

Research on Trends and Hotspots of Mo Yan Literature from the Perspective of Citespace

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Abstract: Since the publication of his first work in 1981, Mo Yan's path of literary creation has gone through more than forty years, and the research on Mo Yan has also been close to forty years and when Mo Yan was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2012, it even set off a frenzy of pursuit in the academic world. In this paper, we take the journals and dissertations in the China Knowledge Network database as the data analysis samples. We use Citespace software to analyze the knowledge mapping of Mo Yan's research hotspots and trends to clarify the research focus in this field. The study results show that the area has not yet formed a group of high-yield authors, and there is the phenomenon of "closed door" in the existing research. From the point of view of the research content, the research on the translation of Mo Yan's novels and the research on contemporary literature will become critical points of research in the future. Still, it is necessary to carry out an in-depth analysis in the process of the future examination by focusing on the specific novels of Mo Yan.

1. Introduction

Mo Yan is the most influential writer in contemporary Chinese literature.^[1] A comprehensive judgment was made from the number of translations of Mo Yan's works abroad, literary influence, and other aspects.^[2] The study of Mo Yan has been broadly divided into four phases: 1985-1990, the exploratory period and the climax; 1990-2000, the period of questioning and criticism; 2000-2010, the period of maturity; 2010-present, the period of development and transition; 2010-present, the period of development and transformation; and the period of transition. The study of Mo Yan is roughly divided into four phases: 1985-1990, the period of exploration and climax; 1990-2000, the period of questioning and criticism; 2000-2010, the period of maturity; and 2010-present, the period of development and transformation.

Citespace has been favoured by many researchers since its inception, and its primary goal is to assist readers in clustering existing literature keywords and displaying the study knowledge association, hotspot, and evolution process of the area using various techniques.^[3]

Mo Yan won the Nobel Prize in Literature, sparking a wave of research on Mo Yan. Searching on Baidu, one can find tens of thousands of web pages related to Mo Yan's works, research papers, and interviews. Huang Ping's "Commentary on the Study of Mo Yan's Novels" discusses the research status of Mo Yan in stages according to the chronological order, divided into the initial period

(1985)^[4], the climax period (1986-1990), and the expansion period (1990-). At the same time, it points out the shortcomings of the research, such as the positioning of Mo Yan's literary history, the repetition of research topics and conclusions, and the loss of vitality. Ma Yanyan and Pei Xiuhong's "[5]A Review of the Study of Mo Yan's Novels" generally follows Chen Jide's discourse, and after repeatedly proposing the study of ugliness and feelings, proposes research on Mo Yan's reference and inheritance, as well as the "folk" stance on Mo Yan's works. Chen Jide believes in his book "Crossing the Sorghum Land - A Review of Mo Yan's Research" that Mo Yan's reputation as a "genius," "strange talent," and "genius" must have some merit. He selected Zhang Weizhong's "On the Influence of Faulkner and Marquez on Mo Yan", Zhang Zhizhong's "On Mo Yan's Literary Style",^[6] Zhang Qinghua's "Inspiration from Ancestral Heritage", Hu Keqing's "On Acheng and Mo Yan's Pursuit of Personality Beauty and Eastern Cultural Tradition" and other papers to discuss Mo Yan's bold artistic exploration, peculiar use of color language, life consciousness, wine god spirit and traditional cultural spirit of Mo Yan's "sorghum land" in his works.

This article categorizes research related to Mo Yan into four main parts: firstly, research on narratology, such as Liu Guangyuan's "Subversion and Transcendence: On Mo Yan's Novel 'Forty One Cannon'", which analyzes in detail the narrative characteristics of "polyphony" and "dialogue" in the novel from a case study. Xu Guobing analyzes the narrative value of Mo Yan's novels from the perspective of Mo Yan's narrative theory, such as irony and poetic narrative; From the perspective of narrative discourse^[7], such as folk and historical narratives, it has been discussed. Secondly, there is a deep exploration from the perspective of the 'folk'. For example, Deng Jinzhou believes in his article "Folk Imagination of History - On the Creation of Mo Yan's New Historical Novels" that the "novelty" of Mo Yan's new historical novels mainly lies in a change from the mainstream form of history, based on folk imagination of history^[8], and thus making history folk. Wang Lei attempts to conduct a comprehensive study of Mo Yan and his literary creations from the perspective of folk writing in his article "Elves Nurtured by the Folk: On Mo Yan's Folk Writing and Its Significance", and analyze the significance of "folk" in Mo Yan's writing. The third is the study of female character images. In her article "The Women's World in Mo Yan's Novels", Wang Meichun starts from the perspective of "human" and provides a modern perspective and reconstruction of various women in Mo Yan's works, focusing on the fate and personality of various women in history, and showcasing the personal struggles and spiritual evolution of women in history and culture. The last one is about the study of language., Such as Wang Aisong's "Miscellaneous Language Writing: New Trends in Mo Yan's Novel Creation" and Cao Nailing's "Rhetorical Characteristics Analysis of Mo Yan's Long Novel" Life and Death Fatigue ". The latter article analyzes the author's attempt to achieve a new way of language expression in the novel through this book. Through the analysis of the novel's idioms, sentence structures, rhetorical devices, etc., it shows its traditional norms, innovative variations, unrestrained writing style, and grand and profound language expression effects, demonstrating the unique language characteristics of this novel.

Mo Yan's works have garnered significant attention in the academic community as a Nobel Prize winner in literature.^[9] However, most of the literature is focused on the results themselves and lacks quantitative research. In this article^[10], the keyword "Mo Yan" is used, and ten years is used as the time slice for searching in the China Knowledge Network (CNN). As of August 20, 2023, a total of 11,070 documents have been explored, yielding 7788 valid data by excluding conference papers.

2. Statistics and Analysis

For the literature, keywords are highly condensed to the article, and by analyzing the keywords, we can gain a preliminary insight into the research hotspot and research scope of the field, among them, keyword clustering, keyword usage frequency, and keyword emergence are three important

dimensions for analyzing keywords.

2.1 Keyword Co-occurrence

As shown in Fig. 1, there are 304 lines and 164 nodes through the keyword co-occurrence, in which the network density is 0.0227. The font size in the figure represents the frequency of keyword usage, the higher the frequency of usage, i.e., the larger the font size. In the past 10 years, the keywords "Mo Yan", "Mo Yan's novels", "literary awards" and "novel writing" were used frequently. The keywords "Mo Yan", "Mo Yan's novel", "Literary Award" and "novel creation" were used most frequently.

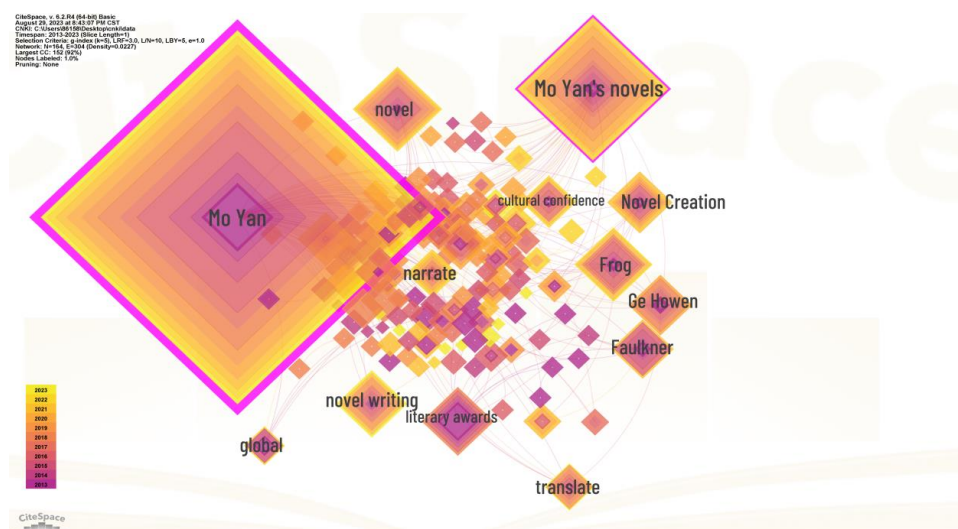


Figure 1: Keywords co-occurrence

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2.2 Keyword Usage Frequency

The centrality of keywords is the main factor in the frequency of use. Keywords with centrality higher than 0.1 are more important. Based on Table 1, it can be seen that in the literature on Mo Yan's literature, the keywords ranked in the top 20 of the keyword usage frequency and with centrality higher than 0.1 are "Mo Yan", "Mo Yan's Novels", which are the two words that fit with the theme to a high degree and are the keywords that constitute Mo Yan's literature. These two words fit the theme to a high degree and constitute the core elements of Mo Yan's literary research. From the year of

appearance, it can be seen that these two keywords appeared centrally in the year after Mo Yan won the Nobel Prize for Literature, which reflects the academic community's following of the hotspot. However, the difference in the number of the two is also enough to prove that the academic community is much more enthusiastic about Mo Yan's own research than the study of his novels.^[12]

Table 1: The centrality of keywords

count	centrality	year	keywords
792	1.47	2013	Mo Yan
124	0.24	2013	Mo Yan's Novels
47	0.01	2013	Novels
35	0.01	2013	Frog
29	0.06	2013	the Nobel Prize for Literature
26	0.02	2013	Ge Haowen
25	0.01	2013	Lu Xun
23	0.07	2013	Novel Creation
22	0.03	2013	Faulkner

2.3 Keyword highlighting

Top 10 Keywords with the Strongest Citation Bursts

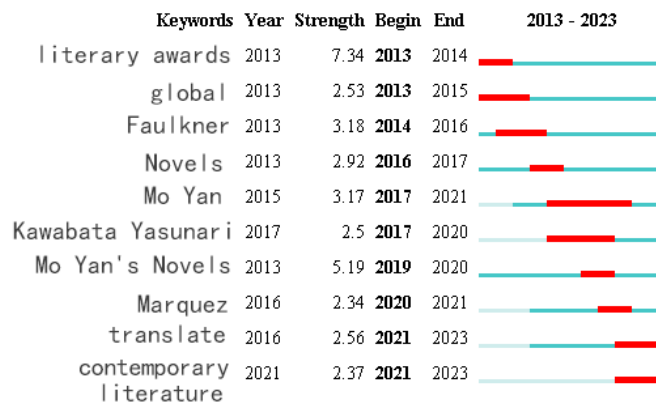


Figure 2: Keyword bursting

Keyword emergence is a visualization of the frequency of the keywords used in a certain period of time, and the research trend and research intensity of the field can be roughly determined by studying these emergent words. In the literature with Mo Yan as the object of study, a total of 10 keywords were used with high frequency (as shown in Figure 2). 2013-2015, "literary prize" and "cosmopolitan" became the focus of research in this field, mainly because in 2012, Mo Yan won the Nobel Prize for Literature, which was the first time that he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in China. Because Mo Yan won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2012, becoming the first Chinese to win the award, and using "cosmopolitan" as the keyword is enough to highlight the influence of Mo Yan's literary works; in 2017-2021, Mo Yan became a hot topic for foreign scholars to study, and Japanese scholars Yasunari Kawabata and Mo Yan were compared with each other. From 2017 to 2021, Mo Yan became a hot topic for foreign scholars, and Japanese scholar Yasunari Kawabata was compared with Mo Yan to explore the connection between the two in his literary works, mainly because Mo Yan was greatly influenced by Yasunari Kawabata at the early stage of his literary

creation, and both of them were fond of the local culture of their respective countries.

From 2021 to the present, research on Mo Yan has gradually shifted to exploring the dissemination of Mo Yan's literature abroad from the perspective of translation in media studies. The main reason why Mo Yan won the Nobel Prize for Literature is that his works have been translated into different languages and disseminated globally. For example, *Red Sorghum* has been translated into Japanese, French, German, and English since its publication, and not only that, the translation of Mo Yan's works in each country is the endeavor of different translators,^[13] such as Prof. Ge Haowen from the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures of the University of Notre Dame, the Swedish translator Anna Chen, and the Japanese version of the book. Main translators: Fujii Shozo and Yoshida Tomio. It can be seen from the many awards Mo Yan's works and himself have won overseas, as well as from the affirmative evaluations of many overseas readers.^[14]

From the point of view of issuing institutions, more research on Mo Yan's literature is still done by colleges and universities, among which the College of Arts and Letters of Shandong Normal University has the largest number, with a total of 24 articles published; followed by the College of Letters and Letters of Jilin University, with a total of 21 articles published; however, the connection between colleges and universities is more dispersed, and the research results are characterized by their own features. From the perspective of authors' cooperative relationship, this field is loosely connected by "geographical" relationship, and mostly dominated by "academic" relationship, which is easy to form the phenomenon of "closed-door work" among each other.

3. Suggestions

This paper takes Mo Yan as the research object, visualizes and analyzes through citespace, and combines specific literature to suggest that future research should focus on the following aspects.

3.1 Deep plowing into the study of literary works

Through keyword clustering, it can be seen that in the past ten years, the proportion of the literature with "Mo Yan" and "Mo Yan's novels" as the keywords in the existing research is relatively large, while the research on his specific works is relatively weak. *Frogs* is one of the most researched works by scholars not only because of its success in portraying a vivid and touching image of a rural gynecologist, but also because it analyzes the humble, awkward, entangled, and contradictory spiritual world of the intellectuals represented by the narrator, Tadpole, in the light of the background of the family-planning era. Mo Yan's writing technique of responding to the background of the times through the mortal world has been consistent throughout his works, and contemporary scholars should analyze and explore the writing characteristics through extensive reading of his works.

3.2 Explore the connection between regional culture and literary works

Mo Yan's works are characterized by strong regional culture, and in 2011, after the Mao Dun Literature Prize, Mo Yan said, "I have the ambition to treat Gaomi Northeast Township as a microcosm of China, and I also hope that my description of my hometown will remind people of the survival and development of human beings."^[15] The first appearance of "Gaomi Northeast Countryside" was in the novel "Autumn Water", and then it appeared in many of his novels, such as: "Red Sorghum", the most important work in Mo Yan's novels,^[16] is a classic work that expresses the resilience of the people of Gaomi in the war of resistance against the Japanese and the spirit of blood and nationhood. The most important work in Mo Yan's novel, *Red Sorghum*, is a classic that shows the tenacity of the Gaomi people in the war of resistance against Japan and is full of blood and national spirit. Around the "red sorghum" cultural IP, Gaomi Northeast Township through the

organization of cultural and creative design competition, cultural and creative merchandise exhibition and marketing activities, has launched the red sorghum series, cultural relics creative series and other characteristics of cultural and creative products, formed a "nine children" brand characteristics of cultural and creative. Contemporary literary works should learn from Mo Yan's literature in the regional culture of writing techniques, the "regional" elements into the works.

3.3 Strengthening regional ties and communication between academics and scholars

From the point of view of research cooperation, research cooperation on Mo Yan is relatively decentralized, and has not formed an effective research group, most of which are currently dominated by secondary schools of literature in colleges and universities, which leads to a lack of all-round understanding of the object of research, and the research of Mo Yan's novels not only need to consider the literary level of the factors need to take into account the multiple factors of society, economy, development and so on. In terms of research content, it needs the intervention of interdisciplinary disciplines such as journalism and communication, tourism, economics, management, etc.; in terms of research methodology, it should efficiently integrate a variety of methods such as comparative research, model analysis, mathematical analysis, etc., and combine them with data visualization and other software to carry out the research. Overall, the research of Mo Yan's literature is definitely not a product of closed-door work of universities, but should be based on the actual development of regional culture, cooperate with different research subjects, and take advantage of their strengths and weaknesses to carry out the research.

4. Conclusions

Mo Yan created a magical 'utopia' in the 'Gaomi Northeast Township'. Gaomi City in Weifang, Shandong Province is what Mo Yan called the "Northeast Township of Gaomi". The Mo Yan Research Association was established in Gaomi City, Shandong Province as early as 2006, with the government as the leader and the city leaders as the chairman. It has an office and dedicated staff. "Mo Yan Research" is a specialized publication that provides first-hand information for Mo Yan's research; At the same time, Mo Yan's former residence has also been renovated in order to "build a cultural platform and promote economic development", leveraging Mo Yan's fame and reputation to drive local tourism and economy. In recent years, Mo Yan's hometown of Gaomi City in Shandong Province has carried out a large amount of industrialization practice and scientific research work. The Cultural Industry Management Committee of Gaomi City, Shandong Province held an academic seminar on building the "Red Sorghum" cultural brand on August 20, 2009. Attendees expressed that Mo Yan's "Red Sorghum Family" is based on the Northeast Township of Gaomi, and was adapted into "Red Sorghum" in the late 1980s, thus establishing the reputation of "the hometown of red sorghum" and spreading it nationwide, becoming an important part of Gaomi culture.^[17]

Next, we need to deeply explore the cultural connotations of 'Red Sorghum', actively develop cultural resources of 'Red Sorghum', take the creation of the 'Red Sorghum' cultural brand as the guide, gather the wisdom and strength of the whole city, and accelerate the pace of cultural construction. The Mo Yan Literature Museum opened in Gaomi on August 23rd this year.^[18] The Mo Yan Literature Museum, located in the courtyard of No. 1 Middle School in Gaomi City, covers an area of 1900 square meters and is divided into several exhibition areas: "Literary Achievements", "Growth Path", "Literary Kingdom", "Hometown Emotions", and "Cultural Exchange". It has a film and television studio, a creative studio, a Mo Yan calligraphy works exhibition room, a Mo Yan works information room, and exhibits some precious manuscripts of Mo Yan, original award certificates, photos from different periods, calligraphy, letters, etc. In 2009, the preparation work for Mo Yan's former residence gradually surfaced.^[19] Mo Yan's old residence in the urban area is still

very new and is now under someone else's name. However, the owner has expressed willingness to donate this house this year as a rich cultural resource for protection. The Mo Yan Research Association is currently working hard to promote this and plans to build it into a Mo Yan Cultural Creation Studio. The old residence in Ping'an Village is more troublesome because it is very dilapidated. Currently, they are discussing a renovation plan with Mo Yan's family and have also begun collecting artifacts that Mo Yan used when he was a child. After the old residence is renovated within this year, they plan to open it to the public mainly for physical display, reproducing Mo Yan's living conditions during his youth. At the same time, Gaomi City in Shandong Province is actively preparing for the Mo Yan Research Materials and History Museum and organizing Mao Opera performances. It achieves the effect of expanding local influence and enhancing local visibility, and produces the comprehensive effect of cultural celebrities through Mo Yan's literary influence. With the development of network technology and multimedia technology, it is possible to widely distribute and share multimedia content. In the meantime, piracy becomes increasingly rampant as the customers can easily duplicate and redistribute the received multimedia content to a large audience.

This article takes Mo Yan's literary creation as the starting point to explore how he understands religion, how he views the relationship between history and literature, as well as the folk customs and national historical memory he expresses in his literary creation. Starting from Mo Yan's understanding of history, this study explores the entanglement between Mo Yan's "literary imagination" and "folk history", and attempts to clarify the "entanglement" between "history" and "literature", as well as the magical space of "aesthetic ideals" and "fantasies" in "literature". This article starts with Mo Yan's religious views and explores his religious thoughts, focusing on his religious beliefs, including natural worship, ancestor worship, and mystical worship. Starting from Mo Yan's literary works, this paper explores the materiality and regionalism of literature, analyzes the folk phenomena in literary works, the historical memory of the country, and the livelihood status in daily life. The research on Mo Yan has already formed a scale and will attract more scholars to enter the field of Mo Yan research in the future.

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