

Circulation and Relay: Writing Differences of "Suffering" in "One Hundred Years of Solitude" and "The Right Bank of the Ergun River"

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Abstract—Colombian writer Garcia Marquez's "One Hundred Years of Solitude" and Chinese writer Chi Zijian's "The Right Bank of the Ergun River" have similar motifs of "loneliness and vicissitudes" in form. It is a historical fate about the "circulation and relay" of their respective families, but it differs in the way of writing "suffering". Combining the parallel research and impact research methods of comparative literature, and analyzing the similarities and differences between the two novels in terms of influence, narrative technique, concern perspective and value connotation, it can be clearly seen that the two authors have different understandings and expressions of "suffering".

Keywords—"One Hundred Years of Solitude"; "The Right Bank of the Ergun River"; circulation and relay; narration of suffering

I. INTRODUCTION

Marquez's "One Hundred Years of Solitude" describes the legendary story of a family of seven generations, as well as the century's rise and fall of the small town of Macondo, a coastal town in the Caribbean. The author portrays many characters of the Buendia family with vivid brushstrokes. The couples, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters and brothers and sisters have little emotional communication and lack of trust and understanding, even though they have made various explorations and try to break the solitude, but all ended up failing. Thus, solitude became the badge and brand of this family. "The Right Bank of the Ergun River" (hereinafter referred to as "Right Bank") is a literary work depicting the history and current situation of the Ewenki people in the Mongolian region of China. The novel tells the story of the Ewenki people living on the right bank of the Ergun River with reindeer through the mouth of their last female sheikh who was nearly ninety years old. It tells how this weak and small nation struggled in the face of fate and the whole nation is gradually fading and helpless. Through the description of love and hate, unique folk customs and the legend of life and death, it shows the tenacious vitality and national spirit of a weak and small nation. From the parallel research and impact research methods of comparative literature, there are not only the impact on theme selection of "One Hundred Years of Solitude" to "Right Bank", but also

the imitation of the narrative style of "One Hundred Years of Solitude" by "Right Bank". By comparing the common motifs of "loneliness and vicissitudes" in these two excellent novels, the difference in the cognition and performance of the two writers in different countries and different periods can be seen.

II. THE DISTANCE OF CHI ZIJIAN'S IMITATION TO MARQUEZ

"Right Bank" is called "Chinese-style 'One Hundred Years of Solitude'". The two have similarities in plot setting, character fate and writing style. Therefore, people can't help but ask: How much influence does Marquez make on Chi Zijian's creation?

Since Marquez won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982, the pirated "One Hundred Years of Solitude" was introduced to mainland China and caused a strong response. Latin America's magical realism influenced the creation of a whole generation of Chinese writers in the 1980s and 1990s. In the novels of Mo Yan, Ma Yuan, Han Shaogong, Su Tong, Liu Heng and Yu Hua, Marquez's influence can be seen everywhere. As a writer who extensively ingests the nutrition of world literature, Chi Zijian will naturally be influenced by Marquez. She once said frankly: "When I wrote for several years, Marquez and Borges became popular. I like Marquez's 'One Hundred Years of Solitude' very much." [1]

However, even if Chi Zijian admits that "One Hundred Years of Solitude" is a work she highly appreciates, her novel creation has no obvious "inheritance" traces. She said: "A person must continue to absorb nutrition to perfect oneself after they 'knocking the door' with 'talent', so this also determines my attitude towards reading, very mixed." [1] It is this kind of mixed reading concept makes her a lifelong learning attitude towards world literary masters. She said: "In the early days, I like Turgenev, Yasunari Kawabata, Lu Xun, Yu Dafu, etc... Later I like Faulkner, Ellen Poe, Duras, etc... I also like the works of Qu Yuan, Su Dongpo, and Xin Qiji." [1] Countless works by Chinese and foreign writers have helped Chi Zijian to enhance her inner understanding of literary creation. Moreover, when learning from the classics of Chinese and Western literature, Chi Zijian always

maintained a dialogue posture, showing a complete sense of equality and realizing the communication between the minds in literary creation. Therefore, although Chi Zijian appreciates and loves Marquez's works, it cannot be the evidence that "Right Bank" imitates "One Hundred Years of Solitude." In fact, Chi Zijian has been involved in the surrealism, expressionism, magical realism, and existentialism of the century's world literature. She has learned from others and established the uniqueness of her own literary creation.

"One Hundred Years of Solitude" is a mixture of magical, surreal and imaginary images, and those imaginations are mostly associated with primitive, wild, and mysterious. Part of the writer's imagination stems from observations of the natural and objective world, such as realistic tornadoes, hurricanes, tsunamis and other natural phenomena; the other part is related to traditional Latin American cultural factors, including primitive religious beliefs in Indian culture. The fictional town of Macondo has connected the real world and the transcendental world. "The two worlds are intermingled and even displaced: the objective reality becomes a dream; and the dream, ghost and premonition become reality. The Macondo world has become a concrete and clear chaotic world; "One Hundred Years of Solitude" has become a modern fable." [2] "Right Bank" is also full of imaginary colors, and readers see the "Arctic Village" and fairy-tale imagination of the Daxinganling, as well as the original Ewenki nationality power and wildness. However, this kind of imagination and wildness is different from the transcendental world under the magical color of Latin America, the right bank of the Ergun River is a real and sensible experience world, which is isolated from the world without falling into the dust. The shaman image created in the novel is also derived from the fact that the Ewenki people believe in shamanism. Chi Zijian once said: "Some 'magic' is true. For example, the old shaman I wrote in "The Right Bank of the Ergun River", it is true that every time she saved a child, she would lose one of her own child, but she did not give up to save others." [3] The right bank of Chi Zijian's pen is not composed of magic and surreal, the legendary story and mysterious power of the entire weak nation are derived from the deep love of human and ecology and the old and simple emotions of the primitive people. Therefore, a certain degree of similarity in the overall style of writing between these two works is not enough to prove that the writing of "Right Bank" is directly affected by "One Hundred Years of Solitude". Macondo is Marquez's Macondo, and Chi Zijian is shaping her own right bank of the Ergun River.

III. THE SAME EXPRESSION IN THE ART FORM OF "ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE" AND "RIGHT BANK"

"One Hundred Years of Solitude" is a novel with strong magical realism. Although Marquez does not agree with this, this classification is universally recognized; and the so-called "magic" of "Right Bank" is only reflected in its naive and ethereal narrative brushwork and the psychic story under the primitive religious ritual, which do not belong to some kind of literary doctrine. Observed in the world context of

literature, these two works of different eras, different countries, and different languages have three similarities:

A. *An Artistic Atmosphere Full of Magic, Mystery and Psychic*

"One Hundred Years of Solitude" and "Right Bank" are influenced by factors such as religion, myth, legend, folk custom, etc., so more or less they would have a mysterious color tendency. Marquez follows the magical realism creation principle of "turning reality into fantasy without losing its truth", which makes "One Hundred Years of Solitude" into mysterious factors such as myths and legends, folk tales, and religious allusions. After clever conceiving and imagination, the shocking reality combined with the myths and legends of fantasy, and creates a colorful and unique style of painting, which enables the readers to acquire a familiar and unfamiliar reading experience in the image of "appear what it really is not". In "Right Bank", based on the fact that the Ewenki people believe in shamanism, Chi Zijian explains the novel's creative concept with "everything is spiritual". The characters in the story believe in the gods, respect nature also has something in common with the concept of "re-enchantment". By regaining the magical and sacred nature of nature, the re-enchanting thoughts make people respect and appreciate the nature. Therefore, the two novels are influenced by religion, mythology, folklore and other factors to present their own magical mystery, making the story plot, character behavior, and environmental background full of spirituality. Whether it is Remedios, the fourth generation of the family in "One Hundred Years of Solitude", grab the white sheets and fly with the wind, or Evelyn in "Right Bank" began to eat petals for a living when she was old, they all symbolizing a soul's comfort and spiritual home.

B. *Showing the Epic Image of the Nation, Family, and Group Characters*

In "One Hundred Years of Solitude", the "Loneliness" motif is presented by the Buendia family as a carrier: the seven generations of the family form a group of dozens of people, each of whom is afraid of being trapped in loneliness. They all resist loneliness in their own unique way; however, their survival is inseparable from this loneliness, so deep in their hearts they are eager to remain lonely and arrogant. Thus, the loneliness of a family is magnified into a huge confusion shared by modern people. Similarly, the "loneliness" motif in "Right Bank" is presented by a manifestation of the history of the weak ethnic Ewenki people, with a generation of people from a tribe of this ethnic group as the carrier: the last female sheikh of the tribe told the life and death of several generations and the rise and fall of the entire ethnic group, narrating the survival sorrow of a nation and the vicissitudes of the past century, reflecting the changes of people in a specific social context during the historical process; expressing the more development of history, the more progress of civilization, the more human beings know about themselves, but still they can not stand the ultimate question from nature and the universe. The two works are based on the family and the nation, express individuality by the name of the group. The narrative is

grand and the brushwork is magnificent. It can be said to be an epic characterization.

C. Tracing the Fate of Decline, Resistance and Suffering

The background of "One Hundred Years of Solitude" was from the 1830s to the end of the 19th century. There were dozens of civil wars in Colombia, killing hundreds of thousands of people. The "solitude" in the work not only exists in the Buendia family and the town of Macondo, but also penetrates into the blood of the entire Latin American nation and became an invisible barrier that hinders national progress and national development, making the entire suffering Latin America excluded beyond the process of the modern civilized world. In "Right Bank", the Ewenke tribe, which has been proliferating in the virgin forests for generations, suddenly came to the door of modern society and survived under the squeezing of Japanese aggression, the destruction of the Cultural Revolution and modern civilization, they stick to their clear and pure land, which reflects the reality of the struggle and failure of the weak and small nation in the process of modernization and urbanization. Under the impact of modernity and the erosion of material and spiritual aspects of foreign cultures, the two groups all tried to rise up and resist. However, the endless loneliness and vicissitudes have penetrated into the blood of their respective peoples. The primitive, backward and simple forces cannot compete with modern civilization. Therefore, all the struggles are finally exchanged for irretrievable decline and destined to the end of failure; in the cycle of fate, the gears of time crushed their heavy sufferings numerous times, leaving only a hundred years of loneliness and vicissitudes.

IV. DIFFERENT WRITING OF "LONELINESS AND VICISSITUDES" IN "ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE" AND "RIGHT BANK"

"One Hundred Years of Solitude" glimpses the vicissitudes of a century in Latin America from the perspective of a family's ups and downs. "Right Bank" is the first literary work in China to describe the living conditions of ethnic Ewenki people and the vicissitudes of the past century. Under the similar motif, the authors made several different writings on the "suffering" of their characters.

A. The Two Works Have Different Views

The encounter of the Buendia family in "One Hundred Years of Solitude" can be magnified into the whole encounter of the town of Macondo, and then extended to the common situation of the entire country, and even the entire Latin American and Latin American continent. It can be said that the Buendia family is in fact the epitome of all the nationalities and families in Latin America. This kind of scaling simultaneously magnifies the contradiction of survival and the loneliness of destiny, and is more typical. Since a family can represent a whole continent, the author's criticism points to the economic-cultural aggression of the highly developed European and American powers against lagging Latin America. The description of Chi Zijian's "Right Bank" is limited to the Ewenki people who are

sparsely populated and lacking their own national characters. Although the decline of this nation still has certain similarities and with certain reference value to other ethnic minorities (such as the Oroqen, Kirgiz, and Hezhe), but in multi-ethnic China, the experience of the Ewenki does not reflect the common situation of other minorities. Therefore, regardless of the scope of vision, the object of description or the degree of attention, "Right Bank" is doomed to be incomparable with "One Hundred Years of Solitude."

B. The Relationship Between the Subject and the Object Is Different

"One Hundred Years of Solitude" is devoted to describing the "Loneliness" and communication crisis between people and the self-enclosed mental state. The members of the Buendia family are in a state of numbness and loneliness, and the distance between people is extremely estranged, the whole family survived lonely in a force that excludes outsiders. Moreover, this kind of loneliness has been passed down from generation to generation, and the whole town of Macondo has been in a backward and pedantic social atmosphere for a long time, forming a self-enclosed small society that rejects new things. In contrast, "Right Bank" focuses on the relationship between man and nature, man and ecology, and the problem of getting along, which is determined by Chi Zijian's fascination with the natural landscape and deep homeland complex. The author portrays the rich natural scenery on the right bank of the Ergun River, making it an "idyllic" writing; the praise of the original nature and the concept of "all things are spiritual" also infiltrate the whole novel with the thought of "Re-enchantment".

C. The Relationship Between Individual and Group Is Different

"One Hundred Years of Solitude" aims to portray isolated and scattered individuals: "Akadio indulges in alchemy; Ursula is busy with housework for her whole life; Colonel O'Reilly has repeatedly made small goldfish, melt it after make it, and then made it again. Amaranta woven a winding sheet for herself all day, weaving it during the day, and dismantling it at night; the pretty girl Remedios kept taking a bath and spending time in the bathroom; Amaranta Ursula loves new fashion clothes and she constantly dressing up herself; O'Reilly is always in the house to decipher the sheepskin book, never leave the house, and his body is covered with long hair." [4] The separation and isolation thoughts run through the whole novel. On the contrary, "Right Bank" focuses on expressing the national collective consciousness: the love of the Ewenki people to the original forest land makes the whole nation closely united. The strong sense of unity stems from the national psychology that inherits the rogue between the races, and is also forced by the double survival pressure brought by primitive nature and modern civilization. Although Ni Hao Shaman has the power to bring people back to life, she can only exchange her child's death for the lives of other children. However, in order to save the people, she still chooses to sacrifice her children again and again, in the guidance of collective consciousness and the feelings of generosity in the ethnic

group, she resolves the endless grief and suffering in her heart.

D. The Fate Is Different in the Trajectory

The two nationalities in the two works both have birthmarks of life cycle and relay: "One Hundred Years of Solitude" begins with a roll of parchment prophecy, and ends with decipher the parchment, and the life of the entire family of seven generations is connected end to end. The circle symbolizes the cycle of fate. The witchcraft ritual of the Shaman in the "Right Bank" is exchanged for the resurrection of a life at the expense of another life. The life of two people is connected end to end, forming a form of "eternal life". Behind the "circular relay", because the fate cycle of the Buendia family is a kind of ring-shaped form that is connected end to end, and the fate relay of the Ewenki tribe is a continuous linear form, so the two families and nations under the cover of suffering have different endings: in the strange cycle of fate, the author is determined not to let solitude reappear, he wrote in the end of his book that: "Everything recorded in the parchment manuscript will never reappear and the family suffered a hundred years of loneliness is destined not to appear on the ground for the second time." The town of Macondo is uprooted, indicating that loneliness must be broken, and the era of closure, backwardness, and decay is gone, a brand new world with modern civilization is coming. Thus, the final outcome of the fate cycle is "finalized." The continuous form of the life-and-death relay of "Right Bank" will inevitably affect the descendants with the problems left over by history. When the younger generations bear the accumulating burden to the door of industrialized society, the decline of the nation is within the expectation. "In a hundred years of history, I feel desolate and sad. History is not broken apart; life a hundred years ago is still going on without interruption. Although it is retreating in reality, history and reality are not strictly divided... I am telling the degeneration process of this tribe, and it is an elegy." [5] Thus, the result of the fate relay is "continuation."

V. CONCLUSION

Because the cycle of fate in "One Hundred Years of Solitude" aims to break the old and establish the new, Marquez criticizes the spiritual aggression of the outsiders on the Latin American continent with spiritual loneliness, and uses the fable of the Buendia family to scream the whole nation to unite and eliminate the civil war, then to build a new world of civilization and progress. The strange circle of "time is a circle, the world is spinning" together with the solitude of thousands of years is finally destroyed, so it maintains a parallel posture of "going forward" with modern social civilization. However, the life and death relay in "Right Bank" holds a kind of psychology that adheres to the original civilization, and writes a tragic and ardent song of a weak ethnic group. Therefore, in Chi Zijian's writing, the traditional residents of the Ewenki tribe showed a returning posture of "going backward" under the general trend of modern civilization development. It tells us that under the impact of the wave of modern life, the cry of the weak

people in the deep mountains can only be the echo of the national memory that will disappear.

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