

What Maketh the Man?
Towards a Psychobiographical Study of Lin Yutang

Roslyn Joy Ricci

School of Social Science/Centre for Asian Studies
University of Adelaide

November 2013

Abstract

Dr Lin Yutang, philologist, philosopher, novelist and inventor was America's most influential native informant on Chinese culture from the mid-1930s to the mid-1950s. Theoretical analysis of Lin's accomplishments is an ongoing focus of research on both sides of the North Pacific: this study suggests why he made particular choices and reacted in specific ways during his lifetime. Psychobiographical theory forms the framework for this research because it provides a structure for searching within texts to understand why Lin made choices that led to his lasting contribution to transcultural literature. It looks at foundational beliefs established in his childhood and youth, at why significant events in adulthood either reinforced or altered these and why some circumstances initiated new beliefs. Lin's life is viewed through thematic lenses: foundational factors; scholarship and vocation; the influence of women; peer input; and religion, philosophy and humour. Most of his empirical life journey is already documented: this thesis suggests why he felt compelled to act and write as he did. In doing so, it offers possible scenarios of why Lin's talents developed and why his life journey evolved in a particular manner, place and time. For example, it shows the way in which basic beliefs—formed during Lin's childhood and youth and later specific events in adulthood—affected his life's journey. It analyses how his exposure to the theories of Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism affected his early childhood basic belief—Christianity—and argues that he accommodated traditional Chinese beliefs within Christianity. It suggests how women played a central role in influencing the specific directions of Lin's life. This study shows how Lin's writing, resulting from his beliefs and the themes and patterns evident throughout his life, is useful information for third millennium global societies. Acknowledging his basic beliefs and how significant events reinforced or changed the patterns built on these beliefs may aid educators in creating environments that enrich learning outcomes. This information shows how writing can inform readers and sway societal opinion and it confirms the importance of contact with nature in early childhood. Contact with nature cannot be underestimated in forming sound structures for concentration and emotional stability in later life. In suggesting why Lin took particular directions and not others, it is acknowledged that

although the circumstances of his birth, childhood and youth (which created his foundational beliefs) cannot be unerringly reproduced temporally or spatially, it is possible to recreate some of the significant events that stimulated this transcultural writer during his adult years. These include learning new languages and experiencing travel: events that can be reproduced to shape twenty first century learning environments.

Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University's digital research repository, the Library catalogue and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

Signed:

Roslyn Joy Ricci

Dated: 05/03/2014

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr Gerry Groot, Dr Delia Lim and Dr Songping Jin — for their supervision, support and guidance throughout the process and their understanding, particularly during my *annus horribilis* – 2011.

Particular thanks must go to my postgraduate peers: Dr Ming Hwa Ting, Dr Midori Kagawa-Fox, Dr Baohui Xie and Shurong Han and to the Administrator for the Centre for Asian Studies, Sarah Hoggard. Special thanks to clinical psychologist Giovanna Severino for her suggestions.

My thanks to the Chinese Studies Association of Australia and the Asian Studies Association of Australia for providing me with opportunities to present sections of my work to their conference attendees for peer critique.

This thesis was edited by Elite Editing: editorial intervention was restricted to Standards D and E of the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice*.

My husband, Giovanni, must be credited with enduring the journey with me.

My thanks to the SAPOL officers at Golden Grove who suffered my proof-reading between greeting clients while on volunteer duty.

Most importantly my enduring thanks to *YHWH* who never failed to support me through brushes with death and illness while this thesis was in progress.

Contents

Abstract	ii
Declaration	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Contents	vi
List of Figures	x
Abbreviations in Citations	xii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 The Significance of Lin Yutang	3
1.2.1 Importance to Western Society	3
1.2.2 Importance to Chinese Literature.....	4
1.2.3 Importance to World Literature	5
1.2.4 Contribution of This Study to Asian Studies	5
1.2.5 Importance of This Research to Psychobiography.....	6
1.3 Thesis	6
1.4 Objectives, Driving Questions and Definitions	6
1.4.1 Objectives.....	6
1.4.2 Driving Questions	7
1.4.3 Definitions.....	7
1.4.4 Methodological Approaches Employed.....	8
1.5 Psychobiographical Theory.....	10
1.5.1 Why Psychobiographical Research for Lin Yutang?	12
1.5.2 Michael J. Howe: A Multidisciplinary Approach	12
1.5.3 J. W. Anderson: The Challenges of Psychobiography.....	13
1.5.4 William Todd Schultz: Framework for This Study	16
1.6 Perspective and Biases	19
1.7 Chapter Plans	20
1.8 Chapter Summary.....	23
Chapter 2: The Empirical Journey and Literature Review	24
2.1 Introduction	24
2.2 The Formative Years: 1895–1904.....	24
2.3 School Days: 1905–1910	25
2.3.1 College and Early Career: 1911–1915	26
2.4 Marriage and Postgraduate Journey: 1919–1923	27
2.5 Children and Career: 1923–1929	30
2.6 Vocation as Author: 1928–1934	32
2.6.1 Establishing Transcultural Credentials: 1935–1937	35
2.7 Pre-War and WWII: 1938–1945	37
2.8 Post-WWII: 1946–	43
2.8.1 Singed in Singapore: 1954–1955	45
2.8.2 Travel and Writing: 1955–1961	46
2.8.3 Taiwan 1965–1972.....	48

2.9 Hong Kong: 1972–1976	50
2.10 Acknowledging Previous Research: Literature Review	50
2.10.1 Language Sources	50
2.10.2 Primary Sources	51
2.10.3 Familial	53
2.10.4 Major Dissertations	53
2.10.5 Minor Dissertations, Online Theses and Papers	57
2.11 Chapter Summary.....	59
Chapter 3: The Formative Years.....	60
3.1 Introduction	60
3.2 Foundational Beliefs and Infant Memory	61
3.2.1 Schacter and Moscovitch	61
3.3 Historical and Geographical Space	62
3.3.1 Geographical Space.....	63
3.3.2 Educational Cultural Space: Amoy—Xiamen and Gulangyu.....	66
3.4 Familial Effect.....	67
3.4.1 Lin Zhizheng	68
3.4.2 Yang Shunming.....	69
3.4.3 Siblings.....	71
3.4.4 Meigong	73
3.5 Women and the Child Lin	78
3.5.1 Childhood Sweetheart	78
3.5.2 Mannia and Mulan	80
3.5.3 Missionaries and Temperance Women	81
3.6 Education.....	84
3.6.1 School Days: 1900–1910	84
3.6.2 St John’s College	85
3.7 Scholarship.....	89
3.8 Childhood and Invention.....	90
3.9 Chapter Summary.....	91
Chapter 4: How Scholarship and Vocation Shaped Lin Yutang.....	94
4.1 Introduction	94
4.2 Scholarship.....	96
4.2.1 Academic Writing	96
4.2.2 Western Scholarship	98
4.3 Academic Writing	100
4.3.1 Translated Texts: Understanding His Choices.....	102
4.3.2 Do Lin’s Translations of Traditional Chinese Texts Reveal Evidence of Isogenesis?.....	103
4.3.3 Marrying the Old and the New	103
4.3.4 Language as ‘Soft-Power’	104
4.3.5 ‘The Pen is Mightier Than the Sword’	107
4.3.6 The Tongue as Whip	111
4.4 Creative Writing.....	113
4.4.1 Publishing.....	114
4.5 Invention	115
4.6 Transcultural Architecture	120
4.7 Chapter Summary.....	124

Chapter 5: The Significance of Women in the Life of Lin	126
5.1 Introduction	126
5.2 Historical Perceptions of Women	127
5.3 Youthful Perceptions.....	128
5.3.1 The Eros of Youth.....	128
5.4 Liao Cuifeng.....	132
The wedding photo below shows a confident maturity in Cuifeng's face, while Lin's face is one of emotional immaturity.	132
5.5 The Daughters	135
5.5.1 Loss of a Child	139
5.6 Significant Women.....	142
5.6.1 Liu Hezhen	142
5.6.2 The Landladies of Leipzig	143
5.6.3 Vocational Peers	144
5.6.4 Pearl Sydenstricker Buck	145
5.6.5 Anna May Wong	146
5.6.6 Huang Zhaoheng	147
5.7 Rejection and Parting	148
5.8 Lin: Feminist or Humanist?	149
5.9 Women and Writing	151
5.9.1 Writing on Women.....	151
5.9.2 Writing about Women.....	153
5.10 Smoking as Sensual Addiction.....	156
5.11 Chapter Summary.....	160
Chapter 6: The Influence of Peers	162
6.1 Introduction	162
6.2 Academic Peers	162
6.2.1 Hu Shi and Lu Xun	163
6.2.2 Hu Shi	164
6.2.3 Lu Xun (Zhou Shuren).....	170
6.3 Political Plight.....	172
6.3.1 Zhang Zongchang	172
6.4 Social and Literary Peers	173
6.4.1 Chiang Kai-shek and Soong Mei-ling.....	173
6.4.2 The Shanghai Circle.....	174
6.5 Publishing Peers	177
6.5.1 Richard John Walsh (1902–1975).....	177
6.5.2 The Paris Circle.....	183
6.5.3 Departure of Friends	184
6.5.4 Chapter Summary	185
Chapter 7: Spiritual Survival: Philosophy/Religion/Humour	186
7.1 Introduction	186
7.2 Religion	188
7.2.1 Formative Belief	188
7.2.2 The Melding of Philosophy and Religion	190
7.2.3 Autumn Years	191
7.2.4 Contradictions	192
7.3 Philosophy.....	194
7.3.1 Lin the Multidisciplinary Philosopher	197

7.3.2 Lin the Cross-Cultural Philosopher.....	198
7.3.3 The Credo of Lin Yutang	200
7.4 Humour	203
7.4.1 Master of Humour	203
7.4.2 Women and Humour	210
7.4.3 Humour in Creative Produce.....	211
7.5 Chapter Summary.....	213
Chapter 8: Conclusions	215
8.1 Introduction	215
8.2 Factors Affecting Lin’s Beliefs	216
8.2.1 Childhood.....	216
8.2.2 Lin and Women.....	217
8.2.3 Religion	218
8.2.4 Nature	218
8.2.5 Travel	219
8.2.6 Scholarship, Peers and Publishing	219
8.2.7 Philosophy.....	221
8.2.8 Humour	222
8.2.9 Invention	223
8.3 Patterns Changed by Significant Emotional Events in Adulthood	223
8.4 Character Traits and the Wisdom of Lin Yutang	224
8.5 What Can be Learnt from this Study.....	225
Bibliography	227
Appendices	241
Chinese Character Chart	259
Publications/Presentations on Lin Yutang	263

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: The <i>yin</i> and <i>yang</i> of psychology and biography.....	10
Figure 2.1: Banzai (Poa-a); Pinghe (Siokhe); Zhangzhou (Chang-Chow)	25
Figure 2.2: Wedding Day Photo: Liao Cuifeng (23 years) & Lin Yutang (24 years).....	27
Figure 2.3: 1931—Cuifeng Holding Hsiangju; Lin with Anor & Adet.....	34
Figure 2.4: An Estimated 11,500 Bombs Fell on Chongqing bw 18 Feb 1938–23 August 1943	39
Figure 3.1: Portrait of Emperor Guangxu in Court Attire.....	63
Figure 3.2: A = Banzai Township	64
Figure 3.3: River Near Lin’s Birth Home	64
Figure 3.4: River Rapids Banzai–Sio-khe	65
Figure 3.5: Lin Yutang at 7 Years.....	72
Figure 3.6: Zhizheng Lin Family 1903: Lin Yutang 3 rd from left/Meigong 2 nd from right	72
Figure 3.7: Deborah Kerr	75
Figure 3.8: Meigong.....	75
Figure 3.9: Missionary Temperance Women.....	83
Figure 3.10: Lin Yutang, 1911	86
Figure 3.11: Childhood Poem	89
Figure 3.12: Well and Water Chute (outside) 2008	91
Figure 3.13: Chute to Butler’s Sink (inside) 2008	91
Figure 4.1: Lin’s Chinese character typewriter.....	116
Figure 4.2: Original Lin Family Home Banzai c.1900	121
Figure 4.3: Replica of Lin’s Banzai Home 2008	121
Figure 4.4: Courtyard of Lin Yutang House	121
Figure 4.5: Plan of Lin House, Yangmingshan.....	122
Figure 4.6: Plan of a Siheyuan Courtyard Home.	122
Figure 5.1: The Chen Home No. 44.....	130
Figure 5.2: Chen Home Juxtaposing Liao Home.....	130
Figure 5.3: The Liao Home No. 48	130
Figure 5.4: Liao Cuifeng and Lin Yutang.....	132

Figure 5.5: Cuifeng, Hsiangju, Anor, Lin & Adet	135
Figure 5.6: Anna May Wong	147
Figure 5.7: Woman with Cigarette.....	158
Figure 5.8: Lin Yutang with a Cigar	159
Figure 5.9: Lin Yutang Lighting a Pipe	159
Figure 6.1: Lu Xun (taken 1930) & Hu Shi (taken 1944).....	163
Figure 6.2: The ‘Thread of Language’ Writers.....	170
Figure 6.3: The CCRL with GB Shaw	175
Figure 6.4: GB Shaw, Soong Ching-ling, Agnes Smedley, Cai Yuanpei & Hu Shi	175
Figure 6.5: [Sun Xifu, Lin Yutang,] Sun Fuyuan, Zhou Jianren, Xu Guangping & Lu Xun	176
Figure 6.6: Walsh and Buck.....	178
Figure 7.1: ‘Awakening’ ballet	197
Figure 7.2: Stefan Doose’s diagram.....	206
Figure 7.3: Doose’s Venn Diagram in English	207
Figure 7.4: ‘Mickey Mouse meets Confucius’	212
Figure 7.5: ‘What I like about America’	212
Figure 7.6: Lin’s Comic Sketches.....	212

Abbreviations in Citations

Books by Lin Yutang

MCMP for Lin Yutang, *My Country and My People*, New York: The John Day Co., 1935.

IL for Lin Yutang, *The Importance of Living*, New York: The John Day Co., 1937.

PC for Lin Yutang, *From Pagan to Christian*, Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1959.

MO for Lin Yutang, *Memoirs of an Octogenarian*, Taipei: Mei Ya Publications, Inc., 1975.

Other

OED for *The Oxford English Dictionary*

Websites

WP for William Todd Schultz, 'What is Psychobiography?', accessed 18 March 2008, www.psychobiography.com

Note on Transliteration

Pinyin is used for the transliteration of Chinese names and terms except those used in direct quotes, book titles or authors and names widely known in other forms, such as Sun Yat-sen.