

The Spread of Printed Copies and the Evolution of the View of Poetry in the Song Dynasty

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Abstract: In the process of the evolution of poetic view in the Song Dynasty, in addition to the development process of literature itself, the change of literati perspective, the progress of material life also plays a subtle role in it. This paper attempts to analyze the influence of print dissemination on the poetic view of the literati in the Song Dynasty and the relationship between the two, starting from the large-scale dissemination of engraved prints in the middle and late Northern Song Dynasty and the Southern Song Dynasty.

Keywords: Printed dissemination Song poetry mud ancient nature

In the more popular textbooks of ancient Chinese literary theory, there are many differences in the Song poetic view. For example, “The History of the Development of Chinese Literary Theory and Criticism” holds that “giving priority to reason” is the core of Huang Tingjian’s literary thought, pointing out that the root of Jiangxi poetry school’s attack on the ancients lies in Huang Tingjian; “A Course of Ancient Chinese Literary Theory” says that Huang Tingjian holds a naturalistic view of poetry. The differences in the understanding of the poetic theory of the Song Dynasty, the formation of the principles of the Song poetry, and the process from “no word, no place” to “living method” and then plain and natural, are all closely related to the large-scale dissemination of printed books.

1. The spread of printed and the literati in the Song Dynasty

Engraving printing embodies many traditional Chinese craft skills such as papermaking, ink making, carving, and copying, and has made outstanding contributions to cultural communication. This technology appeared before the Five Dynasties, and its maturity and large-scale application were in the Song Dynasty. The policy of “advocating Confucianism on the right side” influenced the two Song dynasties for more than 300 years, which gave birth to fertile soil for the development of block printing. From the middle and late Northern Song Dynasty to the Southern Song Dynasty, knowledge dissemination experienced a transformation from manuscript to print as the mainstream. At that time, literati named printed copies after “carved plates” and “carved wood”. For example, Cheng Dunhou said: “The works written by Duzhong, a villager, let’s go to Linchuan and fan, are combined into a great set, and carved wood is used in the world” shows the conscious pursuit of making printed copies to preserve and spread culture.

Printed copies also save the time for literati to copy books, reduce the cost of purchasing books, and broaden the channels for obtaining books. According to the records of the “General Review of the Second Year of Renzong Tiansheng 1024), in October of the second year of Renzong Tiansheng, Prince Rong said:” The old year-old system raised 3,000 yuan for writing. Today’s stamp stops at 30 thousand.” It can be seen that the cost of making books by engraving and printing is 10 times cheaper than copying. As Hu Yinglin concluded, “it is easy to make, difficult to destroy, save money and hide” is its outstanding advantage.

Under this background, the spread of printed materials has a subtle influence on literary creation. In this regard, Zhang Gao commented: “The rise and prosperity of engraving and printing, triggered by the effects of book circulation and knowledge dissemination, is the driving force of the Song Dynasty civilization, the hero of the Song culture, the intermediary of the formation of the characteristics of Song poetry, and the important catalyst of the Tang and Song dynasties, it is a key witness in the Tang and Song

poetry dispute”.

2. Printed Dissemination and Song Poetry

In a well-known public case, some people said to Song Shenzong that Su Shi's literary talent could be compared with Li Bai. Song Shenzong replied, “Otherwise, Bai has the talent of Shi and has no knowledge of Shi.” The reason for this is that apart from Su Shi's subjective studios, it has something to do with the prosperity of printed copies and the convenience of obtaining books at that time. Su Shi also said, “Yu You and Mr. Lao Ru said that when he was young, he wanted” Historical Records “and” Han Shu “but could not get it. Fortunately, they all read it by hand and read it day and night, lest it be too late. People in the near-year-old city turned to copy and carve the books of various schools of thought, and passed on thousands of papers every day. Scholars are many and easy to do so in books.” It can be said that printed copies are cheap and easy to obtain, easy to preserve, clear handwriting, and high reading efficiency. On the one hand, they break the monopoly of book collection, lower the research threshold, and expand the scope of literary acceptance; On the other hand, because of the convenience of printed copies, literati have more resources and energy to analyze the creative rules and artistic characteristics of the text, thus triggering the transformation from Tang poetry to Song poetry.

With the prosperity of printed dissemination, the literati have accumulated profound learning, and “taking literature as poetry, talent learning as poetry, and discussion as poetry” have become the characteristics of Song poetry. Extensive reading has greatly increased the knowledge of poets, and in-depth research has helped them blend various styles and arts, and establish a literary concept that integrates macro abstraction and nuance. Su Shi commented on Wang Wei's poems, “there are paintings in poems and poems in paintings”, and said that “poems of beauty, writings of retreat, and books of Lu Gong are all masterpieces.” Huang Tingjian emphasizes the use of classics, believing that Du Fu's poems and Han Yu's compositions “have no word and no place”. Yan Yu believes that “ripe ginseng” predecessors poetry is a good way to learn poetry. All these thoughts are based on the author's knowledge of the previous works and the integration and analysis.

Furthermore, the dissemination of printed copies has solved the problem of unclear handwriting and misrepresentation of handwritten works, enabling literati to get out of the limitation of clarifying the words of the text, have a broader vision of the works, and greatly enhance their speculative ability. This has cultivated the characteristics of Song poetry, such as plain and old, introverted and “rational”, and theoretically further opened up the tradition of poetry, whether it is the well-known “Title Xilin Wall”, “June 1 Poetry” and “Canglang Poetry”, etc., all reflect the strengthening of abstract thinking and the consciousness of pursuing logical rigor.

3. Print Dissemination and Jiangxi Poetry School

Throughout the poetic theory of the Song Dynasty, almost all of them revolve around inheritance and innovation, mud and nature, and Jiangxi poetry school is a typical example. The reason is that the emergence of printed books led to the large-scale spread of culture and brought the superiority of mastering knowledge for literati, but also led to their excessive dependence on books.

Huang Tingjian, as the founder of the Jiangxi Poetry School, advocates the naturalistic view of poetry, but he also requires that on the basis of mastering the works of his predecessors, there are words and eyes, and the so-called “turning iron into gold” and “seizing the fetus” are all based on the foundation of “iron” and “tire. The concept from “law” to “impossible” has directly affected the formation of Lu Benzong's “living method” theory. “The so-called living method has rules, but it can go beyond the rules; it is unpredictable, and it is not against the rules.” In the meantime, we can see a kind of dilemma that is both confined to books and attempts to transcend them.

The poetic inheritance of Jiangxi poetry school also depends on books. For example, Lu You and Lu Benzong have never met before, and once said that “the origin of the king is from Lu Ziwei”. The large span of Jiangxi Poetry School from the Northern Song Dynasty to the Southern Song Dynasty, its expression and advocacy of the content of study life, and the prosperity of the spread of “Jiangxi Sect Poetry Collection” have all contributed to the later students indulging in books. On the one hand, they are getting farther and farther away from real life. On the other hand, they may also deviate from the understanding of the text. Scholar Zhou Qingshan's related statement is appropriate: “Due to the lack of feedback, the author is unable to adjust the communication behavior in time according to the reaction of the reader, the reader has to be in a passive position to accept the text information. The gap between the author and the reader has become a cultural gap between ancient and modern times, which in turn makes the ancient Confucian scholar Hao Shou poor sutra, died under the sentence, trapped in the cage of words.”

Later, the continuous material in military life made Lu You realize that no matter how to “turn iron into gold” or “reborn”, Lu You could not get out of the barriers of his predecessors, thus finding “the samadhi of the poet”. He took Du Fu's “Deng Yueyang Tower”

as an example to show that provenance is not the first element of good poetry, and the so-called “no origin” is not the value of Du’s poetry. Taking “Xikun” as an example, it shows that every word is not necessarily a good poem. With “creation intentionally amuses poets, supply and poetry are the first to be new” the poem refutes the creative tendency of “every word has its origin” every word has its origin.

Yang Wanli, who was also sent by Jiangxi poetry and opened up another world, wrote “looking for sentences behind closed doors is not a method of poetry, but only collecting his own poems.” “poems in the city have no moustache, and things in the mountains are poems.” “spring flowers, autumn moon, winter, ice and snow, don’t listen to Chen Yan, only listen to the sky.” “the world of mortals don’t understand sending poems, and are better sentences in smoke, looking for themes from nature. Until Yan Yu said, “Poetry has different materials, not books. Poetry has different interests, not related to reason” purposefully in refuting Song poetry, but also pointed the finger directly at “books”, indicating the limitations brought by indulging in books to people’s poetry writing. All of the above, from the perspective of poetic theory, is the understanding and transcendence of poetry creation in the study; from the perspective of communication, it is the vigilance against the large-scale development of printed books and the besieging of scholars.

In a word, the spread of engraved printed copies expanded the horizons of the literati in the Song Dynasty and influenced their study methods and creative ideas. Through reflection and transcendence, the literati formed new creations and theories, which were then spread by printed copies and others to preserve a rich treasure house of knowledge for the research and creation of modern people. “Material determines consciousness, and consciousness counteracts on material”. From indulging in study and cultivating knowledge, to going out of study and seeking “living method”, the literati in Song Dynasty formed a chain of correlation and interaction with printed communication.

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