

The Sorrowful Consciousness of Cao Cao's Yuefu Poems

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Abstract

Sorrow is the emotional tone of Cao Cao's poetry, and Cao Cao's sense of sorrow has multiple emotional expressions, specifically the sorrow of the world's shaking, the sorrow of people's livelihoods falling apart, the sorrow of a short life, the sorrow of seeking wise men, the sorrow of unfulfilled achievements, and the sorrow of heroic loneliness. The "sorrowful consciousness" of Cao Cao's poetry is infused with the personality, political ambition, and inner emotions of this lordly figure, and also reflects the "still sorrowful" theme of life in the era after the "awakening of man". It also embodies the "sorrowful" complex and poetic aesthetics of the life theme of the times after the "awakening of man".

Keywords

Cao Cao; Yuefu Poems; Sorrow.

1. Introduction

Cao Cao was a famous politician, military man, and literary scholar in the late Han Dynasty. As a representative of the chaotic heroes of the late Han Dynasty, Cao Cao had great ambition and the courage and strategy to realize his ideal ambitions, and with his outstanding political and military talents, he stood out in the chaos of warlords and grew into a de facto leader of the Jian'an political arena during his military campaigns. According to the Three Kingdoms note quoted in the Book of Wei, "talent is excellent, hand shooting birds, bow birds and fierce animals, tasted in Nanpi, a day shooting pheasants won sixty-three head", this is the evaluation of Cao Cao [1], and Three Kingdoms - Wei Book I also recorded: "Taizu less alert, has the right to number, and arbitrary chivalry and debauchery." [1] As a great lord of the generation, he was shrewd and keen-witted, good at changing his strategy of civil and military affairs, daring to break through the traditional thinking to go against the custom, issuing "three orders to seek virtue", citing "those who are not benevolent or filial but have the art of ruling the country and using the military", enlisting the world's talents for his own use. He also had the ambition of pacifying the Central Plains by "holding the Son of Heaven to command the vassals" and holding the world together. He had the arrogance and honesty of "If there is no lone person in the country, I wonder how many people will be the emperor and how many people will be the king", and the far-sightedness of "The order of heaven is in the lone person, I am the King of Zhou", as well as the hegemony and brutality of "I would rather make me negative to the world than make the world negative to me. The "Three Kingdoms" - The Book of Wei has the wisdom of the "Three Kingdoms". The Three Kingdoms - Wei Book note quoted Fu Zi has Guo Jia so called Xu, compared with Yuan Shao, Cao has ten victories: morality, righteousness, governance, degree, strategy, virtue, benevolence, clarity, literature, martial [1]. As Xu Shao commented: "the capable minister of the ruling world, the traitorous hero of the chaotic world", which shows his kingly temperament, lordly character.

As a poet, Cao Cao was an outstanding representative of Jian'an literature, and all the poems he left behind were Yuefu poems. Although most of his poems are based on the old themes of Han Yuefu, he has modified the traditional folk songs and poems, bottled new wine in old bottles, and used them to write about current events, truly reflecting the social reality of the turmoil at

the end of Han Dynasty, and expressing the spirit of unification and progress, with the characteristics of the times and personal style, and the style is terse, generous and sad. The institutional creation of quatrain poetry can be considered a strange sound after the Book of Songs, and it stands out among the literati poems since the two Han dynasties, while after Cao Cao, there were basically no outstanding creators of quatrain poetry. Cao Cao's poetry embodies the complex emotions of a hero in a troubled world, with both "the domineering spirit of a hero" and "the sadness of a poet". The Song dynasty man Ao Taosun said in his Poetry Review that Cao Cao's poems are "like the old generals of the Youyan, with a calm and majestic rhythm." This is about the ancient and straightforward sadness of his works, which have a strong and majestic spirit and power. Zhong Rong wrote in his Poetry: Cao Cao's poetry is "straightforward and very poignant." Chen Zuming in Selected Ancient Poems of Cai Beantang, Volume 5, writes: Cao Cao's poems are "fall and sorrowful, unique and superb"; in addition, Feng Ban in Blunt Yin Miscellaneous Records also mentions: Cao Cao's poems are "generous and sorrowful." Whether it is the sadness of lamenting the brevity of life, the ambition of expressing one's ambition, or the beautiful wish of seeking the immortals, Cao Cao's poems all contain a strong sense of sadness. The sadness consciousness of Cao Cao's poetry is infused with the charisma, political ambition, and inner feelings of this lordly figure, and also reflects the "sadness" and poetic aesthetics of the life theme of the times after the "awakening of man". It also reflects the "sadness" and poetic aesthetics of the life theme of the times after the "awakening of man".

2. Results and Discussion

2.1. The World Is Shaken, the People's Livelihood of the Fall of the Sad

The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons -Time Sequence comment on Jian'an literature said: "look at its time, elegant and generous, good by the world's chaos, wind decay and common grievances, and deep and pen long, so the general and more gas also." [2] Cao Cao's poetry was composed in the chaotic world between the saddle and the horse, the chaotic warlords at the end of the Han Dynasty brought bankruptcy to the people's lives, and countless lives perished, in Artemis Fowl, he wrote that "White bones are exposed with the wild, and no chicken crows for a thousand miles. A hundred people are left behind, and it breaks their hearts to think about it." The poet's sorrowful writing is an indictment of the cruel and merciless war, as well as a pity for the people's displaced and broken families. In the poem Scallion Lines, the poet is indignant that "The person who is reappointed is really in vain. Although monkeys wear clothes and hats, but in the end is not a real person, he has small wisdom but want to plan for great things. He was hesitant to do something and caused the king to be robbed". In the power struggle, "the white rainbow is a bad omen from heaven to earth, which was fulfilled in the king, and He Jin himself also ended up in defeat and fame. Dong Zhuo, a traitor, took advantage of the chaos to hold the power of the state, killed the monarch and burned down Tokyo and Luoyang. The 400-year empire of the Han Dynasty was thus overturned and the emperor's temples burned in the flames." The empire was overturned and the temples were burned down, but there was also a sorrow for the wreckage of the country and the displacement of the people after the war. Looking at the tragic state of the city of Luoyang, the poem is as sad as Wei Zi was when he was looking at the ruins of Yin. Fang Dongshu comments on this poem: "The poem is bold and vigorous, ancient and straight and sad, the syllables and words are straight and simple, together with the majestic and straight and tall, the collection is sad and mournful." [4]

Cao Cao spent his entire life on the battlefield, and if he used all his tact in the political struggle, he was full of compassion and care in the world of poetry. The poem The Bitter Cold Line is a poem reflecting the life of military conquering during the turmoil at the end of the Han Dynasty, in which the poet sighs at the hardships of marching, mourns the suffering of the living, and

laments the endless conquests. The poem records the hardships of Cao Cao's army as it crossed the Taihang Mountains from Yecheng to the northwest in the eleventh year of Jian'an. The poem graphically depicts the hardships and dangers Cao Cao's army encountered in the snowy and icy terrain, showing that Cao Cao, as a military leader, was resolute and courageous, but also had a strong humanistic concern: "The water is deep and the bridge is broken, so I wandered in the middle of the journey. The marching army lost its way and had no place to stay at nightfall. Walking and walking for days, I was tired, thirsty and hungry. I carried my walking bag and gathered firewood, and cut ice to make porridge to fill my hunger. When I think of the poem East Mountain, it deeply touches me with sorrow." The suffering of the journey is integrated with the soldiers' homesickness and the disaster suffered by the people, and at the same time, the political aspirations are compared with the cause of the Duke of Zhou, which sublimates the theme and speaks directly to the hearts of the people. As Chen Zuoming commented, "Although all of Meng De's works are anthropomorphic, they are all based on the idea of writing about one's own feelings... There is no general language, but the root is in one's nature, which is why they are unique and transcendent in their ups and downs and sadness. The metre, Mengde is all Han Yin." [5]

2.2. The Sadness of Life's Brevity and the Thirst for Wisdom

The two great scourges of party confinement at the end of the Han Dynasty enlightened the awakening of human life consciousness, and the killing of the clear and turbid streams, exchanging the ultimate extinction of human life for the stability of political power, but fundamentally, the price was heavy, namely, the traditional scholars sought anew the meaning of existence in the collapse of their belief in the ideals of home and country, the spiritual home of Confucianism lost, and the faith once shaken. The meaning of human life is first and foremost to live, which is not an easy task in itself in troubled times. In the profound experience of the brevity of life, timely happiness became the self-satisfaction and relief of the helplessness of short life, which became the theme of life in almost the whole literature from the late Han Dynasty to the Six Dynasties of Wei and Jin. In Cao Cao's Short Song, this profound sentiment for life can be clearly felt, even though he was still a "hero of the world" holding great power at this moment. "Singing to the wine, the geometry of life. Like the morning dew, the days that go by are hard. I am generous with my sorrow, but I will never forget it. How can I relieve my sorrow? Only Dukang." When life is happy, when the song to the wine. After all, life is finite, and no one can escape the limits of time and space, the cage of the universe. This sorrowful thought of life is the most profound insight after the transience of indolence, the rational self-awareness in the forgetfulness of sensual splendor, and the ultimate questioning of the existence in. The transience of life is like the morning dew, but not as short as the morning dew, because "the dew will fall again in the morning, when will people return once they die" (Scallion Dew Line), which is especially painful and sad, low and sentimental. The poet's sorrow for the shortness of life is triggered by the wine in the opening of Short Song, and the only way to relieve his sorrow is to use wine to console himself. In this sorrow and consolation, the poet's firm ambition and great loneliness are present: the ambition of unifying the world requires good and wise talents, and he needs all the talents in the world to join him and help to pacify the world. The sadness that life is short and the sadness that talents are hard to come by are merged in the ambition that "the ambition is in the world": "Learned and talented people, you make me think of you all the time. It is only because of you that I recite it with sorrow to this day", "The high mountain does not resist the earth and rocks to see the lofty, the sea does not abandon the trickle to see the magnificent. I would like to be as courteous as the Duke of Zhou, and I would like the world's heroes and heroines to be sincerely subservient to me." The poet was born in a troubled world, witnessed the people's upheaval and heartbreak, longed to build a successful career but failed to do so, and aspired to change the chaotic situation, so he sighed that life is short. This sorrow for the brevity of life is Cao Cao's profound perception and his sympathy for the life

consciousness of scholars all over the world, and it can even be interpreted as Cao Cao's wisely telling the wise men and women who "circled the tree three times" to remind them that their life is also "like the morning dew" and they should run to me, the "mountain and sea", and offer me their advice and counsel to help unify the world in order to make their lives worthwhile. Cao Cao's poem *A Short Song* combines two emotions: the shortness of life and the thirst for wise men, and the poem is generous and sad, but it has the power to revitalize people's hearts. The sentimental thought of life's brevity is always expressed in different artistic ways in Cao Cao's poems, such as *Stepping Out of the Summer Gate - Although the Tortoise Lives*: "Although the tortoise can live a long life, but there is also the time to die. Although the dragon snake can fly on clouds and fog, but eventually will also die and turn into dust." All things in this world do not exist forever, and metabolism is the fundamental law of nature, which is the rational of knowledge and profound of philosophy. But standing in the dead corner of death to see the survival, but it is difficult to hide the nameless sentiment, life and death are different, but ultimately are going to die, which is the end of anyone no matter how poor or noble can not escape. It is really based on the profound grasp of life that the poet's sorrow that life is short and the years are easy to pass rises from the triumph of the expedition. It is because the poet is mindful of the fact that his ambition to unify China has not yet been realized, while he is already in his twilight years and his heart is full of ambition. It was Cao Mengde's repeated chanting that made this sentiment of life, which originated from the *Nineteen Old Poems*, intensify in the disappointment of the pursuit of success in life, and become an eternal theme for the poets of later generations to express their emotions.

2.3. The Sadness of Unfulfilled Success and Heroic Loneliness

The disappointment and loneliness of unfulfilled success are always intertextual with the passing of time and years, and these two different types of emotions always form a correlative writing. The above article *A Short Song* has been slightly discussed, and the following is based on *Although the Turtle Lives* to add. Although the tortoise can live a long life, but there is also the time to die. Although the dragon snake can fly on clouds and fog, but eventually will also die and turn into dust. The profound philosophical introspection comes from the deep understanding of life, which is sobering in the midst of pain and profound in the midst of penetration. It leads us to think about the truth of "human" living, the relative meaning of transience and eternity: since it is an indisputable fact that years are fleeting and life is limited, a rational person can face it openly, but the key lies in your judgment of the meaning of life and the choice of life pursuit. "Although the old millennium horse is lying by the manger, ambition is still galloping a thousand miles. Even in their old age, the ambitious people will never stop thinking about progress." The old steed aspires to a thousand miles; the martyr's heart is still strong in the twilight. This connotes a boldness of self-improvement to combat the inescapable transient sorrow of life, and profoundly expresses Cao Cao's spiritual outlook of being old and vigorous and enterprising. Thinking about transience and eternity, "A strong heart never ceases" expresses the never-ending pursuit of ideals (achievement), staying active, optimistic and vigorous, keeping self-improvement and old age. "The length of human life is not only determined by God. If you take good care of your body and mind, you will surely live longer." In the end, Cao Cao was not able to escape from the prison of time, and he was not even able to reap the benefits of longevity, but he revealed the importance of human spirituality to life and health with his personal experience, which is the fundamental spiritual core of Cao Cao's poetry. However, the pursuit of success and the ideal can not pay now, but often bring more profound loneliness and sadness, even if there are ambitions in the chest, there are songs and wine to quench sorrow, with the fairy to relieve, or even just have such an effort, after the quiet but doubly sad. In *A Short Song of Songs*, "Green is your collar, long is my heart", how deep and long is this expectation! The verse is originally from *The Book of Songs - Zheng Feng - Dickey*: "Green

is your collar, long is my heart. Even if I never visit you, won't you send me a message?" A woman is separated from her beloved for various reasons and suffers from the pain of separation. She hopes that her beloved will come across the mountains and water, despite all the dangers and hardships, stepping through the clouds. Cao's poem uses the feelings of a man and a woman in a way that is intimate and touching, but with a deeper meaning: "It is only because of you that I recite it with sorrow to this day." He says, "I have been chanting it until now, how I hope that you will come to me in spite of the high mountains and long roads, and that we can unite around the Duke of Zhou and devote ourselves to the cause of unifying the world. What a profound longing, longing hope, and lonely despair. And I am only pondering because you have not yet arrived, and the guests of "drumming and blowing the pith" are just a dream that I deeply hope for.

The loneliness caused by the subjective pursuit of effort and the objective reality is called "great loneliness", and this great loneliness of ancient Chinese poets is often not deep in the small world of personal emotions, but is based on the concern for the fate of the family and the country, the society and the people and the ideal pursuit of the world. This makes the solitude even more profound and soul-stirring, which is the main reason for the immortality of ancient Chinese poets.

Cao Cao was born after a family of eunuchs, and his life of "self-pity for the thinness of his body and the loneliness he suffered from his long history of lowliness" (Goodness and Virtues, no. 2) made his desire to change his fate and status particularly strong, and the stronger his desire to succeed, the stronger his sense of time and loneliness. In Cao Cao's poems, we seem to feel the sadness that comes from the fact that his ambition is not yet fulfilled and his years are not lasting. Regardless of the "factual" poems that express the poet's sympathy for reality, we can also get a glimpse of the poem "showing a transparent and uncomplicated", which is a poem about traveling to the immortals: "How long is heaven and earth, and how short is life compared to it. Heaven and earth are so long, compared with it, life is so short. People always say that Laozi is quiet and indifferent, never knowing that he is old. It is also said that Chi Songzi and Wang Ziqiao became immortal. I have not heard of anyone who has really attained the Dao and become immortal, but perhaps those who have attained the Dao can live long and prolong their lives. I use poetry to express my thoughts about how long heaven and earth last. Spring, summer, autumn and winter alternate far away, the day and night to become a year. Spring, summer, autumn and winter alternate and go away, and the day and night pass and become a year. Virtuous people obey the will of heaven, so they always act in line with heaven. They never worry about growing old, but only about social instability. Life and death are both determined by the order of heaven, so it is foolish to worry about life and death. I use poetry to express my heart, spring, summer, autumn and winter alternate far away" (The Second Part of Qiu Hu Road); "Gas does not speak but tell endless things, for long life this gas I cherish" (Gas Out of Singing). It turns out that the root of Touring Fairy is still focused on the present world.

Among Cao Cao's more than 20 poems of Yuefu, Watching Cang Hai is particularly interesting. The poem was composed in the 12th year of Jian'an when Cao Cao was on his way back to his division after his victory in the northern conquest of Wuhuan. Therefore, facing the vast expanse of the sea, "The initial intention was to conquer Jingzhou in the south and give benefits to the people of Jiangnan", the impact is extremely shocking and infectious. Facing the sea, the poet recalls the political ideal of supporting the Han Dynasty, which he had devoted half of his life to, but the reality that he had not yet achieved his goal of hegemony. Facing the vast sea, the poet is both hesitant and sad, comparing the vast sea with his own small self, and sighing deeply and sadly. Generally speaking, we would compare the magnitude and depth of the ocean to the poet's broad mind, but it is easy to overlook the poet's deep sense of sadness, and this subtle and introverted "sadness" tastes gloomy. Wang Fuzhi's "Selected Reviews of Ancient Poems" has this comment: "Not to say that the sadness, but to fill the eight levels of non-sorrow." [6] It

can be said that he knew Cao Gong's voice. From this, we can also touch the real tone of sadness in his poem Stepping out of the Summer Gate - Yan: "Faced with two different views on the Northern Expedition and the Southern Expedition, I hesitated, not knowing what to do. After arriving at Jieshi, I saw the oppression suffered by the people and felt more sad."

3. Conclusion

Cao Cao's poetry is an important component of Jian'an literature, highlighting the literary spiritual connotations and aesthetic implications of the Jian'an style. The poetry of Cao Cao is characterized by a sense of sadness, reflecting the common emotional psychology of the literati at the end of the Han dynasty. This includes factors such as the change in the mentality of the literati, the trend of the times in which the literati pursued generosity and sadness, and other social trends, as well as Cao Cao's pursuit of success in helping the chaotic world and unifying the world. The literary and ideological impact of Cao Cao's poetry is profound.

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