

Xi Murong returns from her homeland pilgrimage

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Having never set foot in the land of her Mongolian ancestors until well into her adulthood, celebrated author Xi Murong has masterfully captured her yearning for return throughout her literary career, touching generations of readers spanning the Chinese-speaking world.

Presented in Beijing in late May during a signing promotion of her two latest works, *Mongolian Lessons* and *Journey to My Homeland*, Xi shared her writings and experiences with readers present.

Released by The Writers Publishing House, these two prose collections were the crystallization of the author's twenty years of experience in trekking the soils of Inner Mongolia, her ancestral homeland.

Born in Sichuan of ethnic Mongolian ancestry in 1943, Xi grew up in Hong Kong and later settled in Taiwan. Despite never having a chance to see Inner Mongolia until 1989, her deep longing to return to the land of her ancestors marked her early writings, providing her an endless source of inspiration.

Writer Xi Murong. Photo: Guo Yingguang

"Before I went to Inner Mongolia, I was preoccupied with sorrowful nostalgia, but when I finally arrived in 1989, I felt a great release of emotion. All through these past 20 years, I've been searching to find my roots in order to help put my feelings into words," said Xi.

Her simple but melancholic storylines struck a chord among millions of teenagers during the late 1980s. Love, life and homesickness were Xi's strongest reoccurring themes, which later influenced several generations of readers.

"Her works expanded our imagination beyond the confines of student life and prompted us to look at things from a philosophical point of view," said a student from Peking University, waiting for a chance to get Xi's autograph.

Xi published her first collection of poetry in 1981 entitled *Fragrance of Grassland*, which had already become a bestseller in Taiwan before its popularity reached the mainland.

"Source: Global Times"