

On the Therapeutic Writing Perspective of the Childhood Memoir Essays by the Zhou Brothers

療癒寫作視野下的周氏兄弟童年回憶散文寫作論

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Abstract

將周氏兄弟的童年回憶散文放在療癒寫作的視野下進行觀照，引入心理學的家族系統排列法來對周氏兄弟的家族關係做排序與分析，通過文本的比較分析，可重新解讀周氏兄弟的成長路徑及童年情結，辨析周氏兄弟在不同的散文創作方式中的療癒共性。在療癒個體心靈的目的和效果上，魯迅與周作人是殊途同歸的，童年回憶散文的寫作給他們提供一條宣洩、反思、重建的表達通道。但由於父親情結與童年創傷在其個人生活態度和文學創作選擇上的不同反映，周氏兄弟散文創作又呈現出暴露與隱藏兩種不同理路。

The childhood memory prose of the Zhou brothers is examined under the perspective of healing writing, and the family system arrangement method of psychology is introduced to sort and analyze the family relationships of the Zhou brothers. Through comparative analysis of the texts, the Zhou brothers can be reinterpreted. The growth path and childhood complex of the Zhou brothers are analyzed, and the healing commonalities of the Zhou brothers in different prose creation methods are analyzed. That is to say: in terms of the purpose and effect of healing individual souls, Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren reached the same goal by different paths. The writing of childhood memory essays provided them with an expression channel for catharsis, reflection, and reconstruction. However, due to the different reflections of father complex and childhood trauma in their personal life attitudes and literary creation choices, the Zhou brothers' prose writing presents two different approaches: exposure and concealment.

Introduction

Lu Xun 魯迅(1881-1936) and Zhou Zuoren 周作人(1885-1967), two pivotal figures in the creation of modern Chinese essays, have long attracted scholarly attention for their distinctly different writing styles and the underlying reasons behind these differences. As early as the 1980s, researchers such as Wang Furen, Qian Liqun, and Wu Jun began exploring the connection between the Zhou brothers' creative psychology and their texts through case studies. Against the backdrop of modern psychology developments, including expressive writing, narrative therapy, and family therapy, it is imperative to re-examine the Zhou brothers' childhood memoir essays from the perspective of individual therapeutic writing.

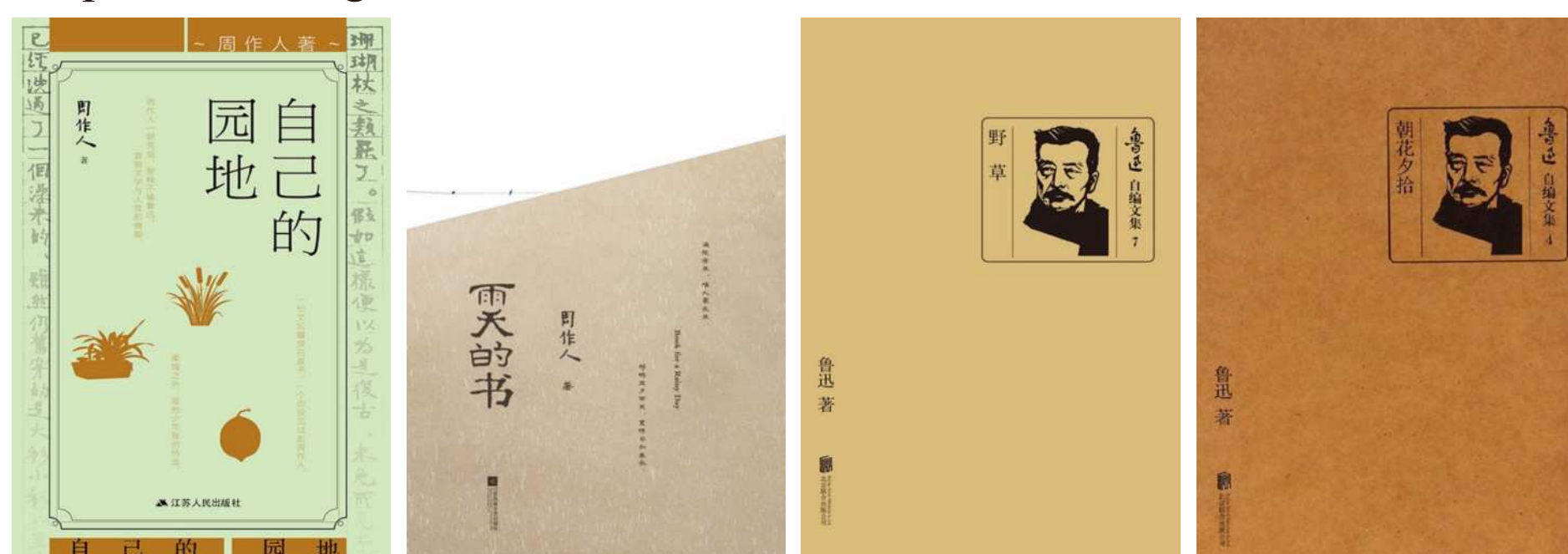


Fig.1. Zhou Brothers Prose Masterpieces

Research Methods

Family Constellation Therapy, first proposed by German psychologist Bert Hellinger, has become a widely influential method in psychological counseling and therapy. Using The Chronicle of Lu Xun 《魯迅年譜》, The Chronicle of Zhou Zuoren 《周作人年譜》, and the



Fig.3. Representations of the Family System

Zhou brothers' diaries and letters as primary sources, this study focuses on their childhood memoir essays. By applying the Family Constellation method to analyze and rank the family relationships of the Zhou brothers, this research seeks to explain their differing tendencies in childhood essay creation from a therapeutic writing perspective.

Analysis

Hellinger discovered that certain hidden dynamics within family systems govern relationships among family members, and many physical and psychological problems are rooted in familial "entanglements." Based on the family constellation diagrams devised by Taiwanese practitioner Zhou Dingwen 周鼎文, the author has created a family system diagram for the Zhou family, as shown in Figure 2.

The analysis reveals that the grandfather's tyrannical personality and the father's premature death significantly influenced the Zhou brothers' upbringing. Lu Xun deviated from his natural path and overstepped by assuming the roles of the excluded (his grandfather and father), thereby inheriting unresolved family entanglements and disrupting the balance of the Zhou family system. The acute awareness of poverty, combined with the paternal complex tied to their roles as the eldest and second sons, shaped the brothers' life trajectories and manifested in their differing literary approaches.

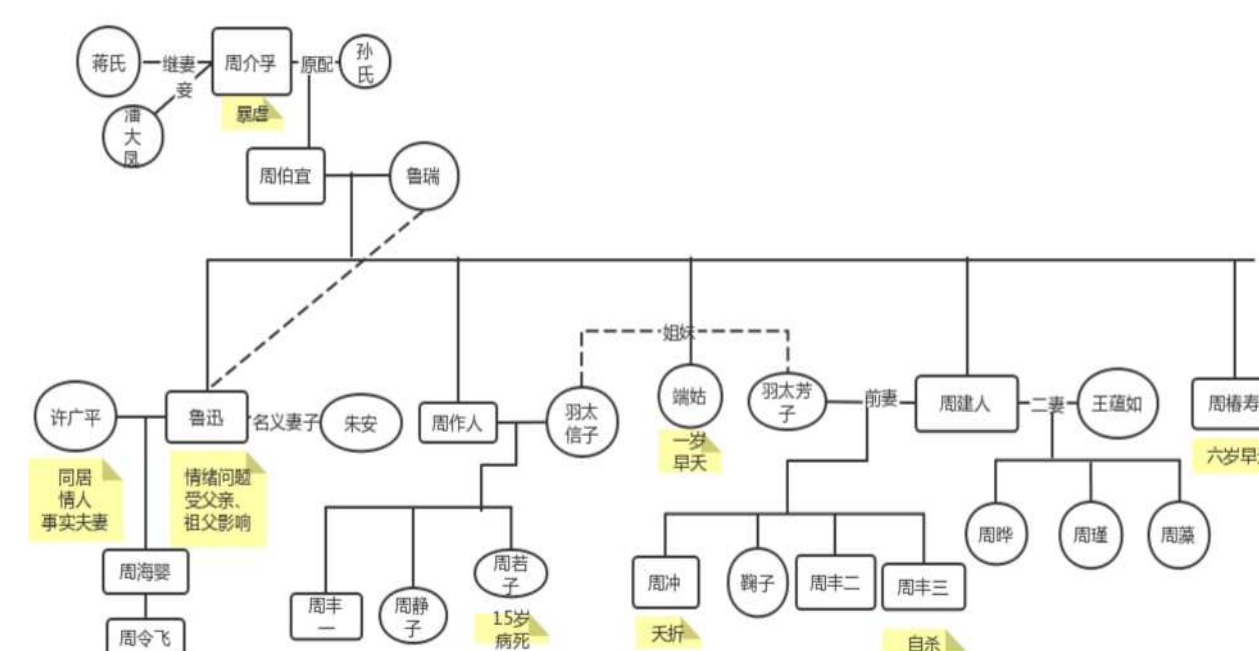


Fig.2. Zhou Family Relationship Diagram

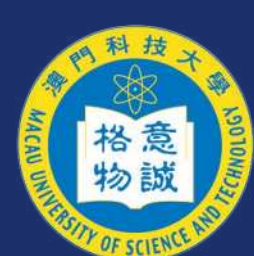
Conclusion

Lu Xun's childhood memoir essays embody a form of overt reflective expression. They reorganize past experiences through rational awareness and literary language, enabling a re-cognition of unconscious complexes. These essays extract keywords from inner struggles—such as "loneliness 寂寞," "desolation 伶仃," and "sorrow 悲哀"—achieving a cathartic psychological effect. Moreover, Lu Xun connects personal experiences with societal issues and historical contexts, transforming feelings of loss and grief into a heightened sense of responsibility toward life, family, and nation.

In contrast, Zhou Zuoren's childhood memoir essays reflect a concealed reflective expression. By consciously adopting an avoidance strategy, Zhou constructs a literary style characterized by harmony and tranquility, seeking inner stability and security. His writings exhibit a distinct tendency toward reconstruction, rarely confronting traumatic events directly. Instead, he adopts an observer's perspective, re-integrating personal experiences by distancing himself from his emotions. Through depictions of hometown landscapes, customs, and the incorporation of proverbs and nursery rhymes, Zhou reconstructs a sense of childhood charm and innocence.

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