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ВЛИЯНИЕ С. Т. КОЛЬРИДЖА И Т. С. ЭЛИОТА НА КИТАЙСКИХ ПОЭТОВ

CHINESE POETS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF S. T. COLERIDGE AND T. S. ELIOT

В статье анализируется влияние теорий литературного творчества С. Т. Кольриджа и Т. С. Элиота и их методов создания поэзии на китайских поэтов XX века. В первой половине прошлого столетия с углублением китайской колонизации увеличивалось влияние иностранной культуры. Стали доступны в том числе литературные произведения поэта-романтика Т. С. Кольриджа и поэта-модерниста С. Т. Элиота. Ай Цин и Бянь Жилин, представители китайского модернизма, подверглись их значительному воздействию. В данной статье ставится задача проанализировать некоторые произведения Ай Цин и Бянь Жилиня, испытавшие влияние теоретических концепций и поэтических приемов С. Т. Кольриджа и Т. С. Элиота.

К л ю ч е в ы е с л о в а : романтизм; модернизм; китайская поэзия; Ай Цин; Бянь Жилин; постколониальная литература.

This article analyzes the profound influence of S. T. Coleridge's and T. S. Eliot's literary creation theories and poetry creation techniques on the Chinese poets in the 20th century. In the first half of the 20th century, with the deepening of Chinese colonization, the influence of foreign culture continued to deepen, and various cultural thoughts continued to flow in, including the literary works of the Romantic poet T. S. Coleridge and Modernist poet S. T. Eliot. Ai Qing and Bian Zhilin, the representatives of Chinese modernism, were deeply influenced by them. This article aims to analyze the specific works of Ai Qing and Bian Zhilin, influenced by theoretical concepts and poetic techniques of T. S. Coleridge and S. T. Eliot.

Key words: Romanticism; Modernism; Chinese poetry; Ai Qing; Bian Zhilin; Post-colonial Literature.

China, before the Xinhai Revolution (1912) was a poor and weak semi-colonial and semi-feudal country. Traditional ancient concepts in literature continued to decline, followed by new trends and new cultures. At that time, many emerging poets and writers drew nourishment from the Western European literature and produced excellent works. The modernist Chinese poets Ai Qing (1910–1996), Bian Zhilin (1910–2000), the modern western poetry translator Mu Dan (1918–1977) and a group of the “Nine Leaf” poetry school poets (Xin Di, Chen Jingrong, Hang Yohe, Zheng Min, Tang Qi, Tang Di, Yuan Kejia, Mu Dan, and Du Yunxie) were all deeply influenced by T. S. Eliot (1888–1965). They evolved also into the romantic literary trend (theory of Imagination by

S. T. Coleridge (1772–1934)) and stimulated the growth and development of the modernist literary movement in China. So, the theory of Imagination by S. T. Coleridge and the theory of Objective Correlative and Depersonalization by T. S. Eliot have not only expanded to the European continent, but also affected other countries and regions in the world.

During the 1900–1930s, the popularity of Coleridge in Chinese academia was undergoing a process of changing the perception of him as a *rebellious poet* and an untimely *dreamer* to an artistic and spiritual *core figure*. The changes in the construction and acceptance of Coleridge’s Symbol are not only related to the time of new social and political “factors, but to the new literary trend with specific imagery and creative process, led and promoted by the main writers in the literary field. At the same time, it reflects the modern Chinese writers’ literary function” [1, p. 52]. In the 1930s, the Anglo-American modernist poetry represented by T. S. Eliot, like a larger magnet, attracted the attention of a group of modern Chinese poets. T. S. Eliot’s name was introduced to China already in the 1920s, but it was truly accepted and recognized in Chinese poetry in the 1930s [2, p.19]. It can be said that the spread of S. T. Coleridge’s and T. S. Eliot’s literary thoughts in China was almost simultaneous. In this long process, along with the widespread popularity of Romanticism and Modernism in China, Ai Qing and Bian Zhilin came into contact with the European poets’ literary ideas and applied them to their own literary practice, especially in the creation of symbolic images. *Symbol* is often presented as an external form of subjective consciousness, articulating the hidden emotions and thoughts that are the main purpose of the symbol, “which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts, and emotions of the poet’s own mind” [3].

Ai Qing often uses a large number of symbol groups in his own poetry. Through the combination, arrangement and unification of a series of symbols, coupled with the poet’s own imagination, he formed his own unique literary style. In *Snow Falling on the Land of China* he wrote: *Snow falling on the land of China / The cold is blocking China / Wind / Like an old woman who is too sad / Following tightly / Stretching out cold fingers / Pulling on the clothes of pedestrians / In words that are as old as the land / Doing it all the time / The one who appeared from the forest / Driven the carriage / Your Chinese farmer / Wearing a fur hat / Breaking heavy snow* [4, p. 157]. Poetry is composed of symbols, which embody the inner emotions and outer life of the poet. The poet integrates a series of independent symbols: *snow*, *land*, *old women*, *pedestrians*, and *farmers* into an observable and sensible reality through imagination. The symbol of land is commonly used by Ai Qing, which runs through his entire poetry. He endowed the word *land* with a very profound symbolic meaning: first, the land symbolizes the troubled China. At that time, the war in China continued, people were displaced, and this land was being destroyed. The land symbolizes hope, everything is born and raised from the land; life will lose its resource and support without the land. Fundamentally, it will be destroyed. The land symbolizes a kind of religious love and attachment. Based on an ancient, deep and extensive cultural foundation, civilization will accommodate,

renew and establish a new order, which brings light and hope for this world. "The Land is a fertile soil for the reproduction of life, a symbol of the regeneration of life" [5, p. 81]. Therefore, a simple *land* symbol carries three meanings at the same time, which is evident in the superb application of its symbolism.

Another commonly used basic symbol of Ai Qing's is *the sun*. In the poem *The Sun* he wrote: *...from the ancient tomb / from the dark age / from the side of human death / shocked and sleeping mountains / as the fire wheel whirls on the sand dunes / The sun rolls towards me / It uses an unconcealable light / It breathes life / The high trees dance to it / The river rushes towards it with wild songs* [6, p.132]. Here, the sun clearly possesses human thoughts and emotions. On the one hand, the poet has given the characteristics of the sun as active power. The sun comes to shock everything and awaken everything. At the same time, everything is singing with the sun. The unmoving things possess people. Their thoughts, feelings, actions and emotions are obviously the result of imagination experience, according to the romantic creative method. At the same time, the sun has a very rich symbolic meaning (as in Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*). First, the sun symbolizes light and hope. In the endless pain and darkness, people are seeking breakthroughs, hoping to bring life and peace to the land of China; second, the sun symbolizes youth and vitality, which means that a new generation will welcome this era with a newer attitude and create a brighter future; third, the sun has become the common subject of belief of the whole world and all mankind. Based on the suffering of the entire human race and the darkness of the world, a religious sentiment and belief were introduced to make people believe that the light will come and everything will pass. The meaning of the sun as symbol has deepened from a single to the universal meaning of human existence. Xu Yuan clearly stated that "a group of sun images symbolically expresses the poet's desire for the ideal of light and the philosophical understanding of life and death, which is transferred by time and people to our literature" [7, p. 107]. Through this typical expression, we can see the profound connection between the subject (person) and the object (the sun) in Ai Qing's poems, as well as the deep emotional experience and inner feeling of many sun symbols. It can be seen that this poem adopts the concepts of both Romanticism and Symbolism, but the result is a profound and typical Modernism. It can be said that this example of Symbol is connected with S. T. Coleridge's Imagination theory. The romantic creative techniques of Symbol and T. S. Eliot's Depersonalization theory are perfectly combined in the creation of this poem, so that the symbol has a dual function and achieves a good art effect. Ai Qing's poetry successfully realized the integration of man and nature, the nation and the world, and had a significant impact on the poetry in the post-Romantic period. As T. S. Eliot said, "Poetry, in fact, is not a little magazine but an INSTITUTION" [8].

Bian Zhilin's (1910–2000) creative process fully reflects the style of the INSTITUTION which was promoted by T. S. Eliot. Bian Zhilin's poetry has a romantic color, but he pays more attention to the modern expression of his verse. The use of symbol in Bian Zhilin's poetry has some influence of T. S. Coleridge,

but more obviously – of T. S. Eliot. Bian Zhilin's poem *White Conch Shell* has such lines: *ethereal white conch shell / no trace of dust in the holes / leaked into my hand / but there are a thousand emotions: the waves in the palm of the hand / I lament your work / your wisdom Ah, the sea / You are so thin that you can wear beads / But I can't help it: you are a cleanliness addiction* [9, p. 54]. The poet used a large number of symbols: *white snail shells, sea, waves, beads, holes*, and collected individual symbols into a unity. T. S. Eliot's method of Objective Correlative includes the opportunity of indirect expression of a poet's emotion with the help of juxtaposition of things (diaphora), and a *white snail shell* is such a typical example of Objective Correlative. Therefore, in Bian Zhilin's poetry T. S. Eliot's Depersonalization theory and the related Objective Correlative theory have been reflected and developed. A *white snail shell* is first of all pure, just like an ideal life without a trace of impurities; at the same time, a *white snail shell* grows out of the sea, which means that everyone grows out of life, metaphorically called mentality, embracing the sea. More importantly, a *white snail shell* is a musical instrument that can blow out pure sounds, symbolizing all beliefs that purify people's hearts. Huang Yingbei said that "The white snail shell is not only the white snail shell, but also refers to the splendid spiritual value that many people think is worthless, but actually it contains a rich spiritual meaning. A natural object, a *white snail shell* also symbolizes an ideal person, an ideal life, or some kind of understanding... Maybe it is the tempering of life, maybe it is the forging of time, maybe it is the divine work of nature..." [10, p. 14–19]. In Bian Zhilin's famous poem *Loneliness* there are such lines: *Country children are afraid of loneliness / Raise a grasshopper by the pillow / Grow up and work in the city / He bought a luminous watch / When he was a child, he used to be envious / Grave grass was the home of grasshopper / Now he has been dead for three hours / Time table which means dawn has never stopped* [11, p. 41]. The symbol of a *grasshopper* in the poem is the result of the Objective Correlative method of creativity. The *grasshopper* triggers the imagination of the poet, who associates his personal life with the short life of the *grasshopper*, and the *grasshopper* becomes the reflection of the poet's feelings and thoughts, expressed indirectly. Most of Bian Zhilin's literary works show a strong influence of modernity. He is deeply concerned with the serious changes in people's hearts, realistic anxieties and living conditions. Through the use of symbols, he guides people to think about themselves, reflect on themselves, and construct themselves.

In the social background and cultural context of China in the 1930s, the poetry of Ai Qing and Bian Zhilin presents the characteristics of a new type of comprehensive modern native poetry, demonstrating the synthesis of Romanticism and Modernism.

S. T. Coleridge's concept of Imagination and the definition of poetry, T. S. Eliot's principle of Objective Correlative and Depersonalization are all centered on the choice, use and function of symbols. They all explain that different symbols should be comprehensively balanced into a new self-expression and

through the principle of Imagination or the principle of the Objective Correlative. “Fundamentally speaking, modernist Chinese poetry is not a question of inheritance or rebellion against tradition; thanks to the intervention of modernity, the overall development trend of world history, the penetration of multiculturalism, and the changes in social structure, it appears as a new tradition. A new aesthetic space is becoming more and more open” [12, P. 191], and the integration of S. T. Coleridge and T. S. Eliot is a significant representative factor.

In the 1930s, with the overall influence of world literature in postcolonial China, Romanticism represented by S. T. Coleridge and the Modernism of T. S. Eliot entered simultaneously and influenced the generation of Chinese poets. Ai Qing’s and Bian Zhilin’s literary creations are not only influenced by the two of them separately, but by the simultaneous and comprehensive effect of the two European poets. Therefore, in the literary creation of modern Chinese poets, the modes of allegory (myth) and symbol (metaphor) appeared in Chinese literature at the same time in the context of synthetic romantic-modernist creativity mode, which became common essence for modern Chinese poets.

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