

Mapping Ideology in Language Han Dong's *Zha gen* (*Banished!*) and Ma Jian's *Rou zhi tu* (*Beijing Coma*)

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Abstract Ideology can play a significant role in shaping literary representations of contemporary China. This study aims to demonstrate that a close reading of the authors' use of language can reveal the influence of ideology on the literary texts, even when it comes to authors whose positions towards P.R.C. are diametrically opposite. The analysis compares Han Dong's *Zha gen* (*Banished!*) and Ma Jian's *Rou zhi tu* (*Beijing Coma*), implementing Fairclough's model for Critical Discourse Analysis on vocabulary and grammar. The experiential, relational, and expressive values coded in the texts reveal different tendencies in the authors' attitudes when representing social reality. Nonetheless, they prove the existence of common ideological features underlying the authors' literary expression.

Summary 1 Language and Ideology through Literature. – 2 Selected Corpus and Methodology. – 3 Analysis. – 3.1 Vocabulary. – 3.2 Grammar. – 4 Two Voices, One Ideology.

Keywords Han Dong. Ma Jian. Banished! Beijing Coma. Ideology. Critical Discourse Analysis.

1 Language and Ideology through Literature

Ideology and language have always been influencing each other in many significant ways.¹ This is especially true for the Chinese language, whose roots lie in an extremely politicised territory, where ideology and power have actively contributed to shaping language features over centuries (Hodge, Louie 1998, 96). As a result, aside from the juxtaposition of 'official' and 'non-official' language (Link 2013, 243), political influences underlie the common speech of contemporary Chinese as well, being found even in everyday language. In such a scenario, narrative plays a central role in providing authors with an effective tool to project their vision and becomes an even more effective mirror through which to analyse the re-

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flection of politics seeping from an author's idiolect. Han Dong 韓東 has always asserted his writing to be the expression of an individual position, claiming a complete detachment from the political scene. On the other hand, Ma Jian's 馬建 critical spirit (Wang Der-wei 2010, 6) has guided his attack to the Chinese system and its way of dealing with social issues by adopting an approach whose straightforwardness has led him to exile.

This study aims to demonstrate that a close reading of the authors' use of language can reveal features that are symptomatic of a political position, showing the influence of ideology on their use of contemporary Chinese. Analysis of the linguistic level, in fact, can reveal both the political connotation underlying an apparently neutral text, and the key role language plays in expressing overt criticism.

Given the socio-cultural perspective of the study, the analysis was conducted following the theoretical model provided by Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter CDA). The CDA approach arises from the field of critical linguistics, among whose first developers include scholars like Fairclough (1989) and van Dijk (1993). The applications of the CDA model range widely among a variety of fields, usually focusing on non-literary texts. However, a significant contribution to its application in the field of literature was provided by Birch (1989) and Weber (1992). Among the most recent studies, examples of investigation of literary texts can be found in the field of gender fiction (Sunderland 2004) and literary translation (Isbuga-Erel 2008; Mansourabadi, Karimnia 2013). In the Chinese context, analysts have increasingly implemented the CDA model; the works by Wang Xinlong (2014a, 2014b) and Wu Hongyan and Xu Yan (2008), in particular, have contributed significantly. However, their research focuses on the analysis of news reports, generally in English, and they do not investigate the impact of ideology on narrative texts.

With regard to the influence of Chinese politics on language, research has been conducted from many perspectives in order to reveal the political jargon underlying contemporary Chinese language. In this field, the studies by Hodge and Louie (1998) and Link (2013) deserve a special mention. They have addressed the issue of political control over common language from a cultural perspective, the former investigating categories such as lexicon, grammar, and metaphor, and the latter conducting analysis ranging from literature to visual art. Additionally, the study by Fengyuan Ji (2004) provided a significant contribution in representing the linguistic engineering behind the political shaping of the Chinese language. Nevertheless, the focus of the abovementioned studies lies essentially in the political value intrinsic to the lexico-grammatical structure of contemporary Chinese, and they do not address the issue of politics influencing subjective literary expression.

Han Dong has been investigated mainly for his poetry (Crevel 2005a, 2005b). While his narrative has been studied by Chinese liter-

ary critics (Wang Chunlin 2011; Wang Yong 2011a, 2011b), on the international scene the contribution is still very limited (Hunt 2010), and his fiction still lacks deep investigation. Conversely, Ma Jian's work has been analysed both as one of the main examples of the literature of the diaspora (B. Kong 2012; Damgaard 2012; S. Kong 2014) and as a case study from a translational perspective (Pesaro 2013).

These approaches provided the background for this study, which aims to make a further step towards the analysis of political features of the Chinese language as they are contextualised in the narrative text, subsequently serving as tools to project the authors' ideological stances.

2 Selected Corpus and Methodology

This study was conducted on two major works by Han Dong and Ma Jian, namely Han Dong's *Zha gen* 扎根 ([2003] 2010), translated in English as *Banished!* (2009), and Ma Jian's *Rou zhi tu* 肉之土 (2010), translated in English as *Beijing Coma* ([2008] 2009), focusing in particular on two selected sections. The significance of the corpus lies in its particular contextualisation: *Zha gen* is a novel set in the very politicised era of the Cultural Revolution and describes the life of families banished to the countryside, while *Rou zhi tu* takes place in the new millennium and recounts the 1989 Tian'anmen Square protests. The two novels show very different narratological features and, similarly, a very thorough comparison can be drawn on the linguistic level of their expression.

The inspiration to write *Zha gen* came from Han Dong's childhood experiences in the countryside, and narrates the story of the family of a writer named Tao. During the Cultural Revolution Tao walks the way of the Glorious Banishment, and, together with his family, moves from Nanjing to a country village named Sanyu, located in Jiangsu province. Through a detailed description of everyday life, the novel depicts the efforts of Tao's family to overcome many difficulties, such as harsh living conditions, poverty, and the social gap between the Taos and the local people, in order to forget about their past life in the city and 'strike roots' in the village of Sanyu. The chapter of *Zha gen* object of the study is titled "516" and deals with two cases of imprisonment and detention during the Cultural Revolution: Hou Jimin - Tao's old friend, and Su Qun - Tao's wife. The two characters, both victims of injustice, are taken for interrogation as suspects related to the counterrevolutionary movement named '516'. Although they are later released, their involvement in the case continues to affect their future lives. Given the particular stress on the relationship with the authorities and the issue of coercive power, this chapter contains many features that can be analysed to provide an insight on the influence of ideology in Han Dong's writing.

Ma Jian's *Rou zhi tu* is a memoir of the Tian'anmen incident of 1989 from the point of view of Dai Wei, one of the students involved in the protest. During the massacre of June 4th Dai Wei is shot in the head and falls into a deep coma, in which he stays for ten years. During his vegetative state, Dai Wei puts together the pieces of his memory and recollects those spring days, describing the complicated mechanics behind the organisation of the student protest. The narration is divided into two temporal dimensions: the memories of 1989 and the present, in which – even as a comatose patient – he is able to perceive through hearing and smell. The section which is the subject of this study recounts an episode of vandalism during which three protesters throw ink onto Mao Zedong's portrait hanging over Tian'anmen Square. The confrontation with the political aspect represented by Mao, and with the authorities willing to undertake certain measures to punish the narrated fact, makes this passage particularly suitable for the analysis of the interactions between text and ideology.

The theoretical approach elaborated by Fairclough (1989) known as CDA provides a model to investigate the impact of ideology on the use of language from a social perspective. The scheme is divided into the three categories of 'vocabulary', 'grammar', and 'textual structure'. The first category analysed was vocabulary, subsequently, the study focused on the use of grammar. The third category, textual structure, was not included in the study, as it would require a more comprehensive approach addressing the whole structure of the novels. Fairclough's model distinguishes between three types of values implicit in the formal features of the text, namely: experiential, relational, and expressive. The experiential value is related to the speaker's experience of the world in terms of knowledge and beliefs; the relational value contributes to shaping and defining social relationship; and the expressive value concerns 'subjects', with its scope being to build and express social identities within the text (Fairclough 1989, 112).

3 Analysis

The analysis is divided into the two main categories of vocabulary and grammar. Both of these are further differentiated into the subcategories of 'experiential', 'relational', and 'expressive' values. Clearly, text features are likely to carry several types of values at the same time, and categories are expected to overlap. The resulting classification was outlined according to the most significant values observed in the analysed features of lexicon and grammar. Nevertheless, these are not intended to be absolute, as each of them is loaded with various shades of different meanings.

3.1 Vocabulary

3.1.1 Experiential Values

In Han Dong's narration of the 516 case, the relations of synonymy, antonymy, and similitude established in the texts contribute to shaping the ideological background against which the narration takes place.

The first significant feature to be encountered in the references to the period of the Cultural Revolution is the relation of synonymy between *shijie* 世界 (world)² and *shidai* 時代 (era), established by adding the prepositional phrase *huo shidai* 或時代 (or era) in brackets for the first five occurrences of the word *shijie*. This suggests the understanding of the Cultural Revolution not merely as a period in Chinese history but as a world apart, implicating a totally different system of rules, values, and also language, able to alienate *lai ziyu lingwai yi ge shijie de duzhe* 來自於另一個世界的讀者 (Han 2010, 144), "those [lit. the readers] from another world" (Han 2009, 144).

A second noteworthy cue is coded in the reference to *Mao's Collected Works*. The book is not described as a milestone in the contemporary literary scene, but is regarded as a weapon to combat the guards looking over Hou Jimin instead. In fact, Han Dong uses the exact formulation *youli de wuqi* 有力的武器 (powerful weapon) when describing how Hou's knowledge of Mao's writings ultimately provides him with a tool to stand against power. This weapon is the symbol of *wendou* 文鬥 (fight with words) which the author contrasts with *wudou* 武鬥 (use of violence), creating a relation of antonymy between the first powerful weapon – as the Confucian tradition suggests – and the guards' *xuruo* 虛弱 (weaker) one. The identification of Mao's thought with a *wuqi* 武器 (weapon) was a widely used metaphor during the Cultural Revolution, when, in fact, it was considered as the most powerful weapon of all: "To our troops, the best weapon is not airplanes, nor big cannons, nor tanks, nor atomic bombs; the best weapon is Mao Tse-tung's thought" (*Renmin Ribao*, 1 March 1966, as quoted in Chuang 1967).

Another example of an established relation of antonymy involves the term *fandongpai* 反動派 (reactionary faction), typical of the 'official' language (Link 2013, 249), as opposed to *geming xianlie* 革命先烈 (revolutionary martyrs). The second term of the antonymy is clearly connoted, since the commonly used collocation contributes to positively represent the revolutionaries as they are compared to the counterrevolutionaries. In fact, although Hou's character is not directly depicted as a villain to the reader, Han Dong still refers to him by a synonym for 'reactionaries',

2 Unless otherwise specified, the translations in brackets are by the author of the article. The translations reported between quotation marks are cited from the English editions of the novels, translated by Nicky Harman (Han Dong) and Flora Drew (Ma Jian).

fangeming jituan 反革命集團 (counterrevolutionary group), using its negative connotation to negatively define Hou's good behaviour:

至於侯繼民是否真是反革命？五一六是否真是反革命集團？已無關緊要，小陶也不關心。侯繼民的獄中表現和電影裡的那些革命先烈別無二致。(Han 2010, 146)

Was Hou really a counterrevolutionary? Was the 516 group really counterrevolutionary? It was irrelevant, and young Tao did not care. To him, Hou's behaviour in prison was just like that of the revolutionary martyrs in films. (Han 2009, 147)

In Ma Jian's passage, the most evident feature of lexicon expressing experiential value is related to the representation of Mao Zedong's double identity. The author gives space to both of the contrasting perspectives, depicting the Chairman as a hero on the one hand, and as a criminal on the other hand:

那車上的解放軍全是熱愛毛主席的 (Ma 2010, 383)

The soldiers waiting to march into the city worship Chairman Mao. (Ma 2009, 416)³

毛是一個國家制度問題的全部象徵 (Ma 2010, 384)

He symbolises all that's wrong with our country. (Ma 2009, 417)

Although Ma Jian clearly expresses his personal criticism throughout the novel, the cult of Mao Zedong still represents a deeply rooted belief, which received mention in this section. In fact, the students' concern about the consequences of such an extreme gesture contributes to demonstrate their seriousness and credibility. Closely related to the significance of Mao's figure is the debate on the symbolic meaning of the portrait hanging over Tian'anmen Square. Even the students who clearly refuse to recognise the Chairman as a *taisui* 太歲 "emperor", tend to believe that the portrait is endowed with the same representative value as the national flag, and that it therefore has the power to *xiangzheng guojia* 象徵國家 (symbolise the nation).

Despite the author's open criticism, references to contemporary political discourse are coded in Ma Jian's text. An example can be found in the sentence *zanmen shi juzhe guoqi changzhe guoge zoujin guangchang de* 咱們是舉著國旗唱著國歌走進廣場的 (Ma 2010, 392), "We arrived in this Square

3 The translated version of the novel presents significant differences to the original Chinese text; these were introduced by Flora Drew and Ma Jian in order to create a text capable of delivering the author's meaning to a foreign readership in the most effective way. For a detailed analysis see Pesaro 2013.

waving the national flag and singing the national anthem" (Ma 2009, 426). The collocation *juzhe guoqi* (to hold up the national flag) is a clear reference to the expression '*gaoju... qizhi*' 高舉……旗幟 (to hold up the flag of...): a military metaphor frequently used in contemporary political speeches (Magagnin 2014, 116).

Fairclough states that some words are "ideologically contested", as they express "social struggle" (1989, 114). In Ma Jian's text, this feature is shown in the following sentence, where the author uses the word *Gongchandang* 共產黨 (Communist Party) to describe the students' movement:

我們搞運動的模式主要來自文革經驗，這就很容易把民主運動變成共產黨式的反抗運動。(Ma 2010, 380)

Our only reference point is the Cultural Revolution, so there's always a danger this democracy movement will degenerate into a communist-style rebellion. (Ma 2009, 413)

This choice can be regarded as an attempt to heavily condemn the methods used in the past by the Party and define democracy first and foremost by stating expressively what it is not. Similarly, the reference to the *wenge* 文革 (Cultural Revolution) seems to express strong criticism towards this phase of Chinese history, representing a very detached attitude that only a disenchanted spirit could adopt.

3.1.2 Relational Values

The expression *xiafang* 下放 (literally 'downward transfer', often translated in English as 'banishment') is of vital importance to Han Dong's novel and one of the most effective in providing relational meaning. The word is used to refer to the social group that underwent the transfer to the countryside and contributes to place the described characters in a particular social position. In fact, it implies they are part of a movement aimed at "forcing the intermixture of large social groups and the interfusion of varied cultural levels, as well as the rehabilitation or reinvigoration of the cadre, under the compulsion of Party ideology" (Hsia 1963, V). The ideology intrinsic to this term operates autonomously and provides the characters of the novel, as well as the readers, with a 'given set' of defined social relationships.

When referring to *Mao's Selected Works*, Han Dong chooses a wording that is loaded with relational meaning and suggests Hou Jimin's intellectual superiority to the guards who are detaining him. In fact, when describing the officers' feeling upon realising that the prisoner apparently knows this literature much better than they do, the author writes that they are afraid of being *zhuazhu* 抓住 (caught) by him in misquoting Mao's words. The low

register and the implicit aggressiveness of the colloquial word *zhua* 抓 (to grasp), further enhanced by the resultative *zhu* 住 (firm), suggests an almost infantile attitude that contributes to lower the intellectual level of the interrogators. In contrast, the author uses the *chengyu touliang huanzhu* 偷梁換柱 (to perpetuate a fraud) to describe Hou's success in making the officers believe in the authenticity of his false quotations. The choice of a *chengyu* itself tends to raise the register, and, moreover, its collocation evokes a completely different social scene, hinting at Hou's intellectual superiority. However, Hou is then described as *tai shusheng yiqi le* 太書生意氣了 "too much the noble-hearted scholar". This expression, although it further elevates him intellectually, actually contributes to collocate him in a lower position, as it highlights his inconsistent idealism. At the end of the section, the author reports young Tao's thought about Hou's behaviour while in prison: *Hou Jimin de yu zhong biao xian he dianying li de na xie geming xianlie bie wu er zhi* 候繼民的獄中表現和電影里的那些革命先烈別無二致 (Han 2010, 146), "to him [...] [it] was just like that of the revolutionary martyrs in films" (Han 2009, 147). This similitude contributes to confirm the discrepancy between the common belief and the actual behaviour, establishing a new social relationship between these alleged 'counterrevolutionary' figures and the common people. Nevertheless, when describing young Tao's attitude towards the pieces of writing that Hou has made out of recycled cigarette packs, the author writes that the boy regards these *cucuo* 粗糙 "crude" artefacts as if they were *geming xianlie de yiwu* 革命先烈的遺物 (Han 2010, 148), "relics of revolutionary martyrs" (Han 2009, 149). This collocation clearly implies moral superiority of the martyrs to Hou's creations, which are not legitimised, and, hence, considered less elevated.

In the section of the chapter that describes the detention of Su Qun, a new system of social relations is presented. Su Qun holds the disadvantaged position of a detainee, which is in stark contrast to the position of the powerful people who she has the chance to informally meet in the dining hall. Moreover, the author depicts her relationships with the members of the *gongzuo zu* 工作組 (production team), described as *daqun zaiwo* 大權在握 (wielding the sceptre of power), and with the two female *zhiqing* 知情 (urblings), whose job it is to supervise her. Although they are said to be *qinjin* 親近 (friendly) to Su Qun, they become *yansu* 嚴肅 (severe) when acting in front of the interrogators. The word *zu* 組 (team) itself carries a connotation of "fear and gravity", since the "'organisation department' in a 'work unit' controlled not just your career but your entire fate in life" (Link 2013, 257), and contributes to the creation of a special sense of authority. The author explains the reason for their behaviour, stating that otherwise they *gei ziji zengjia mafan* 給自己增加麻煩 (Han 2010, 152), "would get into trouble" (Han 2009, 153). The use of this euphemism reveals the ideological pressure that refrains him from giving a full explanation, leaving the reader to imagine for himself what the consequences of

such an act would be. On the contrary, Han Dong spares no details when describing Su Qun's decision to take her own life, in order to avoid being killed by the officers. The author lists a variety of ways to commit suicide, showing a completely detached attitude towards the peasants' conduct. In the scene that recounts the evening in which Su Qun was planning to start her reading session in the activities room with the people of the commune, two key figures are described: *Yu duizhang* 余隊長 (team leader Yu) and *Yu shuji* 余書記 (party secretary Yu). The former's authority is subordinated to the latter's, and this social order is reflected in Han Dong's choice of words when describing the two characters. When presenting party secretary Yu's late arrival, the author underlines the fact that *da huo'er shankai le yi tiao dao* 大伙兒閃開了一條道 (Han 2010, 162), "the crowd made way for him" (Han 2009, 163). The informality of the expression emphasises the submission of the peasants and their prostration in front of the secretary, whose main qualities are his *jizhi* 機智 "quick thinking" and *weili* 威力 "physical strength". In contrast, the team leader Yu is only represented in his falling off the bench as the secretary stands up. The narration of the scene is clearly an attempt to ironically depict the relation of power between them, using the description of personal manners as representative of a social rank.

In Ma Jian's novel the web of social relationship is masterly spun through the description of the interactions between the many authorities, both official and non-official, present in the square. The most evident power relationship is embodied in the opposition between the protesters and the government, the latter being represented by the police. The students' point of view is expressed in a predominantly informal way, as they use verbs such as *duifu* 對付 (to cope with) or *du* 堵 (to block up) when referring to their action against the army to prevent the government from *zhua zhu* 抓住 (catching) them. The policemen speak in a similarly low register, as well; for instance, when claiming their authority to manage the vandals' situation:

他大聲說「你們是哪裡的？」
「廣場保衛科，這件事歸我們管。」 (Ma 2010, 384)

"Who are you?" he said loudly.
"We're from the security office," one of them answered. "We should be handling this matter." (Ma 2009, 417)

Another example of a similarly ambiguous, low-register expression is the verb *chuli* 處理 (to deal with). It is used both by the students and the officers in referring to the vandals and in representing the unspecified ways adopted by the government to eliminate inconvenient subversives. These choices of register seem to suggest an equal level of authority shared by

the students and the officers, preventing the reader from being influenced by the verbal exhibition of power. In contrast, the protagonist Dai Wei, who is in charge of security in the square, succeeds in elevating himself through speech when he has the chance to respond to the angry officers:

「你是幹什麼的？」便衣警察冒火了。
「我是廣場糾察副總指揮。這件事要考慮全體學生的安全，你們要再耐心點。」我堵住他倆的氣焰。(Ma 2010, 384)

“What’s your job?” the government agent asked me brusquely.
“I’m the Square’s deputy commander of security. I must ask you to be patient. We can’t afford to do anything that might jeopardise the safety of the students in the Square.” I could tell my authoritative tone had successfully bridled them. (Ma 2009, 418)

In Dai Wei’s formulation, the formality of his speech is a clear mark of the authority he represents, contrasting with the policemen’s hostile attitude.

The second most evident social relationship represented in Ma Jian’s excerpt is the one between the students and the vandals who damage Mao’s portrait. They are repeatedly accused of having *pohuai* 破壞 (harmed) the *zhengtixing* 整體性 “integrity” and *yanmixing* 嚴密性 “good behaviour” of the movement, thus marking the distinction between the civil attitude of the protesters and the insulting behaviour of the three hooligans.

Thirdly, the protesters themselves are divided into a number of different organisations that generate a complicated system of authority. More specifically, Ma Jian refers to seven different groups present in the square: the *Wai gao lian* 外高聯 “Provincial Students’ Federation”, the *Jueshi zhihuibu* 絕食指揮部 “Hunger Strike Headquarters”, the *Gong zi lian* 工自聯 “Beijing Workers’ Federation”, the *Shimin gansidui* 市民敢死隊 “Dare-to-Die Squad”, the *Bei gao lian* 北高聯 “Beijing Student’s Federation”, the *Xi bei lang jiucha dui* 西北狼糾察隊 “Wolves of the North-West”, and the *Baowei Tian’anmen guangchang zhuihuibu* 保衛天安門廣場指揮部 “Defend Tiananmen Square Headquarters”. Some of them are being dissolved, some others have just been established, and the resulting picture is so confused that the authority seems to derive from the individuals rather than from the organised groups. For instance, two of the most powerful characters, Wang Fei and Tang Guoxian, are delineated through the depiction of their opposite behaviours, both represented in the students’ protest. Wang Fei is described as more intellectual, as he sees through the lenses of his *zongse huaxue yanjing* 棕色化學眼鏡, “square, brown-framed glasses”, and more rebellious, as he confesses his desire to *ba lao Mao de shiti cong jiniantang li tuochulai* 把老毛的屍體從紀念堂裏拖出來 (Ma 2010, 382), “go and drag Mao’s body out of the Mausoleum” (Ma 2009, 415). Contrastingly, Tang Guoxian’s arrogant attitude seems to compensate for his lack

of intellect, which brings him to *zhimi buwu* 執迷不悟 (persist in error) in several situations. The resulting anxiety translates into abrupt behaviour and inclination to cooperate with the policemen by handing the vandals to them. It can be argued that this representation of the relationship between the two implicitly refers to the contraposition between *wendou* and *wudou*. Ma Jian seems to blur the distinction between the two concepts by suggesting that even intellectuals can slip into violence, and that different forms of violence can – or cannot – achieve more or less elevated goals.

Finally, a consistent amount of power is delegated to women. In this section of the novel two female characters are represented as embodiments of authority: Jenny, the President of the Hong Kong Student Association, and Bai Ling, the Commander-in-Chief of the newly established “Defend Tiananmen Square Headquarters”. The Hongkongese girl is described in all her avantgardeness, both her clothes and ideas being extremely new for Beijing. In fact, on describing her outfit, the author adds that *Beijing hai mei ren chuan guo* 北京還沒人穿過 (Ma 2010, 380), “it was a style that hadn’t reach Beijing yet” (Ma 2009, 413). Immediately afterwards, she suggests organising a *lianhuan huodong* 聯歡活動 (social event) to resist the military force, thus implicitly suggesting that the methods of the Beijing students are archaic and ineffective. Moreover, the girl’s superior position is further enhanced by the fact that her association has just donated *hao ji wan yuan gangbi* 好幾萬元港幣, “over tens of thousands of Hong Kong dollars”, to the Beijing Students’ Federation. Nevertheless, the most authoritative character in this section of the novel seems to be Bai Ling, whose leadership skills are revealed through her own speech rather than through the author’s description. Due to this, the ideology implicit in Bai Ling’s character is mostly expressed through grammar, and, therefore, it will be analysed in the second part of the study.

3.1.3 Expressive Values

The analysis of the expressive value of words is of primary importance, as it reveals the writer’s evaluation implicit in the text. Moreover, the expressive value can be ideologically significant since it is coded in a classification scheme that can – or cannot – be in contrast with the canonical values embodied in other discourse types.

Han Dong’s choice to use the expressions *shenmi moce* 神秘莫測 “veiled with mystery” and *ling ren wang er sheng wei* 令人望而生畏 “terrifying” to describe the ‘catch phrases’ used by the Chinese Communist Party during the Cultural Revolution provides an immediate insight to the author’s attitude. The fear and confusion commonly felt during that period are also expressed through the adjectives which are used to describe it, such as *qite* 奇特 “weird”, *niuqu* 扭曲 “distorted”, together with the expression

canlan huihuang 燦爛輝煌 (glorious and resplendent). This opposition in meaning reflects Han Dong's mixed feelings surviving from his childhood memories. Similarly, the fear that takes over the young Han Dong during his experience is well represented by little Tao, whose terror is frequently depicted using common verbs such as *haipa* 害怕 (to be afraid) or *xia* 嚇 (to frighten).

Another interesting feature of the text is the expressive value coded in the references to authorities. In this section of the novel, the author refers explicitly to Mao Zedong nine times, using either the expression *Mao zhuxi* 毛主席 (Chairman Mao), *zhuxi* 主席 (the Chairman), or just *Mao* 毛 (Mao). The frequent repetitions of Mao's name and the references to his works, quotations and portraits which the characters *xinshang* 欣賞 "admired" contribute to load it with positive connotations.

苏群跳下板凳，走到小陶身邊，一隻手搭在他的肩膀上，和小陶一起欣賞著牆上的主席畫像。的確，貼的很正，沒有絲毫的歪斜。(Han 2010, 161)

Su Qun jumped down, walked over to young Tao, and put her hand on his shoulder, and they admired the Chairman's portrait. She had done a good job: the picture hung perfectly straight. (Han 2009, 162)

Similarly, the interrogators and the other functionaries are described as *zhongyao renwu* 重要人物 (important people) deserving *you jing you ai* 又敬又愛 (love and respect). It can be argued that such a choice of words contributes to keeping a neutral tone that suggests a silent submission to power. Furthermore, another noteworthy feature of the vocabulary used by Han Dong is the way in which he refers to the villagers. He often highlights their lack of knowledge and education using both neutral expressions like *mei you shou guo jiaoyu* 沒有受過教育 (lacking education), and negatively connoted adjectives like *yumei* 愚昧 (ignorant). This can be regarded as a symptom of the Tao family's - and the author's - attitude towards a lower social stratum that, despite its apparent impartiality, sometimes slips into unconscious judgement.

In Ma Jian's text it is possible to detect a sense of fear as well, which is represented in two ways. The first is the more concrete fear of the army surrounding the square and of the upcoming storm metaphorically associated with Mao's rage:

女同學有的真嚇得亂叫了。 [...]

奇怪的是，一會兒功夫，陰氣真很逼人，氣溫竟然下降到像是進了地窰似的寒冷。我也有點害怕了，平時再大地雷震雨天也不會這麼黑呀。(Ma 2010, 387)

In the distance, I could hear girls screaming in terror. [...]

A sense of menace pervaded the Square. It was cold and dark. Even

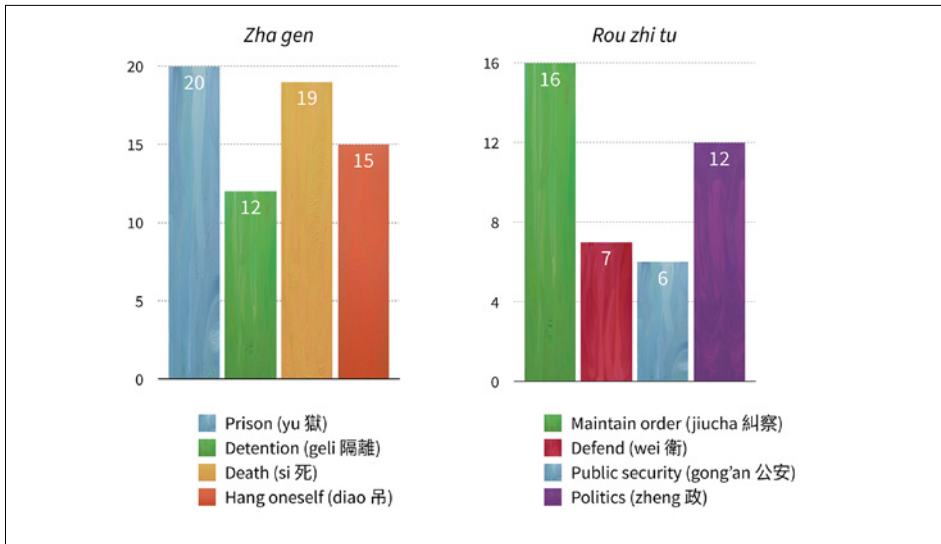
during the biggest thunderstorms, I'd never seen the sky turn so black before. (Ma 2009, 421)

The emotional description reveals the inner feelings of the characters, whose most human side is expressed through simple verbs like *haipa* (to be afraid) or *xia* (to frighten), the same mentioned before in the analysis of Han Dong's character 'little Tao'. The second is the terror of the government, linked to a more ideological dimension: *women neixin kongpa zhege zhengfu* 我們內心恐懼這個政府 (Ma 2010, 392), "That shows how petrified we are of the government" (Ma 2009, 426). The importance of fear and its central role in the author's description is further enhanced by the frequent occurrences of words linked to 'security', as will be shown later in this section.

The analysis of expressive value in Ma Jian's representation of official authorities is mostly confined to the description of Mao Zedong's character, whose name is repeated fifteen times using the three common forms mentioned before: *Mao zhuxi*, *zhuxi*, and *Mao*. Despite the multiple references, Ma Jian's depiction of Chairman Mao is far from positive. He is described as a *bainen lao lian* 白嫩老臉 "pale face" and a *ducaizhe* 獨裁者 "a tyrant", loading his name with negative connotation. The most evident expression of the author's negative evaluation is represented by Wang Fei's exclamation: *qu ni ma de lao Mao, laozi jiu bu niao ni ge jiba* "去你媽的老毛，老子就不尿你個雞巴！" (Ma 2010, 387), translated in English as "Fuck you, Chairman Mao!" (Ma 2009, 421). The offensive tone of the sentence clearly expresses Ma Jian's position, and the choice of such rude words represents a further stress on Wang Fei's rebellious character.

By looking more closely at the occurrences in the text it is possible to identify the main semantic areas whose related words are frequently repeated: "imprisonment" and "death" in *Zha gen* and "security" and "politics" in *Rou zhi tu* (see graphic 1).

Graphic 1. Frequent Occurrences of Words/Lexemes Loaded with Expressive Value in *Zha gen* and *Rou zhi tu*



In the analysed section of *Zha gen*, the noun *yu* 獄 (prison) and its derivatives present the greatest number of occurrences, closely followed by *si* 死 (death), *diao* 吊 (hang oneself), and *geli* 隔離 (detention). The continuous use of such terms clearly loads the text with negative connotation, showing the author's intention to provide as truthful a description of reality as possible and revealing his inner response to the pressure of ideology during the Cultural Revolution at the same time. In contrast, it is not possible to find two equally represented semantic areas in Ma Jian's section of *Rou zhi tu*. The category of "security" includes the verb *jiucha* 糾察 (maintain order), the lexeme *wei* 衛 (defend) and the noun *gong'an* 公安 (public security), while the category of "politics" only includes the noun *zheng* 政 (politics), which presents the second greatest number of occurrences, as shown in the graphic. This might suggest the importance given to security as both cause and effect of the students' fear. The author tries to stress the students' power to resist the stronger force of the government, which is represented as an indistinct ideological and military colossus that they are willing to attack.

The classification scheme resulting from the analysis of Han Dong's excerpt can be built on a rather general taxonomy, including the categories of "good", "bad", and "unknown", as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Han Dong's *Zha gen* Classification Scheme

	Good	Bad	Unknown
Cultural Revolution	•		•
Mao Zedong	•		
Officers	•		•
Villagers		•	

The text shows the author's tendency to positively represent something that is actually mysterious (the Cultural Revolution, the authorities), maintaining a negative evaluation only for the category he represents as inferior according to level of education and knowledge (the villagers). Conversely, the analysis of expressive values in Ma Jian's text reveals a classification scheme that is less spontaneous and more politically connoted (table 2).

Table 2. Ma Jian's *Rou zhi tu* Classification Scheme

	Democratic	Communist
Cultural Revolution		•
Mao Zedong		•
Officers		•
Villagers	•	

The scheme drawn by Ma Jian is built on two labels: 'Democratic' and 'Communist'. The students fighting for democracy are opposed to the other elements representing communism. Although this political conflict hints at a positive and negative judgment, respectively, such evaluation should not be regarded as absolute. In fact, as shown above, the blurred distinction in the ethical dimension seems to prevent the reader from clearly seeing beyond the ideological struggle, focusing the reader's attention on the conflicting factions, instead.

3.2 Grammar

3.2.1 Experiential Values

The analysis of the experiential values of grammar constructions showed a higher rate of processes of action compared to those of attributions and events, which are found less frequently. The clear preponderance of actions could possibly be a consequence of the position of the narrators, who focus on narrating facts instead of giving space to their evaluation of them.

Nevertheless, the representation of a process can sometimes be distorted by the choice of words, which can contribute to making it appear as if it were another type of process. In Han Dong's text, such an example can be found in the passage where the author describes Hou Jimin's imprisonment and the time he spends reading *Mao's Selected Works*. This book, together with *The Little Red Book*, was the only one allowed in prison at the time (Goldman, Cheek, Hamrin 1987, 247), yet Han Dong uses a formulation that represents this fact as an attribution: *zhe shi qiushi li wei yi de duwu* 這是囚室裡唯一的讀物 (Han 2010, 145) "the only reading material he had [lit. in his cell]" (Han 2009, 145). This can be regarded as the expression of a passive acceptance of the given conditions, so that the author does not feel the need to highlight the reason for such a prohibition and focuses on the attributed state instead, obscuring any possible act of judgement.

According to Hodge and Louie (1998), the use of transitivity in the so-called 'actional models' is strongly linked to the type of ideology they serve. More specifically, they argue that a transitive sentence - referred as 'transactive model' - typically serves a P-ideology function, or in other words, its goal is to express 'the power of the powerful'. In contrast, the intransitive 'non-transactive model' is more likely to be used in order to "assure the solidarity of the non-powerful, their identity of interests with the powerful", therefore serving a S-ideology function (Hodge, Louie 1998, 49), and at the same time allowing a convenient vagueness as to who is responsible for the action. The text shows an overall balance in the rate of active and passive sentences; nevertheless, while agency is explicit when the narration is focused on the prisoners and the behaviour of their interrogators, the actions related to their imprisonment are often described through agentless passive verbs. Although this grammatical choice might be due to the common use of verbs like *bu* 捕 (to arrest), *geli* 隔離 (to detain), etc., which are more often to be found in their passive form, leaving the agents of such processes unspoken can be regarded as a way to compensate for the negative connotation naturally associated with these verbs. A further confirmation of the author's refusal to clarify agency can be found in the formulation that explains the content of Hou Jimin's note on his own execution: *shangmian xiezhe, ta shi yuanwang er si* 上面寫著，他是冤枉而死 (Han 2010, 145) "it said he had been wrongfully killed" (Han 2009, 146). This formulation allows the prisoner to avoid explicitly stating by whose hand he was about to die, in what way and even the reason for it.

Ma Jian's text appears to be far more transparent in articulating processes and defining agency. The majority of the processes of action are expressed through active sentences. These types of constructions contribute to clarify not only the process, but also the participants: the 'agent' and the 'patient' (Fairclough 1989, 122). This is generally true for the majority of the processes of action, no matter which side of the protest they are related to. For example, a sentence like *zhe san ge ren pohuai le xuesheng*

yundong de zhengtixing he yanmixing 這三個人破壞了學生運動的整體性和嚴密性 (Ma 2010, 382) “They [lit. these three people] have harmed the integrity and good discipline of our movement” (Ma 2009, 415) is a regular SVO (Subject, Verb, Object) construction, in which the process and the participants are very clearly defined. The preponderance of active positive sentences seems to reflect the author’s desire to report the facts as honestly as possible and to specify the responsibility of the narrated actions.

An exception to this pattern can be found in the words used by the government agent when talking to Dai Wei about how to deal with the three vandals: *na ni mingbai le, zhe jian shi zaowan yao you ge jiaodai* 那你明白了，這件事早晚要有個交待 (Ma 2010, 384) “Well, you understand that this matter needs be sorted out [lit. a resolution], then” (Ma 2009, 418). In this type of sentence, *zhe jian shi* (this matter) is the unanimated agent of an action process whose object is the *jiaodai* (resolution). Such a construction allows the speaker avoid revealing the actual agent (the police) and the action it is about to take. This choice can be seen as a reflection of the author’s intention to further emphasise the obscurity surrounding the measures carried out by the government and the officers when dealing with sensitive matters.

Nevertheless, given the majority of transitive sentences, Ma Jian’s text seems to serve a P-ideology function, as it tends to express the power of both the protesters and the government.

3.2.2 Relational Values

The first step in the investigation of relational values is the analysis of the modes used by the authors. Due to the narrative nature of the texts, the clear preponderance of declarative sentences is hardly surprising, as this is the mode that allows the narrator (or the character) to give information to the addressee, who becomes its receiver. However, by looking more closely at the variety of speeches in the text, significant features can be pointed out.

In Han Dong’s text, it can be noticed that the imperative mode is mostly used in two types of speech: slogans and orders. While slogans are always expressed using the positive imperative, e.g. *xiangxin qunzhong, xiangxin dang* 相信群眾，相信黨 (Han 2010, 153) “trust the party and the masses” (Han 2009, 155) orders coming from the authorities such as the interrogators, the party secretary, or even Mao himself, are more often reported in some other character’s speech and expressed using the negative imperative. In this way, the original imperative becomes reported speech in a declarative sentence, e.g. *Yu shuji bu jiao ni du baozhi* 余書記不叫你讀報紙 (Han 2010, 162) “The party secretary does not want you to read the newspapers” (Han 2009, 164). This can be regarded as a way to mitigate the relations between the participants, as it mitigates the request coming

from the speaker by implicitly suggesting the action to the addressee. It can be additionally argued that this choice aims to differentiate the rules of the Communist Party from the rules of individuals, in order to further define the power relations existing at the time. The degree of authority expressed covertly in an obligation appears, in fact, to be higher than the one implicit in a prohibition.

Another contribution to the definition of a participant's authority in relation to others is provided by modality—specifically relational modality. The abovementioned reported orders are expressed using modal verbs in their negative form, such as *bu yao* 不要 (do not) or *bu jiao* 不叫 (not allowed to). The first formulation allows the authority – and hypothetically also the addressee – to remain implicit, together with the power relations it implies, e.g. *bu yao nüedai fulu* 不要虐待俘虜 (do not mistreat prisoners). Conversely, the second modal verb must carry an explicit speaker, in this case, 'party secretary Yu', and an explicit addressee, 'you': *Yu shuji bu jiao ni du baozhi* 余書記不叫你讀報紙 (Han 2010, 162), "The party secretary doesn't want you to read the newspapers" (Han 2009, 164). The order appears to be more effective when the power relations are better defined, which may account for the author's frequent choice to specify the speaker and the addressee.

In Ma Jian's passage, the imperative mode is used on many occasions, due to the particular context, in which orders are frequently given. However, the use of such mode is particularly significant when clearly linked to authority, as in the case of the orders expressed by Bai Ling (the commander-in-chief of the Defend Tiananmen Square Headquarters) and the policemen. In the officer's sentence *ba ren jiaogei women chuli ba* 把人交給我們處理吧 (Ma 2010, 384), "Hand those guys over to us. We'll deal with them" (Ma 2009, 417), the imperative mode is mitigated by the use of the particle *ba*. This might suggest a lower level of authority, combining the moderate tone with the vagueness about the addressee. On the other hand, Bai Ling's orders are explicitly addressed to a specific target and further enhanced by the use of relational modality. In fact, she frequently expresses her orders using auxiliaries like *yao* 要 (have to), *bu yao* 不要 (do not), and *bie* 別 (do not). The use of these grammatical constructions allows the author to endow this character with a particular power, which makes it easier for the reader to identify Bai Ling as a leader. This is true not only for the cases in which a specified other is receiving the order, but also when the addressee includes the speaker herself, like in the sentence: *women yao yi quanqiu de huaren liliang lai kangyi jiejian* 我們要以全球的華人力量來抗議戒嚴 (Ma 2010, 392) "I want to mobilize every Chinese person around the world to resist martial law [lit. we have to resist martial law with the power of every Chinese person around the world]" (Ma 2009, 427). Moreover, this form of 'inclusive we' (Fairclough 1989, 128) is loaded with relational value as it gives the speaker the authority to speak for the others, while at the same time stressing the unity of a people (the protesters) towards the

common goal of defending the democratic movement. Conversely, the students', the officers' and the vandals' frequent use of the personal pronouns *women* 我們 (we) and *nimen* 你們 (you) is less likely to carry relational value linked to ideology. In fact, its only purpose seems to be to emphasise that the characters belong to different factions present in the square at the same time, without implicitly suggesting authority or solidarity.

3.2.3 Expressive Values

The expressive values are ideologically significant when they are concerned with the claim of authenticity identifiable in the use of modality, or in other words, when the identity of the subject is asserted through the authority of its statements (Fairclough 1989, 128-29). In the case of a narrative text, such a feature may not be as easy to spot as it would be, for instance, in a news report.

In Han Dong's text, the analysis of the characters' direct speech can be an effective way to identify the expressive use of modality. The author seldom lets the interrogators express themselves through direct speech, but when he does, the lack of modal adverbs is a frequent feature. This can be regarded as an attempt to further assert the characters' institutional power by leaving their judgment out of the reach of the reader's criticism. For example, the sentence *ni de shijian yijing bu duo le* 你的時間已經不多了 (Han 2010, 145) "your time is nearly up" (Han 2009, 145) is a clearly authoritative statement, which leaves nothing to either the prisoner's or the reader's imagination. In contrast, the author/narrator's opinion is made more questionable by the abundant use of modal verbs and adverbs. For instance, the use of adverbs such as *huoxu* 或許 (maybe), *wuyi* 無疑 (undoubtedly), or modal verbs like *keneng* 可能 (might) underline the personal point of view of the narrator, affecting the authority of his statements. As a result, the gap in authenticity contributes to increase the authority of power, contrasting with the narrator's and other characters' 'humanity'.

In Ma Jian's excerpt, the degree of certainty revealed through expressive modality is generally high. This can be observed, for example, in the limited use of modal adverbs in the dialogues, which might suggest the author's intention to express the determination in the student's thoughts by increasing the authority in their speeches. Moreover, the use of auxiliaries like *bixu* 必須 (must), *neng* 能 (can), *yao* 要 (shall), etc., further enhances the speakers' authority conveyed through expressive modality. In contrast, verbs like *renwei* 認為 (to believe), *guji* 估計 (to estimate), etc., are found less frequently, as the author does not stress the characters' personal doubts or insecurities. The officers' speech seems to follow this general trend as well; however, it appears to be less relevant for the analysis of the authority implicit in certainty, since it occupies a limited space.

4 Two Voices, One Ideology

This study attempted to analyse the influence of ideology in the writings of Han Dong and Ma Jian by investigating their use of language through the analysis of vocabulary and grammar. It was argued that ideology, here held as “[structure] of signification that constitute[s] social relations in and through power” (Barker, Galasinski 2001, 25), can be detected in the textual structures of narratives, providing insight into the role of social reality in shaping the two novels. The CDA model proved to be an important tool in developing a detailed textual analysis, since it allows for the social meanings of texts to be highlighted as they are coded in the lexico-grammar structures of language.

The first and most striking difference in the authors’ representations is that Han Dong’s language seems to follow the line of the current ideology by retracing beliefs and relations as they were propagated at the time of the Cultural Revolution, whereas Ma Jian is not afraid to desecrate key concepts of Chinese contemporary history. Secondly, quite divergent perceptions of power seem to be revealed through the respective authors’ expression. Han Dong’s way of conveying meaning seems to be the result of a general attitude of submission to power and authority, as he carefully defines the power relations by means of their authority. However, in Han Dong’s scenario, power relations cannot be reduced merely to degree of authority. In fact, the intellectual self of the author is revealed through the emphasis put on literature that – aside from *Mao’s Selected Works* – generally contributes to increase the power in the hands of the prisoners. In other words, this ‘literary dignity’ grants the prisoners a privileged status; despite the strong the power the interrogators wield, they are never described as intellectually superior to the prisoners. Conversely, Ma Jian’s mental scheme appears to be more complicated. In addition to the classification of the authorities present in the square, the author proves to be well aware of the power of the socio-cultural background against which the narration takes place. The influence of Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution is still present, as it affects not only people’s behaviour but also their linguistic expression. Moreover, although Ma Jian does not fully recognise the superiority of the government, its coercive power is well represented as capable to control everything lying under ‘the red flag’.

Nevertheless, the two authors appear to share a common feature: the representation of a sense of fear that contributes to loading their writing with negative connotations. For Han Dong, such a feature seems to increase the sense of blind respect and admiration towards power on the one hand, while being symptomatic of the author’s attitude to escape the social conformation towards a new dimension of the self on the other. For Ma Jian, this fear seems to provoke uncontrolled manifestations of rage, as it appears to represent the main obstacle to the students’ freedom and

the most tangible expression of the government's coercive power. The central role given to the government is another feature that was found in both novels, as it is represented as shaping the lives of Chinese citizens in both of the narrated periods.

Given Han Dong's view of language, stating that language is like a ray of light, a dimension of meaning that allows us to see the world (Han 2003, 87-9), together with his well-known fondness for truth and reality, it can be argued that the primary function of his depiction was to convey a general idea of the atmosphere present at the time; therefore, his language does not show open opposition to power. However, his implementation of an allegedly detached zero degree narration still seems to fail to obscure the author's inner feelings underlying an apparently 'smooth' surface. Contrastingly, although Ma Jian's critical intent does find its overt expression in the author's clearly stated position, it cannot be ignored that his text is somehow subject to the socio-cultural environment in which it was conceived, revealing the marks of the leading ideology that remain implicit in the linguistic formulation.

The identities of the two authors are clearly representative of two diametrically opposed positions: Mainland Chinese literature and exile literature. The authors' subjectivity was shaped through very dissimilar processes, undertaking different cultural paths. Nevertheless, their linguistic representations seem to be strongly bonded to the cultural reality to which the authors belong, no matter how strong the spatial or temporal detachment they claim is. Given a set of cultural linguistic tools, Han Dong and Ma Jian re-interpret these tools and re-use them to shape the power relations represented in their novels. Although the novels *Zha gen* and *Rou zhi tu* show a clear divergence in themes, style and language structures, the authors' use of language is clearly rooted in common ground, soaked with the same ideology against which they take such different positions.

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