

The Reception of Modernity in East Asia: Japan in China's Encounter with the West

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Abstract

This paper studies East Asia's reception of modernity, using Japan's mediating role in China's encounter with the West as a point of departure to explore what may result from the subsumption of the particular under the universal. How Japan influenced China in opening up horizons for modern literature will be examined at length. *The True Story of Ah Q* by Lu Xun (1881-1936) will be chosen to illustrate a translation-like situation China might have found itself in as it observed Japan shifting to the West for reference. I will use, in particular, the slides show incident in Lu Xun's student days at the Sendai Medical School to show how modern Chinese literature arose out of the vantage point of being at the intersection between Japan and the West in their engagement with modernity.

Keywords: modernity, East Asia, China, Japan, Lu Xun, Walter Benjamin, *The True Story of Ah Q*, translation

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*A draft of this paper was first read in a conference held at Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris, in November 2006. This paper is part of the product of a research project funded by Taiwan's National Science Council (NSC-94-2411-H-032-019-BI). The author of the paper wants to thank Professor Hsiao-yen Peng of Academia Sinica for inviting him to read the paper and National Science Council for providing the research fund. He also wants to thank research assistant Ms. Yu-ping Chang for helping collect documents. Last but not the least, the author wants to express his deep gratitude for the three anonymous reviewers for their comments.

(Received 20 June 2011; accepted 15 December 2011)