

# "Suiyuan" Landscape Literature and the Creation Activities of the "Suiyuan" Backbones\*

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**Abstract**—During the period of Emperor Qianlong and Emperor Jiaqing of Qing Dynasty, the influx of a large number of border ministers, garrison persons, and men of writing and literature brought cultural exchanges to the Western Regions of Xinjiang. Due to political affairs and identity, literati and scholars were attached to the officials at all levels represented by General Yi Li, becoming their aides and gaining the convenience of identity. The literati in the Western Regions leaved a lot of poetry and inscriptions when having the banquet tour and talking about the relief. The literati of the Suiyuan, with Wang Dashu and Shu Qishao as the backbones, were in the frontier. With the aesthetic vision and poetry of the scholars, the elegant landscape of the Suiyuan provides the material for the creation of the literati. And Suiyuan became the object that they expressed their feelings, which reflected the cultural psychology created by the literati. As the typical garden of the Western Region, Suiyuan eventually formed a unique literary landscape.

**Keywords**—Qing Dynasty; the Western Regions; a person who has left home and wandered away; Suiyuan; literary creation

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the twenty-fourth year of Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty, the Western Region was settled, and the highest military and political institution was established in Yili of Xinjiang. Therefore, a large number of courtiers and literati were concentrated in the Jiucheng town of Yili. They either guarded the frontier or lived here. The former office building for a general manager of the Suiding City — "Suiyuan" was the most famous place to visit in Yili. Like the Jianyuan Building, it became the famous spot in the Western Region of the Qing Dynasty. Suiyuan was located in the east of the governor office in the town of Suiding, and

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the founder was Deguang, a garrison commander. Later, it was expanded for Zao Junbao governing the town. Combined with the Bala Temple, the Guandi Temple and the shooting pavilions, Chidao and Shuige, Suiyuan has become the embarrassment among the gardens of the Western Region. The craftsmen chiseled the canal to divert water, and digged the pool to rise fish, which added a touch of scenery. During the Mid-Autumn Festival, many people went to Suiyuan to see the lights, full of fun. Suiyuan was built in the Qing Dynasty. It had been changed many times by the Emperor Qianlong, Emperor Jiaqing and Emperor Daoguang and has been continuously renovated. The people of Qing Dynasty who lived here in different periods used poems and notes to record the architectural orientation of the time, the vegetation, the pavilions, the layout and other details. Suiyuan was a wonderful place for the Yili literati in the Qing Dynasty to enjoy daily life such as appreciating flowers, watching fish, versifying poetry, painting, seeing snow, having banquet, and talking about elegant collections. Through such a poetic and picturesque space, it can see the delicacy of life and intention of literati in the Western Regions in the Qing Dynasty, which condensed the literati's poetic feelings. The gardens of the Western Region are a fusion of natural beauty and architectural beauty. They are also the ideal world for leisure and quiet thinking in the boring life of the literati.

## II. GROUP CREATIVE ACTIVITIES AND POETRY OF SUIYUAN LITERATI

The literati who flowed to the Western Region in the Qing Dynasty concentrated in Yili and Urumqi. When the Western Region was first established, the Emperor Qianlong gave orders to General Yili to dispatch officials. The court ordered that the scholars should not be allowed to chant or talk at will. However, as the military affairs and political affairs were on the right track, the cultural construction of the border areas gradually raised. The identity of the literati in the frontiers changed compared with that of the past. In

order to obtain the opportunity of giving the ring as soon as possible, many literati who read poems and books chose to attach themselves to officials at all levels in the Western Regions, or revised local records, raised grain affairs, opened up wasteland, and finally became the staff and assistants of officials at all levels in Xinjiang. Only in the period of Emperor Qianlong and Emperor Jiaqing, the representatives literati of Yili were: Xu Buyun, Zhuang Zhaokui, Chen Tingxue, Zhao Yuntong, Wang Dashu, Shu Min, Shu Qishao, Hong Liangji, Wei Peijin, Chen Yin, Qi Yunshi and so on. Among these people, Shu Min sinned by the father and the rest were the persons who were sent here.<sup>1</sup>The literati who was far away from the homeland, and they waded through the mountains and came to Xinjiang. Similar life backgrounds, values, and beliefs in life made the literati sympathize with each other. The life experience of "sympathizing with each other" made them easy to resonate with the soul.<sup>2</sup>The same spirit had driven the development of the literature of the border area, forming a climax of Xinjiang literature creation in the Qing Dynasty. The gardens such as Suiyuan gave the literati an opportunity to gather together.

There is no fixed pattern in the collection of literati in the Western Regions. The venues and time were temporary and random. Form was not limited to large-scale feasts. Mostly, they gathered for versifying poetry, rhyming poem, drinking and listening. The specific analysis generally has the following three types: the first is the collection of rituals during important traditional festivals. For example, during the Dragon Boat Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, and the Double Ninth Festival, the literati who had left their hometowns often invited each other to share the festivals. The second is the literary pursuits. The literati gathered to appreciate flowers, have tea, play the musical instruments, focused on the will, appreciation, and the talking, such as music, tea reception. The third is the traditional poetry meeting. In case of memorable events, such as the departure of old friends, the friendship between guests and hosts, and mutual consolation between scholars in frontier areas, the homesickness was eliminated; the festive atmosphere of elegant collection was added; and the poems sung and recited were saved and retained in the world. This is an important way of literary and emotional communication among literati. "They learn and infiltrate each other. The literati's tastes are revealed, and the inspiration is inspired, which inject more agility into the poetry of the Western Region."<sup>3</sup>Today, the theme of Suiyuan is more common in the notes and poems, represented by Wang Dashu and Shu Qishao. They had lived in Suiyuan for a long time and served as a librarian. They were very familiar with the structure and scenery of the garden. As the creation

backbones of the garden, they took the garden as the object of observation and make the repeated writing, enriching the meaning of the garden as a literary landscape. It is stated separately as follows.

### III. SUIYUAN LITERATI REPRESENTED BY WANG DASHU AT THE EARLIER STAGE

Wang Dashu (1732-1816), the literary name was Zhan Ming; Nickname was Baisha, Tianshan Yuzhe, Kongguzi; and lived in Taihu of Anhui. In the 53rd year of Emperor Qianlong (1788), he chose to be a magistrate of a county. In the same year, he was guilty and sent to Yili. In the fourth year of Emperor Jiaqing (1799), he was released to go back. Wang Dashu was one of the longest-serving officials in the Western Region in the Qing Dynasty. It lasted for 11 years. The main works are the eight volumes of the Western Expedition, which contain the western expedition, many miscellaneous stories and poetry, etc.<sup>4</sup> Wang Dashu had cultural fame, and Shu Qishao praised him as "having deep knowledge, studying the history, and being a the teachers for the children of the officials."

Wang Dashu became friends with the two masters of the Suiyuan. In the year of Jiayin, the garden was not officially named; he answered the gardener to visit the garden with the scholars. Wang Dashu said that in the banquet, the garden officially named the garden by him, and the literati congratulated this succession. The owner of the garden, Deguang, wrote the poem. Wang Dashu was invited to make an inscription to record the collection of the poetry. Zhao Ziyi of the same town wrote on shrine, observing Gao Qingxi making the congratulation text. Since then, Wang Dashu had about 7 or 8 poems on the subject of Suiyuan, and Suiyuan had begun to enjoy a good reputation.

Later, Wang Dashu answered the invitation of the owner, Zao Junbao, served as a private teacher in the Tinghe room in the garden and taught his two children. In his spare time, he was able to write manuscripts of "Western Expedition" and "Ancient History" and "Ancient Rhyme". The guest and the host were very harmonious, and Zao Junbao also invited a petty official named Tang Hengtai for Wang Dashu to assist him in copying the manuscript. Therefore, Wang Dashu became the literati who familiar Suiyuan at that time. In his writing, this garden was also a fixed gathering place for poets. "For a time, there are many literati. Li Youquan, Yang Tingli, Na Zhongfeng, Xu Tiejiao, Chen Junfeng, Wei Wenting, Zhu Jinjiang, and Chen Xiaotong always visit Suiyuan. They learn and study with each other, appreciate the poem, and admire the full moon. The owner is happy, and the sound is full of Jiucheng. Thus, Suiyuan is the best of Jiucheng, and Tinghe room is the best of Suiyuan."<sup>5</sup> Wang

<sup>1</sup> Xu Xi, "Integration makes Unity — Research on the Leisure Culture of Han Literati in Xinjiang in the Qing Dynasty", Ph.D Thesis, Shandong University, 2015, p118-128.

<sup>2</sup> Xu Xi, "Integration makes Unity — Research on the Leisure Culture of Han Literati in Xinjiang in the Qing Dynasty", Ph.D Thesis, Shandong University, 2015, p158.

<sup>3</sup> Xu Xi, "Integration makes Unity — Research on the Leisure Culture of Han Literati in Xinjiang in the Qing Dynasty", Ph.D Thesis, Shandong University, 2015, p159.

<sup>4</sup> Wang Dashu has made eight volumes of "Western Expedition". The first two volumes are the westbound "Ji Cheng"; volume three is "Xinjiang"; volume four is "Notes"; volume five and six are "Cuncao"; volume seven is "Qiongyin" recording the poems of friends; volume eight is "Dongxuancao".

<sup>5</sup> Wang Dashu, "Western Expedition", Volume 4, "Notes", "Ancient Books, Travel Notes Series", Beijing: Wire-bound Bookstore, 2003, 7007-7008.

Dashu not only recorded the list of literati attending the banquets in the garden, but also retained a large number of literary poems. Deguang wrote "Suiyuan Banquet at the Night of Mid-Autumn Festival"; Wang Zhaotai wrote "Suiyuan Banquet Collection at the Mid-Autumn Festival"; and Yang Tingli wrote "The Collection on Suiyuan". There were connect-sentence poetry wrote by Zao Junbao, Narsonga, Li Xun and Liu Huaxing. As a literary and elegant issue, Suiyuan provided such a place, and its natural scenery left the poet with an unforgettable memory.

#### IV. SUIYUAN LITERATI ACTIVITIES AT THE LATER STAGE REPRESENTED BY SHU QISHAO

After Wang Dashu's return to the East, Shu Qishao served as the backbone among the Suiyuan literati. Shu Qishao (AD 1742 — AD 1821), the literary name was Yitang, Nickname was Chunlin, and was born in Renqiu in Hebei. In the forty-four years of Qianlong's reign, Shu Qishao was enlisted to be a successful candidate in the highest imperial examinations by Enko, and later served as the post of Changxing County. He was assigned to Yili for eight years because of his negligence. There were four volumes of "Listening to the Snow", two volumes of "The Return of the Crane", and a book of "The Return of the East". Among them, "Listening to the Snow" was made by Shu Qishao during the period of Yili, and was ordered by Wang Tingkai. The collection of poems retained a large number of poems about the rewards of literati in the Western Region. It was a precious imprint to inspect the daily life of the Yili literati during the period of Emperor Qianling and Emperor Jiaqing.

Like the Wang Dashu, Shu Qishao was hired by the general of Narsong to settle down in Suiyuan. Suiyuan was not only used for the festival banquet, but also an important place for literati gatherings. With the end of his career, many Yili literati bid farewell to him in Suiyuan. Shu Qishao became one of the important witnesses. Shu Qishao had 11 poems of the "Suiyuan Notes" named after the Suiyuan Xuanshe. This was the record of the scenery of the garden, which provided us with valuable materials such as the overall layout, construction and space of the garden, and local details. This group of poems used the garden as a clue to move the scene and change the scene, and showed the space layout, pavilions, and bridges of the garden at multi-angle and multi-level. The colors were rich and the scenery was beautiful. In "Penglai Pavilion", there is a sentence that "seeing Penglai on the edge of Geden Peak, flying and watching the clouds open". People can obtain the perspective of looking at the front horizontally, and the distance between the horizons is alternating. In the "Kuanguan Pavilion", there was visual extension transformation and the expansion of landscapes. In "Qingen Building", it focused on the description of the surrounding voices, and the drums of military camps. It also used the sentence of "being special domestic and abroad, and being the best with the blessedness of Emperor" to highlight the garden". In "Lianchi", the scenery around the water surface was succinct and concise, and the sensation of the smell was used to drive the feelings "blowing the flavor and showing the scenery". In

"Zhujiating", it used the image of bamboo to foil literati noble character. There were more details in "Longsha Yanyuguan", "Jingji Shanfang", "Wanzaiting", "Banqiao", and "Shandong". From the "Yuxiang Bookstore", it can see the partial changes of Suiyuan. The original Tinghe room of Wang Dashu period was changed to be Yuxiang room for Shu Qishao. It showed that the space creation of Suiyuan was not completed at one time, and it took time to superimpose.

The garden is a unique aesthetic system in China, and the concept of Laozi's vision is presented. It can be said that Suiyuan is a good inheritor of the literati painting features of Jiangnan gardens represented by Suzhou. The landscape is like a painting, and people are in the painting, which constitutes the art of living situations. In terms of real objects, the plaques left by the literati are supplements, and the poetry works are also a kind of virtual supplements, enriching the garden. Suiyuan is a xuan room of the gardens in the Western Region. Shu Qishao was an official in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces. People can appreciate the obvious Jiangnan gardens in his writings.

#### V. CONCLUSION

First of all, for the literati officials in Yili, Suiyuan is not only the residence for the literati, but also the poetic habitat. Suiyuan meets these strangers, and the garden has become a carrier of the literati life. At the same time, the garden is also a materialized life philosophy of Chinese literati. The literati taste is used as the social division, maintaining the control position of cultural power, and also inheriting the humanity as the consciousness of life and ideal. It has integrated life and fun, the concept of joining the world and being out of the world. There is one piece of saying "between the feet, among thousands of miles". Once people enter the painting from the garden, they forget the troubles in reality. The poetry glows with emotions, induces the deepest curiosity, and brings them the relaxation and pleasure of the soul.

Secondly, the garden is located in the vast western region and the exotic frontiers. In the garden, it forms a unique field that is also true and illusory, seems to be true and false, and throws away the real time and space. Garden is more like a "life stage" with better privacy. People can release multiple emotions and multiple stories. For Western bureaucrats, they are away from the political center, and at the edge of the land. "Garden is a binary nature; the main body is mountains and rivers; the landscape is artificial; and the taste is real." In this scene, nature is natural. People choose a point in nature to place themselves. This is a typical psychological type. Looking for the world of bliss is the so-called "Peach Blossom Source". It is used to heal peace and to carry joy, becoming a paradigm of an ideal world.

Finally, the energy contained in the garden has been continually spawning a variety of opportunities. It has a unique and elegant situation to teach. The garden of the Western Region is the Peach Garden of spirituality for the literati who are far away from their homes and their careers. They interweave the cultural factors of the Central Plains, especially the cultural accumulation of "the Capital". The

cultural accumulation of "Jiangnan" interweaves together and becomes a melting pot of northwest frontier culture.

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