

Research on Poetry Theories in the *Modern*

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Abstract—Founded in Shanghai, China in 1930s, *Modern* presented a literary aspect different from the realistic literary works of left-wing writers for reason that its editor in chief maintained an editing concept of "being left-wing in politics and freedom in literature and art"¹ and a literary pursuit full of modern consciousness. As a result, the Journal not only interacted with left-wing writers but also subjected to intense ideological attacks from left-wing writers. Aiming at maintaining in simultaneous development pace with modern world literature, the Journal initiatively and actively translated and introduced the "emerging literatures and top literatures: it refers to all new literature patterns from Soviet Union to Western Europe, and British and America"². Nobody may ignore its agility, courage and enthusiasm in giving response to the world literature trend in the 20th century. In the Journal, foreign literature and local literature formed a benign interaction. Foreign literature provided Chinese intellectuals with a fresh sense of understanding the world. Activated by foreign literature, Chinese new sensualistic novel and modernistic poetry were generated, taking the Journal as the base. In the Journal, a total of 14 native original poetry theories were published, which showed the Journal writers' thinking about poetry problems. In those poetry theories, there were both comments on specific poets and poems, and discussion on the content and form of poetry. What's more, they provided a theoretical basis for the formation of Chinese modernistic poetry genre.

Keywords—*Modern; poetry theories; literature; Chinese modernistic poetry genre*

I. INTRODUCTION

Modern (hereinafter referred to as the Journal), founded in Shanghai in May 1932, was published and issued by the Modern Book Company, in form of monthly journal, 6 issues/volume and two volumes/year, and stopped publication in May 1935. In total, the Journal was published for 6 volumes and 4 issues (i.e., 34 issues in total). According to the difference in editors in chief of the Journal, the publications can be divided into three stages. In the first two volumes (published from May, 1932 to April 1933), Shi Zhecun served as the independent editor and Du Heng and Dai Wangshu participated in the editing work; Starting from

issue No.1 of Vol.3, Shi Zhecun and Du Heng jointly served as the editor in chief; hence in the said first two stages, the editing purpose was basically continued. But up to the third stage (from the issue No.2 of Vol.6 to the issue No.4 of Vol.6), the journal's publication was stopped due to the close of Modern Book Company. In this stage, Wang Fuquan served as the editor in chief of the Journal, Xu Lang, a leader of gangsters, was in charge of Modern Book Company, and the editing purpose had been changed without any connection with the previous volumes. In this paper, only the former 31 issues of the Journal are discussed.

In translation and introduction column of the Journal, a large quantity of foreign poetries were published, all of them were modern poems, and the translators were only Dai Wangshu, Peng Tongbin, Xu Chi, Shi Zhecun, Xu Xiacun and Li Jinfa. This column mainly introduced poems from France, Japan, Soviet Union, America, Ireland and Italy, and most of them were French symbolist poetry and American imagist poetry. In addition, the Journal also published three pieces of translation of foreign poetry theories: namely, the "British and American New Poetry Genres" written by the Japanese literary theorist Abuzhi'er and translated by Gao Ming as published in the issue No.4 of Vol.2 of the Journal (1933), the "Where will poetry go" written by American writer Tao Yizhi and translated by Shi Zhecun as published in the issue No.2 of Vol.5 of the Journal (1934), and the "Yesenin and Russian Imagist Poetry Genre" written by new Russian poet Benjamin Goriely lived in France and translated by Dai Wangshu as published in the issue No.3 of Vol.5 of the Journal (1934).

Stimulated by foreign poetry and poetry theories, the Journal actively encouraged the creation of native poetry and poetry theories. Totally, 224 poems and 14 native original poetry theories were published in the Journal. The 14 poetry theories include: Dai Wangshu's "Wangshu's Poetry Theory" as published in the issue No.1 of Vol.2 of the Journal (1932), Su Xuelin's "Discussion of Li Jinfa's Poems" as published in the issue No.3 of Vol.3 of the Journal (1933), Du Heng's "Wangshucao · Preface" as published in "Historical Materials of Literature · Essay" column of the issue No.4 of Vol.3 of the Journal (1933), the "About Poems Published in the Journal" as published in the "Informal Discussion in the Association" column of issue No.5 of Vol.3 of the Journal (1933), Shi Zhecun's "Again about Poems in the Journal" as published in the "Literature Monologue" column of issue No.1 of Vol.4 of the Journal (1933), Su Xuelin's "On the Poems of Wen Yiduo" as published in the issue No.3 of

¹ Talking about the "Decadence" in Chinese Modern Literature. "On the History of Chinese Literature in the 20th Century". Orient Publishing Center. 1997.

² Shi Zhecun. Talking about "Modernist". "Shi Shucun's Collection of Literary Works · Literary Creation", Vol II: "Beishan Prose Collection" (i). East China Normal University Press. 2001, p680.

Vol.4 of the Journal (1934), Mu Mutian's "A Review of My Poetry Creation" as published in the issue No.4 of Vol.4 of the Journal (1934), Xu Chi's "Seven Poets of Imagist Genre" as published in the "Thesis · Introduction" column of issue No.6 of Vol.4 of the Journal (1934), Mu Mutian's "Wang Duqing and His Poetry" published in the issue No.1 of Vol.5 of the Journal (1934), "Poetry and Reality" published in the issue No.2 of Vol.5 of the Journal (1934) and "About Mr. Du Yuying's Poems" published in the "Informal Discussion in the Association" column of the same issue version, Gao Ming's "Futuristic Poems" and Wu Xingben's "Poem Reading Method" as published in the issue No.3 of Vol.5 of the Journal (1934), and Yu Dafu's "About Poems" and Lin Geng's "Poem and Free Verse" as published in the issue No.1 of Vol.6 of the Journal (1934). They promoted the modernization of Chinese new poetry from the following three aspects and laid the theoretical foundation for the formation of modern poetry genre in China in the 1930s.

II. INTRODUCTION OF FOREIGN MODERNISTIC POETRY GENRES

Xu Chi's "Seven Poets of Imagist Genre" as published in the "Thesis · Introduction" column of issue No.6 of Vol.4 of the Journal (1934) introduced the imagistic poetry movement initiated by British and American poets during the five years from 1914 to 1919. The seven representative poets in this movement are respectively Zera Pound, Amy Lowell, HD-Hild Doolittle, John Gould Fletcher, Richard Alding, D.H.Lawrenne, and F.S.Flinte. This article first summarizes that image of the imagist is not abstract but essential and can be felt, and the purpose of imagist poem is to liberate the content of poem. The task of imagist poetry is to infiltrate new ideas, new colors, new touches, new sentiments, and new tastes into poetry. Later, the characteristics of imagist poetry were presented by analyzing the seven poets' poems. Xu Chi was a modernist poet in 1930s and made himself conspicuous in the *Modern*. He actively engaged in the translation and introduction of imagist poetry and poetry theories into Chinese. His poetry creation was also deeply influenced by the imagism. He was a representative of Chinese poets in 1930s and actively accepted Western modern poetry's creation experience, which promoted the modernized development of Chinese new poetry. The issue No. 2 of Vol.4 of the Journal (1933) published the "Poet Vachel Lindsay" written by him and the long poem "Journey in Santa Fe" written by American imagist poet and translated by him. His poems "MEANDER: Without the Nazi Colors in Germany", "Daylight with Seven Colors", "The Street of Light Rain", and "The Full Moon of the Metropolis" were published in the "Excellent Poems" column of issue No.1 of Vol.5 of the Journal (1934). In the "Daylight with Seven Colors", seven colors are compared to seven girls with different color colors, different facial appearances and different bodies. This description is easy to make one think about the image of urban decadent women as created by Paul Morand, and hints an urban decadent fast-pace life and the image of modern girl in fast-food love. The poet also said, "A secret meeting and thinking over of lovers is a matter of two persons; saying that seven colors compose daylight is too much. I rotate in single-color fog, while the seven-color

world rotates".³ The whole poem expresses that he is tired of urban life and thinks fondly of simple emotional life. The opening of "The Street of Light Rain" describes that the poor and strained "I" drifts lonely, but the rain is not distressed and will not be exhausted. The whole poem is filled with the poet's psychological feelings of the rain. The poet is writing the rain in nature, but also the rain in the poet's psychology. The rain creates a clear and lonely atmosphere, showing the poet's poverty in urban life and the loneliness deep in heart. In the "Full Moon of the Metropolis":

"The twelve stars represented by Roman capitals I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, and XII circled around a gear.

The full moon of every night, / three-dimensional plane body. / The full moon attached to the tower of the skyscraper. / Another full moon of the metropolis under the skyscrapers.

Short needle liked person, / long needle liked shadow, / may occasionally look at the surface of the full moon of the metropolis.

Then they know the philosophy of floating of full moon of the metropolis, / know the distinct moment, / and there are moon, light and clock. "⁴

The moon of the metropolis is contrasted with the artificial moon composed of clock. There is no full moon in the metropolis, but only the artificial full moon; the clock pointers watched by people in the metropolis are short needle like people and long needle like shadow, symbolizing that people's life is as busy as the clock and is paced as fast as the time passing by. The whole poem expresses a sense of emptiness and exhaustion of people in a mechanical society.

The issue No.3 of Vol.5 of the Journal (1934) published Gao Ming's "Futuristic Poems". In the same issue of the Journal, the article placed before this article is the "Yesenin and Russian Imagist Poetry Genre", written by new Russian poet Benjamin Goriely lived in France and translated by Dai Wangshu, which describes that the Russian imagist poet Yesenin is often misunderstood as futuristic poet. The two articles were arranged together, and the editor's intention was obvious, namely it is expected that readers can read the two articles in contrast to make clear the following questions: what is imagism? What is futurism? And what are the poetic features of futurism different from imagism? Those questions are clearly explained in Gao Ming's "Futuristic Poems". The futuristic movement in Italy was an anti-philosophical anti-cultivation literary movement initiated by a group of Italian poets and artists on February 20, 1909. The movement was centered on Poesia (a poetry periodical) founded by Marinetti who declared it's him who published the "Declaration of Futuristic Literary Technician". Other representative poets are Boogie, Goponi, Macha, Kabachi Ollie, Forgo Ray. Futuristic poetry can be divided into free verse and free saying. In 1912, all poetries collected in "Futuristic Poets" were in free verse. In 1925, all poetries collected in "Futuristic New Poets" were in free saying. This article mainly introduces the generation, grammatical

³ *Modern*. 1934, Vol.5, No.2, p185.

⁴ *Modern*. 1934, Vol.5, No.1, p186.

composition, geometric, mechanical glory and digital sensation of futuristic free saying. Futurist advocates:

"The most decisive rebellion against French symbolism; healthy poem; praise for the ecstasy to power, speed, science, and mechanics; change from the praise for violence, danger, and decisiveness, to the praise for war, then turn to the requirement for patriotism and declaring war against Austria."⁵

In the Journal, the article introducing futuristic poetry also contains the "A Visit to Marinetti" translated by Dai Wangshu in his pseudonym "Jiang Si" and published in the "Miscellaneous" column in issue No.3 of Vol.1 of 1932. The article reviews the generation of futuristic poetry, Marinetti's futurist temperament, and his practice of transforming the revolutionary art of futurism into a national art, in futurist leader Marinetti's tone.

Xu Chi's "Seven Poets of Imagist Genre" and Gao Ming's "Futuristic Poems" provide two forms of Western modernist free verse poetry. The two forms of free verse poetry both had a far-reaching inspiration to the formation of Chinese modernist poetry in 1930s.

III. SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF XINYUE GENRE AND SYMBOLIST GENRE

In the Journal, there are totally 4 articles about comments on poets' poems. Wherein, Su Xuelin wrote two articles, respectively the "Discussion of Li Jinfa's Poems" as published in the issue No.3 of Vol.3 of 1933, and the "On the Poems of Wen Yiduo" as published in the issue No.3 of Vol.4 of 1934. Mu Mutian wrote two articles, respectively the "A Review of My Poetry Creation" as published in the issue No.4 of Vol.4 of 1934 and the "Wang Duqing and His Poetry" published in the issue No.1 of Vol.5 of 1934. Four poets were involved in the four articles and belonged to two poetry genres: Xinyue genre and symbolist genre. Wen Yiduo was the representative poet of Xinyue genre; Li Jinfa, Mu Mutian and Wang Duqing were symbolist poets. Xinyue genre and symbolist genre were both poetry genres of China in 1920s. The two genres and the modern poetry genres gradually developed and grown up by virtue of the Journal all insisted on making exploration along with the artistic laws of poetry itself, paying attention to the intrinsic characteristics of poetry and all advocating "pure poem" theory. The four articles analyzed and summarized the poetry experience of the two genres in details. Chinese new poetry is influenced by three poetry traditions such as Chinese ancient poetry tradition, Western modern poetry tradition, and Chinese modern new poetry tradition. In the "Chinese modern new poetry and classical poetry tradition", Li Yi gets Chinese traditional poetry divided into four major forms, makes a comparison between Chinese modern new poetry and the four major forms of traditional poetry, and places Chinese new poetry into the four forms of traditional poetry accordingly. The four major forms are respectively:

"The free form represented by Qu Yuan's 'Lisao (Sorrow after Departure)', the self-conscious form represented by the poetries in Wei, Jin, Tang, and Song Dynasties, the anti-traditional form represented by Song poetry, and the singing form represented by 'National Customs' and Yuefu."⁶

Correspondingly, he got Chinese new poetry created from the advocating of "May 4th" vernacular new poetry till the 1920s classified into free verse and that created in 1920s and 1930s classified into self-conscious form. In the 1920s and 1930s, Xinyue genre and symbolism both advocated the "pure poetry" theory of "Art for art's sake", and were influenced by Western romanticism, symbolism, aestheticism and other genres. Among them, the aesthetic Parnassianism run through all the time and had the greatest impact on Chinese poetry in the 1920s and 1930s:

"Parnassianism opposes sentimentality and proliferation of emotions, and advocates rational temperance, craftsmanship in artistic form, and exquisite poetry shaping. This poetic pursuit concerns to the unique features of Xinyue genre poetry which further poses influence on modernistic poets."⁷

Xinyue genre and symbolism are both intoxicated with Parnassianism. For example, the symbolist poet Mu Mutian once clearly expressed that he was "quite fond of" the poetry works of the Parnassianism pioneer Vigny. They learned the idea of "treat emotions with a rational attitude" from Parnassianism, advocated the ingenuity in art forms and opposed the excessive proliferation of emotions. It was right at this point that the Chinese modern new poetry communicated with the "be joyous but not indecent, mournful but not distressing" lyrical tradition of Western modern poetics and ancient Chinese poetics. The idea of "treat emotions with a rational attitude" marked that Chinese new poetry enters self-conscious form from emotionally erupted free form. Emotional expression is matched with the objective world; an object corresponding to a specific emotion can be found in the objective world, and used to support and hint the poet's subjective world so as to get Western symbolism communicated with the artistic conception of Chinese ancient poetics. This point is similar to China's Xinyue genre and symbolism. Taking *Modern* as the base, the formation of modern poetry genre represented by Dai Wangshu also inherited and developed the poetry creation experience of Xinyue genre and symbolism, namely "to treat emotions with a rational attitude, widely use symbolist techniques, and get Western symbolism communicated with the artistic conception of Chinese ancient poetics".

As far as the form and rhythm of poetry is concerned, the pursuit of the beauty in form of poetry is a sign that poetry is maturing. Just as the "Where will poetry go" written by American writer Mrs. Barbot · Tao Yizhi and translated by

⁶ Li Yi. Chinese modern new poetry and classical poetry tradition. China Renmin University Press. 2015, p55.

⁷ Li Yi. Parnassianism and Chinese modern new poetry. Academic Journal of Zhongzhou. 1990(2).

⁸ Mu Mutian. A Review of My Poetry Creation. *Modern*. 1934, Vol.4, No.4.

⁵ *Modern*. 1934, Vol.5, No.3, p475.

Shi Zhecun as published in the issue No.2 of Vol.5 of the Journal (1934), it expresses the constant-changing characteristics of the form of poetry:

"But if the changes in poetry materials are relatively few, the poetry form used can be continuously refurbished. Considerably, it can be said that this change in techniques is just similar to the swing of the pendulum; excessive pursuing for complicated syllables can often cause boredom to the syllables; as a result, free verse of poetry takes the chance to develop; and when poets are tired of creating free verse of poetry, they may again return to pursuing for techniques in syllables."⁹

The important philosophical thoughts expressed in the ancient Chinese classic literature "the Book of Changes" are also constant changing. "Change" contains simple change, change and no change. Xinyue genre is a metrical poetry genre among new poetry genres. It advocates a harmonious and homogeneous language mode and builds a "three-beauty (music beauty, architectural beauty and painting beauty)" principle. The symbolism was inspired by the pure poetry theory of the French symbolism and learned the theory "poetry should have beauty both in shaping and music" as proposed by French symbolic poets Verlaine and Rambo. The poet group in the Journal not only absorbed the poetry form and metrical experience of Xinyue genre and symbolism but also developed somewhat different from the two genres. The modern poetry genre formed in 1930s on the basis of the Journal advocates orienting to emotions. This genre thinks that rhyme and neat words and sentences may hinder the emotional expression of the poem or make the emotional expression deformed. The modern poetry genre interprets that rhyme is a free verse poem created on the basis of free emotions and is more suitable for expressing modern people's modern emotions in modern life. In the opening of "Scattered record of poetry theories", Dai Wangshu proposed that:

"Poetry cannot borrow heavy music but abandon the composition of music. Poetry cannot borrow the advantages of painting."¹⁰

From this, it can be seen that modern poetry genre absolutely opposes the rhythmic theory of Xinyue poetry genre and symbolism. So, what on earth are the form and rhythm characteristics of modernistic poetry? Dai Wangshu once contributed a lot to the construction of modernistic poetry theory. The next takes Dai Wangshu as an example and describes it from the following aspects:

First, the modernists focus on expressing the modern mood of modern people in the modern life. The so-called modern life, such as the "airplanes, cars, Groups on the road, machine factories, cooks and unemployed workers" in Yu Dafu's "Talking about Poetry" published in issue No.1 of Vol.6 of the Journal (1934)¹¹, is very similar to the life in the metropolis Chicago as described in Sonderborg's works. In terms of expressing modern people's modern emotions,

Chinese modern poetry genre and world modernist poetry genre both expressed the alienation between people caused by the rapid development of machinery in modern society, and the sense of decadence in heart of modern people. For example, when reading Dai Wangshu's "Going Out with Tears on Face (凝泪出门)" (Drowsing lights, sloppy rain, heavy unbroken morning, and desolate emotions take my sorrows) in contrast with his translation of the French symbolist poet Verlaine's "Tear drops and entangles in heart (泪珠飘落萦心雨)", it may be found that the French symbolist poet passed the "Century Disease" to Dai Wangshu. However, Dai Wangshu as a representative poet of Chinese modernist in 1930s had his unique modern emotions: the first modern emotion is the projection of Chinese revolution on modernist poets. It was after the failure of the Great Revolution that modernistic poets represented by Dai Wangshu all entered literary circle. Due to the uncertain revolutionary prospect and the hardships in their social life, they expressed a painful emotion in their poems. The way that modernistic poets express this pain is implicit, namely "to disclose the hidden soul in poem"¹². Moreover, love was also an important motif in the modernistic poets' poems. Most of Dai Wangshu's poems were created on the basis of his frustrated personal love and incorporated other social experiences, for example, the poem "Sleeplessness (不寐)" (In the quiet low-voice wave, the shadow of each lover, instantly walks, in my dizzy brain). Dai Wangshu has few pure love poems; but he always described some other things on the basis of love so that the theme became ambiguous.

The second modern emotion is the cadence of emotions reflected in the rhythm of modernist poetry. He believed that rhyme and neat words and sentences may hinder the emotional expression of a poem; so he advocated free verse of poetry. He thought that only in this way can he fully express modern urban life in poem. In the exploration of rhythm and sound, he was not satisfied with the poetry skills even his "A Lane in the Rain" was widely recognized and praised; on the contrary, he fully denied his poems created during the period of creation of "A Lane in the Rain" after he created the "My Memory" that he thought was mature both in artistic conception and rhythm. After the creation of "My Memory," he fixed this pattern of rhythm and sound as a model for his own poetry creation. Since "My Memory", he began to write non-rhythm poems down to earth. The ups and downs of his poems depend entirely on the cadence of emotions.

IV. THEORY AND DECLARATION THAT CONSTRUCTED MODERNISTIC POETRY GENRE

First of all, it is needed to differentiate and analyze *Modern* poetry genre and modernistic poetry genre. These two concepts are both connected and different. The activity time of Modern poetry genre coincides with the founding and ending times of the *Modern*, while modernistic poetry genre was one of the Chinese new poetry genres in 1930s and its specific starting and ending times were uncertain. As far as the composition of poets is concerned, the number of

⁹ *Modern*. 1934, Vol.5, No.2, p241.

¹⁰ *Modern*. 1932, Vol.2, No.1, p92.

¹¹ *Modern*. 1934, Vol.6, No.1, p13.

¹² *Modern*. 1933, Vol.3, No.4, p490.

Modern genre of poets is determined to be 91, while that of the latter genre is uncertain. Accordingly, the number of poems of the former genre is 224, and that of the latter genre is uncertain. *Modern* genre of poetry refers to all the poetries published in the Journal and contains various categories and genres of poetries, while modernistic poetry is just one category of them. The existence of *Modern* poetry genre promoted the establishment and development of modernistic poetry genre. Gradually, modernistic poetry was developed into the mainstream poetries in the Journal. As a result, modernistic poetry became a practical existence in Chinese new poetry creation genres in 1930s. In the issue No. 5 of Vol.3 of the Journal (1933), the "Informal Discussion in the Association" column published a letter of Wu Tingrui. This letter questioned the poems published in the Journal and thought that the poems were unreadable:

"The poem is clearly like a prose, but has no classical allusion to play a trick on readers, no rhythm of poem and has not any emotional function; there is no classical masterpiece, but there is no rhythm of poetry and no emotional effect. It can be said to be a futuristic mystery... This kind of futuristic new poetry makes people feel mysterious, just as getting into the fog of 5 miles."¹³

In response to this letter, the editor-in-chief Shi Zhecun gave a response, and affirmed that all poetries published in Journal were poems. Shi Zhecun further explained that the poems in the Journal all expressed an emotion or a kind of induction. Wu Jun's "I don't understand" is not a question of the content and form of poetry, but at most it is caused by insufficient techniques of the poet. Shi Zhecun's "Again about Poems in the Journal" was published in the "Literature Monologue" column of issue No.1 of Vol.4 of the Journal (1933). The opening of the article emphasized that "all poems in the Journal are poems and pure modern poems; they are modern poem forms arranged in modern words to express modern people's modern emotions in the modern life", and put forward the texture theory: "most poems in the Journal have no rhyme; the sentences are not in order; but they have quite perfect texture; they are in modern poem form and are poems"¹⁴. In the process of answering reader's questions, the said two articles of Shi Zhecun more clearly grasped the important features of poems published in the Journal one by one: namely, those poems, in content, expressed modern people's modern emotions in modern life, and in form, used modern poem form arranged in new modern words. The two articles constitute the prototype of modernistic poetry theory. "Literature Monologue" column of issue No.2 of Vol.5 of the Journal (1934) published Mu Mutian's "Poetry and Reality". This article explains that modernistic poetry expresses the "modern people's modern emotions in modern life", poet's true emotion is the necessary element in a poem, and "poetry is to up lift and express an emotion toward real life awaked in poet's mind"¹⁵. This article also makes a comparison between Du Fu's "Sorrow at River Head (哀江头)" and Bai Juyi's "Everlasting

Regret (长恨歌)" to illustrate the important significance of emotion in poetry creation.

Wu Xingben's "Poem Reading Method" as published in the issue No.3 of Vol.5 of the Journal (1934), and Yu Dafu's "About Poems" and Lin Geng's "Poem and Free Verse" as published in the issue No.1 of Vol.6 of the Journal (1934) all explain the modern poem form arranged in modern words by modernist. Among the three articles, Wu Xingben's "Poem Reading Method" was a comment on Yang Yuying's "Three Poems" as questioned by readers on issue No.2 of Vol.5; wherein, Wu Xingben thought that the difference between poetry and essay was that essay must be natural and clear, while poetry was implicit and ambiguous, and Yang Yuying's poems precisely had the magic of making the readers wandering out tear. Yu Dafu's "About Poems" maintained that only by new poets could new emotions, new objects and new construction be expressed. With regard to the tradition of poetry, there are Chinese classical poetry traditions and Western poetic traditions, as well as the traditions of Chinese new poetry. Therefore, the future poetry should not merely break the shackles of ancient rhythms and in turn be added with the new shackles of Western sonnets. There should be new rhythm in new poetry. In Lin Geng's "Poem and Free Verse", the "poem" in the title refers to old-style poems. The difference between free verse and old-style poem is not so much in form as in content; free verse originated from France; with the development of free verse, impressionism and symbolism came out in France one by one. Chinese new poetry turned to the direction of free verse. The new life requires free and creative application of text. The so-called "free verse is not easy to understand" is because the text cannot be restrained in the usual narrow sense of application, and the image and symbol are both a form of this kind of application.

What really became the declaration of modernistic poetics was Dai Wangshu's "Wangshu's Poetry Theory" as published in the issue No.1 of Vol.2 of the Journal (1932), namely Item 17 of "Scattered record of poetry theories". Wherein, Item 5 stated that "the rhyme of poetry lies not in the cadence of words but in the cadence of the emotion expressed in the poetry, namely the poetic extent"; Item 9 stated that "new poetry should have new emotion and new form for expressing the emotion. The so-called form is by no means an arrangement of words on the surface, or the accumulation of new words"; in Item 11, "The application of old classical allusion is unobjectionable; when it gives us a new emotion..." respectively explains the poetics of modern poetry genres from the perspectives of content, form, rhythm and classical allusion. The emphasis is on expressing new emotions in new life, and using poetic emotions as the rhythm of poetry. As can be seen from "The application of old classical allusion is unobjectionable", modernistic poetry genre communicates with the characteristics of traditional Chinese poetics and Western modern poetics. Du Heng's "Wangshucao ·Preface" was published in the issue No.4 of Vol.3 of the Journal (1933). It is not only a preface made to Dai Wangshu's collection of poems "Wangshucao", but can also be regarded as a detail explanation to Dai Wangshu's "Scattered record of poetry theories". The book

¹³ *Modern*. 1933, Vol.3, No.5, p726.

¹⁴ *Modern*. 1933, Vol.4, No.1, p7.

¹⁵ *Modern*. 1934, Vol.5, No.2, p221.

"Wangshusao" was published and issued by Modern Book Company in 1933 and its advertisement was placed the issue No.4 of Vol.3 of the Journal (1933). In the book, there is such a comment:

"The poems of Mr. Dai Wangshu are the stunners of the new poetry circle in recent years. Anyone who has read his poems can feel a special charm. This charm is neither in words, nor in syllables, but in the poetic emotions."¹⁶

This book's advertisement describes the fact that Dai Wangshu became a modernistic poetry leader in 1930s, and captured the important characteristics of modernistic poetry genre represented by him: poetry is used to express modern mood of modern people in the modern life. The collection of "Wangshucao" collected 41 poems from "My Memory" to 1933. "Wangshucao · Preface" almost analyzes "Scattered record of poetry theories" item by item. Du Heng thought that "it is neither merely the truth nor merely an imagination". This saying represents Dai Wangshu's attitude towards poetry creation. He maintained that Dai Wangshu "discloses hidden soul" in poetry, with motivation to both express himself and hide himself"¹⁷. In the form of poetry, Items 1, 5 and 7 of "Scattered record of poetry theories" stated that:

"Poetry should not borrow heavy music. The rhythm of poetry lies not in the cadence of words. Rhyme and neat words and sentences may hinder the emotional expression of the poem or make the emotional expression deformed."¹⁸

Dai Wangshu's rhythm of poetry was inspired by the French symbolism poetry. His poems are regarded as having the form of symbolism, and the content of classicism. After the creation of "My Memory," Dai Wangshu's rhythm of poetry was fixed; namely, the rhythm of emotion was used as the rhyme of poetry. So what is the emotion expressed in Dai Wangshu's poetry? In the five years before going to France (1927-1932), in addition to suffering from the hardship in common life of all Chinese people in this era, Dai Wangshu also endured the profound pain of frustrated love which was turned into the empty and this profound pain turned into the vacant expectation and drifting downhearted sense in his poems.

V. CONCLUSION

In summary, the 14 native original poetry theories published in the *Modern* demonstrate the Journal writer group's thinking about poetry problems. Those poetry theories not only include comments on specific poets and poems but also include the discussion on poetry contents and forms. More importantly, they provide a theoretic foundation for the formation of Chinese modernistic poetry genre.

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- [16] *Modern*. 1933, Vol.3, No.4, p495. (in Chinese)
- [17] Ibid. p490. (in Chinese)
- [18] Ibid. p490. (in Chinese)

¹⁶ *Modern*. 1933, Vol.3, No.4, p495.

¹⁷ Ibid. p490.

¹⁸ Ibid. p490.