

## Representation of Violence in Contemporary Chinese Literature: A Case Study of Chi Zijian's Work

**Authors :** Xiaowen Yang

**Abstract :** Violence has been gaining an increasing presence among contemporary Chinese writers, yet scholarship on the representation of violence in contemporary Chinese literature is disappointingly sparse. The violence which took place in the Cultural Revolution attracted the most attention in previous literary work and academic studies. Known as a writer of the quotidian, Chi Zijian is one of China's most prominent and prolific writers. It is noticeable that in her depiction of ordinary people, an overwhelming presence of violence features which embodies one of the on-going characteristics of contemporary Chinese literature. The violence present in her texts are not about graphic and minute depiction of violent acts, but rather about the character's complex interrelation with violence. Is it an obsession with extreme figures and events to create powerful tensions within the texts? Or is it a necessary tool to achieve criticism about social realities? This paper argues that based on her grassroots writing philosophy which is characterized by her long-standing concern about ordinary and even marginal people, it is necessary for her texts to involve characters related to violence. This endows her texts with great potential for reading their social and political implications. This paper also contends that though a shocking effect could make the criticism of social realities more powerful, an over-reliance on the excessive exterior representation of violence inhibits the writer's literary innovation.

**Keywords :** Chi Zijian, contemporary Chinese literature, Violence, grassroots writing philosophy

**Conference Title :** ICHSS 2015 : International Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences

**Conference Location :** Venice, Italy

**Conference Dates :** April 13-14, 2015