

# On Li Hao's Subversion of Patriarchy in Cultural Construction in *Busy Autumn Days*

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**Abstract:** "Father" is an important role in Li Hao's novels. As an avant-garde writer, he inevitably creates the ugly image of father in his works, subverts and clears up the role of patriarchy, so as to achieve the meaningful rebellion against the past and show the confusion of human nature and life.

**Keywords:** Li Hao; Patriarchy; Subversion

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## 1. The subversion of traditional gender roles

In thousands of years of Chinese farming civilization, the family production mode of "male tilling and female weaving" has led to different social division of labor between men and women, forming a male-centered social pattern. Especially in the rural areas of China, the impact of commodity economy is small and the feudal traditional ideology is deeply rooted, resulting in women becoming subordinate to men for a long time, becoming the role of "others". In China's traditional patriarchal society, the male role is often uncommunicative and resolute. Rousseau argued in *Emile* that men should be educated to develop virtues such as courage, temperance, justice and fortitude. Women play the role of "family angels", considerate wives and mothers who have no right to participate in the decision-making of family affairs. Li Hao's *Busy Autumn* is completely subvert the traditional culture of men and women have become part of the father and mother, father's temper is weak, and his wife to the children not to play the scold, as a father in a patriarchal society should take responsibility to feed their families, but my father seldom do farm work, even refused to raise pigs. Outside is unable to support a home, the occurrence of changes in the home also always rely on five uncle Li Jinfeng to solve. According to the norms of traditional gender roles, men are supposed to be the breadwinner, but the father is lazy, he is tied to the land and can't earn enough money to support his family, even the youngest son can't afford to go to school. To express this identity anxiety, the father often drank alcohol, beat his wife and children. Similarly, uncle derailed others were caught, outsiders scold, wife scold will attract violent beating, this kind of male cowardice in uncle body reflected incisively and vividly. Liu Hutu is the son of Liu Changsheng's legs, to maintain their position as the head of the family. In the article, the mother has few warm words for her children, and even full of vulgar words. She does not show the appearance of "family angel". She called Aunt Liu Tu a rotten, and has a tough attitude towards grandma. But it can maintain the image of his son in front of outsiders, when the responsibility to take care of and protect the child, in the son by the grandmother "persecution" when the courage to come out, burned grandma's beloved bees for his son revenge back, to assume the responsibility of the father.

Li Hao's subversion of gender roles in *Busy Autumn* is also shown by marginalizing the role of father and placing mother and other female characters at the center of the work. Male characters often appear as a passer-by or auxiliary plot in the article, and the description of male characters is almost fleeting. Male characters are mostly introduced to promote the development of the story, such as father beating his mother, uncle cheating on his wife, father beating his second brother in revenge for grandma's lost honey... The description of the main plot revolves around the mother, grandmother, aunt and grandmother, reflecting the helplessness and tragic fate of women and children at the bottom of the traditional patriarchal society.

## 2. The subversion of the traditional social tradition of filial piety

There are no normal fathers in *Busy Autumn*. They think they are in absolute authority and fear their children to challenge their authority just as they once challenged their fathers. Therefore, in order to maintain their male supremacy, they kill the vitality of their children everywhere. My father would beat his two elder brothers and "me" whenever he disagreed. Although my elder brother is always proud and authoritative in front of me and my second brother, my father looks like the egg laid by the black duck in our family. Our black duck eggs, most of them are soft. <sup>[1]</sup> "I" even dreamed of the scene in which both myself and my second brother were stabbed to death by their father. Just as Freud thought in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, the generation and work of dreams are not blind and irrational, but with great purpose and thinking. In my subconscious during the day, my father would beat me and my brothers to death. Under the influence of the father's violence, the three brothers' psychological state are more or less problems, the brothers are also full of violence, the eldest brother beat the second brother and "me", the second brother beat "me", the mother does not love me so much. When uncle stroked with warm big hand "I" the head, this kind of warmth makes "I" was full of good feeling to big uncle, but this kind of good feeling is in uncle off the rails after Liu Tu's wife disappears completely. Uncle turned into a ruthless husband and father, who had no shame after being caught cheating on his wife, hitting her in front of their daughter when she argued with him.

Of course, all of these are written from the perspective of "me". This kind of "non-adult perspective" seems to more truly observe the bad character of "father", or this view itself is a caricature of the father image.<sup>[2]</sup> and the author Li Hao to father figure look more is through the conflict between father and son in general, this paper also appear the situation of the father and son against many times, such as father and son three conflicts, adopted Liu Changsheng and adoptive father Liu Hutu conflict between... In the conflict, the social tradition of filial piety of the father was completely dissolved. The father slapped his sons in the face whenever he disagreed with them, and Liu Hutu broke his son's legs alive. The image of the father in *Busy Autumn* has no mercy any more, only violence and ferocity. Not children respect their parents, the first response is Liu Changsheng, when Liu Hutu when beaten Liu Changsheng this street again, Liu Changsheng anger, because Liu Hutu before playing Liu Changsheng too vicious, plus the village gossip, make Liu Changsheng increasingly feel not of his own, belong to the Liu's father identity also collapsed, There is no clan ethics can bind Liu Changsheng, he is more and more vicious to Liu Hutu up. It also led to the complete disappearance of the father's dignity. The eldest brother, Li Wei, quietly dispelled his father's role in another way. When his mother was beaten by Zhao Shitou with a shovel, Li Wei took on the responsibilities that should have been his father's. He fought back Zhao Shitou to protect his mother. The eldest brother became more and more like my father. They had the same hobbies and both fell in love with driving tractors. The eldest brother starts to grow up and gradually takes the place of the father as the head of the family. This is the thousand-year-old tradition of primogeniture in China, and natural law cannot avoid it. The father will eventually grow old, and the son will eventually grow up

## 3. The double transcendence of form and history

Li Hao regarded himself as the representative of avant-garde literature, and his works inevitably had the characteristics of avant-garde literature. Avant-garde literature is a narrative game in the form of text, which is more flat and more disorganized and broken in structure. In *Busy Autumn*, Li Hao adopts defamiliarizing writing techniques, such as elongating, replacing and mutating, which deviate from the word order of modern Chinese and produce refutation, irony and teasing characteristics, thus distancing his work from readers and creating a sense of alienation. Using language forms to rebel against the old meaning and subvert the dignity and authority of patriarchy. His reform of form also lies in his adoption of the perspective of children's narration. In *Busy Autumn*, he adopts the perspective of "I", a pre-school child. From the perspective of children, the world should be harmonious and pure, but in the description of "I", the home is full of violence and bloodshed. My brother and mother are often beaten by their father, and "I" is always beaten by my brother and father, and ignored by my mother. In this strong contrast, reflects the cruelty of patriarchal society, the torture and oppression of children and women.

Pioneer by western modernism literature ideological trend and the influence of postmodernism, "especially the non-rationalism of life ontology doubt, uncertainty and humanity itself is suitable for the Chinese vanguard writers face belief crisis of cognitive model"<sup>[3]</sup> So the old social and cultural system represented by patriarchy was attacked fiercely by avant-garde writers. The academic circle also generally believes that the consciousness of "father-killing" is concentrated in the works of avant-garde literature, such as Su Tong's "Maple Grove Series" criticizing "father", Yu Hua's Brothers and many other works dispelling and subverting the image of "father"... It is not difficult to find that Li Hao's works are often filled with subversion of paternity. Is the author's subversion of gender roles under patriarchy just to plunge the image of "father" into the abyss? Some scholars think that the consciousness of "father killing" is due to Oedipus complex, which is too one-sided. The "father" in the article does not necessarily represent the father who is related by blood, but represents the typified figure of the political ideology at that time. By the time of new period literature, the role of "father" was regarded as the representative of conformist culture and a mental obstacle that the avant-garde writers had to break down.

## Conclusion

Li Hao in the busy autumn, using language defamiliarization and innovation by way of children's narrative perspective, create one image, the father of brutal violence, sets up the coarse yet courageous mother's image, the gender roles, is ultimately to revolt the patriarchy society, to the laws of the old ethical resistance, resistance to the traditional culture of conformism, Is the spiritual barrier that the avant-garde writers must break down.

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