based on the Japanese work, full of direct translations” (Wang 2000). So the categorizations are basically of the same mode. However, these early histories are not independent of the traditional Chinese literary categories, such as *xiaoxue* and *jing, shi, zi, ji*. They fit the Chinese literary content into the format of the Western literary history.

Second, these works mentioned above have a better-organized structure than the earliest histories. They also shed more light on the characteristics of the Chinese literature. With Xie Wuliang’s *History*, we find a tendency of independence from Japanese and Western influence. The Chinese literary history is becoming more coherent and mature as a national literary history. The background information about characters, phonology and semantics are given in the preface.

The other chapters are focused on a more detailed narration of the literary history, prose, poetry, etc.

2.2.2 The Evolution Theory Based Mode in the Second Stage:
1919–1949

Stage 2: The Evolution Theory Based Mode

The second stage, the period from “The May Fourth Movement” to “the Founding of the PRC”, is characterized by the autonomy mode, i.e., focused on the evolution of language or genres. Since the 1920s literary histories have become more mature with regard to their arguments and historical narrative. The May Fourth Movement in 1919 as a cultural movement marks the upsurge of the Chinese nationalism. In a broader use the term “May Fourth Movement” refers to the period between 1915 and 1921, usually called “the New Culture Movement”. The overthrowing of the imperial Qing Dynasty ushered in a new era. Nineteenth century romanticism was introduced to China with the new literary movement. Romanticism’s concern for emotions also influenced Chinese scholars. In 1920 Hu Shi said “literature has three prerequisites: first, it must be clear; second, it must be moving; third, it must be aesthetic, the core of which is to express emotions” (Hu 1920: 2). The emotional function of literature has been highlighted during the period (Table 2.2).

The 1920s marks the maturity of Chinese literary history writing. One of the underlying causes is that the Chinese scholars have a clearer understanding about the concept of “Literature”. They forgo the old *wen* for the Western literature. Since the 1920s and 1930s, Chinese Literary histories have been more coherent and better-organized in terms of the historical narrative. In this stage the *Histories*

Table 2.2 The second stage of chinese literary histories

Author	Year of publication	Title	Publishing house	Notes
Hu Shi (胡适)	1928 年6月初版	国语文学史	上海新月书店	
Hu Shi (胡适)	1928 年6月初版	白话文学史 上卷	上海新月书店	
Tan Zhengbi (谭正璧)	1929	中国文学进化史	上海光明书局	
Zheng Zhenduo (郑振铎)	1932	插图本中国文学史 四册	北平朴社	1957 年作家出版社再版
Liu Dajie (刘大杰)	上卷完成 1939/1941 出版 下卷完成 1943/1949 出版	中国文学发展史	中华书局	
Lin Geng (林庚)	1947	中国文学史	厦门大学出版社	

are written in vernacular Chinese, with evolution theory as the predominant model. Scholars in the 1930s are unsatisfied with the mimic histories of the first two decades of the twentieth century, so they are determined to write histories that can truly represent the development and evolution of the Chinese literature. For example, Zheng Zhenduo discarded the Japanese model of *shanggu*, *zhonggu*, *jingu*, and *jindai* or *jinshi* for the tri-fold division of *gudai*, *zhongshi* and *jindai*. Usually, *zhonggu* begins with Sui or Tang and *jingu* ends with Ming, but the literary history of Sui and Early Tang, Late Ming and Early Qing are inseparable, so the historians get out of the Japanese influence in literary categorization and attempt to represent the real characteristics of the Chinese literary history.

The *Literary History of the National Language* (《国语文学史》) by Hu Shi (written in 1921–1922, published in 1928) and the *Vernacular Literary History* (《白话文学史》) (revised and published in 1928) are based on the change of literary language. The former one is from the Six Dynasties to the Southern Song, which Li Jinxi (黎锦熙) refers to as “no beginning and no ending” (Hu 1928).¹¹ It is a collection of the lectures given to the third Institute of the National Language (国语讲习所). It has three sections covering three periods—respectively Han, Wei and the Six Dynasties; Tang; and the Northern and Southern Song. Hu attributes “Vernacularization” to the Tang literature because the vernacular Chinese began to replace the classical (古体 *guti*) literature then. The traditional quadruple divisions (*chu*, *sheng*, *zhong* and *wan*) of the Tang Dynasty are recategorized as four periods of the noble literature, the beginning, development and climax of the vernacular literature. So the evolution of genre continues through every dynastic period. However, Hu presents the vernacular literary history with his single standard—the priority of the vernacular literature. The Late Tang is not a period of decline but the peak of vernacular poetry, prose, and lyrics. In this new light, the prose selection is not Han Yu’s *guwen* prose, but Yixuan (义玄)’s Buddhist prose. Hu Shi refers to Xie Wuliang’s *History* frequently but negates his arguments (Hu 1928: 80).¹² Hu Shi has established a coherent argument around a historical narrative. He refutes the traditional Early, High, Mid, Late Tang categorization and proposes the vernacularization of the Tang (Hu 1928:103).¹³

The *Vernacular Literary History* is a revised edition of the former *History* with the addition of pre-Han, beginning from *guofeng* (国风). Hu Shi states that the title is an equivalent to “*Chinese Literary History*” because the vernacular literature is the center of the Chinese literary history. He attaches great importance to the notion of the “evolution” of the vernacular literature. The range of the *History* is also extended in comparison to the former *History*. The dichotomy is between vernacular literary history and the history of classical Chinese (*guwen*, 古文). Hu Shi has included the translation literature of Buddhism sutras in the Western and

¹¹ Hu (1928). Note: Li Jinxi wrote the Preface.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

Eastern Jin and the Northern and Southern Dynasties instead of the *piantiwen* (骈体文, parallelism essays), the vernacular poetry instead of the *shangguan* style (上官体) and the Four Elites of Early Tang (初唐四杰), the New *yuefu* (乐府) of the eighth century instead of the traditional High Tang poem collections, and the poets praising nature. These are good illustrations indicating the independence and maturity of the Chinese literary historians.

Accordingly, the Chinese literary historical process is divided into the ancient literature (before Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty), the first phase of the vernacular literature (from Western and Eastern Han Dynasties to the Northern Song Dynasty), the second phase of the vernacular literature (from the Southern Song Dynasty to the early Republican Period) and the Mandarin literary movement (after “the May Fourth Movement”). The literary development is presented from the particular perspective of the vernacular Chinese, but its weakness lies in its biased approach of focusing on the language form only.

In 1924, Tan Zhengbi edited the *Outline of the Chinese Literary History* (《中国文学史大纲》). This work was revised and developed into the *Evolution History of Chinese Literature* (《中国文学进化史》), published in 1929. This book is indebted to the previous works by Zheng Zhenduo, Hu Shi, Zhao Jingshen (赵景深), Lu Xun, and etc. The author borrows the established statements in their works. The categories in this work are not consistent, with dynastic, genre, regional, and development categories used in combination—making up twelve chapters in all. The author points out that the purpose of literature is beauty. He emphasizes the connections between literature and emotions. He delineates literature as *belles lettres*, excluding history and philosophy. He argues against the conventional notion of “*wen yi zai dao*” by Han Yu. Evolution theory has had great impact on him, especially via Hu Shi and Zheng Zhenduo.

The *Chinese Literary History (with Illustrations)* by Zheng Zhenduo (1932) is focused on the interactions between Chinese and Western literatures, and the transition from the old literary genres to the new. The distinctive feature of his framework is a three-phase categorization: the native literature without external influences (before the Western Jin Dynasty), the change of the native literature under the influence of the Indian literature (from the Eastern Jin Dynasty to Reign Zhengde of the Ming Dynasty), and the genesis of lively literary genre as *avant-garde* literature (from Reign Jiajing of the Ming Dynasty to the pre-May-Fourth Period). Zheng’s *History* is divided into three sections chronologically, *gudai*, *zhongshi*, and *jindai*. *Zhongshi* begins with the Eastern Jin when the Buddhist literature comes in; *jindai* begins with *Jiajing* (嘉靖) Reign of the Ming Dynasty when the Kun Opera (昆剧) emerged and long novels developed. Thus, it differs from the acknowledged model—the pre-historic (*gudai*), the medieval (*zhongshi*) and the contemporary (late-modern, *jindai*) classification. The attempts of Hu Shi and Zheng Zhenduo represent the common conceptions of the traditional evolutionists. Both Hu Shi and Zheng Zhenduo have received the Western education and adopted Western ideas. Their works are based on the thread line of the Western Evolution Theory.

The *Developmental History of the Chinese Literature* by Liu Dajie (1939/1949) introduces the new thoughts of the French Evolution Theory and the Sociological School. He intends to represent literary historical development by combining the literary movements with genre evolution. Hu Shi and Zheng Zhenduo focus on the “vernacular literature”, while Liu Dajie emphasizes “classical literature” as the “mainstream”. The combination of the two would make an integral Chinese literary history. Liu Dajie listed the works that influenced him the most (Liu 1984: 66–81),¹⁴ e.g., *Philosophie de l'art* by Hippolyte Adolphe Taine and *History of English Literature* by Taine, *Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature* by Georg Morris Cohen Brandes (1842–1927), etc., (Liu 1941 and 1949/1962/2006:4) These works are characterized by sociological positivism and historicist criticism. Literary historicism as a critical movement has been said to originate with Taine. He is particularly remembered for his three-pronged approach to the contextual study of a work of art, based on the aspects of what he called **race, milieu, and moment**.

Liu Dajie is concerned with the evolution of the literary genres. *Fu Niao Fu* by Jia Yi (贾谊) is evolved from *Fu Pian* by Xun Zi (荀子), and is a transformation of *Chu Ci* or Chu Lyrics, and serves as a prelude of the coming *Han Fu* or Rhapsody (Liu 1962/2006:91). Furthermore he elaborates on the development of the important genres in literary history, e.g., rhapsody (*fu*), pentasyllabic poetry (*wu-yan-shi*) and heptasyllabic poetry (*qi-yan-shi*). He illustrates the beginning, development and decline of these genres throughout different periods. The transitions between the old and new genres are highlighted in separate chapters. For example, his conclusion is that in case of pentasyllabic poetry, the Western Han marked its origin. The period of Ban Gu and Zhang Heng witnessed its establishment and Jian-an Period ushered in its prime age (Liu 1962/2006:142). In terms of pentasyllabic poetry, the recurrent theme of frontier soldiers and their lovesick wives (*zheng-fu-si-fu*) is attributed to the social context, e.g., the continuous wars during the reign of Emperor Wu of Han. As for the Han narrative poetry, it developed from the multi-syllabic poetry (*za-yan-ti*) to the pure pentasyllabic poetry and further to the long narrative pieces (Liu 1962/2006:149). From these examples, we can see that in Liu's *History*, the development of genres is well represented and highlighted under the influence of the evolution theory.

Lin Geng's *The Chinese Literary History* (1947) and Wen Yiduo (闻一多)'s *Manuscripts of the Chinese Literary History* (1944/1982) adopt the “heteronomy” approaches. However, they are focused on the internal literary forms. They inherit the “Poetic History Paradigm” with some variations.

In conclusion, the literary histories in the Second Stage are notable for their maturity. They are evolution theory based with the typical Chinese categorization.

¹⁴ The article entitled *About Criticism on the Developmental History of Chinese Literature* was written in March, 1959 in Liu 1984.

The outstanding figures are Hu Shi, Zheng Zhenduo and Liu Dajie. Their *Histories* have a lasting impact on contemporary historians.

2.2.3 *The Socio-Political Determinism Mode in the Third Stage: 1949–1990s*

Stage 3: The Social Context Based Mode:

The Third Stage is from the founding of the P.R.C. to the 1990s. During this period, it was widely accepted that literature should be integrated with the socio-political context. Literary history should be examined against a social background. This is mainly due to the influence of the Marxist theory of “Base and Superstructure”, e.g., the base determines (conditions) the superstructure, and the superstructure often influences the base, however, the influence of the base predominates. Marx postulated the theoretic essentials of the base-superstructure concept in *the Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859).¹⁵ Literary historians attempt to make an association between the literary development and the socio-political changes accordingly. Lin Geng’s *A Brief Chinese Literary History* was published by the Shanghai United Press of Arts in 1954. The *History* is written with reference to the Russian syllabus of the eleventh to the seventeenth century literature. It emphasizes the people’s literature and the anti-feudal trends in literature. The guiding principle is that literature reflects the social reality (Table 2.3).

This stage witnessed a boom of collective literary histories. However, nearly all of them focus on the impact of the external socio-political factors on literary development, for instance, *The Chinese Literary History* by You Guo’en, Wang Qi, Xiao Difei (萧涤非), Ji Zhenhuai (季镇淮) and Fei Zhengang (费振刚). All other collective literary histories are characterized by this, representing the influence of Marxism on literary history writing. As for *The Chinese Literary History* by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Yu Guanying (余冠英) is in charge of *shanggu* to Sui, Qian Zhongshu (钱钟书) for Tang and Song, Fan Ning (范宁) for Yuan, Ming and Qing.

The Third Stage is characterized by the heteronomy mode. It focuses on the external factors of the motives of literary development, e.g., politics, economy, nature, situation, ethics, culture and socio-psychology, etc. In other words, the production and development of literature is always related to the socio-physical production and the level of spiritual life alongside. This heteronomy mode and the evolution based mode of the Second Stage lay the foundation for the following literary historians. Secondly, the categorization of You’s *History* is in accordance with the collective *History* compiled by students of Grade 1955 of Beijing

¹⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Base_and_superstructure.

Table 2.3 The third stage of chinese literary histories

Author	Year of publication	Title	Publishing house	Notes
Lin Geng (林庚)	1954	中国文学简史上卷	上海文艺联合出版社	
北京大学中文系文学专门化 1955 级集体编著	1958	中国文学史	北京: 人民文学出版社	
北京大学中文系文学专门化 1957 级编著	1962	中国文学发展简史	北京: 中国青年出版社	
中国科学院文学研究所中国 文学史编写组编写	1962	中国文学史 (3 volumes)	北京: 人民文学出版社	三册分别由 余冠英 钱钟书 范宁主持
You Guoen (游国恩) collaborated with Wang Qi (王起), etc.	Compiled during 1961–1963 and published in 1963	中国文学史 (4 volumes)	人民文学出版社	With 2 million copies published, the most authoritative textbook

University, that is, literature from the primitive (*shanggu*) period to the unification of Qin, Qin and Han literature, literature of Wei, Jin and South and North Dynasties, literature of Sui, Tang and the Five Dynasties, Song literature, Yuan literature, Ming literature, Early Qing and Mid-Qing literature, and Modern literature—literature from Late Qing to “the May Fourth”. The nine chapters are basically arranged according to historical periods. Literature is dominated by the dynastic history (the first 8 chapters) and the social history (the last chapter). The literary thoughts and schools or the “spirit of the age” are interrelated with the social economy and culture. This established the conventional mode for writing Chinese literary history in the following decades. Thirdly, the descriptions in these histories are characterized by dichotomy such as realism versus romanticism, the folk literature versus the court literature, the progressive versus the reactionary forces. On one hand, the literary history is oversimplified by these dichotomies; on the other, the literary history is engulfed by social and dynastic history.

2.2.4 The New Perspective Mode in the Fourth Stage: 1990s–now

Stage 4: The New Perspective Mode:

The Fourth Stage is from the 1990s to the present. Literary historians attempt to reexamine the past practices on a macro scale, but they still remain within the confines of the “autonomy” and “heteronomy” modes. They usually take an integrated approach while advocating some new methods and concepts from a new perspective.

Yuan Xingpei illustrates this in *An Overview of Chinese Literary History* (1990/1995), “In the past, the Chinese literary studies were skewed towards its historical aspect and comments on the individual writers and works. It lacks an overall elaboration from a multidimensional perspective. The evolution of the literary genres and stylistic features should be highlighted, since every period is marked by

Table 2.4 The fourth stage of chinese literary histories

Author	Year of publication	Title	Publishing house	Notes
Zhang Peiheng (章培恒) and Luo Yuming (骆玉明)	1996	中国文学史	复旦大学出版社	
Yuan Xingpei (袁行霈)	1999	中国文学史 (4 volumes)	高等教育出版社	Collaborative work of 30 contemporary scholars
Zhang Peiheng (章培恒) and Luo Yuming (骆玉明)	2007	中国文学史 新著	复旦大学出版社 上海文艺出版社	

the full-fledgedness of a certain genre. Every literary genre has its own development, maturity and decline, like an organic body” (Yuan 1990/1995:28). The Chinese history of classical literature can be divided into four periods: the Pre-Qin Period, also called the Poetry and Sao Period; from Qin-Han to Mid-Tang Period, also known as the Poetry and Fu Period; From Mid-Tang to the End of Yuan Dynasty, also called Lyrics and Qu, Huaben Period; From Early Ming to “May the Fourth” Movement, also called the Saga or Long Novel Period. According to the genre, content and context, the Chinese literature is broadly divided into four categories: the Court (*Gongting*, 宫廷) Literature, the Magistrate (*Shilin*, 士林) Literature, the Urban (*Shijing*, 市井) Literature and the Rural (*Xiangcun*, 乡村) Literature (Table 2.4).

Neither the “Internal Cause Theory” nor the “External Cause Theory” can justify literary development separately, thus appears the integrative method. Chen Bohai (陈伯海) proposes the three pairs of conflicts central to literary history: the conflicts between literature and life, between thought and image and between different literary phenomena. These integrative forces combined will represent a living panorama of the literary history. By and large, his perspective is influenced by Hegel’s dialectic theory. He emphasizes that literary history is an organic body evolving from abstract to concrete in circular movements of “spiral acceleration”.

Chen Bohai put forward in *A Survey of Chinese Literary History* (1995) that Chinese literature moves towards independence through the stages of Shamanistic Literature, Historian Literature and Writer Literature. The three periods in Chinese Literary History are: the Shamanistic Literature from the Prehistoric Period to West Zhou Dynasty (with literary core in non-literary forms), the Historian Literature between Zhou and Qin (with non-literary content in literary forms) and the Writer Literature between Chu and Han (with both content and form being independent) make up the first period; the second period covers the combination of style and content in Han and Wei, the splitting of style and content in Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties, up to the unity of style and content; from the synchronic development of the Classical and Vernacular Literatures in Song and Yuan, their conflict in Ming and Qing (before the Opium War), up to their merging make up the third period. The three periods can be further divided into sub-periods. The three periods make up a global process, e.g., beginning, development and metamorphosis of Chinese literary tradition. The “integration of aesthetics and virtue” characterizes traditional Chinese literature. Nobles, Magistrates and civilians are the driving forces in traditional Chinese literature. Their transfer symbolizes different literary movements in different historical periods. The three climaxes come at the turn of Zhou and Qin (summit of Historian Literature), the turn of Tang and Song (maturity of the classical literature), the turn of Ming and Qing (peak of novels and operas). According to Chen Bohai, three periods, three forces and three climaxes are the highlighting principles in Chinese literary history from a global perspective.

Chen Bohai emphasizes three tendencies in traditional literary history perspective: *Fugu* Theory, *Xinbian* Theory and *Tongbian* Theory. The motives of literary history are either the internal causes or the external causes. In general, his

literary framework represents a “recycling” mode. He calls on applying scientific historical perspective and methodology to surpass the traditional literary history perspective, ushering a new epoch. In contemporary times, the traditional historical concepts broke down. Prior to “May the Fourth”, the traditional literary history perspective is transferred to the evolutionary perspective. From “May the Fourth” to the founding of PRC is marked by the prevalence of evolution theory. After the founding of PRC, the dialectic historic perspective moves forward.

Lin Jizhong in *New Horizon of Literary History* (2000) states that, “Mode is a way of operation and constructive behavior in a certain cultural system. Literary historians usually work in a certain mode.” The predominant mode of traditional literary review is the “biography and sociological mode”. Hu Shi initiated the conventional practice of a binary mode as the thread of literary history. Lin Jizhong concluded that the relations between cultural factors and literature are beyond description. The dynamic external conditions and the internal literary conditions are inter-tangled. Their interrelationships are far more intricate and complex than the root system of a fully-grown tree.

A History of Chinese Literature by Zhang Peiheng and Luo Yuming was published in 1996. They collaborated again on *A New History of Chinese Literature* (2007). As is stated in the *Introduction*, “our description is generally based on aesthetics and its development involved with human nature. This is concerned not only with the relationship of literature and human nature, but with the artistic form of literature.” This is the core value in their literary history. Their viewpoint can be traced back to the Marxist viewpoint on human nature, e.g., the essence of human nature is freedom; the ideal result of human history is to achieve the “overall and free development of every individual”; humans have a “general nature” that “varies in different historical periods”. Literature is a special way for humans to pursue their nature of freedom and to create their own lives.

An overview of the empirical work and studies of Chinese literary history in the past shows a panorama of the different interpretations of literary historians. This research generalizes four periods and three modes in Chinese literary history. The first period is the preliminary imitation period. The second period is typical of “autonomy” mode. It addresses the underlying principles from the internal factors. Every literary period and school has its own characteristics, either in terms of literary genres or stylistic features, or in terms of language evolution.

The Fourth Stage is characteristic of the integrated approach of autonomy and heteronomy. This integrative approach attempts to rewrite Chinese literary history from new perspectives. This is also a period of reflection on Chinese literary history studies. New literary histories and literary history studies go hand in hand. Some scholars try to establish an independent discipline of “Literary History Studies” (*wen xue shi xue*), like Ge Hongbing (葛红兵) and Wen Panya (温潘亚), Tao Dongfeng (陶东风, literary history typology or taxonomy), etc.

Table 2.5 The histories of Sino Literature by Japanese Sinologists

Author	Year of publication	Title	Publishing house	Notes
Sasagawa, Rinpū (笹川種郎, 1870–1949)	Meiji 36 (明治36, 1903)	《支那历史 文学史》	上海: 上海中西书局	Written in 1898
Kubo, (久保得二, 1875–1937)	Meiji 37 (明治37, 1904)	讲述 《中国文学史》	东京: 早稻田大学出版社	
Kojō, Teikichi (古城貞吉, 1866–1949)	Meiji 39 (明治39, 1906)	The Sino Chinese Literary History (Shinabungakushi, 《支那文学史》)	Tōkyō Fuzanbō (东京, 富山房)	Written in 1898
儿岛献吉郎		The Sino Literary History Outline (《支那文学史纲》)		
Chikuma Shobo (かのなき 狩野直喜 1868–1947)	1908 (明治41年)	The Sino Literary History (《支那文学史: 上古より六朝まで》)		Reprinted in 1970 by Misuzu Shobo (みすず書房).
内田泉之助	1977 (昭和31年)	《中国文学史》	东京: 明治书院	Reprinted in 1982 (昭和36年)

2.3 Chinese Literary Histories Compiled by Japanese Sinologists

The Chinese literary histories compiled by Japanese sinologists ushered in a new era for literary history writing. Since the *Meiji* Reform (1868), the Japanese scholars began to absorb Western culture in all fields. The Japanese sinologists took the lead in writing Chinese literary history at the end of the 19th century. Kojō, Teikichi (1866–1949)'s the *History of Sino Literature* (Shina bungakushi, 支那文学史) was published by Tōkyō Fuzanbō (東京, 富山房) in Meiji 39 (明治39, 1906). According to the introduction by Yoshikawa, Kōjirō, (吉川幸次郎, 1904–1980) in Kanō, Naoki (狩野直喜, 1868–1947)'s *Sino Literary History*, Kanō and Kojō are close friends since childhood (1908). Besides, Sasagawa, Rinpū (1870–1949) and Kubo (1875–1937) studied at the Tokyo University around the same time. Both of their histories are well-organized, while Kanō thought Sasagawa's and Kubo's Histories were not satisfactory in his view, for these two previous works are too small or brief (Kanō 1908: 462). Kanō began writing his literary history at the end of the Qing Dynasty (Table 2.5).

The *History of Sino Literature* (《支那文学史:上古より六朝まで》) by Kanō, Naoki (1868–1947) was originally published in 1908 (明治41年) and reprinted in 1970 by Misuzu Shobo (みすず書房). As the founder of the “Kyoto Sinology” (京都支那学), he developed the positivistic school in Japanese sinology from the early 1900s to the 1930s.¹⁶ The *History of Sino Literature* is divided into four chapters, the Literary Thoughts before Confucius, the Literature of the Spring and Autumn Periods, the Literature of Qin and Han, the Literature of the Six Dynasties. In the *General Introduction*, he introduced the scope of Sino literature, the characteristics of Sino literature in respects of rhetorics and the origin of Sino literature. According to the *Introduction* by Kōjirō Yoshikawa (吉川幸次郎), Shobo's *History* was originally designed as teaching materials for the Arts and Humanities Department of Kyoto Imperial University (京都帝国大学). Yoshikawa said, Chinese Literary Histories compiled by Chinese scholars were not published until the 1911 Revolution (辛亥革命). One thing remarkable about Kanō's *History* is that it was based on Chinese literature and philosophy for their own sake, free of the Japanese influence. This principle has far reaching effects on Japanese sinology later on (Kanō 1908: 464). During that period, in the Arts and Humanities College of Tokyo University, the pre-eminent professor is 井上哲次郎. Kanō thought that 井上's lectures were a combination of Eastern and Western ideas, but they were rough and simplified, only touching the surface of Chinese literature (Kanō 1908: 467). 青目正儿 is a student of Kanō's at Kyoto Imperial University.

Uchida, Sennosuke (うちだ内田泉之助)'s the *History of Chinese Literature* was published by Meiji Press (明治书院) in 1977 (昭和三十一年). He is a student

¹⁶ <http://baike.baidu.com/view/975140.html?fromTaglist>.

of 盐谷温 (いわや あつし). Sennosuke Uchida and Yuji Ami (網祐次) compiled *Wen Hsuan (Poem)* (文选 < 诗篇 >) in Japanese in 1984 (昭和三十八年十月), published by Meiji Press. Uchida's *History* is divided into eight chapters: The Pre-Qin Literature, the Qin and Han Literature, The Six Dynasties Literature, The Sui and Tang Literature, The Song Literature, The Yuan and Ming Literature, The Qing Literature, and the Revolution of Literature. It is still based on dynastic history with a general introduction to the dynastic history at the beginning of each chapter. Take the *Tang Chapter* as an example: it is divided into Early, High, Mid, and Late Tang conventionally. He thinks the political situation has much bearing on the poems and styles in general. He accordingly described the fourfold division as the emerging (渐变), established (成立), transforming (转换), declining (衰颓) processes of the poems (Uchida 1977:220). Meanwhile, prose and novels also developed along the same scheme.

In conclusion, the Chinese literary histories written by Japanese sinologists are significant in the following aspects. First, at the end of the 19th century, the pioneering Japanese sinologists began to write Chinese literary histories in Japanese in the model of the Western national literary histories. These early Japanese works have direct impact on the beginning of Chinese literary history writing at the beginning of 20th century. Lin Chuanjia declared he imitated *Sino Dynastic Literary History* by Sasagawa Rinpū (《支那历朝文学史》). As is mentioned earlier, Zeng Yi's *Chinese Literary History* (1915), Xie Wuliang's *The Grand Chinese Literary History* (1918), Wang Jianyu (汪剑余)'s *Chinese Literary History* (1925), Gu Shi (顾实)'s *Chinese Literary History* (1926), Lu Xun (鲁迅)'s *Gist of Han Literary History manuscript* (1926) were all influenced by Japanese sinology. Hu Yunyi (胡云翼) argued that Zeng Yi's *History* was a translation from 儿岛献吉郎's *An Outline of the Sino Literary History* (《支那文学史纲》). According to Sun Jingyao (孙景尧), Lu Xun, Zeng Yi and Gu Shi were overseas students in Japan. Liang Rongruo (梁容若) described Gu Shi's *History* as "full of direct translations from the Japanese work" (Wang 2000).

Second, the Japanese works have designated a framework or model for early Chinese literary historians to follow. It was not until the 1920s or later that the historians began to get out of this influence. The Japanese literary history is usually divided into four sections, *shangdai* (上代), *zhonggu* (中古), *zhongshi* (中世), *jinshi* (近世). Hu Shi and Zheng Zhenduo made a change to this categorization in the 1920s and 1930s. The interrelations between the spirit of age and dynastic history are the overriding principles for literary historians.

According to the list of Chinese Literary Histories in the Preface of Uchida (内田泉之助)'s *History*: (1) The first surge of writing Chinese literary histories came with KojōTeikichi, Sasagawa Rinpū, Kubo, 儿岛献吉郎 around the same period. All these *Histories* are entitled "the *History of Sino Literature*". The evolution of the modern literature was not included in these books (Uchida 1977: 10). Besides, 盐谷温 also published his *Talks on Generals of Sino Literature* by Tokyo 大日本雄辩会刊 in 1926 (大正8年). In 1968 (昭和22年) the revised edition was published as *Generals of Sino Literature* by 弘道馆. (2) Zheng Zhenduo's the *Outline of Literature* was published in Shanghai by the Commercial Press in 1927

(民国16年). Hu Shi's *Vernacular Literary History* (Vol. I) was published by Shanghai Crescent Bookstore in 1928 (民国17年). Zheng absorbed world literature extensively and made associations with Chinese literature in his *History*. Hu's *History* is involved with the evolution of vernacular literature. Uchida commented on these two *histories* that "There are many remarkable thoughts". (3) Tan Zhengbi's the *Evolution History of Chinese Literature* (《中国文学进化史》) was published by Shanghai Guang Ming Press (光明书局) in 1929 (民国18年). This *History* was focused on drama and novels. Hu Yunyi's *New Chinese Literary History* was published by Shanghai Bei Xin Press (北新书局) in 1932 (民国21年). Uchida said Hu Yunyi's *History* is translated from 井东宪氏's *History*. After that, there are the *Drama History* by Wang Guowei (王国维) and the *Novel History* by Lu Xun, etc. (4) Zheng Binyu (郑宾于)'s the *Chinese Literature Movement History* (《中国文学流变史》) was published by Shanghai Bei Xin Press (北新书局) in 1930 (民国19年). This work reaches the literature after Tang and mingles the thoughts from all schools. (5) Zheng Zhenduo's the *Illustrated Chinese Literary History* (6 volumes) was published by Beijing Pu Kan Press (北平朴刊社) in 1932 (民国21年). He complemented the previous works by adding the literature since the end of Ming. (6) Zhao Jingshen (赵景深)'s the *New Chinese Literary History* (《中国文学史新编》) was published by Shanghai Bei Xin Press (北新书局) in 1936 (民国25年). It is representative of the artistic writers. Liu Dajie's the *Development History of Chinese Literature* was published by Shanghai Zhong Hua Press (中华书局) in 1941–1949 (民国30–38年). Liu's *History* is noted for his elaborative narration on genres. But the Second Volume is less remarkable in documents. (7) Li Changzhi (李长之)'s the *Brief Drafts of Chinese Literary History* (《中国文学史略稿》) was published by Beijing Wu Shi Nian Dai Press (五十年代出版社) in 1954. Lin Geng (林庚)'s the *Brief Chinese Literary History* (《中国文学简史》) was published by Shanghai Wen Yi Lian He Press (文艺联合出版社) in 1954. This summary is made by Uchida in 1977 (Uchida 1977: 10–11).

2.4 Chinese Literary Histories Compiled by Western Sinologists (Mainly in English)

Stage 1: Chinese Literary Histories compiled by European sinologists from 1900 to the 1920s;

Stage 2: Chinese Literary Histories or Anthologies compiled by American sinologists from the 1920s to the 1950s;

Stage 3: Chinese Literary Histories compiled by Chinese sinologists in the US in the 1960s;

Stage 4: Chinese Literary Histories or Anthologies compiled by the American sinologists from the 1990s to the present.

2.4.1 All-Inclusive Mode of European Sinologists in the First Stage: 1900–1920s

Stage 1: Chinese Literary Histories compiled by European sinologists from 1900 to 1920s

A History of Chinese Literature by Herbert Allen Giles (1845–1935) was first published in 1901 and republished by D. Appleton at New York in 1909. *Gems of Chinese Literature: Prose* by Giles was first published in 1884, and *Gems of Chinese Literature: Poetry* was first published in 1898 under the title *Chinese Poetry in English Verse*. They are reprinted in 1923 and again reprinted by Paragon Book Reprint Corp at New York in 1965. Herbert A. Giles, Professor of Chinese at the University of Cambridge is the most outstanding sinologist at the beginning of the 20th century. He declared that his *History* is the first systematic history of Chinese literature to be published “in any language, including Chinese”. He presents China’s high antiquity in a very brief summary. Due to the limitations of scholarship at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, the pioneering sinologists did not have access to the original written records, the Tunhuang manuscripts and the fruits of archaeological excavations. These are the rudimentary form of Chinese literary history in the West.

The First Stage in the West is typical of the sinologist type of literary history. They opened the window to the Western readers. Their purpose is to introduce the Chinese culture—literature, religion, philosophy, etc. So writing Chinese literary history serves this purpose. They are encyclopedic literary histories with generalizations and major information. In addition they frequently use Western concepts to interpret the Chinese culture. The earlier Western-language anthologies or histories of Chinese literature offer only sketchy representations. As for the translations, Chinese literature is translated into a style of archaic English.

On the European Continent, sinologists also wrote Chinese literary histories in German and French. A German scholar named Wilhelm Grube (顾路柏, 1855–1908) wrote the *Chinese Literary History* (*Geschichte der Chinesischen Litteratur*) which was published in 1902. According to Yoshikawa, Kōjirō (1904–1980), Grube’s work was published in 1909. It is not uncommon for western sinologists to make a comparison between the Western literary figures and the Chinese authors, because these introductions to Chinese literature are oriented towards western readers. “Western literature often serves as clues for explaining Chinese literature, for example, the Spanish writer Calderón (1600–1681)’s *Life is A Dream* is compared to Zhuangzi’s transformation into a butterfly; The ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus (A.D.341–A.D.270) serves as the counterpart for Yang and Zhu” (Li 1996: 1).

Georges Margouliés’s *Histoire De La Littérature Chinoise: Prose* was published by Payot-Bibliothèque Historique in Paris in 1949 (336 pages). *Histoire De La Littérature Chinoise: Poésie* was compiled by de Margouliés G., published by Payot in 1951, comprising 416 pages.

2.4.2 Literature-Based Deductionism Mode of American Sinologists in the Second Stage: 1920s–1950s

Stage 2: Chinese Literary Histories or Anthologies compiled by the American sinologists from 1920s to 1950s

Since World War II, the center of sinology studies was transferred from Europe to the US. Many American universities founded Departments of East Asian Languages, or East Asian Studies, or the Far East. The studies of Chinese literature prove to be outstanding both in its range, depth and accomplishments. Their studies present different perspectives and research approaches in the Western academia and cultural context. The scholars in the US usually make use of sinology works in different languages, Japanese, Western European or Russian on an international arena. “Hu Shi wrote in his diary of April 5, 1916, ‘The Western sinologists... were not constrained by the conventions in China, therefore their works are insightful to us.’” (Nienhauser 1995/2007:5) The latest theoretical developments also have some bearing on writing literary history, e.g., deconstructionism, postmodernism, feminism, hermeneutics, etc.

The Anthology of Chinese Literature compiled and edited by Cyril Birch was divided into two volumes: *From Early Times to the Fourteenth Century* (Volume 1, with Donald Keene as the associate editor), published in 1965 and *From the 14th Century to the Present Day* (Volume 2), published in 1972. The *Anthology* presented the Chinese literary collections by arrangement of genres within an overall chronological scheme. This work relates historical and literary factors with the evolution of works in each section. It collected the latest translations of Chinese literature at that time. Quoting the back flap, “This is the first anthology of Chinese literature to draw together the finest of existing translations. Where these have been found wanting in scope or representative character, new translations have been commissioned: thus, roughly one-half of the material is published here for the first time” (Birch 1965/1972: 1).¹⁷ For this sake, this work has been accepted in the Chinese Literature Translations Series of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The book was dedicated to Arthur Waley, the translator and sinologist. It is one of the most comprehensive anthologies in English in the 1960s and 1970s.

Next I will discuss the characteristics of this *Anthology*. First of all, the definition of literature is modern Western rather than Chinese traditional, exclusive rather than comprehensive. The traditional Chinese bibliography recognized four major categories: *ching* (classics), *shih* (historical writings), *tzu* (philosophical writings), *chi* (collections of the verse and prose of individuals, excluding fiction and drama). The last category corresponds approximately to the Western concept of *belles lettres*. It can be argued that the earlier Chinese literary historians have taken an “all-inclusive” attitude and the earlier Western anthologists took a

¹⁷ Birch (1972).

“deductionist” view. The Chinese work is wide-ranging and all-inclusive, in contrast, the Western anthology is filtered and selected within the range of the modern Western literature concept. Second, the anthologist carefully selected translations of comparatively modern English style, instead of the lifeless English decades ago, with a multitude of footnotes. Birch said, “Each writer of worth, Chinese or others, is an individual with an individual voice. For this reason we have preferred to allow more space to each of a smaller total number of writers, even though as a result many names of high luster must drop out altogether” (Birch 1965: xxv). In this respect, Birch made an attempt to link the individual writer with the individual translator, so that Watson speaks for Ssu-ma Ch’ien (司马迁), Waley for Po Chü-yi (白居易), Rideout for Han Yü (韩愈), Bullet for Fan Ch’eng-ta (范成大). Moreover, the period is also compared to the Western historical period with similar features. The T’ang was equated with the Italian renaissance. Compared with the Chinese historians, the Western anthologists consciously make a distinction between the styles of individual writers in English translations. Third, The Western anthologist is more concerned with the beloved themes of Chinese writers. However, the Chinese historians focus on the evolution of genres throughout the dynastic history. The recurrent motifs are highlighted by Western sinologists. For example, love between man and woman, war, harmony between man and nature. In Chinese Taoism, men are identified with the world of hills and streams, compared to the ego-centrism of Westerners. Wordsworth is compared to Wang Wei. The Chineseness of literary tradition is disposed and interpreted in the context of Western literary tradition. Fourth, the anthologist emphasizes how the general cultural and social history serves as the background knowledge for Chinese literature and Chinese civilization. As he says, “**The spirit of age** is often very strong in the works that follow, and space remains only for us to make a few general comments and comparison” (Birch 1965: xxx). The beginning Songs were spontaneous folk songs being direct; the Songs of Chu were marked with sophisticated self-awareness. The theme of seclusion was stressed through the period which separates Han from Sui and Tang.

Taking the Tang Dynasty as an example, Birch’s categorization corresponds with the historical period from 618 to 907. It is divided into 5 sections: Poets of A Generation: One (Wang Wei and Tu Fu), Prose Essays (Han Yü and Liu Tsung-yü), Poets of A Generation: Two (Han Yü, Po Chü-yi, Yüan Chen, Li Ho and Lu T’ung), T’ang Short Stories (Yüan Chen, Po Hsing-chien and Tu Kuang-t’ing), and A Late T’ang Poet (Li Shang-yin). It covers 113 pages (pp. 217–329). Each section is initiated with a brief introduction to the characteristics of the author and the works. For the Late T’ang Period, only one poet Li Shang-yin was selected. What is characteristic about him is that he is among the few major writers who favor themes of the pains of love and the beauty of women. His poems are noted for metaphorical complexity using devices such as “the interplay of literary allusions and the parallelism of members within the couplet” (Birch 1965: 323).¹⁸

¹⁸ Birch (1965).

For this reason, Li Shang-yin is difficult for translators because of loss in translation. But Birch is intended to introduce his poems to Western readers through the translation of A. C. Graham. Graham addressed Li Shang-yin as the central figure in the last mature phase of T'ang.

2.4.3 *The Period of Chinese American Sinologists in the Third Stage: 1960s–1990s*

Stage 3: Chinese Literary Histories compiled by the Chinese American sinologists in the US

From the 1960s to the 1990s, there is a lull in Chinese literary history writing in the US. During this period, few Chinese sinologists compiled Chinese literary histories in English. Ch'en Shou-yi (陈绶[受]颐) compiled *Chinese Literature: A Historical Introduction* (《中国文学史述》), which was published by the Ronald Press Company in New York in 1961. Lai Ming (赖明) compiled *A History of Chinese Literature* (《中国文学史》), published by John Day Co. in New York in 1964. Liu Wu-chi (柳无忌) compiled *An Introduction to Chinese Literature* (《中国文学概论》), published by Indiana University Press in Bloomington and London in 1966. Li Tienyi (李田意) compiled *The History of Chinese Literature: A Selected Bibliography* (《中国文学史: 精选书目》), published by Far Eastern Publications of Yale University in 1968. What they have in common is that they received the traditional education on Chinese literature in China and later on pursued their careers in the US. Therefore, their works exert some domestic influences on the rewriting of Chinese literary histories in the West.

In this section these works will be investigated. Ch'en Shou-yi (1899–1978) was a professor of Chinese culture at Pomona College. In the *Foreword* Lin Yutang commented that this work has filled “an important gap in the field of Chinese literature” (Ch'en 1961: v). Lin stated that “Professor Herbert A. Giles's *History of Chinese Literature*, written about half a century ago, was a misnomer; it was a series of attempted essays on certain Chinese works, and was not even an outline covering the successive periods. There have been translations of different poets, studies of certain interesting aspects, and compilations of much-needed reference material. But a comprehensive outline of the story of Chinese literature has been conspicuous by its absence” (Ch'en 1961: v). Chen's history is presented in chronological order. It covers the entire range of Chinese literature, from the earliest truly historical period to the end of the Chinese Empire in 1911 and the effects of Western influence in the 1920s and 1930s. His special efforts are to “devote enough space to the lives and works of particular writers so that the readers will see these men as individuals interesting in their own right and not merely as steps in a historical progression” (Ch'en 1961: vii). Ch'en admits that he is especially indebted to Hu Shih among all the literary historians. As for translations, he is most grateful to Arthur Waley, although many of the translations are

his own. The Tang is made of four chapters: The Songs of the T'ang Dynasty, The Dawn of Chinese Fiction, The Literary Reform and T'ang Popular Literature.

Lai Ming's *A History of Chinese Literature* was printed with a preface by Lin Yutang in 1964. In Lin's preface, the distinction of this *History* is made clear "the periodic cycles, the influence of Buddhism and of the musical arts, have been made the framework against which the story is told. The author has deftly interwoven the social factors and the life of a representative poet or writer with the evolution of a particular period" (Lai 1964: i). He summarized four striking features in the development of Chinese literature for general Western readers. They are:

1. The golden ages-outstanding exponents of each form of the various genres of Chinese literature are generally recognized.
2. Buddhist literature and its immense influence on Chinese literature since the East Chin Period.
3. The flowering of Chinese poetry, novels and the drama in their various forms that generally sprang from the spontaneous expression of the common people.
4. The close relationship between music and Chinese literature.

From his characterization, we can conclude that he intends to select the major literary figures and major works to represent the prime age for each genre. It is a kind of single-story narrative, following single thread of literary form and its representatives. Second, he emphasized the external influence of Buddhism on Chinese literature. The literary form of the Buddhist sutras combined prose and rhymed verses, which was new to Chinese literature. The indirect change to Chinese language was the general acceptance of the Theory of Four Tones, leading to a new prosody of Chinese poetry. Another immediate effect of the emphasis on tonal value was the emergence of *p'ien-ti wen* (combination of prose and rhymed verse), with requirements as to the tones of certain words in a sentence, consisting of parallel sentences of alternately four and six words. The further influence is the emergence of *hua pen*, contributing to the development of Chinese novels, even drama (Lai 1964: 4–6). Third, he attributed the development and transition of literary forms to the popular or folk forms later adopted by Chinese *literati*. For example, story-telling as a popular form of entertainment influenced Chinese novels, not only in content but also in form. Lastly, he made an association between music and all literary forms, from the *Book of Poetry*, to *Yue Fu* of the Han Dynasty, to the "new-style" poetry (namely 'regular' 律诗 and 'stop-short' 绝句) of the Tang Dynasty, Tse of the Sung Dynasty, Chu, or dramatic poetry of the Yuan and Ming Dynasties. In conclusion, for Lai Ming, his task of presenting a general picture of the development of Chinese literature turns into the tracing and outlining of the evolution of literary forms, which, under political, economic and/or social situations produced masterpieces or works of excellence (Lai 1964: 13).

An Introduction to Chinese Literature (《中国文学概论》 1966) by Liu Wu-chi, as he says, is like an anthology supplemented by commentary and illustrative material of poetry and prose (Liu 1966: vii). This *Introduction* lays emphasis on

major writers and major works to Western readers. It is composed of 18 chapters. In the first 9 chapters, Liu juxtaposes classical and contemporary works, highlighting the influences of traditional works like *Classic of Poetry*, *Songs of Ch'u* and *Historical Records*. In the next 9 chapters, he gives new insights to drama and fiction based on recent scholarship. Out of the predominant influence of Confucianism, aesthetic excellence of literature gives way to moral soundness. "Enriched by a vast bulk of historical materials, Chinese literary writings abound in allusions to historical figures and events, a knowledge of which is even now a criterion for Chinese scholarship" (Liu 1966: 5). "Instead of being the mysterious or inscrutable Orientals represented by Westerners in their early reports on China, the Chinese were and are a practical people, have supported the down-to-earth teachings of Confucius, and created a literature whose main function is utilitarian rather than aesthetic" (Liu 1966: 5–6).

All in all, Chinese literary historians in this stage try to provide a more comprehensive literary history. On one hand, they are unsatisfied with the static and stereotyped literary history presented by the earlier sinologists; on the other, they have gained new insights based on recent scholarship. Take Chap. 7 "Later T'ang Poets" as an example, Liu introduces a few major poets. Po Chü-i with his satirical ballads is the mid-T'ang poet representative. The Late T'ang poets include Li Ho and Li Shang-yin. Li Ho reformed the "harem poems" with his originality; Li Shang-yin wrote amatory poems of allegory and symbolism; Ssu-k'ung T'u wrote philosophical poems; Wei Chuang wrote long narrative poems. Thus this *Introduction* selected the major writers and major works to represent the characteristics of Chinese literary tradition to Western readers.

2.4.4 New Perspective Mode of American Sinologists in the Third Stage: 1990s–Present

Stage 4: Chinese Literary Histories or Anthologies compiled by the American sinologists from the 1990s to present times

The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature (1994)

From the 1960s to the 1980s, there were very few literary histories or anthologies by Western sinologists, with the exception of a few Chinese American scholars in the 1960s. Scholars were reflecting on the methods and principles of literary historiography. They want to make a change to the old narrative mode. Then the 1990s witnessed a new boom of rewriting Chinese literary history and anthology. This generation of historians and anthologists proclaimed a break-away from the conventions and old modes. Another major factor is that the literary studies circle had gone through a dramatic change in the 1960s. Scholars begin to challenge the feasibility of literary history writing. This has much bearing on Chinese literary history writing as well. The third factor is that the accessibility of

the recent scholarship in China made it possible for Western scholars to have a fuller view of Chinese literature.

The *Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature* edited by Victor H. Mair was published by Columbia University Press in 1994. Mair is concerned with presenting the full range of Chinese literature with translated texts. The range of literature is as broad as “vivid or imaginative writing” (Mair 1994: xxiii). Mair intends to enlarge the narrow, prescriptive conception of “Chinese literature”. One term can be used to characterize of this anthology—“iconoclastic”. In his view, the literary tradition should go beyond the customary constraints of “classical” literature. Western sinologists in the earlier stage cannot see the woods for the trees, emphasizing only the standard genres and elite writers. This new generation of Western scholars begins to rethink tradition and culture as an organic whole. There is a transition from classical to vernacular, from monotonous to multifarious, from *belles-lettres* to miscellaneous literature. Materials from all levels of society are included, such as women, minorities, farmers, soldiers, merchants, physicians, etc. The earlier anthologies are more restricted to works of “literati-officials”, “magistrates”, or “elites”. In addition, new translations and new translators have been introduced to Western readers at the turn of the century. Mair replaced the conventional chronological and authorial scheme with type and genre, broad categories and subcategories. The types less anthologized before include biography and autobiography, rhapsody and popular genres derived from prosimetric oral storytelling.

The innovation of this anthology is the so-called “intertextual analysis”, where recurrent themes and images are pointed in different genres from different periods. Mair highlighted certain motifs and allusions that recur frequently “in a self-referential way is an interesting feature of Chinese literature that should not be overlooked” (Mair 1994: xxxvi). Moreover, literature is also related to the other arts, painting, music, dance, craftsmanship. The anthologist means to investigate the Chinese literary tradition for its own sake.

There is still comparison between the Chinese literature and the Western counterparts, e.g., the transformation text on Maudgalyāyana’s journey to hell in search of his mother versus Dante’s *Inferno* and parts of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, the narrative poem about the girl warrior Mulan versus Joan of Arc, Li Ju-chen’s “*The Women’s Kingdom*” versus Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*. The similarity and contrast are not only designed for university purposes, they also arouse interest for Western readers.

An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911 (1996)

The construction of Chinese literary tradition in this anthology is a kind of instantiate Chinese literary history. Since the 1990s, the literary historians have turned over a new page in writing literary history. The values proposed in *the Norton Anthology* are the interconnections between text groups, the diversity and coherence of the literary tradition, and diachronic arrangement. While the earlier sinologists were satisfied with the simplified picture of ‘Chineseness’ in literature, this new generation of sinologists is more concerned with an in-depth view of its

immense diversity and complexity. As Owen said, “Although the literary tradition was a unifying force, it was far from monolithic” (Owen 1996: xxxix).

Moreover, Owen goes beyond the mode of major writers and major works. He intends to show how the Chinese literary tradition works. His practice is “Re-creating the family of texts and voices that make up a ‘tradition’ rather than simply collecting some of the more famous texts and arranging them in chronological order” (Owen 1996: xl). Owen arranges text groups on themes, subgenres, etc., cutting across chronological history and literary genres. These cohesive and conscious principles become the basis for the selection of texts.

Stephen Owen’s new perspective is influenced by the concept of “*champ*” or the Field of Literary Production by Pierre Bourdieu. This concept evades the contradiction between the internal reading and external analysis, thus combining them. The relationships of the literary *champ* are investigated from an integrative research approach. The complex nature of the literary history should be addressed with a hierarchical and multi-dimensional mode. In a certain period of time, there must be different communities, different text groups, different social contacts though they might live in the same period and the same city. Owen also focuses on the competition of different text groups beneath the texts. “My criterion of choice has been those texts which, working together, tell a story that embodies the concerns of the tradition and shows its coherence” (Owen 1996: xlii). These recategorizations have a purpose—approaching the diversity of Chinese literary tradition. Out of the influence of deconstructionism in the 1960s, the sinologists try new ways to write literary histories. Owen emphasizes “discursive communities” in literary tradition. “A literary work is not only part of the history of a genre, but it is also part of what I would like to call a “discursive community,” a group that reads, hears, writes, reproduces, transforms, and disseminates material in a given period.”¹⁹ Remarkably, all the texts are translated by Owen himself. In his translations, he aims to represent the register variance in Chinese literature.

The Columbia History of Chinese Literature (2001)

The Columbia History of Chinese Literature was edited by Victor H. Mair and published by Columbia University Press in 2001. The organization of this *History* is intended to complement that of *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature* (1994) and *The Shorter Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature* (2000). It is a collaborative work of more than forty authors, covering fifty-five chapters. The project commenced in 1996 and ended in 2001. The conventional practices like chronological arrangement according to dynasties, genres are out of date. The old system of periodization in traditional comprehensive history is challenged and discarded. New systems and paradigms are to be explored and constructed in the new century. The creation of a new viable history of Chinese literature is needed.

¹⁹ Owen (1998). The manuscript was offered to the author (visiting scholar between 2009 and 2010 at Harvard University) by her sponsor Stephen Owen.

From 1960s to 1990s, on one hand, the literary historians and anthologists were reflecting on how to write Chinese literary history from a new perspective; on the other hand, new research on all aspects of Chinese literature mushroomed. As Mair said in the “Prolegomenon”, “Seldom was there an attempt to construct a systematic account of the development of genres, styles, and themes or to analyze the relationship of literature to society, political institutions, or even the other arts. Around half a century later (since the earliest attempts a century ago), it became possible to write general introductions to the history of Chinese literature, and several dozen of these indeed appear in Chinese, Japanese, English, French, and German” (Mair 2001: xi). The *Columbia History* included seven genre-based chapters: “Foundations”, “Poetry”, “Prose”, “Fiction”, “Commentary, Criticism, and Interpretation”, and “Popular and Peripheral Manifestations”. Mair’s approach is both chronological and topical, and it transcends the traditional division of dynastic and genre framework. As he said, “As for topics covered, this volume by no means subscribes to the view that Chinese literature can be neatly broken up according to traditional genres. Since many of the old genre categories are problematic, they are referred to but not regarded as restrictions” (Mair 2001: xii).

Mair enumerates the important issues and themes of the *Columbia History*. First, the way that thought (broadly construed) and religion such as Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and folk religion have conditioned the growth of literature. Second, the intricate interaction between the Han (Sinitic) and non-Han (non-Sinitic) is manifested in literary works. Mair’s *History* is to some extent influenced by Zheng Zhenduo’s *History*. Third, as for the position of literature, it is viewed as the “product of an infinite array of sociopolitical forces and cultural factors.” (Mair 2001: xiii) The interconnections are illuminated as much as possible. Fourth, this *History* is intended to represent the multifarious nature of Chinese literature. “In the end, what this history has helped the contributors to see—and what we hope it helps our readers to see—is the varied nature of Chinese literature, its shifting contours and **kaleidoscopic transformations**, its subtle lineaments and lasting verities.”

The *Columbia History* attempts to present to readers the vagaries and multifariousness of genres, the whole categories of Chinese literary treasures, with traditional genres as well as special ones like *hsiao-p’in* (*xiaopin*, 小品) in late Ming, even epistolary writing. He also emphasized the noteworthy characteristic of Chinese literature being that “the same material can be reworked in many different genres, both in the literary language and in the vernacular language” (Mair 2001: 8). At last, Mair elucidated the multiplicity of ideologies and peoples in Chinese culture and its impact on Chinese literature. The different ideological approaches in Chinese culture are also permeated and mingled together. This inseparable nature of these different ideological elements makes its way into literature. Mair is especially concerned with the dichotomy of *literati* and vernacular literature, the external influence of Buddhism and Taoism on Han Confucian literature. It can be traced by his statement, “Among the most fruitful avenues of twentieth-century research on Chinese literature has been the work of scholars

such as Cheng Chen-to²⁰ (1898–1958) and Jaroslav Průšek (1906–1980) on so-called *chiang-ch'ang wen-hsüeh* or *shuo-ch'ang wen-hsüeh* (spoken-sung literature)” (Mair 2001: 11). At the end of the introduction, Mair says, “Because of these processes (the interplay of the vernacular and the literary, the interaction of the Han and non-Han, the exchange among various regions, the tension between male and female voices), Chinese literature has remained vital to this day. Considering the enormous array of internal and external forces at play, it is impossible to predict with any degree of accuracy what will happen on the Chinese literary scene during the twenty-first century” (Mair 2001: 15).

In the *Columbia History*, the Chapter of Tang Poetry includes 5 sections entitled periodization, forms of *shih*, the sources and their limitations, the 7th, 8th and 9th centuries. It is not a narrative history but an encyclopedic history, a mosaic mode. The forms of Tang Poetry are examined briefly: the pentasyllabic lines, the heptasyllabic lines; “Old-Style” (*ku-t'i*) including *ko* (songs), the *sao* style; “Recent-Style” including quatrains (*chüeh-chü*) and *p'ai-lü* (排律); *Yüeh-fu* (ballad), the Tang *fu*, including smaller (*hsiao*) *fu*, regulated *fu* (*lü-fu*), the *su-fu*, or “*fu* in common speech”.

The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature 2 volume set (2010)

The *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature* was edited by Kang-i Sun Chang and Stephen Owen. The two-volume *Cambridge History* is intended to provide a coherent narrative of consistency and readability concerning the structure and goals of each individual chapter, since it is a collaborative work of 17 scholars. The overall concept of the *Cambridge Literary History* is the **literary culture**, which refers to a whole world of production of texts, cultural artifacts, things, the circulation and the world that surrounds the production. The **literary culture** refers to the culture of writing rather than the culture in the anthropological sense. We cannot separate writing from the culture that supports it.

In the beginning stages of writing literary history, people highlight the *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of the time. It is a highly “romanticized” term that literary historians no longer use. There is no necessary relationship between dynastic change and major changes in literary periods. Sometimes literary change might happen in the middle of a dynasty or before the dynasty, and sometimes it corresponds to the dynastic change. When the Western Jin fell, that was a major change both for literary history and dynastic history. The Cultural Tang of the *Cambridge History* does not correspond completely to the dynastic history of the Tang Dynasty, from 618 to 907. The Cultural Tang (650s–1020s) covers the period from the rise of Empress Wu in the 650s until after the establishment of The Song Dynasty, that is, before the brilliant generation of people such as Fan Zhongyan and Ouyang Xiu. The Early Northern Song is similar to the Tang Dynasty in the literary realm. First, this arrangement is based on the continuity of literary tradition. If we look at Tai Zong’s court, it is similar to the Northern Zhou court. There is a continuity

²⁰ Note: Mair uses the Wade-Giles system. The Mandarin spelling is Zheng Zhenduo.

between Northern Zhou, Sui and Tang. Second, it is related to the literary people and the recruitment process. If we look at people who came to the court of Empress Wu, there were people who had not served in court and were from literary families. If we look at the court of Emperor Taizong, it was filled with people whose parents or grandparents served in the Southern or the Northern Dynasties. One of the characteristics of the world of Eastern Han was the presence of writers from literary families throughout the period. What marks the difference is the recruitment change. How people get into the government or the court changes around Empress Wu's reign, the court selects people by personal favor and later on by the exam system, and it gradually changes in Song to a whole new system.

Third, this arrangement is also connected with the discursive communities. If we read materials from Empress Wu's reign, virtually every single writer working in the court is related to the court, or from families of the court. Almost every text is court related, either written in the court or sent to the court for the Empress to approve. There is very little private writing, with Wang Ji as the only exception here. In Europe, we find the sculptors, architects and poets who are closely involved in the Renaissance. They are in the same world. In China, things work differently, so we have to get into the communities within which the works are produced, circulated, admired, and in which people get prestige. These are different worlds. Here we are talking about specific subcultures not culture as a whole. So within the literary culture, there are distinct discursive communities with subcultures.

Comparatively speaking, the *Norton Anthology* is more standard. It leaves out the Early Tang, and concentrates on a few poets. It talks about genres and few poets in High Tang, Du Fu, the Frontier poets as a whole, and the Mid- and Late Tang together. It can be used as a university textbook for Chinese literature texts and translations. The *Cambridge History* can be used as a historical reading of literature. The abiding principles for compiling the *Cambridge History* are: first, it is focused on intervals rather than on genres, to see the different kinds of texts as a whole rather than simply talk about genre and isolation. Therefore there is a chapter called the *Cultural Tang* instead of the *Tang Poetry*. Second, the collaborators are to think about literary culture in a broad sense, rather than to present a few major works and dynastic periodization. Third, everything should contribute to a single story.

In conclusion, the *Cambridge History* is characterized by the notion of literary culture. Taking the Tang for instance, it traces the transformation process of the Tang literary culture, with literature changing from the center of court life in the mid 7th century to separateness from the imperial court in the 9th century, thus marking a whole new sphere of literary culture for the elite. Second, the poetry, prose or Tang stories are all part of the complete literary culture. Third, accordingly the collection of works are enlarged with the periodization, for example, ten thousand more poems from the first half century of the Song, still regarded as in the Tang tradition, are added to the 51,000 poems of the Tang and Five Dynasties, from *The Complete Tang Poetry (Quan Tang Shi)* and its supplements. Fourth, the literary cultural history is a dynamic representation of the conservation,

manuscript circulation, personal evaluation preferences, and the real canon formation process. Take Li Shangyin (813–858) as an example, his pre-eminent position today is indebted to Li Shangyin's early Song admirer Yang Yi (974–1020). Fifth, the emergence of new genres are highlighted, such as “preface on parting” (*songxu*), “account of an excursion” (*youji*), “regulated *fu*” (*lü fu*) used in the literary examination, “songs” (*gexing*) different from *yuefu* in making up new titles and often having the poet himself as a speaker (Owen 2010: 644), the “poem on history” (*yongshi shi*), “poems on things” (*yongwu shi*).

As is said in the preface of the *Cambridge History*, “Literary history as practiced in China has been shaped both by pre-modern Chinese categories and by nineteenth century European literary history; historical accounts of Chinese literature in the West have in turn been shaped by Chinese practices, whose categories have become habitual even though the result often seems strange to Western readers” (Owen 2010: 26).²¹ Therefore what is remarkable about the *Cambridge History* is that it “questions these categories”. Instead of following the conventional division of the field into genres, it takes a more integrated historical approach, “creating a cultural history or a history of literary culture”. The *Cambridge History* takes an **integrated historical approach**, treating poetry, prose, anecdote books, and stories as part of a cohesive historical whole. The main purpose is “**creating a cultural history or a history of literary culture**”. Issues of genre do need to be addressed, but the historical context of a given genre's appearance and its transformations clarifies the role of genre in ways that are made difficult by a genre-based organizational scheme (Owen 2010: 27–28).

In the Fourth Stage, literary historians aim to make breakthroughs in literary historiography. Briefly, these literary histories in the West are characterized by representation of the multiplicity, diversity and intricacy of Chinese literature, compared to the previous focus on the monotony, uniformity, and over-simplistic “Chineseness” in nature. Second, they transform the academic conventions and standard categories with their own principles and paradigm. The traditional comprehensive history of Chinese literature arranged according to dynasty and history is substituted with new modes. The *Columbia History* emphasizes the multifarious nature of Chinese literature, such as the vernacular manuscripts in Tun-huang, the reinterpretation of women's literature and women's place in literature (Chap. 11 of the *Columbia History*); while the *Cambridge History* focuses on the cultural history of literature. Third, with the globalization of information and academia, both the *Columbia History* and the *Cambridge History* make the best use of the recent scholarship, such as the Dunhuang manuscripts. This is due to the abundance of documents and latest scholarships exposed to the western scholars in Chinese literary studies.

²¹ Chang and Owen 2010. Note: The first volume was compiled by Stephen Owen as editor-in-chief, which will be referred to as (Owen 2010) in this book.

2.5 Conclusion of the Different Modes of Chinese Literary Histories

The writing of Chinese literary history has gone through over a century of evolution. In this chapter, the stages of writing Chinese literary histories have been investigated in general.

In the first stage, there appeared the *Histories of Chinese Literature* in Japanese, Chinese and English at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These earliest works sketch out the general introduction to Chinese literary tradition. The histories in Chinese are a hybrid of Western national history and traditional form.

After the preliminary stage of pioneering literary histories in the first decade of the twentieth century, writing Chinese literary history reached the second stage. In the 1920s and 1930s, historians make their arguments focused on a thread of thought and develop the standard narrative mode, be it genre evolution, language evolution from classical to vernacular, or internal influence and external influence on literature. Literary history writing is getting more mature and independent representing characteristics of Chinese literature. In the West, the literary histories and anthologies are in very crude forms. Their practices are also influenced by the conventions and categories of Chinese scholarship.

In the third stage, China produced a number of collaborative histories with the socio-political context mode. While in the West in the 1960s, only three Chinese American scholars produced Chinese literary histories. Since then, the western academia may be called the “Lull Period” of Chinese literary history writing.

In the fourth stage, the Chinese literary historians are exploring new perspectives while still inheriting the basic assumptions of genre and socio-context literary historiography. Mair’s contribution is highlighting the diversity and full range of Chinese literary history. Regional literature, vernacular literature, women’s literature shed a new light in the Columbia serials. On the other hand, the *Cambridge History* is moving from a historicist approach to a larger cultural history approach, because it is impossible to do justice to the real complexity of literary history by using a single category—genre.

All in all, the changes and transformations of writing Chinese literary history is a reflection of changing values or perspectives towards literary historiography. The paradigm of literary historiography is moving from macro to micro, from general to diversified, from universalism to “*champ*” or the “Field of Literary Production”, from a single standard narrative to a larger literary culture history. In some sense, the old system is based on the narrative of genre evolution, the dichotomy of classical and vernacular literature, the interrelation between literature and socio-political context, etc. That is to say, the internal values of literary works are associated with some other elements inside or outside literary history. These two are known as autonomy or heteronomy modes. On the contrary, the new paradigm of the *Columbia History* is the “**kaleidoscopic transformations**” of Chinese literature, the interactions between Confucian literature and Buddhism and Taoist literature, Han and non-Han literature, different sociopolitical cultural and

ideological forces, classical and vernacular literature, etc. The new mode of the *Cambridge History* is to situate literature in cultural history. The production and circulation of literary texts are represented and reexamined in the “**literary cultural history**”. The static and fixed canonization process should be challenged. The underlying forces in the process of cannon formation prove to be a vivid living panorama of a history of literary culture. In this new light, literary history is viewed as part of a larger cultural history that includes literary aesthetic values, sociological values and discursive values. Therefore, the new modes have a greater bearing on the multidimensional paradigm of literary historiography.

A general survey of *the Histories* and *Anthologies* in China and in the West help us to have a better understanding of literary historiography. The four stages of Chinese literary history in China are the Hybrid Mode of western form and Chinese categories in the first stage (1904–1919); The Evolution-Theory-based Mode in the second stage (1919–1949); The Socio-historical Determinism Mode in the third stage (1949–1990s); The New Perspective Mode in the fourth stage (1990s–present). All these different modes can be categorized to one theoretical paradigm—a teleological narrative of the nineteenth century historicism. Chinese literary histories by the western sinologists are generalized in four stages: the Europe-centered encyclopedic histories in the first stage (1900–1920s); the American-centered literature-based deductionistic histories in the second stage (1920s–1950s); a Lull Period with histories by Chinese American sinologists in the third stage (1960s–1990s); the New Perspective Mode of neo-historicism in the fourth stage (1990s–now). The latest accomplishment is the *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature* (2010) by Kang-i Sun Chang and Stephen Owen. With the reflections in the third period, historians proclaim new perspectives in order to break away from the conventional paradigm. “Discursive Communities” complement the predominant genre-based mode. The “Cultural Tang” differs from the traditional dynastic history and the socio-political determinism. A non-teleological mode is adopted to represent the multiplicity, diversity and intricacy of literary history.

The US, in the 1990s witnessed a boom of new perspectives in literary historiography, among which Stephen Owen has been a prominent figure. The *alter ego* perspectives in the West will be analyzed through his works in the past few decades. What indeed are the relations between the “intrinsic” domain of literature and the “extrinsic” ones of history, society, philosophy, religion, etc.? Above all, should literature and literary history be historicized and assimilated to social and political contexts? What are the dimensions of paradigm in literary history studies? These issues will be further discussed in the next chapter.

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The Alter Ego Perspectives of Literary Historiography
A Comparative Study of Literary Histories by Stephen
Owen and Chinese Scholars

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2013, XXVIII, 184 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-642-35388-8