

# Guangling Ci Circle and Its "Amorous Ci" Chimed Activities

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## ABSTRACT

Through the literature analysis, the paper probes into the features of Guangling Ci Circle (ci, a type of classical Chinese poetry, originating in the Tang Dynasty and fully developed in the Song Dynasty) as well as its amorous ci chimed activities, as Guangling Ci Circle has actually become an important milestone to carry forward the practical changes and theoretical construction of prosperity of ci poem, especially the amorous ci in Qing Dynasty, and laid the solid foundation for the far-reaching and significant development of ci poem, especially the amorous ci in Qing Dynasty. As the ci poems were mainly under the theme of love between men and women, the research value of amorous ci cannot be ignored absolutely.

**Keywords:** *Guangling Ci Circle, Amorous Ci, chimed activities*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of "Guangling Ci Circle" can be found first in the exposition of Yan Dichang in his "History of Ci in the Qing Dynasty": "When the tinder of 'Yun-chien' lit by Chen Zilong in Zhengjiang and other provinces were about to burn out, a group of his Jiangdong disciples had been active in the cultural centers of Suzhou, Wuxi and Changzhou etc. successively, and finally joined hands with Wang Shizhen from the north. Finally, with the combination of opportune time and favorable geographic position, the right men gathered together in Yangzhou, the ancient Guangling city, and triggered an unprecedented upsurge of ci study. This is the first time in the early Qing Dynasty to form a large scale, wide lineup, high awareness of the momentum of the ci center. In terms of its keynote, it was originally the aftereffect of 'Yun-chien' style of ci, but in fact it had been transformed generally to the ci center characterized by 'hua-jian' sentiments." [1]<sup>55</sup> This paragraph highly summarizes several important aspects of Guangling Ci Circle. First, Guangling Ci Circle was formed in the Early Qing Dynasty. Second, Guangling Ci Circle was active mainly in Yangzhou. Third, the leading figure of Guangling Ci Circle was Wang Shizhen. Fourth, the literary nature of Guangling Ci Circle is the center of ci studies. Fifth, the literary characteristics of Guangling Ci Circle is outwardly the aftereffects of "Yun-chien" ci style, but actually have been transformed into "hua-jian" sentiments generally. Sixth, the literary value of Guangling Ci Circle lies in that it initiated an unprecedented upsurge of ci study, which was formed

for the first time in the early Qing Dynasty. It was large in scale, wide in lineup, high in self-consciousness and vigorous in momentum.

The amorous ci chimed activities of Guangling Ci Circle not only contributed to the birth of important forms of artistic expression in the creation of amorous ci such as "feng ren zhi zhi" and "a tune with eight pieces", etc., but also became a milestone to promote the practical reform and theoretical construction of Qing ci, especially amorous ci, laying a foundation for the far-reaching development of ci, especially amorous ci in Qing Dynasty.

## II. GUANGLING CI CIRCLE PROMOTES THE PRACTICAL REFORM AND THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE REVIVAL OF CI, ESPECIALLY THE AMOROUS CI IN QING DYNASTY

### A. *The formation time of Guangling Ci Circle: early Qing Dynasty*

"So the evolution of works is related to the social situation, and the ups and downs of the literary world are related to the dynamic of the times" [2]<sup>511</sup> The transformation of literature and even culture is closely related to the change of dynasties and the survival of the nation. At the turn of Ming and Qing dynasties, the literati and official classes were stunned, distressed, and disturbed. The formation of Guangling Ci Circle is closely related to the ruling class's attitude towards literati in early Qing Dynasty.

According to Chen Yishan's "Liyuan Unofficial History": "When Qing invaded China, the official Hong Chengchou taught the authorities to buy popularity since those coveting money and wealth would surrender; as for the scholars, if they can enjoy honor and distinction just by making stereotyped writing, they certainly would abandon their previous emperor. Therefore, Provincial Examination was held." [3]<sup>106-107</sup> In his "Cultural History of Ming and Qing Dynasties", Feng Tianyu said, "the Qing government had different attitudes towards literati in different periods of the early Qing Dynasty: during the first decade of Emperor Shunzhi's Reign, it adopted the exploitation policy; from the eleventh year of Shunzhi's Reign to the tenth year of Kangxi's Reign, it adopted the coercion policy; after the tenth year of Kangxi's Reign, it adopted the policy of conciliation." [4]<sup>352</sup> Since the tragic "10-day Massacre in Yangzhou" carried out by the Qing army from the 25th of the fourth lunar month to 5th of the fifth lunar month in the second year of Emperor Shunzhi's Reign, Yangzhou bore the brunt of the Qing government's tyranny and coercion as a terror area. According to Meng Sen's "Series of Heart History", the people involved in the case were "more than 13,500 literati and 240 officials" [5]<sup>1</sup>. Most of them were Jiangnan people near Yangzhou. The treatment of those involved in the case was extremely cruel. "The current officer was demoted by two grades, sent to Beijing and sent to the Ministry of Penalty for severe punishment" [5]<sup>10</sup>. According to "San Gang Shi Lue" by Dong Han, "They were being even crueler before long, for example, an official was punished so severely that the school became empty." [6]<sup>56</sup> In this passage, the official Ye Fang'ai was punished severely just for a little amount of money in debt. It can be seen that the punishment of the Qing government was very severe. The brutal punishment resulted in a phenomenon that "there were almost no officials in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces". The literati in the south and north of the Yangtze River were very afraid all day long.

"What was the timing of the resurgence of ci-ology? The author's conclusion is Wang Shizhen's ci-related activities in Yangzhou. This is the most unique part of his literary activities, but also the most noteworthy event in the whole Ci Circle of Qing Dynasty." [8]<sup>92</sup> This is Jiang Yin's self-questioning and self-answering in his "Wang Yuyang and the Origin of Ci in Qing Dynasty", which is very to the point. Several years later, Li Dan explained in the "Introduction" of the book, "Research on the Guangling Ci Circle During the Reign of Emperor Shunzhi and Emperor Kangxi in Qing Dynasty", that "The Guangling Ci Circle was formed from 1660 to 1665 when Wang Shizhen served as an official in Yangzhou" [9]<sup>4-5</sup>. It was during such a turbulent period of change of dynasties that the Guangling Ci Circle came into being. Time and opportunity are constantly moving, contents and forms

are constantly changing, and the same is true in ancient times as it is today!" [2]<sup>496</sup>

#### *B. The activity area of Guangling Ci Circle: Yangzhou*

"Guangling, the ancient name of Yangzhou, has been a gathering place for scholars since ancient times." [10]<sup>44</sup> Yangzhou and the southern political center of Nanjing face each other across the river, coupled with extremely convenient waterway traffic, and close contact with the anti-Manchu front. Due to such a special geographical location, a large number of dismissed officials and literati gathered in Yangzhou. After the country was ruled by the Qing Dynasty, Yangzhou city once became a place where the 'adherents of Ming Dynasty' from the north and the south met and discussed the court." [11]<sup>63</sup> Yangzhou, once a bustling city, was in a terrible state since Qing troops moved south.

Yangzhou has been a fertile ground for ci literature since ancient times. In the late Tang Dynasty and the Five Dynasties Period, Guangling, that is, Yangzhou and Jinling, namely Nanjing, was the cultural center in the South of the Yangtze River, especially the lyric creation base. [12]<sup>33</sup> During the Song Dynasty, Ouyang Xiu, Su Shi, Liu Yong, Zhou Bangyan, Jiang Kui and Qin Guan all left immortal poems here to praise about Yangzhou. In the Yuan and Ming dynasties, although ci-ology was declining, the musical and literary tradition in Guangling, namely Yangzhou was not cut off. The famous ci writers Guan Yunshi and Bai Pu were all engaged in creative activities here. In the mid and late Ming dynasty, famous ci-ologist and ci writer Zhang Wei and Wang Wei were produced here. Due to the special political and cultural background in early Qing Dynasty, the specific region, Yangzhou with a long and profound tradition of ci studies, has become a hotbed for the revival of literature prosperity, especially the reform and revitalization of ci style.

In her master's thesis "Study Yangzhou Ci of Guangling Ci Tan in Shunkang", Liu Sainan believed that the heritage of "urban prosperity" and "urban destruction" coexist in Yangzhou. Although Yangzhou has long ceased all activities and become an obscure city, scholars and poets have been portraying it throughout the centuries. Yangzhou's ups and downs are necessary to show the city, its reversal of fortune are the its natural and unshakeable fate. These themes have guided generations of Yangzhou people to depict the city, to give and express the special connotation of it. Yangzhou is described not only in terms of its beautiful moonlight, its rich merchants, prostitutes and geisha as well as celebrities, but also in terms of the humiliation and trauma brought by the war, and the decay and decline of the city. These themes, expressed in history as well as in literature, are an accumulation of

the cultural heritage created by the literati over many centuries. [13]<sup>39</sup>

The reality of Yangzhou city in the early Qing Dynasty was in extreme contrast to the history and became a unique scenery standing in the heart of the poet. There was a striking contrast between the crowds, traffic and hustle and bustle in the past, and the cold and cheerless, destitution, comedown and desolation then. The once resplendent, dissipated and feasting ruins of the Sui Palace has been deserted and as still as still. Sadness permeated the air of the Early Qing Dynasty. In his "Selected Poems of the Three Talented Persons in Yun-chien", Chen Zilong said, "Birds do not sing for the spring, yet spring is warm; insects do not moan for autumn, yet autumn is sad. Amid the change of times, animals and plants cannot be their own masters. Seeing them breaking the army and killing the generals, people have no way but to express their anger and sadness in poems" [14]<sup>8</sup>. The feeling of rise and fall, the grief for home and country, the pain of the body, became ci as blood and tears. Yangzhou was no longer a beautiful place, but a shabby one.

During his stay in Yangzhou, Wang Shizhen "was busy welcoming the ci writers after finishing his official duties" [15]<sup>154</sup>. He presided over a series of activities related to ci studies, which quickly activated the creation of regional lyric-writers and made his fame spread far and wide, attracting scholars from all over the country to gather there. The ci creation and study atmosphere in Yangzhou was unprecedented at that time. Peng Sun Yu, a poet who later became an important member of the Guangling Ci Circle, accurately described the grand situation of ci writers in Yangzhou at that time in a poem with which he presented Wang Shizhen "Da Yishang", "In every dynasty there were famous writers, and the most beautiful sentiments were born in Yangzhou" [16]<sup>185</sup> In other word, if we compare the ci writers from all over the country gathering in Yangzhou to mountains, the first peak is Mount Tai in the Dong Yue (great mountain in the east), because Wang Shizhen is a metaphor for the Dong Yue, and all ci writers' most perfect works come from Yangzhou. [17]<sup>87</sup>

Yan Dichang put forward in "History of Ci in the Qing Dynasty" that "Ci poets in Yangzhou in the early Qing Dynasty kept emerging, and their fame spread all over the country. Such famous figures as Chen Shixiang and the brothers of Mao Xiang formed a very good atmosphere" [1]<sup>55</sup> Liu Yangzhong believed that "Those who made ci in Yangzhou are not just local ci writers, but also the ones with the characteristics of the city." [17]<sup>86</sup> The formation of such a group of people in Yangzhou marked that the Guangling Ci Circle had begun to ascend the historical stage in Yangzhou.

### C. *The leading figure of Guangling Ci Circle: Wang Shizhen*

Wang Shizhen (1634-1711), called Yishang (a name taken at the age of twenty), with aliases of Ruanting, Yuyangshanren, is of Shandong descent. "Young as he was, he overshadowed thousands." [18]<sup>69</sup> Before Wang Shizhen came to Yangzhou, he had long been famous. In 1657, he wrote a poem named "Autumn Willow" in Daming Lake of Jinan, Shandong province. The poem contained unpredictable thoughts and faintly discernible nostalgia about his mother country, which was so famous and has a profound influence on Yangzhou. [19]<sup>87-90</sup> At the early period of Guangling Ci Circle's formation, as there were not many ci writers, the circle was a group without leader. Although Zou Zhimo, Peng Sunyu and others had made quite a lot of works which are not bad, their overall learning and virtue could not be comparable to Wang Shizhen. Although Wu Weiye and other surviving elders were highly respected with virtue, they had more concerns and compromised with the tyrannies of the Qing Dynasty. It was obvious that they lacked ambition and were depressed. Just at the right time, Wang Shizhen emerged with moral nature and great learning. "It was such an interesting historical handover, so objectively, Yuyang became the bridge connecting the three great ci writer (Wu Weiye, Gong Dingnie and Cao Rong) and the master duo Chen Weisong and Zhu Yizun from the Ming Dynasty to the Qing Dynasty." [8]<sup>95</sup> Gu Zhenguan, a ci writer of the Qing Dynasty, once said, "Since the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, there have been many famous predecessors and leaders who make all kinds of excellent poems and ci, but Wang Shizhen should be considered the most outstanding one." [20]<sup>3452</sup> "Wang Shizhen's ci creation and study activities in Yangzhou cultivated a group of ci writers, encouraged a kind of ci-writing style, and accumulated strength for the next stage of the revival of Qing Ci." [21]<sup>228</sup> "Wang Shizezhen was an important figure who led, promoted, criticized and was enthusiastic about ci writing. who was highly expected by the elders and promoted and followed by the people of the time, thus gaining popularity. He led and encouraged the atmosphere of ci writing, accumulating strength for the revival of ci in the next stage and playing a leading role in the comprehensive revitalization of ci in the Qing Dynasty." [22]<sup>257</sup> Wang Shizhen's becoming the leader of Guangling Ci Circle, was both that he picked Yangzhou and that Yangzhou chose him.

Yangzhou chose Wang Shizhen through giving him three roles: tui guan in Yangzhou (a type of official), talent scout in the ci circle, and elder brother of the adherents of the former dynasty. As a tui guan in Yangzhou, he cared for people and did thing good for people, practiced the policy of benevolence during the oppressive tyranny of the Qing Dynasty and gave quarter to people involved in the "Haitong Case" and

"Zouxiao Case" As a talent scout in the ci circle, he is eclectic in all kinds of creative styles, good at encouraging and discovering talents, instruct people, and discover able people and put them at suitable posts. For example, he promoted and funded Sun Mo to compile the "Poetry of Famous Poets in the Dynasty", showing his unique vision in selecting and employing people. Most of the scholars Wang Shizhen befriended were commoners. "For these friends, he would provide some financial and cultural support. For example, he let Chen Yunheng live in Wenxuan Building in Yangzhou and help to compile the compilation of his "Guo Ya Collection"; and he also edited and published poetry anthology for the poet Lin Gudu." [13]<sup>14</sup> Although Wang Shizhen was an official of the Qing Court in Yangzhou, it was obvious that he had become the elder brother of the adherents of the former dynasty in troubled times. He was magnanimous, disregard previous enmity and helped people whether they are afflicted gentries, surviving adherent of late Ming Dynasty, sorehead scholars or turncoat officials in the new dynasty. He was always ready to help others, and even return good for evil.

Wang Shizhen picked Yangzhou, which is reflected in his initiative to do a good job in the city in two aspects. First, he recalled scholars of the past in retrospect and inherited the tradition of ci creation. Second, he organized the advancement of talent and planed the chimed activities. The City of Amorous, Yangzhou has been a place of ci since ancient times. Wang Shizhen took the initiative to visit Qian Qianyi, Wu Meicun and other famous writers in the early Qing Dynasty on many occasions. He also visited the former Pingshan Hall to recall Ouyang Xiu and Su Shi and wrote the poem "Zhongchuo · Pingshan Hall, To the Original Rhyme of Master Ou", aiming to recalling the past wise men and promote the atmosphere of creating and discussion ci, so as to inherit the tradition of ci creation. This kind of conscious behavior of Wang Shizhen is well documented. For example, Du Jun recorded that Yangzhou has been a place for cultural celebrities and officials since ancient times, among which the most famous two were Ouyang Xiu and Su Dongpo. To the west of Yangzhou now stands a small red-colored bridge, around where lotus flowers bloom along with New York in May, and where Wang Shizezhen wrotes his latest ci works in continuation of that cultural tradition. Wang Shizhen also conducted advancement of talent, ci chimed activity with drinking and commenting works, through which he befriended many afflicted gentries, surviving adherent of late Ming Dynasty, sorehead scholars or turncoat officials in the new dynasty Wang Shizhen trusted and promoted Zou Zhimo, and joined hands with him in compiling the "Yi Sheng Chu Ji". Wang also elaborated the amorous ci chimed activities. All these laid the foundation for the development and expansion of Guangling Ci Circle,

and stimulated and promoted the practical reform and theoretical construction of the revival of ci, especially the amorous ci in Qing Dynasty.

#### *D. The literary nature of Guangling Ci Circle: the center of ci studies*

On the surface, Guangling Ci Circle looks like a regional school of ci. Guangling Ci Circle had a creation base, Yangzhou, leading figures such as Wang Shizhen, Zou Zhimo, Peng Sunyu and Chen Weisong, etc., and a large number of writers writing the same Yangzhou-themed ci, as well as ci collections like the declaration of a genre "Yi Sheng Chu Ji" and "Poetry of Famous Poets in the Dynasty", just like the "Hua Jian Ji" of the Hua-jian School, "Ci Zong" of the West Zhejiang School and the "Ci Xuan" of the Changzhou School, though. As a school, it lacks the most basic condition, namely, the common artistic style and aesthetic tendency of ci writers. It can be seen, just from the comparative analysis of the ci works and ci theories of Wang Shizeng, Zou Gion, Peng Sun Yu and Chen Weisong, four core leaders of Guangling Ci Circle, that their artistic styles and aesthetic tendencies are very different. In terms of ci creation, Wang Shizhen highly praise the style in late Tang Dynasty and Northern Song Dynasty and he particularly model himself after Wen Tingyun, Li Qingzhao, Chen Zilong; he even chimed with all the pieces in Li Qingzhao's "Shu Yu Ci" in lockstep with their original rhymes. He shared the artistic style and aesthetic tendency with the Hua-jian School. "What is thought in mind and written by hand is all beautiful and elegant and pleasant." [23]<sup>3426</sup> After an analysis of Peng Sunyu's "Yan Lu Ci", it can be seen that many ci lyrics are very beautiful and have their own characteristics." [1]<sup>58</sup> Although Zou Zhimo compiled the "Yi Sheng Chu Ji" together with Wang Shizhen, his ci theories not just advocates those in late Tang Dynasty and the Northern Song Dynasty, but also recognizes the different schools in the Southern Song Dynasty and embraces different styles and formats. In addition, in his works, there are not only works about amorous affairs following the Hua-jian School, but also those about ambition, loyalty and faithfulness as a man. What's more, the ci style of Wang Weisong was totally different form that of Wang Shizhen, Zou Zhimo and Peng Sunyu. He completely inherited the bold style and opened his own faction with unique charm.

To sum up, it is obvious that Guangling Ci Circle is a creation group of ci writers with loose structure, short activity time and inconsistent creative styles and aesthetics. This group is a ci study center with Yangzhou as a regional symbol rather than a literary school. Wu Qi, one of the most important ci writers in Guangling Ci Circle, said, "In the past, all ci writers respected the Yun-chien school, which belonged to

Lanling School, but today it is Yangzhou School that is being valued" [24]<sup>817</sup>

*E. The literary characteristics of Guangling Ci Circle: seemingly the aftereffects of "Yun-chien" ci style, but actually it has been transformed into "hua-jian" sentiments generally*

Yun-chien Ci School was an important ci school in the late Ming and early Qing Dynasties. It was amid the lingering charm of it that many ci writers in Guangling Ci circle, with Wang Shizezhen, Wang Shilu, Zou Gion Mo, Peng Sun Yu and other core members gradually entered the ci circle. "What he thought in his mind and wrote by his hand was all beautiful." [23]<sup>3426</sup> Tang Yunjia said in the preface of "Poem Collection of Ruanting", "Wang Shizhen is the best among all in writing about flowers and what he thought in his mind and wrote by his hand was all beautiful." [24]<sup>143</sup> "Hua Cao Meng Shi" is Wang Shizhen's only work on ci theories, from which it can be seen that his only tendency in ci study is his praise for 'Hua Jian Ji'." [24]<sup>96</sup> In the article "Comparison Between the Ci Works of Wang Shilu and Wang Shizhen", He Qin said, "Both Wang Shilu and Wang Shizhen were influence by the ci styles of 'Hua Jian' and 'Cao Tang' at the turn of Ming and Qing dynasties. Wang Shilu was conscious in inheriting the ci style of 'Hua Jian' and 'Cao Tang'. He said in the 'Author's Note in Cui Wen Ci' that I chose the styles in 'Huan Jian', 'Zun Qian' and 'Cao Tang' and made them more standardized'. As for the attitudes towards "Flowers" and "Grasses", Shizhen and Shilu were in accordance." [25]<sup>105</sup> Wang Shizezhen, leader of Guangling Ci Circle, and his brother Wang Shilu, built the "Huan-jian" School under the influence of "Yun-chien", which was true of other poets in Guangling Ci Circle, such as Zou Zhimo and Peng Sunyu, etc.

Since Guangling Ci Circle was ci center with Yangzhou characteristics deeply imprinted in its bone, Many of its ci writers naturally tended to explore and reflect the cultural connotation of Yangzhou in their ci works, which reflected their thoughts and feelings about personal life, family and country in Yangzhou, the city of amorous ci at the turn of the Ming, Qing and Qing Dynasties. It was also because Guangling Ci Circle was a ci center instead of a certain school, which made it inclusive of all different styles that its construction of Yangzhou images appeared diversified yet unified, and showed regional characteristics of the "hua-jian" sentiments with distinct features from those in other periods of history yet in harmony with them. The literary value of Guangling Ci Circle: raising an unprecedented climax in ci study, the first time in the early Qing Dynasty, which was large in scale, wide in lineup, high in self-consciousness and vigorous in momentum.

As an open and inclusive ci-ology center, Guangling Ci Circle covers writers from Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces and all over China. It was because it was not a regional ci school resting on its laurels, that it was naturally responsible for the great pioneering role in creating a ci style in Qing Dynasty that no general school of ci could achieve. Its leader Wang Shizhen, as though he often made enlightening remarks, was always non-sectarian. He made concerted efforts with Zou Zhimo, Peng Sunyu, etc., with the purpose of opening a generation of ci composing only. "Zun Qian Ji" in the early Northern Song Dynasty and "Hua-jian Ci Collection" in the late Southern Song Dynasty all have their own characteristics, advantages and opinions on the basis of mutual learning and supplement. Wang Shizhen and Zou Zhimo promoted and praised these ci collections, which fully demonstrated the forward-looking and broad mind of the major ci leaders in Guangling Ci Circle in the early Qing Dynasty. The ci writers in Guangling Ci Circle played their respective roles and made full use of their talents, which promoted the blooming of a hundred flowers, the contention of a hundred schools of thought and the competition of all writers in the ci circle in the early Qing Dynasty. As a result, the revival of Qing ci, especially the amorous ci, also comes naturally.

Those experienced the chimed activities of Guangling Ci circle, from Yangzhou or elsewhere, are mostly young ci writers, who made their debut in various ways after Wang Shizhen left Yangzhou. Later, most of them became influential figures in the field of ci. Some built their own schools and set up their styles as masters, the most typical example of which was Chen Weisong of the Yangxian Ci School. The Guangling Ci group with Wang Shizhen as the leading figure opened the revival of Qing ci, especially the amorous ci. The emergence of the group of Guangling ci writers was an inevitable appearance in the field of literature and art in the early Qing Dynasty.

On the surface, the important ci activities organized by Guangling Ci Circle were the first climax of ci study in large scale, with strong lineup, high self-consciousness, strong momentum and unprecedented prosperity in the early Qing Dynasty. However, it is actually a breakthrough of the restrictions made by the "Yun-chien" School. It not only "triggered the group creation of ci schools headed by Chen Weisong, but also inspired the aesthetic tendency of ci people headed by Zhu Yizun in artistic spirit" [8]93. Moreover, these activities stimulated and promoted the practical reform and theoretical construction of the revival laid a foundation for the far-reaching development of Qing ci, especially the amorous ci.

### III. THE CHIMED ACTIVITIES OF AMOROUS CI BY GUANGLING CI CIRCLE: INDUCING "FENG REN ZHI ZHI"

According to the analysis and discussion on the chimed activities by Guangling Ci Circle made in the two articles of Jiang Yin's "Wang Yuyang and the Origin of Ci in Qing Dynasty" by and Liu Yangzhong's "Study on the Group of Poets in Guangling in Early Qing Dynasty", the chimes activities of Guangling Ci Circle were mainly: "ou xing chiming", "Qing Xi Yi Shi' Picture Album" chiming, "Female Embroider Painting" chiming, "Boudoir ci" chiming, "Red Bridge" chiming and "Shu Gang Tiao Wang" chiming. In these six activities of chiming, more than twenty kinds of long tones were used and more than forty pieces of ci were chimed. The use of long tones enables these vocals to express a wider range of emotional content. "Rhymes" or "second rhymes" have been used more than in previous lives since the beginning of the chimed activities in Guangling Ci Circle. This greatly promoted the artistic skills and even the overall ability of the ci writers in the early Qing Dynasty, and to a certain extent, it also enriched the creation of Qing Ci, especially the amorous ci. There are many works of amorous ci in the "ou xing chiming", "Red Bridge" chiming and "Shu Gang Tiao Wang" chiming. In most works, the way of expressing emotion was free expression of one's feeling, and the content of the thoughts is to express the nostalgia at the turn of two dynasties, the reminiscence of old time and detachment featuring the feeling of being tired of worldly fame of the adherents of Ming Dynasty. "Therefore, in such chiming of direct expression of nostalgic feelings, they could ease the lump in their heart and encourage each other with "open-minded words", so as to find a spiritual path to free themselves in the deep thinking and oscillation. In another "ou xing" chiming, Wang Shizhen showed his weariness to the common customs in his first piece, and others did their bit to support him. Detachment came from the repetitive chiming. It is in this kind of repeated narration that not only achieves the purpose of comforting each other, but also enables the ci people to find a good way to share, comfort and warn others. At the time of this chiming, the participants were mostly young men who had just entered official positions. Therefore, their unfamiliarity with life is strongly in need of confide and consolation." [26]<sup>71-72</sup> Because of its close proximity to reality, self-concern, genuine and sincere feeling, and mutual sympathy among writers, this kind of singing directly expresses the feelings of the heart, which lays the foundation for the universality, breadth and mass character of the singing of the amorous ci in Guangling Ci circle.

In the "Preface of Red Bridge Ci Collection", Wang Shizhen records that the Red Bridge chiming initiated by him was on the fifth day in the last month of summer

of 1662, and the Red Bridge was located in the west of Pingshan Hall, two li northwest of Yangzhou Prefectural City. Wang Shizhen loved sceneries by nature. But his love for the Red Bridge came not only from the beautiful sceneries there; the more important reason was that the Red Bridge was so near to the Pingshan Hall, which was built by Ouyang Xiu, the grandmaster of amorous ci. Under the repressive and brutal rule of the early Qing Dynasty when people mostly maintained discreet silence, he chose such a place adjacent to the grandmaster of amorous ci to make the sound of it, which was full of originality and well-intention. According to the "Table of Basic Situation of Participants in Red Bridge Chimed Activities" in Zhang Hongsheng's "Wang Shizhen's Ci-poetic Activities in Yangzhou and the Ci-poetic Circles in the Early Qing Dynasty", participants of this activity were Yuan Yuling, Du Jun, Qiu Xiangsui, Jiang Jie, Zhu Kesheng, Zahng Yangchong, Liu Liangsong, Chen Yunheng, Chen Weisong, Wang Youdan, Zou Zhimo, Yu Huai and Cao Jizhen. Among them on the list, the identities of adherents and non-adherents are almost equally divided, [19]<sup>89-93</sup>, all of whom raised the chimed activity with the largest number and most complicated composition of participants of Guangling Ci Circle. Why could this Red Bridge chimed activity gather and inspire so many ci writers with different identities but the same passion for creation to participate in it? This is closely related to the high pressure and violence of the ruling class in the early Qing Dynasty. As mentioned above, during the period of Guangling Ci Circle in the reigns of Emperor Shunzhi and Kangxi, whether it was for afflicted gentries, surviving adherent of late Ming Dynasty, or sorehead scholars and turncoat officials in the new dynasty, there was desolation that the old nest is broken yet the new one could not be rest upon; and it was same for all of them that the life changes at the turn of dynasties led to the befuddlement, sadness, panic and numbness deep in their heart. Both of us being strangers here, both of us stranded, does it matter that we've just met, if our hearts understand? This helplessness of the replacement of sadness instead prompted each other to dilute the obvious differences in identity. In particular, the afflicted gentries and sorehead scholars also received the help of the new rich and turncoat officials when they were drifting from place to place and wondering around homeless and miserable. Therefore, in the social atmosphere at that time, the ci writers did not care too much about each other's political standpoint in their communication, but formed some subconscious tacit understanding deep in their hearts.

This kind of tacit understanding, as Li Youqiang analyzes in the article "Study of Guangling Ci Tan Under the Guidance of Wang Shizhen": "and for the common adherents who experienced change of world affairs and quite a lot of vicissitudes of life, it was

already very difficult to change the current political situation, fierceness and craziness had already become the impulses of youth, what most inspired them then was not the roar, but the inexplicable touch and the unspeakable sadness they feel during the natural solar term transition. And when Ruanting came into the Red Bridge, 'one often could not explain the mix of pain and happiness he felt deep in his heart. "Looking back at the history, will the discussion of state affairs of the powerful, the grief of King Jing of Qi Kingdom even matter?" So there was a discourse system that could be communicated with the adherents, which make such a big splash." Ruanting refers to Wang Shizhen. Now, the tui guan in Yangzhou, talent scout in the ci circle, and elder brother of the adherents of the former dynasty, the main leader of Guangling Ci Circle, which is a combination of time, geography and people, was firmly grounded and personally on the scene, at the Red Bridge in Yangzhou, the city of amorous ci. For young Wang Shizhen, who was mature, calm and dignified, and brilliant, this sorrow of changing dynasties out of worries about the country and the people was under the disguise of the big-hearted "when the weather gets cool he says nice autumn". In fact, as early as 1657, he had such deep feelings when he organized the singing of "Autumn Willow Poem" at Daming Lake in Jinan, Shandong province. "'Autumn Willow Poem' was originally composed to satirize and criticize Zhu Yousong, the King Fu for wrecking the country and courting his own destruction with the life experience of some female like Zheng Tuoniang as stimulants (one of the modes of expression in Chinese poetry, called xing is to borrow something else in order to cause the thing being intoned; the other corresponding mode is called bi, which is to compare an object with another)". Using the sentiments between men and women to relate to and convey the righteousness between the monarch and his ministers in use of the bi-xing method originated from Qu Yuan's creation of "Li Sao", which is generally called "feng ren zhi zhi" (the soul of being a poet). To this day and in this situation, Wang Shizhen successfully organized the "Red Bridge chiming" by relating to the once famous "Autumn Willow Poem". "In this 'Red Bridge chiming'. Wang Shizhen chose the Tune of 'Huan Xi Sha', which has the closest form to the 'Autumn Willow Poems', from which his intention can be seen. ... We can also see the flavor of "Autumn Willow Poem" from Wang Shizhen's lyrics on Raccoon Sand." [27]<sup>84</sup>

In his "History of Ci in the Qing Dynasty", about the fact that the history in Emperor Shunzhi and Kangxi's reign bred the evolution and revival of amorous ci", Yan Dichang had an incisive exposition, "Located to the north of the Yangtze River, Yangzhou, where salt merchants collect wages, has a delicate political character, and many of the representatives of Ci writers who have gathered here were being punished

or demoted. Therefore, the remaining grudge of a broken country and family, along with the newly-felt pain, are not much in concert with the amorous tones softly crooned, and a change in the underlying state is thus inevitable." [1]<sup>56</sup> This is the inherent power of the evolution of ci. "It can be seen that the development and reflection of ci is indeed closely related to the changes of the world." [28]<sup>96</sup> Obviously, in a relatively stable political environment, amorous ci and the state of mind are not contradictory, feelings caused purely by personal ups and downs and other experiences can be expressed completely through amorous ci with its nature of grief over spring and reluctance of parting as well as other artistic forms. Even if "men write in the perspective of women", it is also in line with the consistent discrimination of the so-called orthodox culture or mainstream culture has always been represented by Confucianism against the amorous ci, that is, poetry can express ambition, prose can convey truth, and ci is just a minor form just to reveal personal feelings. Such dissonance is rare or even completely absent from the typical works of "Hua Jian Ci" in Western Shu, or the ci works of literati in northern Song, especially those of Ouyang Xiu and Su Shi who once held posts in Yangzhou, the city of amorous ci. At the turn of Ming Dynasty and early Qing Dynasty, however, especially in the period of Guangling Ci Circle during the Reign of Emperor Shunzhi and Emperor Kangxi in the Qing Dynasty with the high pressure of political repression and violent rule to an extreme, Yangzhou, the city of amorous ci in the past, although people being plunged into an abyss of misery, has become the most sensitive area for all kinds of faces on stage as a land and water transport hub in the Jiangnan area. The mixed feelings in a displaced life of the adherents and scholars who struggled, sunk and was depressed in their perch, transit and stay in Yangzhou, the ruin of the once city if amorous ci gave the city a more secret, obscure, deep and melancholy sentiment, which was especially similar to the collective resonance of national hatred and family enmity. If the general artistic form of amorous ci is applied here, it will be difficult to freely express such a profound and deep collective resonance, especially something like the national hatred and family enmity, under the cruel realistic situation, which will certainly lead to the harmony of artistic form and ideological content of amorous ci. At a cruel and stern situation where the ideological contents of such a profound and deep collective resonance could only be conveyed freely in the form of amorous ci, which gave rise to a more subtle and implicit artistic form of amorous ci. The historical mission and the opportunity of amorous ci evolution, inevitably chose Wang Shizhen. Wang Shizhen inevitably chose the form of amorous ci chiming. The amorous ci chiming inevitably chose "Qing Xi Yi Shi' Picture Album" chiming, "Female Embroider Paiting" chiming and "Boudoir Ci" chiming,

all based on the "Autumn Willow Poem" chiming. And these three typical amorous ci chiming inevitably chose the expression techniques of bi-xing and placing emotions, that is, the artistic form of "feng ren zhi zhi". Such evolution of amorous ci was in the continuous efforts of Wang Shizhen in organizing the chimed activities, in which unconscious act turned into conscious perception and deliberate guide, and "pure amorous chimed activities turned into activities mixed with expostulation for the emperor" [29]<sup>102</sup>.

In "'Qing Xi Yi Shi' Picture Album" chiming, "Female Embroider Paiting" chiming, "Boudoir Ci" chiming, there is more indirect expression of feelings in which the feelings such as national hatred and family enmity expressed through the techniques of bi-xing and placing emotions have to more secret, sharp, gloomy and profound. In an extraordinary time when the harsh reality could not allow him to speak his mind without scruple, along with ci writers of the Guangling Ci Circle, Wang Shizhen made their spiritual garden of the Red Bridge the habitat of the soul. They cleverly selected the amorous ci that had always been regarded as a minor form and was not enough to attract the attention from literary inquisition authorities of the Qing ruling class. By way of playing with romantic themes in their amorous tunes of expostulation for the emperor, they convey the strong sad tone of changing dynasty in their innermost feelings with the subtle implicit and veiled use of bi-xing and placing emotions. The art form of expostulation for the emperor of the amorous ci in Guangling Ci Circle is an important milestone in the evolution and development of ci especially the amorous ci in Qing Dynasty.

#### **IV. ARTISTIC INNOVATION OF THE AMOROUS CI CHIMED ACTIVITIES OF GUANGLING CI CIRCLE: A TUNE WITH EIGHT PIECES**

In terms of artistic form, the most important feature of the amorous ci chimed activity of Guangling Ci Circle is its innovative use of a tune with multiple pieces. In the "Qing Xi Yi Shi' Picture Album" chiming, Wang Shizhen blazed a new path of making eight pieces based on one tune in "Pu Sa Man · Qing Xi Yi Shi Picture Album", leaving a profound influence on the chimed activities of ci of later generation. In the "Huan Xi Sha · nostalgia in the Red Bridge " in the first year of Emperor Kangxi's Reign, there were three pieces based on the one tune. Although it was not the first to open the fashion of one tune with multiple pieces in the early Qing Dynasty, its spreading effect was obvious and self-evident from Wang Shizhen's position in the ci circle and the influence of Guangling poetry circle at that time. In the "Pu Sa Man · Chanting 'Qing Xi Yi Shi Painting Album'", eight pieces were made based on one tune in form of joint chapter and the female's life was depicted and presented from multiple perspectives. It

showed a new trend of creation and unique and distinct features, which was a major breakthrough and development in the history of ci, especially in the history of amorous ci.

The form of a tune with three pieces initiated in the chimed activity of "Huan Xi Sha" laid a foundation for the tradition of a tune with multiple pieces. And the form of a tune with eight pieces should be the result of the development of this tradition, a tune with three pieces. This form has been developing continuously along with the creation and influences the development of later generations' singing and harmony activities, which is of great significance in the development history of ci studies. To the chimed activity of "Nian Nu Jiao", it developed to the form of a tune with twelve pieces, with a trend of scale expansion. As to the chimed activity of Qiu Shui Xuan, this form evolved into a complex situation from a tune with about a dozen pieces to a tune with twenty two pieces. While the scale kept expanding, the forms were getting more and more flexible. There were one tune with twelve pieces, like in Chen Weisong's works, as well as fifteen, seventeen and twenty two pieces, such as in Zhou Zaijun's works (fifteen), Ji Yingzhong's (seventeen) and Gong Dingzi's (twenty two). [30]<sup>64</sup> The use of joint-chapter form of a tune with eight pieces in chimed activities especially influenced the creation of ci works chanting things such as "Qin Yuan Chun" et al., which had a profound influence on the development of ci works chanting things.

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

In short, formed in the early Qing Dynasty, Guangling Ci Circle was mainly active in Yangzhou, with Wang Shizhen as the leading figure. With the center of ci studies as its literary nature, and "hua-jian" (referring to a poetry style featuring romance) sentiments as its general literary character, Guangling Ci Circle has a significant literary value in promoting the climax of ci studies that started the unprecedented prosperity in the early Qing Dynasty. The amorous ci chimed activities of Guangling Ci Circle spawned the important forms of artistic expression in the creation of amorous ci such as "feng ren zhi zhi" (the soul of being a poet) and "a tune with eight pieces", etc. More importantly, it is an important milestone to promote the practical reform and theoretical construction of Qing ci, especially amorous ci, which lays a foundation for the far-reaching development of it.

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