

第一章

中国人民

／ Chapter One The Chinese People ／



## 一. 南方与北方

研究任何一时代的文学或任何一时代的历史，其最终和最高之努力，往往用于觅取对该时代之“人物”的精详的了解。因为文学创作和历史事迹之幕后，一定有“人物”，此等人物及其行事毕竟最使吾人感到兴趣。当吾人想起马可·奥勒留（Marcus Aurelius）或琉善（Lucian），便知适当罗马衰落时期。又或想起弗朗索瓦·维永（Francois Villon），便知适当中古世纪。想起一个时代的重要人物，马上感觉到那个时代很熟悉，也很明了。像“十八世纪”那样的名称，还不如称为“约翰逊（Johnson）时代”来得有意义。因为只稍提醒约翰逊的一生行事：他所常出入的伦敦四法学院怎样，他所常与交谈的友侪怎样，整个时代便觉得生动而充实起来了。设想有与约翰逊同时代而文名不足道之一人物，或一普通伦敦市民，其一生行事中也许有同样足资吾人榜样者，然一普通伦敦市民终不足引起吾人之兴趣，因为普通人总归是普通人。不论普通人喝烧酒也好，呷立顿茶也好，都只算是社会上无足轻重之偶发事件，毫无特色可言，因为他们是普通人。

倘若为约翰逊，则他的抽烟和时常出入伦敦四法学院，倒也是于历史

上具有重要价值的史料。伟人的精神用一种特具方法反映于当时社会环境而垂其影响于吾人。他们的优越之天才，能影响于他所接触之事物，亦能接受此等事物之影响。他们受所读书本之影响，亦受所与交际之妇人的影响。若令较为低能的人物与之易地而处，则不会有什么特征可以发现。是以在伟人的生命中，生活着整个时代的生命。他们吸收一切所可吸收之事物，而反射以最优美最有力之敏感。

可是论到研究一整个国家，那普通人民便千万不容忽略过去。古代希腊的人民，并非个个都是索福克勒斯（Sophocles），而伊丽莎白时代的英吉利，也不能到处散播培根（Bacon）和莎士比亚（Shakespeare）的种子。谈论希腊而只想到索福克勒斯、伯里克利（Pericles）、阿斯帕西亚（Aspasia）寥寥数人，势必把雅典民族之真相弄错。盖吾人尚须想及索福克勒斯的儿子尝以家务纠纷控诉乃父，更须想及阿里斯托芬（Aristophanes）同时代的人物，他们不完全是爱美的，也不完全是追求真理的，而却是终日狂饮饕餮，唯以醉饱为务。争辩纷纭，诡变狡猾，唯利是图，这真是一般普通雅典人民的典型。唯利是图，诈谲多变之雅典人性格，有助于吾人之了解雅典共和邦所以颠覆之理，适如伯里克利与阿斯帕西亚之使吾人了解雅典民族之所以成为伟大。倘个别地加以评价，则他们的价值几等于零，但倘以集体来观察，则他们之所影响于国运之力量至为宏大。是以过去的时代，已无法将他们加以改造，至现代国家中，所谓普通人民，固未尝一日与吾人须臾离也，安得以等闲视之？

但是谁为普通人民？而普通人民又是怎样一个形象？所谓“中国人民”，在吾人心中，不过为一笼统的抽象观念。撇开文化的统一性不讲——文化是把中国人民结合为一个民族整体之基本要素。南方中国人民在其脾气上、体格上、习惯上，大抵异于北方人民，适如欧洲地中海沿岸

居民之异于诺尔曼民族。幸而在中国文化之轨迹内，只有省域观念之存在，而未有种族观念之抬头，因而在专制帝政统治下，赓续数世纪之久，得以相安无事。历史上复遗传下来一种宝贵的普遍法式——文字，它用至为简单的方法，解决了中国语言统一上之困难。中国文化之融和性，因能经数世纪之渐进的安静播植，而同化比较温顺之土著民族。这替中国建立下“四海之内皆兄弟也”的友爱精神，虽欧洲今日犹求之而不得者。就是口说的语言所显现之困难，亦不如今日欧洲分歧错杂之甚。一个欧洲籍人倘旅经西南边境如云南者，虽略费麻烦，仍可使其意思表达而为人所懂，语言的技巧在中国使其拓植事业逐渐扩展，其大部盖获助于书写之文字，此乃中国统一之显见的标志。

此种文化上之同化力，有时令吾人忘却中国内部尚有种族歧异、血统歧异之存在。仔细观察，则抽象的“中国人民”意识消逝，而浮现出一种族不同之印象。他们的态度、脾气，理解各个不同，显然有痕迹可寻。假使吾们用一个南方籍贯的指挥官来驾驭北方籍贯的军队，那时立即可使吾们感觉二者不同性之存在。因为一方面，吾们有北方人民，他们服习于简单之思想与艰苦之生活，个子结实高大，筋强力壮，性格诚恳而忸急，喜啖大葱，不辞其臭，爱滑稽，常有天真烂漫之态，他们在各方面是近于蒙古族的；而且比较聚居于上海附近之人民，脑筋来得保守，因之他们对于种族意识之衰颓，如不甚关心者。他们便是河南拳匪、山东大盗，以及篡争皇位之武人的生产者。此辈供给中国历代皇朝以不少材料，使中国许多旧小说之描写战争与侠义者均得应用其人物。

循扬子江而至东南海岸，情景便迥然不同，其人民生活之典型大异。他们习于安逸，文质彬彬，巧作诈伪，智力发达而体格衰退，爱好幽雅韵事，静而少动。男子则润泽而矮小，妇女则苗条而纤弱。燕窝莲子，玉碗

金杯，烹调极滋味之美，饮食享丰沃之乐。贸迁有无，则精明伶俐；执戟荷戈，则退缩不前；诗文优美，具天赋之长才；临敌不斗，呼妈妈而踏仆。当清廷末季，中国方屏息于鞑鞑民族盘踞之下，挟其诗文美艺渡江而入仕者，固多江南望族之子孙。

复南下而至广东，则人民又别具一种风格，那里种族意识之浓郁，显而易见，其人民饮食不愧为一男子，工作亦不愧为一男子；富事业精神，少挂虑，豪爽好斗，不顾情面，挥金如土，冒险而进取。又有一种奇俗，盖广东人犹承受着古代食蛇土民之遗传性，故嗜食蛇，由此可见广东人含有古代华南居民“百越”民族之强度混合血胤。至汉口南北，所谓华中部分，居住有狂躁咒骂而好诈之湖北居民，中国向有“天上九头鸟，地下湖北佬”之俗谚，盖湖北人精明强悍，颇有胡椒之辣，犹不够刺激，尚须爆之以油，然后煞瘾之概，故譬之于神秘之九头鸟。至湖南人则勇武耐劳苦，湘军固已闻名全国，盖为古时楚国战士之后裔，具有较为可喜之特性。

因往来贸易而迁徙，与科举时代应试及第之士子被遣出省服仕之结果，自然而然稍稍促进异种人民之混合，省与省之差异性乃大见缓和，然大体上仍继续存在着。盖有一颇堪注意之事实，即北方人长于战斗，而南方人长于贸易，历代创业帝王，几从无出自大江以南者。相传食米之南人，无福拱登龙座，只有让那啖馍馍的北方人来享受。实际上除却一二例外，如唐周二代的创业帝王，出自甘肃东北部，故有土耳其族之嫌疑，其余各大皇朝的帝王，盖莫不起自比较阻塞的山陵地带，靠近陇海铁路，此地带包括东部河南、南部河北、西部山东和北部安徽。这个开业帝王的产生地带，倘以陇海铁路为中心点，它的幅径距离不难测知。汉高祖起于沛县，即现在之徐州；晋室始祖起于河南；宋室始祖起于南部河北之涿县；

明太祖朱洪武出生于安徽之凤阳。

直到如今，除了蒋介石将军出生于浙江——他的家族谱系尚待考——大半将帅，多出自河北、山东、安徽、河南，也以陇海铁路为中心点。山东产生了吴佩孚、张宗昌、孙传芳、卢永祥；河北产生了齐燮元、李景林、张之江、鹿钟麟；河南产生了袁世凯；安徽产生了冯玉祥、段祺瑞。江苏不出大将，而产生了几位出色的旅馆侍者。五十年前，中国中部湖南省出了一位曾国藩，这个好像是例外，但是足以证明上述之定律：因为曾国藩是一位第一流学者，同时也是第一等大将，但他既系出生于长江之南，是以为食米者而不是啖馍馍者，从而他的命运注定应为贵显大臣，而不能为中华民族开创一新的皇朝。因为开创帝业这种工作，需要一种北方典型的粗犷豪放的态度，要具备一种淳朴而令人可爱的无赖汉之特性，要有爱好战争，不厌劳动而善于自利的天才——藐视学问与孔教伦理学，直至大局的南面称皇，那时孔教的尊皇思想始有用于他，然后大模大样大讲其尊孔之道。

粗暴豪迈之北方，与柔荏驯良之南方——二者之异点，可以从他们的语言音乐与诗歌观察而得。你可以把陕西的歌曲跟苏州的歌曲作一对比，立可发觉其决然不同之差异。一方面陕西歌曲声调铿锵，乐器用击筑拊嗒板而和歌，音节高而嘹亮，颇类瑞士山中牧歌，歌声动则回风起舞，似在山巅，似在旷野，似在沙丘。另一方面则有那耽安淫逸之苏州的低音歌曲，其声调呜咽哽咽，似长叹息，似久困喘哮病者之呻吟，因其勉强哼嘘而成颤抖之音律。从寻常对话中，亦可以察觉明朗清楚之北平官话，其声调轻重之转变分明，令人愉悦；而苏州妇女之甜蜜柔软之喋喋琐语，多圆唇元音，抑扬波动，着重处不用高朗之发声，而徒拖长其柔悦婉转之缀音以殿于句末。二者之差异固甚显然。

关于南方与北方语言腔调之不同，曾有一段有趣故事。据说一次有一位北籍军官，尝南下检阅一连苏籍之军队，当这位军官大声喝令“开步……走！”的时候，全体士兵屹立不动，屡次喝令，均属无效，正无法施行其命令之际，其连长系久居苏州习于苏俗者，乃稟请军官准其另自发令，军官准之，连长乃一反军官之清楚明朗的“开步……走！”的急促腔调，而出以婉转诱惑之苏州口音，“……开……步……走……嗷……”果然，全体军队应声而前进了。

诗歌里面，像这样歧异的色彩，表现于第四、第五、第六世纪者，尤为浓厚。当时北部中国初次经鞑鞑民族之蹂躏，汉人之受有教育者相率渡江而南下。值此时抒情诗方发皇于南朝，而南朝统治阶级，颇多为抒情诗能手。民间复通行一种体裁别致之恋情小曲，名为“子夜歌”。把这种热情的小诗，与北方新兴的富有朝气的质朴诗作一对比，二者情调之歧异是深刻而明朗的。吾们且看那时候南朝歌曲的作风怎样：

#### 读曲歌

打杀长鸣鸡，  
弹去乌白鸟。  
愿得连暝不复曙，  
一年都一晓。

#### 子夜歌

路涩无人行，  
冒寒往相觅。  
若不信依时，

但看雪上迹。

南宋之际，又有一种韵律长短错综之活泼的抒情诗，称为“词”。其内容大抵描写妇女之深闺幽怨，绣阁伤春；或则吟咏黛眉粉颊，素抹浓妆；或则吟咏红烛朱栏，丝帟锦屏；道相思之苦，热恋之情。“红烛自怜无好计，夜寒空替人垂泪”“惜弯浅黛，长长眼”。其韵多似此类。人民而习取于此种恋情诗歌之萎靡情绪，其被发表豪放质朴简短诗歌情绪之北方民族所征服，固为自然之结果。北方之诗歌盖直接取自荒凉北方之景色而不加润色者。下面一首为很好的例子：

敕勒川，  
阴山下。  
天似穹庐，  
笼盖四野。  
天苍苍，野茫茫，风吹草低见牛羊。

看这一首小诗，倒是魔力非凡，相传一位北朝大将，竟能借此短短数句之力，于新败之余，收集余众，激励将士，使军心复振，因能重整旗鼓，杀回战场。下面又一首小诗，为另一北族将领所作，乃咏其新购之宝刀，其情绪风格，适与南方的恋情诗词成一对比：

新买五尺刀，  
悬著中梁柱。  
一日三摩挲，



剧于十五女。

另一首则风格音调更见雄壮：

遥望孟津河，  
杨柳郁婆娑；  
我是胡家儿，  
不解汉儿歌。  
健儿须快马，  
快马须健儿；  
跋黄尘下，  
然后别雄雌。

像这样的诗歌——南北两方作品的内容与技巧之完全不同——对于吾人今日研究中华民族之构成分子，南北两大血统之异同上，有很大贡献，值得吾人之玩味。吾人于此更可进而了解何以具有两千年磕头历史，习于户内生活，缺乏普遍运动，而能不追踪埃及、罗马、希腊之后尘而退化，而崩溃。然则中国果何以能免此厄运乎？

### *I. North and South*

IN the study of any period of literature or of any epoch of history, the final and highest effort is always an attempt to gain a close view of the man in that period or epoch, for behind the creations of literature and the events of history there is always the individual who is after all of prime interest to us. One thinks of a Marcus Aurelius or a Lucian in the times of decadent Rome, or of a Francois Villon in the medieval ages, and the times seem at once familiar and understandable to us. Names like "the Age of Johnson" are more suggestive to us than a name like "the eighteenth century" for only by recalling how Johnson lived, the inns he frequented, and the friends with whom he held conversations does the period become real to us. Perhaps the life of a lesser literary light or of an ordinary Londoner in Johnson's time would be just as instructive, but an ordinary Londoner could not be very interesting, because ordinary people throughout the ages are all alike. Whether ordinary people drink ale or Lipton's tea is entirely a matter of social accident, and can make no important difference because they are ordinary men.

That Johnson smoked and that he frequented eighteenth century inns is, however, of great historical importance. Great souls react in a peculiar way to their social environment and make it of importance to us. They have that quality of genius which affects and is affected by the things they touch; they

are influenced by the books they read and by the women with whom they come into contact, which make no impress on other lesser men. In them is lived to its full the life of their age or generation; they absorb all there is to absorb and respond with finest and most powerful sensitiveness.

Yet, in dealing with a country the common man cannot be ignored. Ancient Greece was not entirely peopled by Sophocles and Elizabethan England was not strewn with Bacons and Shakespeares. To talk of Greece and only think of Sophocles and Pericles and Aspasia is to get a wrong picture of the Athenians. One has to supplement it with an occasional glimpse of the son of Sophocles who sued his father for incompetency in managing his family affairs, and with characters from Aristophanes, who were not all in love with beauty and occupied in the pursuit of truth, but who were often drunk, gluttonous, quarrelsome, venal and fickle, even as were common Athenians. Perhaps the fickle Athenians help us to understand the downfall of the Athenian republic as much as Pericles and Aspasia help us to understand its greatness. Individually they are naught, but taken in the aggregate they influence to a very large measure the course of national events. In a past epoch, it may be difficult to reconstruct them, but in a living country the common man is always with us.

But who is the common man, and what is he? The Chinaman exists only as a general abstraction in our minds. Apart from the cultural unity which binds the Chinese people as a nation, the southern Chinese differ probably as much from the northerners, in temperament, physique and habits, as the Mediterraneans differ from the Nordic peoples in Europe. Happily, within the orbit of the Chinese culture there has not been a rise of nationalism, but only of provincialism, which after all was what made peace within the empire possible for centuries. The common historical tradition, the written language, which has in a singular way solved the problem of Esperanto in China, and the cultural homogeneity achieved through centuries of slow, peaceful penetration of a civilization over comparatively docile aborigines,

have achieved for China the basis of the common brotherhood so much desired now in Europe. Even the spoken language presents no difficulty nearly so great as confronts Europe today. A native of Manchuria can, with some difficulty, make himself understood in southwest Yunnan, a linguistic feat made possible by a slow colonization process and helped greatly by the system of writing, the visible symbol of China's unity.

This cultural homogeneity sometimes makes us forget that racial differences, differences of blood, do exist within the country. At close range the abstract notion of a Chinaman disappears and breaks up into a picture of a variety of races, different in their stature, temperament and mental make-up. It is only when we try to put a southern commander over northern soldiers that we are abruptly reminded of the existing differences. For on the one hand we have the northern Chinese, acclimatized to simple thinking and hard living, tall and stalwart, hale, hearty and humorous, onion-eating and fun-loving, children of nature, who are in every way more Mongolic and more conservative than the conglomeration of peoples near Shanghai and who suggest nothing of their loss of racial vigor. They are the Honan boxers, the Shantung bandits and the imperial brigands who have furnished China with all the native imperial dynasties, the raw material from which the characters of Chinese novels of wars and adventure are drawn.

Down the southeast coast, south of the Yangtse, one meets a different type, inured to ease and culture and sophistication, mentally developed but physically retrograde, loving their poetry and their comforts, sleek undergrown men and slim neurasthenic women, fed on birds'-nest soup and lotus seeds, shrewd in business, gifted in belles-lettres, and cowardly in war, ready to roll on the ground and cry for mamma before the lifted fist descends, offsprings of the cultured Chinese families who crossed the Yangtse with their books and paintings during the end of the Chin Dynasty, when China was overrun by barbaric invaders.

South in Kwangtung, one meets again a different people, where racial

vigor is again in evidence, where people eat like men and work like men, enterprising, carefree, spendthrift, pugnacious, adventurous, progressive and quick-tempered, where beneath the Chinese culture a snake-eating aborigines tradition persists, revealing a strong admixture of the blood of the ancient Yüeh inhabitants of southern China. North and south of Hankow, in the middle of China, the loud-swearing and intrigue-loving Hupeh people exist, who are compared by the people of other provinces to "nine-headed birds in heaven" because they never say die, and who think pepper not hot enough to eat until they have fried it in oil; while the Hunan people, noted for their soldiery and their dogged persistence, offer a pleasanter variety of these descendants of the ancient Ch'u warriors.

Movements of trade and the imperial rule of sending scholars to official posts outside their native provinces have brought about some mixture of the peoples and have smoothed out these provincial differences, but as a whole they continue to exist. For the significant fact remains that the northerner is essentially a conqueror and the southerner is essentially a trader, and that of all the imperial brigands who have founded Chinese dynasties, none have come from south of the Yangtse. The tradition developed that no rice-eating southerners could mount the dragon throne, and only noodle-eating northerners could. In fact, with the exception of the founders of the T'ang and Chou Dynasties, who emerged from northeast Kansu and were therefore Turkish-suspect, all the founders of the great dynasties have come from a rather restricted mountainous area, somewhere around the Lunghai Railway, which includes eastern Honan, southern Hopei, western Shantung and northern Anhui. It should not be difficult to determine the mileage of the radius within which imperial babies were born with a point on the Lunghai Railway as the center of the area. The founder of the Han Dynasty came from Peih sien in modern Hsuechow, that of the Chin Dynasty came from Honan, that of the Sung Dynasty came from Chohsien in southern Hopei, and Chu Hungwu of the Ming Dynasty came from Fengyang in Anhui.

To this day, with the exception of Chiang Kaishek of Chekiang whose family history has not been made public, the generals for the most part come from Hopei, Shantung, Anhui and Honan, also with the Lunghai Railway as the central point. Shantung is responsible for Wu P'eifu, Chang Tsungch'ang, Sun Ch'üanfang and Lu Yunghsiang. Hopei gives us Ch'i Hsüehyüan, Li Chinglin, Chang Chihchiang and Lu Chunglin. Honan produced Yüan Shihk'ai and Anhui produced Feng Yühsiang and Tuan Ch'ijui. Kiangsu has produced no great generals, but has given us some very fine hotel boys. Over half a century ago, Hunan in the middle of China produced Tseng Kuofan, the exception that proves the rule; for although Tseng was a first-class scholar and general, being born south of the Yangtse and consequently a rice-eater instead of a noodle-eater, he was destined to end up by being a high-minded official and not by founding a new dynasty for China. For this latter task, one needed the rawness and ruggedness of the North, a touch of genuine lovable vagabondage, the gift of loving war and turmoil for its own sake—and a contempt for fair play, learning and Confucian ethics until one is sitting secure on the dragon throne, when Confucian monarchism can be of extreme usefulness.

The raw, rugged North and the soft, pliable South—one can see these differences in their language, music and poetry. Observe the contrast between the Shensi songs, on the one hand, sung to the metallic rhythm of hard wooden tablets and keyed to a high pitch like the Swiss mountain songs, suggestive of the howling winds on mountain tops and broad pastures and desert sand-dunes, and on the other, the indolent Soochow crooning, something that is between a sigh and a snore, throaty, nasal, and highly suggestive of a worn-out patient of asthma whose sighs and groans have by force of habit become swaying and rhythmic. In language, one sees the difference between the sonorous, clear-cut rhythm of Pekingese mandarin that pleases by its alternate light and shade, and the soft and sweet babbling of Soochow women, with round-lip vowels and circumflex tones, where force

of emphasis is not expressed by a greater explosion but by long-drawn-out and finely nuanced syllables at the end of sentences.

The story is recounted of a northern colonel who, on reviewing a Soochow company, could not make the soldiers move by his explosive "Forward March!" The captain who had stayed a long time in Soochow and who understood the situation asked permission to give the command in his own way. The permission was granted. Instead of the usual clear-cut "K'aipu chou!" he gave a genuine persuasive Soochow "kebu tser nyiah!" and lo and behold! the Soochow company moved.

In poetry, this difference is strikingly illustrated in the poems of the North and the South during the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries, when northern China was for the first time submerged under a Tartar rule, and the cultured Chinese migrated southward. For it was a time when sentimental love lyrics flourished in the southern courts, and the southern rulers were many of them great lyric poets, while a peculiar form of love ditties, the *tzy ehko*, developed among the people. A contrast between this sentimental poetry and the fresh, naive poetry of the North would be highly instructive. So sang the anonymous poet of the South in the popular ditties:

*Kill the ever-crowing cock!  
Shoot the early announcer of the dawn!  
That there might be an uninterrupted  
Rolling darkness till Next Year's morn!*

*tzy ehko*  
*The roads are muddy and forsaken,  
Despite the cold I came to thee.  
Go and look at the footprints in snow,  
If thou wilt not believe me.*

During the Southern Sung Dynasty, we saw a peculiar development of a sentimental lyric in intricate meter, the tz'u , which invariably sang of the sad lady in her boudoir, and her tearful red candles at night and sweet-flavored rouge and eyebrow pencils, and silk curtains and beaded window screens and painted rails and departed springs, and pining lovers and emaciated sweethearts. It was natural that a people given to this kind of sentimental poetry should be conquered by a northern people who had but short, naïve lines of poetry, taken, as it were, direct and without embellishment from the dreary northern landscape.

*Down by the Chehleh river,  
Beneath the Yin hills,  
Like an inverted cup is the sky  
That covers the wasteland.  
Enormous is the earth,  
And the sky is a deep blue;  
The wind blows, the tall grass bends ,  
And the sheep and cattle come into view.*

It was with this song that a northern general, after suffering a heavy defeat, rallied his soldiers and sent them again to battle. And in contrast to the southern songs of love, we have a general singing about a newly bought broadsword:

*I have just bought me a five-foot knife,  
I swing it with a gleaming cadence.  
I fondle it three times a day,  
I won't change it for fifteen maidens!*

Another song handed down to us reads:



*In the distance I descry the Mengchin river,  
The willows and poplars stand in silent grace.  
I am a Mongol's son,  
And don't know Chinese lays.  
A good rider requires a swift horse,  
And a swift horse requires a good rider.  
When it clatters off amidst a cloud of dust,  
You know then who wins and who's the outsider.*

Lines like these open up a vista of speculation as to the differences of northern and southern blood that went into the make-up of the Chinese race, and seem to make it possible to understand how a nation subjected to two thousand years of kowtowing and indoor living and a civilization without popular sports could avoid the fate of civic racial degeneration that overtook Egypt, Greece and Rome and the other ancient civilizations. How has China done it?