

Tracing the Origin of the Thought of "Advocating Simplicity" in Chinese Poetics

Jianqing Li

School of Literature and Journalism and Communication, Baoji University of Arts and Sciences, Baoji, Shanxi, 721007, P.R.China

ABSTRACT

Thinkers such as Confucius and Zhuangzi used the wisdom of "simplicity" in the process of creatively transforming the ritual and music culture of the Western Zhou Dynasty. Although the two thinkers had different thoughts on "advocating simplicity", they both became the source of "advocating simplicity" thought in the poetics since the Six Dynasties.

KEYWORDS

The thought of "Advocating Simplicity"; The analects of Confucius; Zhuangzi; Creatively transforming; Writing the heart-mind and carving the dragon

1 The Raising of Questions

In the period of Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, the thought of "advocating simplicity" in Chinese poetics has been established, represented by Liu Xie's "Writing the Heart-mind and Carving the Dragon".

Liu Xie's thought of "advocating simplicity" is based on the revelation and testing of sages' writings. He believes that the writings of saints use simple language to express meaning, or rich language to express emotions, or clear reasoning to establish structure, or implicit meaning to express true function. He also puts forward the highly dialectical thought of "advocating simplicity". Various articles have differences between complexity and conciseness, as well as between obscurity and distinctiveness in terms of expression techniques. The different systems and techniques Who used to suppress or assist depend on the timing. The ever-changing nature of writing requires both attention to integrating the experiences of sages in writing and adapting flexibly to change specific situations.

Liu Xie's thought of "advocating simplicity" in "Writing the Heart-mind and Carving the Dragon" includes four aspects of meaning: first is simplicity of meaning, that is, the ideas in the article should be based on Confucian classics, striving to achieve correctness, conciseness, and substance. Of course, Liu Xie is not blindly retro, does not require the article to express Confucian principles, but draws literary nutrition from the Confucian classics. The second is to be concise, that is, the language should still be "brief". Liu Xie put forward that one should avoid using overly peculiar or uncommon characters or fonts, reduce the use of half identical characters, avoid the repetition of the same character and adjust the complexity of the character shape When writing. Third, the genre is simple. He realized that the article system should be fused into the Confucian classics, and studied the style of "One word for meaning, five stones and six spears, written in detail and outline" in historical books (the styles of historical texts that focus on clarity and conciseness). Fourth, simplicity in essence, referring to "clear and simple" of the writer's personality. Starting with the writer's personality and

talking about the style of his works is the general feature of the early literary theory.

Liu Xie's thought of "advocating simplicity" is not a blind pursuit of advocating simplicity, but emphasizes that it is necessary to adjust the way of expression and adopt different strategies according to different times and situations to achieve the best expression effect in writing. The question is, where is the source of the thought of "advocating simplicity" in Chinese poetics?

2 Confucius' Wisdom of "Advocating Simplicity" and the Problem Domain

The concept that Confucius put forward in the *Analects of Confucius* that "Speaking or writing only requires expressing the meaning clearly" is related to Chinese poetics. The so-called "Ci" of Confucius, as described in Qian Daxin's *"Qianyangtang Collected Works,"* Volume 9, "Answer and Question," the "Ci" specifically refers to words. Tu Youxiang said: "This 'da' is the direction 'of the meaning, from here to there in the process of poetic generation', rather than the already state of reaching 'and' achieving '!' Confucius believes that in political and diplomatic activities, the rhetoric of '*Da Zheng*' and '*Zhuan Dui*' should be implicit and stimulate rich new ideas. This kind of aesthetic effect of "inferring future events from known events" is the embodiment of the wisdom of "advocating simplicity".

What is the problem domain of Confucius' "advocating simplicity"? Since the Western Zhou Dynasty, the Duke of Zhou made rites and music, and standardized the rites and music ceremonies. In the Spring and Autumn Period, Confucius carried out a creative transformation of the tradition of rites and music of the Western Zhou Dynasty by adhering to the attitude of "presenting rather than creating", that is, not abandoning the existing rites and music cultural ceremonies, but injecting emotional and other psychological contents.

It is said in the *Analects of Confucius* that Zi Gong wanted to express a preference for feasting the sheep. Confucius responds, "You love the sheep, I love the rites." The so-called "I love the rites" means the rites of maintaining rites and music. This is the maintenance of rites and music culture in the Western Zhou Dynasty.

In the *Analects of Confucius*, it is recorded that Zai Wo asked Confucius, "The three-year mourning period is already quite lengthy. If a gentleman does not adhere to rituals for three years, rituals will surely deteriorate; if he does not enjoy music for three years, music will lose its harmony. The old grain has been depleted, the new grain has ripened, and matches have replaced firestones, signifying ongoing changes." Confucius responded, "You eat rice and wear silk; are you comfortable?" Zai Wo replied, "Yes." Confucius said, "Since you are comfortable, then go ahead and do it. During mourning a gentleman finds no pleasure in fine food, gains no joy from music, and feels no peace in his dwelling, hence he refrains from such activities. Now that you are comfortable, you may proceed." Zai Wo left. Confucius continued, "Zai Wo is not a benevolent person! A child leaves its parents' embrace after three years. The three-year mourning period is observed universally. Does Zai Wo think his love for his parents lasts only three years?" Confucius maintained the ritual of rites and music, creatively transformed it, emphasizing the emotional content of "three years of mourning" in the funeral.

There is a saying in the *Analects of Confucius*: "Rituals, oh rituals! As precious as jade and silk! Music, oh music! As harmonious as bells and drums!" Confucius believed that only emphasized the ritual of rites and music, but ignored the psychological emotion contained in the ritual and music. He also believed that "rites" was not an external "instrument" and "music" was not an external form of "music". It is impossible to understand the essence of rites and music only from the ritual observance.

In the *Analects of Confucius*, it is recorded: "Lin Fang asked about the essence of rituals. Confucius said, 'What a profound question. Rituals should prefer simplicity over extravagance;

mourning rituals should prefer solemnity over ease."

It can be seen that Confucius took the way of grasping simple to control complex, went straight to the two ceremonies of rites and music, and revealed the fundamental location of rites. The external system of rites and music is only a symbol, while the "origin" of rites is hidden in people's inner emotions. Without the induction of people's inner emotions, rites and music will lose the value and significance of regulating people's self-emotions. Just as Mr. Yu Yingshi said, " 'Ren' (Benevolence) is the core of Confucius' thought, and he finally found the inner basis of rites and music here. Rites and music represents the traditional part of Confucius' thought, and benevolence is its innovative part. ...But Confucius used benevolence to re-understand rites and music, and the meaning of rites and music took on a new look, and it was no longer an old thing passed down from generation to generation."

It can be seen that Confucius did not completely abandon the traditional culture, and injected new thoughts and wisdom into the traditional culture of rites and music, thus completing the creative transformation of the rites and music culture of Western Zhou Dynasty.

It was precisely through the wisdom of "advocating simplicity", that is, selecting the rites that could be reconstructed and injecting new emotional content in the various rites and music ceremonies, Confucius completed the creative transformation of the external rites and music rules and regulations and presenting them in a fresh new light.

3 Zhuangzi's "Advocating Simplicity" wisdom and anti-intellectualism philosophy

Chuang Tzu's "Advocating Simplicity" wisdom is different from Confucius's "Advocating Simplicity" wisdom. One is once the meaning is understood, there is no need to remember the words. The other is he only narrates and clarifies the theories of predecessors, without creating one's own.

There is a saying in Chuang Tzu: "Huan Gong was reading in the hall, and Lun Bian was chopping round under the hall. he put down the vertebrae and chisels and asked Huan Gong: 'what does the book you read say?' Huan Gong said: 'The sage's words.' 'Does the sage live?' He asked. 'Dead. He said: 'then what you read are the dregs of the saint.' Huan Gong said: 'Should the book I reads can be discussed? If you say it, you may live, if you do not, you have to die.' Lun Bian said: 'I also judge them by what I do. Chopping the wheel, slow is willing but not solid, quick is bitter not to go in, not slow or not quick, get it in the hand and should be in the heart. My mouth can not speak, there are a few things stored in it. I can not transmit my son, and my son also can not accept my advice, so I am seventy years old and still chopping the wheel. The thoughts of the ancient people can not be transmitted, and they are dead. So what you read are the dregs of the saint.' "

It is said In the "Autumn Water Chapter": "Those who can speak are coarse in substance, those who can convey meaning are fine in substance. Those who cannot speak or convey meaning are not fine in substance. It is said in "External Objects" that the fish trap is used to fish and the fish trap is forgotten after catching the fish; Rabbit nets are used to catch rabbits, and the rabbit nets are forgotten when catching the rabbits; Words are used to convey thoughts, and the words are forgotten when grasping the meaning.

It can be seen that Zhuangzi reveals the limited function of the written characters from the above materials. The written characters are one of the criteria for human civilization. The written characters have the function of recording the wisdom of our dead ancestors, and They are a bridge to communicate the wisdom of the ancients. Mr. Zhang Guangzhi said, "The power of writing comes from its connection with knowledge; Knowledge comes from the ancestors, and the living need to communicate with them through the written characters." With his wisdom, Zhuangzi examined human civilization and criticized language and the written characters as "the dross of the ancients",

and the written characters records could not fully reproduce the rich meaning in the context of "past tense". Zhuang Zi criticized language and the written characters, believed that language is a tool to convey ideas. "Words are used to convey thoughts ", but rich thoughts can not be fully conveyed by words, and the attitude towards words should be forgotten. Taking this as an opportunity, he reflected on the negative effects of civilization and clearly saw the sufferings and disasters brought about by the rich civilization and material wealth which promoted social progress.

Zhuangzi believed that not only tangible words should be abandoned, but also all artificial concepts such as right and wrong, good and evil, size, beauty and ugliness should be abandoned. There is a saying on Qi Wu in Zhuangzi: "When right and wrong are evident, Tao is also deficient. The reason why Tao is deficient is also why love is achieved. Is it successful or deficient? Isn't it successful or deficient? Success and loss, so the Zhao family play the drums; Without success or loss, the Zhao family does not play the drums." There is nothing greater than the end of autumn glory in the world, and the mountains are small; There is nothing older than Shangzi,, while Gu Zu was born in .death. Heaven and earth are born with me, and all things are one with me. Now that they are one, can they speak?" Zhuangzi thought that humans should break the concept of anthropocentrism and break the boundary between life and death, so as to examine the relationship between humans and nature and understand the life interest of the universe.

Zhuangzi criticized the two prominent schools of Confucianism and Mohism at that time. It is said in Zhuangzi's "Fisherman": "Those who are polite are the actions of the world Those who are true are therefore subject to the heavens, and naturally cannot be easily changed. Therefore sages value the truth and are not bound by the customs. Foolish people cannot follow the laws of heaven and sympathize with people. They do not know the value of truth, and their salaries are changed to the customs, so they are insufficient. It is said in Zhuangzi's "Autumn Water": "the North Sea says: Well frogs cannot speak to the sea, they are confined to the void. Summer worms cannot speak to the ice, they are bound to the times, and Qu scholars cannot speak to the Tao, they are bound to the teachings." Zhuangzi criticized Confucianism, Mohism, and others for evaluating things based on human standards of right and wrong. and cannot appreciate them In the vast and infinite aesthetic realm. Zhuangzi even wanted to forget his own body and intelligent mind. It is said in Zhuangzi's "The Grandmaster": "Falling off limbs, discarding wisdom, and departing from form to know are the same as the Great Learning, which is called sitting and forgetting. Zhuangzi believes that only by reaching the realm of "emptiness and stillness" and "sitting and forgetting", can we achieve the carefree state of "no waiting" for gods. best humans. and saints, and realize the rhythm of life in the universe. That is, "all things are one with me. As American psychologist E. Fromm said, "In highly meditative behavior, the state of harmony between heaven and man is achieved.

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