

YAN Tonglin

## “Literary Light Cavalry” in the Main Battlefield of Targeted Poverty Alleviation — On Ouyang Qiansen’s Reportage “Poverty Alleviation Trilogy”

**Abstract** The great social changes since China’s reform and opening up have facilitated the revival and development of reportage. Life in the New Era has provided infinitely rich and valuable themes and materials for the creation of reportage. Among them, the theme of targeted poverty reduction and poverty alleviation has become the focus of reportage writing in recent years. The “Poverty Alleviation Trilogy”: *In Leaf and Bloom, Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers* (Huafan Yemao, Qingting Huakai de Shengyin), *The Sunshine of the Blissful Spring* (Baode Sanchunhui), and *A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan* (Kan Wanshan Hongbian), written by famous writer Ouyang Qiansen, is not only a self-evident breakthrough of Guizhou-themed reportage and its status within national literary circles, but is also strong evidence of the reflection on major themes and the spirit of the times through reportage, which, in this sense, is of irreplaceable significance.

**Keywords** reportage, Ouyang Qiansen, “Poverty Alleviation Trilogy,” *In Leaf and Bloom, Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers, The Sunshine of the Blissful Spring, A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan*

---

### Introduction

Reportage is a special literary genre that is categorized as prose. It shares

---

Translated from *Mountain Flowers* 山花 2 (2019): 128–35

---

YAN Tonglin (✉)

School of Literature, Guizhou Normal University, Guiyang 550025, China

E-mail: tonglin618@163.com

certain characteristics of style with those of literature and journalism, and is recognized for its authenticity and objectivity, earning the sobriquet of the “light cavalry.” By its timely, accurate, and objective capturing of complicated information and its uncompromising depiction of real life, reportage has the ability to reflect the true spirit of the times. In this sense, the great social changes after China’s reform and opening up have facilitated the revival and development of reportage, which is proven by the surge in the number of writers in the genre, and the obvious improvement in the quantitative and qualitative composition of reportage with diversified themes. Ding Xiaoyuan says that, since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the life in the New Era and the striving to realize the Chinese Dream have become an infinitely rich resource of great significance for reportage writing, whereby writers are deeply inspired to turn their gaze onto and express their feelings about the era and to pay tribute to it. Ding also says that targeted poverty reduction and poverty alleviation in all respects are more of national actions covering all levels than merely policies, which have become a focus of reportage writing in recent years.<sup>1</sup> Obviously, this is a golden age for reportage composition in the New Era. Literary critic Hong Zicheng argues on the basis of rigorous investigation that there were two peaks of reportage writing in the 1980s, during which reportage attracted a myriad of readers and aroused an enthusiastic response. In his opinion, one reason is that, because of the restrictions on news reports in particular contexts, reportage can sometimes assume certain functions of a news report by “reporting” social news and other phenomena that concern readers in the form of “literature.”<sup>2</sup> This argument seems still in fashion in a broader sense, which partly explains why themes of fighting against poverty and targeted poverty reduction are favored by reportage writers.

Reportage has long been underdeveloped in Guizhou literary circles, and is hence weak at reflecting the life of the era. While Guizhou Province

---

<sup>1</sup> Ding Xiaoyuan, “Baogao Wenxue: Zai Baogao Wenxue Zhong, Women Yujian Xin Shidai,” *Wenyi Bao*, September 9, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Hong Zicheng, *Zhongguo Dangdai Wenxueshi*, 212.

has been known nationwide as the main battlefield for the decisive fight against poverty since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, reportage, the "Literary Light Cavalry," as a useful tool for recording this New Era, correspondingly becomes an important weapon for charging forwards onto this main battlefield. As an already-established literary writer renowned for his novels, poems, and screenplays, Ouyang Qiansen 欧阳黔森 has only recently taken up reportage writing. But unexpectedly, three pieces of reportage by him with the theme of targeted poverty reduction in Guizhou Province were published on the front page in different issues of *People's Literature* in 2018, which is indeed a breakthrough since Guizhou-themed reportage has never occupied the front page of an authoritative literary journal in such a successive way. The three pieces of reportage are *In Leaf and Bloom, Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers* (*Huafan Yemao, Qingting Huakai de Shengyin* 花繁叶茂, 倾听花开的声音) in no. 1 of 2018, *The Sunshine of the Blissful Spring* (*Baode Sanchunhui* 报得三春晖) in no. 3 of 2018, and *A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan* (*Kan Wanshan Hongbian* 看万山红遍) in no. 9 of 2018. This literary phenomenon, no matter whether in the development of Guizhou literature or in the history of *People's Literature*, is of invaluable significance. It is not only a self-evident breakthrough for the status of Guizhou-themed reportage in Chinese literary circles, but also strong evidence of the reflection of major themes and the spirit of the times by current reportage. The above-mentioned three pieces of reportage by Ouyang Qiansen are typical representations and reflections of Xi Jinping Thought on targeted poverty reduction in the New Era. These three works, with similar yet rich themes, grand style, and distinct and eye-catching artistic features, are independent pieces of writing while at the same time intertwined with each other in terms of theme, thus forming a "Poverty Alleviation Trilogy" with the theme of targeted poverty reduction, which is undoubtedly a heavy fruit in the development of Chinese reportage. It also reveals the role that the "Poverty Alleviation Trilogy" plays: Literature and art was, is, and will always be the trumpet call to forging ahead in all eras.<sup>3</sup> And this

---

<sup>3</sup> Li Jingze, "Liang Ge Zhongyao": Wenyi Diwei he Zuoyong de Zai Renshi," *Renmin Ribao*, March 20, 2015.

special “trumpet” will continue to encourage people to move forward in the pursuit of a better life, never resting, never stopping!

---

## **Creative Reflection and Case Presentation of Targeted Poverty Alleviation**

Guizhou, an underdeveloped or backward province in southwest China, is geographically mountainous with little flat land, and, therefore, there is little land per capita. Guizhou has become a symbol of backwardness, poverty, and ignorance in the eyes of the country and so a key target for assistance in poverty alleviation by the CPC Central Committee and the central government of China. In the history of Guizhou literature, the writing of rural Guizhou most typically matches the traditional social form of an agricultural economy, which can be generally perceived from works by generations of Guizhou writers from Jian Xian'ai 蹇先艾 and He Shiguang 何士光 to Ouyang Qiansen. Their writing styles are similar in that, focusing on a rural narrative, they take specific villages as cases to reveal contemporary change, social features, and figures, thus revealing the humanity and fate of characters experiencing the change.

As head of Guizhou Writers Association and Guizhou Federation of Literature and Art Circles, Ouyang Qiansen has not only to listen to his inner literary voice, but must also fulfill the tasks assigned to him by the CPC and the government in terms of his literary production. As a native Guizhou writer from Tongren City, Ouyang Qiansen has made great achievements in rural novel writing. His obsession with the rural narrative is typically illustrated by his portraits of Sangeji Village and Lihua Village in east Guizhou and Panjiang Village in the hinterland of the Wumeng mountainous area. Among these long or short novels themed on special localities, those about how people from various areas in Guizhou fight against poverty and strive to have a prosperous life under the guidance of the CPC and the government are in the majority. As is frequently seen, his writings are interspersed with recountings of his career and experience as a geologist, or use his hometown of east Guizhou as the background of the stories. The Wuling and Wumeng mountainous areas are the two most typical backdrops for his stories, which can be seen in his novellas

containing similar themes, such as *Eight Corn Trees* (*Ba Ke Baogu* 八棵苞谷), *Village Chief Tang Sancao* (*Cunzhang Tang Sancao* 村长唐三草), and the novel *Miracles in Desperate Land* (*Juedi Fengsheng* 绝地逢生). Obviously, no matter whether in his short stories, medium, or full-length novels, or in TV and film scripts, Ouyang Qiansen primarily takes the localities of various ethnic groups as the backdrop. To tell real Chinese stories about how grassroots cadres at all levels and compatriots of all ethnic groups work together to reduce poverty and strive for prosperous lives has evidently and steadily been a distinctive feature of his writing. Therefore the writer himself has become a representative of writing about poverty alleviation in Guizhou literary and art circles.

For example, the story *Eight Corn Trees* takes place in Baiying Village in the hinterland of the Miaoling Mountains, with the focus on the rural life of local singer Long Qimin and his son Sanzai. Twists and turns unfold, especially concerning the marriage of Sanzai, which is intertwined with the local people's desire to shake off the effects of poverty. Core plots generally involve low land occupations per capita, relocation, and arranged marriages (an old custom of low-income families who marry their daughter to another family in order to get a wife or daughter-in-law in exchange). *Tang Sancao, the Village Chief* tells stories about assisting poverty alleviation in villages, rural tourism, industrial adjustment, and ecological protection. *Miracles in a Desperate Land* has been adapted into a TV series of the same name, which is quite a popular program nationwide. It describes the historical process of how Panjiang Village in the hinterland of the Wumeng mountainous area removed its label of poverty in the era of scientific development and industrial adjustment. It is not difficult to figure out that this batch of novels explicitly or implicitly shares themes of survival, development, poverty alleviation, and common prosperity.

The writer sticks to his previous theme and renews his form of art presentation. It is obvious that both *In Leaf and Bloom*, *Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers* and *The Sunshine of the Blissful Spring* depict how new rural areas alleviate poverty and strive for a relatively prosperous life, and *A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan* depicts the rebirth of resource-depleted towns. All of them are consistent and

pioneering in their themes. They are not only documentary portrayals of the poverty alleviation effort in Guizhou, a poor and barren land, but also a literary expression of targeted poverty alleviation themes in the New Era. The reason why the series “Poverty Alleviation Trilogy” can be published on the front page of *People’s Literature* three times in the same year is that they live up to the call and expectation of writing on major themes of the New Era, which is proved in the “Introductory Remarks” of *People’s Literature*. The three pieces of writing are admitted by the column “Records of the New Era,” and the “Introductory Remarks” of the three issues are respectively as follows: Entering 2018, how will cultural confidence be manifested in Chinese literature? In the vision of a better future, and with our actual effort of voluntarily and actively going deep into life and entrenching ourselves in the people by faith and enthusiasm, we will make 2018 a harvest year for literary creation of contemporary themes in the New Era, and this phenomenon will undoubtedly be the cultural logo of the year. In *Leaf and Bloom, Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers* tells stories about poverty alleviation efforts in Huamao Village, an old revolutionary base area in Guizhou Province. This small mountainous village, which is particularly significant to China’s revolution history, is an embodiment of the integration of the revolution gene and green development. In this sense, it is especially guided and concerned by Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, and become a sample of targeted poverty alleviation in the old revolutionary base areas, which has drawn the whole nation’s attention.<sup>4</sup> *The Sunshine of the Blissful Spring* describes the extraordinary years of struggling for survival in the homeland, which also involves a portrait of the decisive stage of fighting against poverty. In the novel, the ordinary people “remain true to the original” and esteem the simple style of being sincere and grateful. What they bring to Bijie City, the beloved homeland, is a new morale, a new atmosphere, and the new atmosphere of the new era.<sup>5</sup> *A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan* was published in the column “Record of the New Era.” Ouyang Qiansen, an experienced member of a geological team,

---

<sup>4</sup> “Juanshou Yu,” *Shanhua*, no. 1, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> “Juanshou Yu,” *Shanhua*, no. 3, 2018.

narrates, with careful exploration and passionate writing, the historical transformation of Wanshan, the famous mercury zone in Tongren City of Guizhou Province, from a typical resource-depleted area to a shining example of green development, wherefrom we can truly feel the wisdom of China's governance and the spirit of the Chinese people in the New Era.<sup>6</sup> The three pieces of reportage are all emphatically introduced at the time of publication, which is not an accidental literary phenomenon, but a result of the collision of thought out of the works and the unique artistic expression of the writer.

Indeed, no matter Huamao Village and Gouba Village in the old revolutionary base areas, or Haique Village in the alpine mountainous area of Hezhang County in Bijie City, they all have undergone incredible changes in the face of historical opportunities in the New Era. In *A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan*, Wanshan District of Tongren City, previously known as the "mercury zone," has also completed a thorough transformation. The three pieces of reportage are all elaborations and extensions of the "poverty alleviation" theme, which depict the real picture of people's pursuit of a better life from different perspectives. In other words, what are portrayed in the "Poverty Alleviation Trilogy" are typical cases of targeted poverty alleviation in the New Era, which could not have been achieved without the guidance of the poverty alleviation thought and the planning of the CPC Central Committee and General Secretary Xi Jinping, and without the hard work and poverty alleviation practices of local cadres at the local level and of the ordinary people. With an advantageously ideological position, rich aesthetic connotation and adept artistic skills, "Poverty Alleviation Trilogy" can be regarded as a masterpiece among literary works on the theme of targeted poverty alleviation.

---

### **From the Flourishing of Flowers and Leaves to the Red Mountains: A Once-in-a-Thousand-Year Change in the New Era**

How the theme of poverty alleviation is revealed and vividly presented in literature and by literary forms is currently the touchstone to test the

---

<sup>6</sup> "Juanshou Yu," *Shanhua*, no. 9, 2018.

conscience and responsibility of writers. Whether writers can consciously go deep into life, entrench themselves in the land under their feet, and gallop on the artistic track of recording the New Era is also a barometer to test whether they can confront and embrace reality. Ouyang Qiansen keenly seizes the advantages of reportage, the “literary light cavalry,” and pushes forward quickly and lightly to illustrate Guizhou’s advance onto the main battlefield of fighting against poverty. Based on his long-term life experiences in villages, factories, mines, and enterprises all over Guizhou, through numerous targeted interviews and his independent thinking and reflection, Ouyang Qiansen finally offers his answers to the New Era. This also proves that only when excellent writers observe with their eyes, feel and experience with their own hearts, and root their aesthetic values in the passion of real life, can they personally adopt important themes of reality and compose excellent works of the people’s literature and art. The creation of major realistic themes should delve into the interior of reality, present the width and breadth of real life, and highlight the vividness and complexity of real life.

As the headline in no. 1 of *People’s Literature* in 2018, *In Leaf and Bloom, Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers* was highlighted in the column “Records of the New Era.” Huamao Village, formerly known as Huangmao Field, had never been out of poverty since it was renamed in the 1950s. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, especially after Xi Jinping’s inspection, the village has experienced a historically thorough change. The diligent work of grassroots cadres, the twists and turns in the implementation of the “three transformations” (environment, kitchen, and toilet transformations) in rural areas, the perfection of production and sales chains of special agricultural products, the booming rural tourism industry, and other recent phenomena in the countryside are all vividly narrated in the interviews of Shuai Bo, the Party Secretary of Fengxiang Town of Bozhou District in Zunyi County, Zhou Chengjun and Pan Kegang, first secretaries of the Party of Huamao Village, as well as proficient poverty alleviation practitioners such as Mu Xiancai and Wang Zhiqiang. The abovementioned new things are also implemented in all respects under the guidance of policy documents promulgated by the Guizhou provincial and municipal governments. From poverty to well-

off and then to prosperity, the countryside has made three great leaps in development. The 18th National Congress of the CPC clearly states that the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects will be completed by 2020. This is a once-in-a-thousand-year change in Chinese society and an important part of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, which undoubtedly is or will be a historical event that countless "Huamao Villages" are going to experience. Huamao Village, located at the foot of Mazongling Mountain in the Dalou Mountain range and adjacent to Gouba Village, a red tourism heritage site, is surrounded by over twenty villages at varying levels of poverty. Focusing on Huamao Village and Gouba Village, the writer illustrates the thorough transformation of old revolutionary base areas, which involves not only the sighs and struggles of people with past experiences, but also the joys, sorrows, and hopes of the people at present. The portrait of the village and the changes in statistical data are all fresh records of the principles, policies, and measures of targeted poverty alleviation. Take Huamao Village as an example, besides water, electricity, telephone, radio and television facilities, as well as cement roads connecting every household and every piece of farmland, the village also provides internet, natural gas, a sewage treatment pipe network, e-commerce, the Internet + Center and logistics distribution points. Needless to say, the above-mentioned facilities and conditions of modern rural life are changing the perception of the poor and backward rural areas, and therefore refreshing the hearts and minds of ordinary people. "Rome wasn't built in a day." All these changes are manifestations of the governance capability of the CPC and the governments at all levels, the consistent power of the people to innovate history, and the simple desire of ordinary people to pursue a better life.

Similar to villages of the old revolutionary base areas in the north of Guizhou, Haique Village, a remote place in Hezhang County of Bijie City, has experienced a more thrilling struggle for poverty alleviation. Early in 1985, the residents of this small village that is composed of Miao and Yi ethnic groups were almost on the brink of death due to hunger. A severe lack of food and clothing and ecological deterioration deprived them of the will to live, which is a true portrayal of the past. In exactly the same year, the CPC and the Central government initiated the establishment of

the poverty alleviation pilot zone in Bijie City. In the following over three decades, Guizhou people witnessed the successive commitments to poverty alleviation by generations of the CPC and the country's leaders as well as the concerted efforts of multi-party cooperation to facilitate the development of poverty-stricken areas under the leadership of the CPC, and the significant feats of the tenacious villagers striving to shake off poverty under the leadership of grassroots leaders such as Wen Chaorong, which are all parts of a vivid plot being played out on the main battlefields of poverty alleviation. Among these, there is the special visit to Hezhang County by Hu Jintao, then newly-inaugurated secretary of the Provincial CPC Committee of Guizhou; the seven guidance and instructions to the Bijie Poverty Alleviation Pilot Zone by Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the CPC; and the donations to the low-income people in Bijie County in the "Shenzhen and Guizhou Hand in Hand to Alleviate Poverty" program conducted by Xi Zhongxun after his retirement. These are all warm and plump historic plots. "Whoever speaks of the heart of an inch of grass, acknowledges the kindness of three springs" (*shui yan cuncaoxin, bao de sanchunhui* 谁言寸草心, 报得三春晖) originally expresses the gratitude of a parting son to his mother, and is currently the most appropriate expression to show the local people's gratitude to the CPC and governments at all levels for their decades of assistance in poverty alleviation.

A slightly different case is Wanshan District of Tongren City, which used to be rich in cinnabar. It became the first special zone after the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and its large-scale mine was admired by the villagers around Tongren City in the east of Guizhou Province. The Wanshan Special Zone, however, went bankrupt due to the depletion of the mercury resources, which became even shamefully worse after it was changed into Wanshan District. Nevertheless, as an old industrial base that has made important contributions to the PRC's industrial base, Wanshan has never been forgotten or abandoned by the country. Unlike Huamao Village and Haique Village, Wanshan District, once a special industrial zone, makes poverty reduction in the New Era a tough task due to its large area of extreme poverty. However, in the transformation toward green development, Wanshan people have made breakthroughs in the primary industry, secondary and tertiary industries,

which can be said to be multidimension-driven and flourishing. The introduction and demonstration of Jiufeng High-Tech Agricultural Expo Park, the creation of the "622" profit-sharing model by Zhonghuashan Village, the rapid implementation of new energy automobile projects, the complete renewal of the one-time town of cinnabar, and the returns on paying an annual salary of one million *yuan* to e-commerce talents . . . . All of which confirms the practical belief of poverty alleviation that the key lies with the people, and the key is ideas. In these three pieces of work, Ouyang Qiansen illustrates, by vivid facts, Guizhou's poverty reduction path and the spirit of firmly following the instructions and forging ahead with gratitude, abundant and convincing data, and ordinary and honest people. *In Leaf and Bloom, Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers* says that I deeply feel the fragrance of the earth and the brilliance of thought emanating from that fragrance.<sup>7</sup> Where does this brilliance of thought come from? The answer lies in targeted poverty reduction, in the steadfast commitment to realizing a common moderately prosperous society with no one left behind by the CPC and Xi Jinping since the 18th National Congress of the CPC. Thanks to this commitment, Huamao Village has found its way to develop rural tourism and special agricultural products, Haique Village has found a new path to ecological development and population control, and Wanshan District has found a gateway to simultaneously developing high-efficiency modern agriculture, new energy vehicles, tourism, e-commerce, and other industries.

"Poverty Alleviation Trilogy" is the embodiment of Ouyang Qiansen's three explorations of Guizhou's reality, which, like three searchlights, illuminates the southwest corner of China. With distinctive themes, the "Poverty Alleviation Trilogy" speaks from solid and sound data and cases with no exaggeration or pretension, which gives voice through vertical and horizontal multi-dimension comparisons. This is not only good news for Guizhou as a key battlefield in poverty alleviation, but also a new green signal in the New Era. The goal of achieving a moderately prosperous society in all respects is set at the beginning of the new era, and Xi Jinping Thought on targeted poverty reduction has become the guiding light for

---

<sup>7</sup> Ouyang Qiansen, *Jiangshang Ruci Duojiao*, 141.

true poverty alleviation and helping the truly poor in the current work of poverty reduction. From village to village, and from town to town, the vast Chinese land has indeed experienced the kind of tremendous change that happens only once in a thousand years.

The “Poverty Alleviation Trilogy” also vividly reveals how to carry out poverty reduction and alleviation works and how to focus on specific critical problems. *In Leaf and Bloom, Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers* writes that the hard work of the CPC has benefitted the people, that we will make every residential house in the north of Guizhou an industrial incubator, that the most important thing in poverty reduction is to stimulate people’s inner power, that ecology should be a “cash cow” and that “nostalgia” will become a “big brand”<sup>8</sup>; *The Sunshine of the Blissful Spring* promotes the idea that ecological protection is of equal importance with poverty alleviation and development, and that we should bear in mind the instructions and forge ahead with gratitude;<sup>9</sup> *A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan* includes the idea that seeing is believing, that only through struggle can we realize the importance of a single pillar and among thousands of mountains there must be a highest peak, that the key lies with the people and the key is ideas, and that changing our ways and freeing our minds is the top priority.<sup>10</sup> These inspiring views and thoughts are from the speeches and instructions of the CPC and the country’s leaders, the feelings and ideas of grassroots cadres, or the summaries and conclusions of ordinary people, which, combined with statistical data from many in-depth interviews by the writer, along with news records and other materials, sound a loud cheer for the New Era!

---

### **Between Form and Skill: New Elements and New Style of “Poverty Alleviation Trilogy”**

As the “Poverty Alleviation Trilogy,” *In Leaf and Bloom, Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers, The Sunshine of the Blissful Spring*, and

---

<sup>8</sup> Ouyang Qiansen, *Huafan Yemao, Qingting Huakai de Shengyin*, 4–11.

<sup>9</sup> Ouyang Qiansen, *Baode Sanchunhui*, 4–12.

<sup>10</sup> Ouyang Qiansen, *Kan Wanshan Hongbian*, 4–31.

*A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan* are enough to constitute a literary phenomenon. Its dynamic combination of ideological and artistic elements is undoubtedly worthy of attention and analysis. Ouyang Qiansen insists on the belief that seeing is believing in his writing and maintains an attitude of paying tribute to literary realism. In terms of the narration in the three pieces of reportage, the writer inserts his own creation experience of TV series and novels or fragments of his long-term life in towns and villages in Guizhou, or adeptly intersperses various recorded happenings and scenes as well as historical and cultural anecdotes and local knowledge, illustrating his authentic and easy writing style. The writer's combination of narration with records, and a portrait of the landscape with emotional expression based on a bulk of interviews, together with his appropriately-inserted appealing comments, contribute to the display of a new style in artistic and aesthetic dimensions.

First, the "Poverty Alleviation Trilogy" vividly illustrates and highlights the theoretical essence and practical characteristic of Xi Jinping Thought on targeted poverty reduction in the New Era. The time span of the trilogy is from the 18th National Congress of the CPC held in 2012 to the present, which is correspondingly extended and expanded for the sake of making comparisons and echoing reality in a timeline. For example, *In Leaf and Bloom, Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers* depicts the village's long-time poverty in the past, including a time extension after the village changed its name in the 1950s; *The Sunshine of the Blissful Spring* starts with the instruction to Hezhang County of Bijie City in 1985 by Xi Zhongxun; *A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan* begins from 2008, which also includes comparison and extension of the timeline. There are multiple connections among the three pieces of reportage, wherein some policy documents and the spirit of relevant speeches by the Central Committee of the CPC and General Secretary Xi Jinping, are frequently cross-referenced in the three pieces of works. For example, there are introductions and explanations for writing the first two pieces of reportage in the beginning paragraphs of *A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan*. In general, the "Poverty Alleviation Trilogy" highlights the pioneering role of Xi Jinping in the governance of China and the practicality of the thought of targeted poverty reduction. Although only

three cases are provided, namely, two villages and one county-level special zone, theoretically speaking, these three cases are reflections of accumulated experience, exploration, and improvement of poverty alleviation work in Guizhou since the reform and opening up, which fully and vividly emphasizes the idea of putting the people's interests first by Xi Jinping since his inauguration. By skillfully integrating the spirit of the New Era and the profile of ordinary people and cadres at all levels into his composition, the writer reveals the combined power of the CPC and the people and the relationship thereof as close as flesh and blood. The brilliance of this idea, like a searchlight, illuminates the subject of the writings, thus giving them their own soul.

Second, the combination of literariness and journalism with the focus on literariness is mainly reflected in the following aspects: The first one is the artful design of the structure. One of Ouyang Qiansen's talents is the writing of various types of novels. For example, he regards short novels as a form of happiness that can be completed while the writer maintains his excitement, thus always giving readers an impression of fullness, excitement, and perfection. He says that short stories should not only be written in one breath, but also be finished reading by readers in one breath.<sup>11</sup> In terms of the structure of reportage, the writer places the internal logical texture of things as the priority and fully utilizes multiple narrative techniques such as artful interspersing and appropriate complements and flashbacks, which gives readers a sense of smoothness and fluency. The benefit of completing short stories in one breath and the expectation of readers to finish reading the novel in one breath are indirectly reflected in the creation of reportage. Among the three pieces of reportage, the longest one has more than 40,000 words, and the shortest 10,000 words, all of which are interspersed with a myriad of political news reports, news records, and statistical data. These writings are actually in no sense boring, but they can benefit readers and make them feel touched after they have finished reading them in one breath. This shows that the writer is adept at smoothly interlinking the rhythm of narration and the selection of materials, and artistically arranging

---

<sup>11</sup> Ouyang Qiansen, *Weidao · Houji*, 179–80.

the narration and materials in his unique and skillful way. Statistics, for example, are relatively boring and monotonous. However, the writer's treatment of statistics is not merely a pile of numbers but an appropriate, accurate, and vivid selection after full consideration. The most important thing is to perceive the true gaps and changes in the comparison of data at different stages. Cases, materials and datas are specific, while the interspersing of the portrayal of scenes and the expression of feelings are abstract. They are intertwined and at the same time can present their charm respectively, which illustrates that the writer is indeed superior in his design of structure and the harmonious combination of different elements. The second is to make the figures vivid and three-dimensional in his writing. When summarizing his successful experience in scriptwriting for TV, Ouyang Qiansen said that his creations around mainstream themes were intended to highlight figures in narration. "Only through vivid character portrayals, can a production win its audience."<sup>12</sup> It is what the "Poverty Alleviation Trilogy" exactly did. Writing local characters well and telling Guizhou stories has always been the strength of Ouyang Qiansen's literary creations, which is also the critical point for him to understand literary creation and portray characters well. There are many methods to write good characters, including the Chinese historical and biographical traditions and notebook novels, as well as the inner logic of the rural world. Vivid depictions of the personalities and stories of real figures in rural Guizhou are prevalent in the "Poverty Alleviation Trilogy." No matter whether a village or a town, and no matter whether cadres at the city, county or township level, grassroots CPC members of the village committee, or local ordinary people working on their lands, these figures are authentic and real, and each has a name. The description of their words and deeds makes the characters come alive. In the portrayal of these characters, the writer inserts their important conversations, or special words and deeds, which highlights the significance of their behavior. For example, from leaders at the central and provincial level to district and township Party cadres and the masses, many characters are depicted in *A New Lease Life: The Story of Wanshan*, forming a moving

---

<sup>12</sup> Shen Shichu, "Ouyang Qiansen: Zhizhuo Yu Qiandi Xiangtu de 'Gezhe,'" 56–57.

gallery of characters. Among them, the characters with more details include cadres at all levels that were interviewed, such as Chen Changxu, Chen Shaorong, Tian Yujun, Zhang Jigang, Wu Zejun, Yang Shangying, Tian Maowen, and Mao Zhaoxin; those who are at one time low-income people, such as Yang Tongbao, Li Laidi, Tang Shaowei, and Yu Xiuying; expert planters who have cast off poverty and become rich, such as Feng Zhongqing, Zhang Xiaojin, and Liu Yongqi; as well as business talents such as Lu Xiaowen, Hua Qian, and the others . . . . The writer sometimes narrates using few words, or uses side descriptions, but almost every time a voice is heard, the owner of that voice appears. The characters in and out of his narrations are reflections of the character groups in the rapidly changing and reforming of the times. The third is to highlight details of life, and turn the details into literary classics. For example, in *A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan*, the writer interviewed Li Laidi, a mercury mine worker. When Wanshan District was hit by a serious snowstorm disaster in 2008, General Secretary Xi Jinping visited Li Laidi's home to learn about her difficulties. Later, significant improvements were made in her housing and living conditions. As an independent and grateful person, she went to Beijing to visit Xi Jinping during the 19th National Congress of the CPC. She said that while in Beijing, even she saw General Secretary Xi Jinping on TV, she felt she was closer to the General Secretary. This story is real and touching and illustrates the gratitude of a mercury mine worker from Wanshan District, and the sincere and simple love and esteem of an ordinary person towards the people's leader.

The third is that the writer attaches importance to the process and focuses on transforming all that he has experienced into vivid stories in his narration and reportage. For example, in a wordy passage in *A New Lease of Life: The Story of Wanshan*, the writer describes the story of Aunt An. By comparing her past sufferings and current life, the writer highlights the contribution of Xi Zhongxun, then secretary of the secretariat of the CPC Central Committee and Liu Zifu, a reporter for Xinhua News Agency, to Haique Village, and reveals the gratitude and hopes of low-income villagers. Taking the latter half of this reportage as another example, it focuses on the poverty reduction policies of administrations at all levels in Wanshan District and the changing of people's minds. When it comes to

the transformation of the primary, secondary, and tertiary industries, the writer respectively inserts plots that introduce the Jiufeng High-Efficiency Modern Agricultural Park and Wanren new-energy vehicles, as well as e-commerce talents with an annual salary of one millions *yuan*. Some of the narrations are detailed, and some are not, but everything that needs to be made clear is presented in a direct manner without any unambiguity. Sometimes at the end of a reportage piece, related stories will be added in context, as a side introduction, or to be thought-provoking for readers. When telling stories, small stories are often inserted within big stories, which are either gripping or soothing. The stories unfold through the changes and ups and downs of society, and the resources of those stories are legendary, typical, and novel. Once artistically cut apart, they are sewn back together into a tightly fit piece.

---

## Conclusion

Targeted poverty reduction is an important part of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. The significant changes and industrial revitalization in rural areas in the New Era could not have been achieved without targeted poverty reduction. The thorough transformation of the countryside, the rebirth of towns, and the prosperity of the people are not just lovely slogans nor empty concepts, but a concrete reality that we can see with our own eyes and touch with our own hands. Miracles are being made from Huamao Village to Haique Village and from rural areas to towns like Wanshan. This is a time for heroes and miracles. Some scholars believe that heroic narration is key to understanding Ouyang Qiansen's works. Du Guojing says that hero complex or heroic passion and loftiness are the value orientation and writing perspective of Ouyang Qiansen's works.<sup>13</sup> This idea is also embodied in the inner temperament and spiritual character in the "Poverty Alleviation Trilogy."

From *In Leaf and Bloom, Listening to the Voices of the Blooming Flowers, The Sunshine of the Blissful Spring, and A New Lease of Life: The Story of*

---

<sup>13</sup> Du Guojing, "Ouyang Qiansen de Yingxiong Xushi ji Qi Dangdai Jiazhi," 117–28.

*Wanshan*, the theme of poverty alleviation remains unchanged but is portrayed in different ways. In this sense, the three pieces of reportage respectively push the theme of targeted poverty reduction to historically new heights. The “Poverty Alleviation Trilogy” by Ouyang Qiansen constitutes three successive peaks of reportage writing, representing the highland of Guizhou literature and the central peak of the current reportage genre.

---

## References

- Ding Xiaoyuan. “Baogao Wenxue: Zai Baogao Wenxue Zhong, Women Yujian Xin Shidai” (Reportage: In reportage, we meet the New Era). *Wenyi Bao* (Journal of literature and art), September 19, 2018.
- Du Guojing. “Ouyang Qiansen de Yingxiong Xushi ji Qi Dangdai Jiazhi” (Heroic narration of Ouyang Qiansen and its significance). *Dangdai Zuoqia Pinglun* (Contemporary writers review) 2 (2016): 117–28.
- Hong Zicheng. *Zhongguo Dangdai Wenxueshi* (A history of contemporary Chinese literature). Revised edition. Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2007.
- “Juanshou Yu” (Introductory remarks). *Shanhua* (Mountain flowers), 1 (2018).
- “Juanshou Yu” (Introductory remarks). *Shanhua* (Mountain flowers), 3 (2018).
- “Juanshou Yu” (Introductory remarks). *Shanhua* (Mountain flowers), 9 (2018).
- Li Jingze. “‘Liang Ge Zhongyao’: Wenyi Diwei he Zuoyong de Zai Renshi” (“Two importances”: Rethinking the position and function of literature and art). *Renmin Ribao* (People’s daily), March 20, 2015.
- Ouyang Qiansen. *Baode Sanchunhui* (The sunshine of the blissful spring). *Renmin Wenxue* (People’s literature) 3 (2018): 4–12.
- . *Huafan Yemao, Qingting Huakai de Shengyin* (In leaf and blooms, listening to the voices of the blooming flowers). *Renmin Wenxue* (People’s literature) 1 (2018): 4–11.
- . *Jiangshan Ruci Duojiao* (Our motherland so rich in beauty). Tianjin: Baihua Wenyi Chubanshe, 2021.
- . *Kan Wanshan Hongbian* (A new lease of life: The story of Wanshan). *Renmin Wenxue* (People’s literature) 9 (2018): 4–31.
- . *Weidao · Houji* (Taste · Postscript). Beijing: Zhongguo Wenlian Chubanshe, 2003.
- Shen Shichu. “Ouyang Qiansen: Zhizhuo yu Qiandi Xiangtu de ‘Gezhe’” (Ouyang Qiansen: A “singer” devoted to rural Guizhou). *Dangdai Guizhou* (Guizhou today) 30 (2011): 56–57.