

Viewing the Publishing Positioning of "Grassland" (1950s—1960s) From the "Instructions for Authors"

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ABSTRACT

"Grassland" is the most important literary and art magazine in Inner Mongolia. This paper takes the "Instructions for Authors" of the magazine from 1950s to 1960s as the research content and adopts the method of inductive analysis to examine the publication positioning of it. From the analysis, it can be seen that, "Grassland", was established as a monthly literary magazine that nourished the literary creation of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, contacted and cultivated authors, and had a certain political color at the same time. In 1958, there were important changes in the journal, and the militancy and politics would be placed in the first place. After 1962, the overall tone of the journal was still subordinate to the revolutionary literature and art of politics. In 1966, "Grassland" basically lost the literary characteristics of the journal, and gradually returned to the positioning of the comprehensive mass literature and art journal.

Keywords: instructions for authors, Grassland, publishing positioning

I. INTRODUCTION

In November 1949, in order to implement the spirit of the first national congress of literary and art in Inner Mongolia, the Preparatory Committee of Inner Mongolia Federation of Literary and Art established the first literary and art journal in Inner Mongolia on October 1, 1950. In the first issue of "Inner Mongolia Literary and Art", Ulanhu personally wrote an inscription, pointing out that "to develop the literature and art of the mass of Inner Mongolia, literary and art workers of Inner Mongolia should be close and united, serve the people and the country together." [1] The publication of "Inner Mongolia Literary and Art" stopped in 1951 after 10 issues. Inner Mongolia Literature and Art, renamed in July 1954, was published as a comprehensive monthly literature and art magazine. In 1957, "Inner Mongolia Literary and Art" changed its name to "Grassland", which was published in April 1957. This paper takes the "instructions for authors" of "Grassland" from the 1950s to the 1960s as the research objects to investigate the publishing positioning of "Grassland" from the 1950s to the 1960s.

II. THE BEGINNING OF RESUMING PUBLICATION: A LITERARY JOURNAL WITH NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The original intention of changing the name of "Inner Mongolia Literature and Art" to "Grassland" is to separate the singing and Chinese folk art forms from other publications, and to make "Grassland" a literary

journal specialized in publishing literary works. In the opening words of "making Grassland more beautiful", the editor defined "Grassland" as a monthly literary magazine that makes "a hundred flowers bloom, a hundred schools of thought contend", flourishes the literary creation of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, contacts and trains authors, "must have strong national characteristics and local color", and "carries forward the excellent literary tradition of the nation with these precious heritages" to moisten and irrigate the young plants of literature." [2] In this issue of the "instruction for authors", it can be seen that its editorial policy and work selection are very simple. "This journal welcomes works in various forms of literature and art: 1. Poems, novels, essays, features, plays (including movie plays), folk literature, classical literature works, etc.; 2. papers and comments on creation issues, research papers on classical literature and folk literature, etc.; 3. short and concise translation with practical significance." [3]

In this period, the requirements of "Grassland" for manuscripts are very close to the requirements of the press for the unlimited theme of manuscripts. It welcomes "works of various literary and artistic forms", and distinguishes them according to "literary and artistic forms". The three types of manuscripts can be roughly divided into works, papers and translations. In such a distinction, on the one hand, the obvious political requirements seen everywhere in the previous publications have been eliminated and gradually internalized in the specific writing of works; on the

other hand, works of art such as singing and Chinese folk art forms have been separated, and the "literariness" of the publications is more pure. The outstanding impression of "Grassland" is that it adds more literary content, and also emphasizes national and regional characteristics. In the first issue of "Grassland" published a large number of literary works, such as Na Saiyinchaketu's poem "white Jiaojin Lake", Malaqinfu's prose "old herdsman and his wooden chair", Ankoqinfu's novel "Golden season" and the Mongolian classical literary works "Genghis Khan's Two Steeds" translated by Bai Gele. According to the works published in this issue, on the one hand, the journal strives to carry out its new tenet of running the journal, with more prominent and pure literariness; on the other hand, it also embodies obvious national and regional characteristics. Most of the writers of this issue are Mongolian and ethnic minority writers in Inner Mongolia. The works include both Mongolian classical literature works and the contemporary Mongolian literary works created by new authors. The following issues also basically adhere to the self-orientation of the journal and maintain a relaxed, lively and tolerant atmosphere.

Like many other magazines of the same kind in the country, "Grassland", an organ publication of the Inner Mongolia Federation of Literary and Art, is inevitably bound by the times and has a certain political color. In August 1957, "August 1 special issue" was added with the supplement of "completely counterattack the Rightists"; in September 1957, "Baogang special issue" was published to open a column on counterattacking the Rightists. On September 1957, it also published an editorial "continue to fight against the Rightists in depth", pointing out that "Grassland" needs to "use the strongest fire to fight against the Rightists", and then "achieve the complete victory of the right struggle" [4]. In addition, slogans began to occupy the commanding heights of literary expression, such as "letting the voice of hammer and poetry fill the land and sky of the motherland!", "Shining, burning, inclining, dawn of brilliant Steel Street" and other sentences, seeming artificial and blunt. At this time, "Grassland" had deviated from the literary track.

III. 1980: THE ADVOCATOR OF THE TIMES

In 1958, "Grassland" ushered in a carnival like "great leap forward" movement. In April 1958, "Grassland" published a short treatise "great harvest of correct literary creation", pointing out that in response to the slogan of Inner Mongolia Party Committee "building Inner Mongolia quickly", Inner Mongolia Branch of China Writers Association also put forward a loud battle slogan: "having two to three years of bitter struggle, literary creation should catch up with and surpass the that of past ten years in quantity and quality." In order to achieve this goal, "every writer,

poet, critic, professional and amateur soldiers engaged in literary work are required to pick up the pen, summon up the revolutionary energy and set off the climax of the great leap forward of socialist literary creation", and to be "a red expert"; second, it is required to "break the stereotypes and burn down the twilight, arrogance and delicacy in literary creation", and "change the style of writing, express correctness, vividness and vividness, as well as the universality of the subject matter and the diversity of the form", making the "Grassland" full of flowers all the year round"; third, it is necessary to "write more short forms of works: poems, short stories, one-act play, close-up works and essays reflecting people's life and struggle in the leap forward in time." [5]

Compared with the "instruction for authors" in 1957, this essay revealed the important changes of the journal after that, that is, the militancy and politics of the journal would be placed in the first place, and the writers were required to "take up the pen" as "soldiers" to participate in the "revolution" and "battle" and become "red experts". In "for readers and authors" in June 1958, the editorial department of "Grassland" also said: "in order to protect the party spirit of the cause of literature and art, thoroughly hoe through poisonous weeds and water flowers, this journal has opened literature and art review since July, with the column of everyone's comments. We warmly hope that literary and art workers, amateur writers, literary enthusiasts and readers of this journal will write more short and intrepid articles such as monographs, essays and afterthoughts on literary and art criticism, so as to help run the column of "everyone's comments". [6] Since then, the essays, features, novels and other works published in "Grassland" have begun to approach the requirements of "timely reflecting the new people and new things in the socialist comprehensive great leap forward" [7], so as to match the vigorous movement in reality. At the same time, in order to embody the purpose of literature and art serving for "industry, agriculture, animal husbandry and military", and advocate "miracles" on the production front, "Grassland" published a large number of works of "going to the mountains and the countryside, working and fighting", with strong utilitarian and pompous taste.

With the deepening of the great leap forward, on December 1958, "Grassland" published an article entitled "instructions of Inner Mongolia Party Committee on developing mass literary and art creation movement centering on reflecting the great leap forward". In response to the call of Inner Mongolia Party Committee, in February 1959, the editorial department of "Grassland" decided to edit and publish four kinds of literary and art books", and solicit articles or essays "to the professional and amateur literature of the whole region". The title, writing group, content and requirements of the series were explained in detail. The

first kind of "beautiful Inner Mongolia" required to "reflect the great changes of Inner Mongolia under the leadership of the party, the richness and beauty of Inner Mongolia, and the growing prosperity and perfection of the changes in the hands of the people of all ethnic groups"; the second kind of "revolutionary memoir" welcomed the old comrades to "recall how to eliminate all difficulties and go through numerous difficulties and dangers in class struggle and revolutionary war", so as "to educate the people with revolutionary heroism and far-reaching communist ideology." The third kind of "factory history" wanted the old workers to "write the factory history, write the history of the working class struggle", so as to "educate people to understand the past, look forward to the future, and summon up greater energy to leap forward." Fourth, "we welcome you to write the history of the people's commune and the history of the people's commune in pastoral areas, so as to improve people's awareness of communism." [8] This "solicit contributions" fully embodied the important significance and role of grassland as the most important literary media in Inner Mongolia. It can not only promote the production of literary works through the forms of "solicitation of manuscripts" and "solicitation notice", but also make these literary works show in the space it has opened up. On the one hand, it clarifies the content of its communication, and to a certain extent, it changes the existence of Mongolian and other minority literature in Inner Mongolia. From the catalogue of "Grassland" in 1959, it can be seen that "memoirs of revolution" and "history of people's commune" account for a large proportion, and novels and essays also give enthusiastic praise to "people's commune" and "great leap forward". "Sun", "flowers", "spring", "sunrise" and other terms become the most commonly used image expression in poetry and prose. At this time, "Grassland" seems to be the advocate of the times. It is worth noting that in 1958 and 1959, "Grassland" was full of politics and fighting. As the most important literary media in Inner Mongolia, it also published a large number of excellent Mongolian literary works, which made an important contribution to the dissemination of Mongolian classical literature, the development of Mongolian contemporary literature, and the excavation and collation of Mongolian folk literature.

IV. MID-1960S: COMPREHENSIVE MASS LITERATURE AND ART JOURNAL

After 1962, the state adjusted the production and life of industry and agriculture, and the pompous style of "Grassland" was weakened. However, the overall keynote of the magazine was still subordinate to the revolutionary literature and art of politics. In the "instructions for authors" in 1964, the requirement of "reflecting the class struggle" was highlighted, "reflecting the class struggle, highlighting the major

struggle and victory in the contemporary socialist revolution and socialist construction, profoundly expressing the heroic spirit of the Chinese people in the socialist construction, and educating the people with socialist and communist ideas." [9] The theme of "eulogizing" and the requirement of reflecting "three revolutionary movements: class struggle, production struggle and scientific experiment" were also emphasized in the "instructions for authors" of 1965. "Grassland" made the following provisions for the popular works. First of all, in terms of content, it is necessary to "sing praises to the party, Chairman Mao and the great achievements since the founding of the people's Republic of China, especially the great victory of the three red flags, the great victory of the party's national policy, such as reflecting the great achievements of the three revolutionary movements of class struggle, production struggle and scientific experiment, extolling the advanced figures and deeds on all fronts, especially new people, new life and new features in the current fiery struggle in the rural areas, semi-agricultural and semi pastoral areas, pastoral areas and industrial and mining areas." Secondly, in terms of form, "we welcome all kinds of short and shrewd scripts and Chinese folk art forms that are suitable for the performance of rural amateur troupes and "Wulanmuqi", as well as reportage, short stories, essays, 'four histories' and poems that are easy to understand and can be read by the masses, especially opera, Errentai, Errenzhuan, haolibao, short stories, new folk songs and poems written with folk styles." [10] From this "instruction for authors", it can be seen that: first, ideological and political nature became an important standard for choosing works of "Grassland" in this period; second, scripts, Chinese folk art forms, opera and other works of art began to return to "Grassland", and gradually became the first choice works of journals, and the original literary space was constantly squeezed. In the context of the "Cultural Revolution", the only standard to measure the quality of literary works is whether they are politically correct or not. The writers consciously use the creative principle of "three highlights" and the symbolic technique of "typicalization" to demand themselves, and the works are integrated into the national discourse expression system.

In the first issue of 1966, "Grassland" published to the readers, which was signed as "'Grassland Monthly", indicating that in order to meet the needs of new forms, "Grassland" started to restore bimonthly magazine to monthly magazine from the second quarter of that year. In order to facilitate the carrying of farmers and herdsmen, it changed 16 copies to 32 copies, with the price of each volume reduced to 0.2 yuan. The content of the manuscript required "taking Mao Zedong Thought" as the commander in chief, reflecting the three revolutions, showing the reality of the socialist

revolution and construction in the autonomous region, singing praises to the heroes and advanced deeds of Mao Zedong on the display front of industry, agriculture and animal husbandry, and singing praises to the great victory of the party's national policy. In terms of form, "it is required to be short, concise, lively and diverse", and "small operas, small plays, Errentai, Errenzhuan, haolibao, Chinese folk art forms, comic books, revolutionary stories and revolutionary songs suitable for performance in rural areas, pastoral areas, factory and mining clubs (Cultural rooms) and Ulan Muqi are welcome. Meanwhile, it is also appropriate to publish reportage, short stories, four histories and poems that are popular and easy to understand." At this point, it can be seen that "Grassland" basically lost the "literature" characteristics of the publication, and gradually returned to the position of comprehensive mass literature and art publications. At that time, in order to eulogize, but also to criticize, it has become a product of catching up with the task, and it was closed in June 1966.

V. CONCLUSION

To sum up, as the most important carrier and media of literary creation, criticism and theoretical research in Inner Mongolia, "Grassland" in the 1950s not only disseminates literary works, but also undertakes the important responsibilities of publicizing national ideology, literary concepts and policies, guiding local literary creation practice, etc. It plays an important role in the modern transformation of Inner Mongolia minority literature, not only in the passive publication, appearance and bearing of Inner Mongolia new literature, but also in giving full play to its active role as the main body of cultural media, nurturing and participating in the construction of Inner Mongolia literature. In the middle and late 1960s, "Grassland" was obviously influenced by the literature and art policy and the extreme left thought at that time. The literature activity and the writing mode pursued the "unification", and the literature and the ethnic minority's "nationality" characteristics were gradually lost.

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