

Study on Wen Tianxiang's Poetic Thoughts of "Self-singing and Resonance"

Changjie Zhao

College of Liberal Arts, Shanghai University, Shanghai 200444, China

Abstract

As a hero of defending against Yuan Dynasty in the late Song Dynasty, Wen Tianxiang sought spiritual conversion from Du Fu's poems and put forward the poetic view of "Self-singing and resonance" under the tragic opportunity of the end of chaos. He put it into the Re-formation of Du Fu's poems, changed the humble style of collection of poems, and led the way of gathering of poems. In a grand narrative style of family and country, he merged into the literary climax of "the misfortune of the state and the luckiness of the poets", realizing the mutual reference and integration of literature and history.

Keywords

Wen Tianxiang; Du Fu; Self-singing and Resonance; Re-formation of Du Fu's Poems.

1. Introduction

As a famous national hero, Wen Tianxiang's deeds of defending against Yuan Dynasty are very impressive and glorious. However, his literary achievements, common research works such as the history of Chinese literature, the history of literary thought, and the history of literary criticism, are generally not introduced in detail, and are often superficial, not profound, or even absent. If we think about it carefully, it is not that his literary achievements are very poor, but that his great achievements in leading the army to resist the Yuan Dynasty have concealed his light in the field of literature. As the Prime Minister of the late Song Dynasty, Wen Tianxiang witnessed the dark reality that the wane of rivers and mountains and the corruption of the imperial government. He not only took the lead in fighting against the Yuan Dynasty, but also determinedly wrote about the suffering of reality, the voice of the times and the rise of resistance, forming a distinctive poetic concept of "Self-singing and resonance", which was practicable in the Re-formation of Du Fu's poems, realizing the perfect combination of the creative concept and poetic practice. It has become a monument of the patriotic literature camp in the South-Song Dynasty.

2. Background: The Tragic Opportunity of the End of the World

Looking at the situation of the Song Dynasty, the economic construction, cultural undertakings and academic thoughts all showed vigorous vitality, but they were far inferior to the Han and Tang Dynasties in terms of national strength, military affairs and territory. For more than three hundred years in the Song Dynasty, the ethnic issues always revolved around the struggle between the fighting faction and the surrender faction. After the change of Jingkang, the national contradictions became more and more acute, and the country declined. Reflected in the field of literature, it appeared the main tide of patriotic literature represented by Fang Wen's poems and Ji Xuan's songs. When it came to the late Song Dynasty, the mountains and rivers of the South-Song Dynasty were swaying under the trample of Mongolia's iron hooves, just like a lonely boat. Wen Tianxiang won the first place in the year of weak crown, and in the next year's palace examination, he startled the government and the public with "Imperial Examination Strategy". Wen Tianxiang's materialistic philosophy and political ideal of constant reform are

sparkled in this text. With many irrefutable facts, he put the dark and terrible things of civil affairs, official administration, military administration, finance and foreign affairs in Song Dynasty before LiZong's case[1]. He made a bold criticism on many practical problems such as the decadent system and the dark administration of officials. This article marks Wen Tianxiang's brilliant beginning on the road of patriotism and national concern.

Wen Tianxiang was forced to alienate from the government because he denounced Jia Sidao, the favorite Minister of LiZong. Although he failed in the process of fighting against traitor minister, he never stopped worrying about state affairs and looking forward to political reform. In the seventh year of Xianchun (1271), Wen Tianxiang avoided the shadow in the mountains, Xiangyang and Fancheng fell soon. A passion for serving the country is expressed in the surging feelings of poetry, such as "winnowing and listening to the dustpan open mouth, husband strong gas to fight, the end of the night brush sword blue light cold, handshake phase of the cloud." ("Responded to Xie Aishan's Long Sentence on Birthday") [2] the heroic spirit of sweeping the sword into the sky. In the first year of Deyou (1275), Wen Tianxiang was ordered to fight. For Wen Tianxiang, an excellent opportunity to show his ambition came that save the country and the people. However, he was only given the title of Jiangxi investigators. The imperial court did not provide him with the source of soldiers and food. Later, Wen Tianxiang resolutely decided to "contribute family assets to military expenses"[3], the national integrity of giving up small family to take care of overall situation is actually resplendent as the sun and the moon. However, during the fierce war, Sun Huchen, the commander-in-chief of the army, was terrified and fled, which eventually led to the escape of Lu Gang in history.

Du Fu's greatness lies in that he outline the broad social picture of the Tang Dynasty from prosperity to decline with a social conscience. The justice, compassion and critical spirit revealed in Du Fu's poems moved countless readers through the tunnel of time and space. Du Fu's poems can not only record the events of the three dynasties, but also reach the places that can't be found in history. They have a distinct color of the times, a strong political tendency, and are full of the lofty spirit of patriotism and self sacrifice. Therefore, they can walk alone through the ages and shine brilliantly[4]. If Du Fu could still see the hope of empire rejuvenation from Suzong and Daizong, Wen Tianxiang could not see any light at the end of Song Dynasty. For the sake of great Song Dynasty, he resisted stubbornly and looked upon death as if he would return home. Even if he was captured and went north, he refused to accept the persuasion. His "Guide Book" "Guide Book Sequel" and "Yinxiao Collection", with blood, tears and heart, wrote the integrity that subjugation does not obliterate the ambition of serving the country. In the second year of Xiangxing (1279), Zhang Hongfan escorted Wen Tianxiang to the sea. On the way, he passed through Lingding ocean, leaving a touching poem "Crossing Lingding Ocean". "who has no death in life, leave his loyal heart to shine in history", which reflects a kind of solemn and stirring national integrity. Wen Tianxiang, a Confucian of the Song Dynasty, who was influenced by Emperor's benevolence, inherited the realistic tradition of Chinese poetry and wrote a great number of poems, in order to record the times and political devastation in a specific era, which is also a true reflection of his ambition to serve the country.

3. Concept: The Proposal of Poetic Theory of "Self-singing and Resonance"

As for poetry creation, Wen Tianxiang advocates that "poetry is engendered by temperament of the poet". In the preface to luozhubu yie's poems, Volume 9 of his collection, he puts forward that "poetry is the harmony of temperament, and poetry is silent when temperament is not developed; poetry is vocal when temperament is developed." [2] It is obvious that Wen Tianxiang accepted the literary and artistic ideas of Confucian poetics, that is "the poet should be determined by his heart, and his speech should be poetry" and "poetry originates from emotion and ends in etiquette". Wen Tianxiang believes that "since Wei and Jin Dynasties,

Chinese poems have been nearly three hundred and five poems, and the method of poetry began to be refined in the Tang Dynasty. After the late Tang Dynasty, the more coherent the poems are, the more superficial the poems are." ("Preface to Eight Rhymes") [2]. He praised "Book of Songs" and Tang poetry for "harmony of temperament". This kind of poetics idea not only comes from the Chinese poetics tradition of "poetry comes from emotion", but also criticizes the triteness style of Neo Confucianism (Taoism) poetry at that time. Wen Tianxiang advocates that poetry should express real feelings, and opposes empty preaching.

In addition to "moving temperament", Wen Tianxiang also puts forward the theory of "Self-singing and resonance", which has become the core idea of his theory of poetry. In his postscript to Zhou Ruming's Self-singing collection, he said: "I sing my heart, Xing Chu (Zhou Ruming) sing Xing Chu's heart, this is called Self-singing. Although every sound is originated from individual heart, they can resonate." [2] However, this resonance is based on common ideas and emotional experience. In his later years, Wen Tianxiang created Re-formation of Du Fu's poems twice, just as the practice of the poetics view of "Self-singing and resonance". "Self-singing" is to lament the loss of the country and the suffering of parting; "Resonance" is to immerse himself in the spiritual homestead constructed by Du Fu's poems, communicate with Zi Mei, share sorrow with sorrow. "Self-singing and resonance" is a kind of performance of dialogue thinking pattern outstandingly--dialogue with sages, dialogue with the times, dialogue with the poet's heart, sublimate the suffering of reality into art treasures through spiritual understanding.

In the preface to "Re-formation of Du Fu's Poems", Wen Tianxiang said: "I want to express the emotion, Zimei has already said it for me. I appreciate and recite it every day. I think it's my poem and forget it's Zimei's poem. Du Zimei was born hundreds of years earlier than me, but his words are used by me, it lies in the same temperament?" [2] Wen Tianxiang and Du Fu share the same temperament. Confronted of similar political decline, Mr. Wenshan achieves the spiritual interaction with Du Fu through Re-formation of Du Fu's poems. The 200 poems of collection Du Fu and 18 poems of Hu Jia's eighteen Pai are the practical crystallization of the theory of "Self-singing and resonance", and have made great artistic achievements. In a grand mode of family and country narration, he reversed the humble style of Shi Manqing, Hu Guiren and others in the early Song Dynasty, and led the way forward in the creation of Re-formation of Du Fu's poems. "General Catalogue of Sikuquanshu" commented: "Tianxiang paid attention to Du Fu's poems, and his works get rid of the vulgar at that time." [5]

4. Creation: Time Specimen of Respect and Integrate for Du Fu

In fact, Wen Tianxiang's poetics idea of "Self-singing and resonance" is based on the spiritual quality of Du Fu's poems, continuing of Du Fu's thoughts of worrying about the country and the people, inheriting of his epic writing and the expression form of a series of poems. Wen Tianxiang and Du Fu achieved spiritual reconstruction through the new changes in the form of collection of Du Fu's poems, which has left a significant specimen value in the long history of Chinese poetics.

The reason why Du Fu's poems are called "the history of poetry" is that the poet draw historical facts, and they reach unfinished parts in the history, which authentically record the stirring history before and after the AnShi rebellion. As a living fossil of the age, "Sanli" and "Sanbie" have made us resentful, compassionate and sentimental about the loss and damage caused by the war. In addition to the writing method of poetry history, the creation of group poems is also Du Fu's contribution to the poetry world. A large number of group poems are presented in order to record history and reflect on history. One poem is not enough to completely record historical facts or express emotions, such as "Nine Poems Go Ahead to The Great Wall", "Five Poems After Leaving Great Wall", "Three Poems in Qiang Village", etc.

Wen Tianxiang's study of Du Fu's poetry can be described as his profound attainments in both the epic writing and the creation of a group of poems. Through the collection of poems from Du Fu, Wen Tianxiang achieved the perfect combination of poetic arts and creation, presenting a strange aesthetic effect in the history of Du Fu's acceptance, which is quite worthy of being imitated and praised by later generations.

"General Catalogue of Sikuquanshu" commented on the four volumes of Re-formation of Du Fu's poems by Wenxin Gong: "a famous poet, Wenshan's history of poetry, was written by Wen Tianxiang of Song Dynasty. All the 200 poems are composed of five characters and two rhymes, which are collected from Du Fu's poems specially. At the beginning of each chapter, there is the order and catalog, and the title narrates the current events, the causes of the country's decline, the situation of life experience, and the struggles of loyal officials and righteous people. Those who are the detailed facts one by one, which is worthy of being the catalogue of the history of poetry" [5]. 200 Re-formation of Du Fu's poems can be divided into five parts: first, the process of Song Dynasty's decline; second, the struggle against Yuan Dynasty; third, the deeds of comrades in arms; fourth, missing relatives and family; fifth, sighing with emotion. The five parts are arranged according to the time sequence, with one-two as the longitude and three-four-five as the latitude, restoring the most direct, original and vivid historical scene in the late Song Dynasty. Through the title of top 44 poems, we can roughly investigate the original history of Song Dynasty's decline. They are "State" "Li Zong Duzong" "Powerful Officials Lost the Country" "Luzhou General" "Xiangyang" "Jinghu Garrison" "Huangzhou" "Yangluo Castle" "Across the Yangtze River" "Ezhou" "Jiangzhou" "Anqing Residence" "Escape from Lugang" "Jiankang" "Battle in Zhenjiang" "Leaders Abandoning Country" You can see an era clearly by linking these directories.

There are a set of excellent poems in "Re-formation of Du Fu's Poems", such as "Xiangxing" (the 33rd to the 39th), "Jiangxing" (the 85th to the 89th), "Beixing" (the 90th to the 95th), "Lament" (the 192 to the 200th), etc. The poems have the same titles and related contents, expressing the same theme or feelings for independence, which sentimentalized the heavy sense of the times and aroused people's meditation on history.

The third part of "Re-formation of Du Fu's Poems" includes the deeds of comrades in arms. There are 45 people mourning for the officials and generals, who are all important roles on the historical stage of the late South-Song Dynasty just like a set of heroic spectrum against the Yuan Dynasty. In the preface before the poem, Wen Tianxiang combs their names, signs, native places, positions, life stories and personalities. In fact, these prefaces are biographies of the characters, through check the biographies of loyalty and righteousness of "History of the Song Dynasty". Obviously, the poems of biographies of characters in "Re-formation of Du Fu's Poems" is an important development of Du Fu's "Five Generals" and "Eight Laments". The method of combining preface with poem is highlighted in "Re-formation of Du Fu's Poems", which gives impetus to Song Poetry "discussion as poem" and "prose as poem".

After "Re-formation of Du Fu's Poems" created by Wen Tianxiang, the collection of Du Fu's poems in Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties continued to flourish [6], forming a continuous and winding poetic landscape of respecting Du, learning Du and transforming Du, reflecting the poet's times, experiences and mentality, constituting a unique specimen of the times. The light of literature to penetrate history, the afterglow of history to reflect literature, which is broadening the margin of literature and history. It realizes mutual verification, mutual learning and intercommunication between them.

5. Postscript: On "The Misfortune of the State and the Luckiness of the Poets"

Wen Tianxiang inherited the realistic tradition of Du Fu's poetry, casting the end of the world complex, and formed a poetic style of deep indignation, desolation and tragic in a grand way of family and country narrative, which made a brilliant summary of patriotic literature in the South-Song Dynasty. After Wen Tianxiang, Yuan Haowen also inherited the realistic poetics tradition of Du Fu's poetry and became a literary giant in Jin Dynasty. He is good at poetry song and prose, especially poetry is well-known. Witnessing the end of the world, he described the trauma and grief of the society and the people left by the war with deep feelings. "Three Poems of Qiyang" is taking Fengxiang as the breakthrough point, which reflects the invasion by the powerful Mongolian enemies in the Central Plains. "grass beside hundred and two rivers is not horizontal, army dark Qinjing for ten years. Qiyang west no letter, Longshui East heard crying. The wild vines linger in the battle bone, and the setting sun shines on the empty city. From whom to heaven, condemn for Chiyou to be the five soldiers? [7] Ten years of garrison, all the plants are bloody; Fengxiang fell and the city was deserted; Inquiry into the sky, why use the army? These poems are melting and casting the thinking of history and war, which can cast their thoughts on history and war, adding depth and thought-provoking.

Zhao Yi, an outstanding historian and litterateur in the Qing Dynasty, summed up the unbalanced development phenomenon of literature and politics as the paradigm of "the misfortune of the state and the luckiness of the poets" in his notes on poetry [8]. Looking back on a history of Chinese literature, Qu Yuan, Cai Yan, "three CAOS", "seven sons", Yu Xin, Du Fu, Li Yu, Li Qingzhao, Lu You, Xin Qiji, Wen Tianxiang, Wang Yuanliang, Yuan Haowen, Wu Weiye.....In the waning sun of their country, they chanted the sufferings of the times, understood the essence of life, and deliberated prosperity and decline of history, created the monumental article with the feeling of cuckoo crying blood. It enlarges the realistic literary tradition of "inspecting current affairs and venting human feelings", sings the sorrow of "the voice of state defeated", shortens the distance between history and literature, and even blurs the boundary between them, forming a benefit mankind text of mutual infiltration and blending. Such texts often have deep thoughts, deep emotions, natural forms, and great literary power, so they reach the highest attainments of poetry [9].

6. Conclusion

"One hundred years of lonely singing, without a bosom friend" ("Southern Expedition"), is Du Fu's lament about his poor fate. History always exists between innumerable accidents. More than 500 years after Du Fu's death, the South-Song Dynasty is on the verge of extinction. Wen Tianxiang's experience is more tragic than Du Fu's. However, at the end of his life, he seeks spiritual conversion from Du Fu's poems, with different times and the same emotion. He realized the spiritual interaction with Du Fu through Re-formation of Du Fu's poems, then achieved the new change of Du Fu's acceptance, putting forward the poetics concept of "Self-singing and resonance", and constructing the spiritual highland in gathering Du Fu's poems.

References

- [1] Wan Shengnan: Biography of Wen Tianxiang (Henan people's publishing house, China 1985) p.30.
- [2] Wen Tianxiang: Complete Works of Wen Tianxiang (Chinese Bookstore, China 1985) p.23, 226, 227, 245, 397.
- [3] Tuo Tuo: The History of Song Dynasty (Zhonghua Book Company, China 1977) p.12534.
- [4] Xiao Difei: Proofreading and Annotation of Du Fu's Complete Works (People's Literature Publishing House, China 2014) p.preface17.

- [5] Yong Rong: General Catalogue of SikuQuanshu(Zhonghua Book Company,China 1965) p.1407, 1408.
- [6] Zhao Changjie: Research on Gathering Poems of Du Fu by Wen Tianxiang (MS. Southwest University, China 2011)p.19-25.
- [7] Yuan Haowen: Collection of Yuan Haowen(Phoenix Press, China 2020)p.100.
- [8] Zhao Yi: Notes on Oubei Poetry(People's Literature Publishing House, China 2013)p.534.
- [9] Chen Youkang: On "the misfortune of the state and the luckiness of the poets", Journal of Yunnan University for Nationalities(philosophy and social sciences edition), Vol. 21 (2004) No. 3, p.108.