



Jia Pingwa's View of Literature and Art

Xiaojing Liu^(✉)

Wuhan Research Institute, Jiangnan University, Wuhan 430056, Hubei, China
Claire889@126.com

Abstract. Jia Pingwa has formed his own literary and artistic ideology in his long-term writing practice. This system includes: First. Literature and art are the writer's lyrical unique consciousness of heaven, earth, nature and life. Literature and art are emotional "things" with social emotions and individual life emotions; Second, the form is the content; Third, the aesthetic theory of literature and art: He advocates that the connotation of works should be modern in realm and the taste of national tradition in form; Four aspects: realistic principles of literary creation.

Keywords: Jia Pingwa's literary view · emotion · thought · language · aesthetic · realism principle

1 Introduction

In May, 1983, Jia Pingwa's prose "*The First Record of Shangzhou*" was published in *Zhongshan* magazine, which quickly aroused widespread concern in the literary world. Later, he published "*The second Record of Shangzhou*" and "*The third Record of Shangzhou*". The Three Records of Shangzhou, writing the history, geography and humanities of Shangzhou in the form of notes, also deeply describes the folk world, showing a strong flavor of classical art. It is also a return to Chinese traditional culture and expresses the author's pursuit of Chinese classical aesthetic realm. He is a first-rate prose writer in China. In 1993, Jia Pingwa's novel "*The Waste Capital*" was published. In 1997, "*The Waste Capital*" won the French Fermina Prize for Literature. "*The Waste Capital*" was banned in China for 16 years because of a large number of sexual descriptions. "*The Waste Capital*" was published again in 2009, and it forms Jia Pingwa trilogy with "*Impetuous*" and "*Qin Opera*". His literary language has a unique style and is called a contemporary stylist. Jia Pingwa made a series of theoretical expositions on his literary thoughts, and his literary thoughts gradually formed a system. His remarks about literature and art are scattered in literary theory, preface, interview and so on. Specifically, his literary thought was influenced by Chinese Confucianism and western modernism. Any literary thought can't be separated from thinking about the relationship between literature and art and self, literature and art and life, literature and art and society, thus forming a rational understanding of the essence, noumenon and function of literature and art, and the profound views on the above issues naturally formed Jia Pingwa's basic concept of literature and art.

2 The Theory of Emotional and Ideological Essence of Literature and Art

What is the essence of literature and art? Jia Pingwa believes that Literature and art are the writer's lyrical unique consciousness of heaven, earth, nature and life. Literature and art are emotional and ideological. Jia Pingwa said: On the basis of regional culture, the works can reveal the author's life experience, which has reached a considerable level. How to further express his unique consciousness of heaven, earth, nature and life is a breakthrough for Shangluo people's artistic creation, including myself.... All creation can be said to be the way to experience the natural life of heaven and earth. I always think of experience, instead of only thinking of my art practically. That art will naturally be close to us, and the realm of my works will inevitably be big [1].

Of course, the characters in the works are not specific authors, but all the characters in the works are devoted to the author's thoughts and feelings, especially the main characters. ... Some people say that the deepest quality of a work can only be the quality of the author's ideology [2].

In the essay "*Correspondence on Prose*", Jia Pingwa said, "Even though what is written is true, it lacks real knowledge, and has no own experience of nature and life. Therefore, the article is practical and has no philosophical consciousness. How can lofty personality images be constructed and displayed? [3]". He believes that every word and sentence of a writer must be derived from life experience. The spirit of art is embodied in consciousness, which comes from the experience of life, either sublime or ethereal, but it is not intentional [4].

Jia Pingwa also talked about the importance of ideological content in literary and artistic works. Jia Pingwa said: the brilliance of thought is the quality of a great artist, and the power of art is the guarantee for the emergence of a great artist [5]. Great works of art need not only superb skills, but also strong ideas [6].

Art can never be an art without metaphysics, but it is too abstract to be an art. How to integrate the physical and the metaphysical is what I have been searching for [7]. If the metaphysical and the physical are well integrated, the works will be readable, which will lead to polysemy [8].

Without physical, there is no confidence. Without metaphysics, there is no mental outlook [9]. A work must be physical and metaphysical, and it can't be an art without being metaphysical, but pure metaphysics becomes philosophy again [10]. Jia Pingwa believes that art is a "thing" of emotions, with social emotions and emotions of individual life. When combined, a good work is written, and any art has a complex in it. For example, Li Shangyin said, "and the silk-worms of spring will weave until they die, and every night the candles will weep their wicks away." That's not out of thin air. There must be someone, but Li Shangyin is dead, and no one knows. The production of good works is the product of this complex [11]. Jia Pingwa believes that a good work must contain the author's sadness and hardship. Complex is a psychological term, which refers to a group of important unconscious groups, or a strong and unconscious impulse hidden in a person's mysterious psychological state.

Literature is the art of true feelings [12]. Art comes from life, but life is not equal to art. If you go deep into life, you have to go deep into your thoughts and feelings.... To go deep into life must be full of passion, and passion is the foundation of going deep.

The production of works is an outbreak of life accumulation, but also an outbreak of emotional accumulation [13].

Jia Pingwa emphasized that literary works are the author's life experience of the universe, which is also the value of literature. Jia Pingwa said: I like my recent works, ... The works with life experience seem to be disorganized and rambling, but every sentence is realized by my own life, and the value of literature is just here [14]. Jia Pingwa thinks that emotion and ideology are the value of art.

3 The "Language Ontology" of Literature and Art

What is the ontology of literature and art? Formalists believe that form is the only existence of art, so form is the noumenon of art. What is the relationship between form and content? Which is more important, form or content? Jia Pingwa attaches great importance to language. He pushed the importance of language to the extreme. In the 1980s, Jia Pingwa made a speech at a conference, "*Random Thoughts on Novel-A Speech at a Conference*", which talked about content, form and style. From my experience, content is the most important and form is also very important, and form is actually content. If you talk about form alone, it will backfire. Everything is creation, the creation of the whole. The fundamental problem of a work, especially a novel, is its personality, and the level of its achievement is the size of its mental outlook. Otherwise, it can only be reduced to flowery boxing, and it will eventually earn a stingy shell [15].

No matter what faction, the key lies in the size and depth of their works. There is really no skill in creation, but only personality. Nowadays, people talk a lot about style, and style is not forced, but also the expression of individuality and the need of individuality. This is also the root of the theory that form is content [16].

In the early 1990s, Jia Pingwa wrote in his novel "*Epilogue of Hometown*": A writer's contribution, on the one hand, is the contribution of style. It's not a style, of course, it's not a popular style, it's a thinking angle that senses and expresses the world, and it's content itself [17].

4 The Theory of Artistic Aesthetics

Jia Pingwa's aesthetics of art includes two aspects: firstly, it emphasizes the beauty of art connotation. He believes that life and spirit are sent to artistic works, and the works have its aesthetic value. He said: What is important for an artist is not what he writes or paints. The difference between style and realm lies in how he writes and paints.... Life and spirit are sent in the painting. Thus, such a painting has its aesthetic value and the existence of his real and living person [18].

Works with physical evidence seem to be disorganized and rambling, but every sentence is realized by one's own life, and the value of literature is just here [14]. The artist's purpose in creating art is to let us discover and understand that we are human beings, living in this place in this era with our fate, and enjoying people's troubles and joys as concrete people [6]. The so-called literature gives people spiritual enjoyment [19]. Writing not only masturbates our writers themselves, but also makes the society happy. Let's write more works that really belong to this era [20].

Secondly, Jia Pingwa emphasized the beauty of art form. In Jia Pingwa's view, the beauty of form is to maintain the aesthetics of the Chinese nation. In May, 1994, Jia Pingwa pointed out in his *"Self-Portrait"*: In the process of writing art, I paid great attention to the trends of world literature, but kept the aesthetics of the Chinese nation. What I pursued was to write about modern people and modern life in China in the way of thinking and expression of my own nation. Just like a river, it was moving towards world literature, but the riverbed was Chinese, which was really Chinese flavor [21].

Jia Pingwa also talked about his own way to get oriental aesthetic thoughts. He said: If someone says that my works are somewhat influenced by oriental aesthetic thoughts, it is largely due to Chinese literati paintings, folk music, calligraphy and Chinese operas. I consciously compared Chinese ancient philosophy with western modernist philosophy, then compared Chinese literati paintings with western paintings, and compared Chinese operas with modern dramas, so as to obtain the aesthetic things formed by our national culture for a long time [19]. Chinese painting and Chinese opera are obviously the art of expression.

What is oriental aesthetics? In daily life and aesthetic activities, the oriental people never pay attention to distinguishing subject from object, and there is no clear boundary between subject and object. They even think that subject is object, and object is subject. Beauty (aesthetic feeling) is the result of "mutual infiltration", "sympathy" and symbiosis between people and external things. "Beauty" in oriental aesthetics is a poetic concept. Oriental aesthetics has three important characteristics: poetic thinking mode, symbolic system and artistic world of imagery. "Poetic wisdom" refers to the way of thinking of "creating by imagination". The most basic feature of "poetic thinking" lies in the cognitive way of "measuring things by oneself". Poetic wisdom (poetic thinking) produces a large number of thinking images through imagination, metaphor and symbolic expression. The "irrational" factors in oriental thinking are very prominent. The poetic thinking of the oriental nation has symbolic characteristics, forming rich symbolic images. Oriental aesthetics, artistic theories and categories are expressed in poetic and imagery language. "Poetic thinking" or "poetic wisdom" is the most prominent feature of oriental aesthetics. Jia Pingwa's artistic creation is suitable for these oriental aesthetic characteristics.

Jia Pingwa said, "It's my creative pursuit to truly express the life and emotions of modern Chinese people with Chinese traditional beauty expression methods" [22]. Jia Pingwa said: I have always advocated that the works should be modern in connotation and taste of national tradition in form [23].

Jia Pingwa believes that literary works must keep Chinese style. This is one of his aesthetic pursuits. In 1985, Jia Pingwa said in his *"Letter to Cai Xiang on April 27th"*: Literary works can deeply and accurately grasp the most fundamental things as human beings, so the essence and emotional appeal of the works can only be Chinese flavor and national style, and the form of adapting content must be Chinese flavor and national style. At this point, we can learn from Japanese writer Kawabata Yasunari [24]. He believes that Kawabata Yasunari's works are a combination of western modernist creative methods and Japanese national spirit. Therefore, Kawabata Yasunari succeeded.

Jia Pingwa said that the form of (literature) should be national. This is my opinion. In other words, must write Chinese articles.... I have opposed the idea that "the more

national, the more global". My view is: if a national thing lacks cosmopolitanism, it will never go to the world [25]. I've been advocating that the connotation of the works should be modern in the realm, and the taste of national tradition in the form [23].

To understand the national traditions of China, it is very important to know the Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism in China, so as to understand the national character of Chinese and the history of literature development in China [26]. Jia Pingwa said in "*Diary of Prose*": Many good people talk about the tradition of Chinese national literature, but what are the national things?... If we don't start with Chinese philosophy, we will be beside the point. To understand Chinese philosophy, and then to study the art of Chinese opera and traditional painting in detail, and the thinking will be clear [27]. Jia Pingwa's artistic aesthetic theory holds that Chinese national spirit is not only the cultural spirit of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, but also the spirit of literature and art.

Jia Pingwa not only elaborated his artistic aesthetics. He once again talked about his literary aesthetics in the preface of "*The Sea Breeze Immortal Bone-Selected Paintings and Calligraphy Works of Jia Pingwa*". He said: My experience is that I have my long-established concept of the world and life, and I have my own aesthetics. Therefore, my literary writing and calligraphy and painting, including my collection, are basically a hobby, that is, modern consciousness, traditional flavor and folk flavor must be required [28]. In Jia Pingwa's view, modern consciousness, traditional flavor and folk taste are the three elements that constitute the aesthetic feeling of literature. This kind of beauty is also his lifelong artistic pursuit.

5 Realistic Creative Principles of Literature and Art

Jia Pingwa advocates realistic literature. Jia Pingwa once talked about his novel creation concept in his novel "*The Door of Earth*" (1996): "The first thing a writer faces is to observe the society and study the social form. The results of his observation are written into the novel, and how much of the part included in the novel can become the history being formed, and the value of the novel itself is great" [29]. Some great works in the history of Chinese and foreign literature have written about reality [30]. Looking at the history of literature and art, all the extreme works of each period must reflect the society of that period, that is to say, it has a strong spirit of the times [31].

However, Jia Pingwa admitted that he was not strict realism. He said: I like the polysemy and fuzziness of the works. Another point, I think there is also a problem of thinking change when reading works. There are also problems in understanding the society. If it comes to strict realism, then I am not; Nor should it be attributed to romanticism. My subjective color is strong, and I like imagery. I've been advocating that the works should be modern in connotation and taste of national tradition in form. Although I'm not doing well, I'm working hard [23].

Jia Pingwa pointed out in "*Prose Creation in the New Era*": whether a work is profound or not depends on whether it reflects the times.... The important point is to find the social mentality, the spirit and the potential, and to show this kind of thing by the carrier. It can be said that the principles and policies of a period, or even the things advocated by the government in a period, are not the spirit of the times. On the other

hand, personal gratitude and grudges and petty feelings cannot be counted as the spirit of the times. The success of Cervantes' *"Don Quixote"* and Lu Xun's *"True Story of A Q"* is precisely the result of a thorough understanding of the society at that time, which captured the mentality and mood of the society. The reason why most of our works are waste products is that we don't realize this [32].

Although I dare not say that a writer is the spokesman of the people, a work must be a true record of a certain era if it is to be passed down for a long time. Today, when it comes to responding to social problems with letters to the government and folk situations, literary works are another form of the letters and visits, which is a mirror of folk situations [33]. Jia Pingwa emphasized the principle of realistic creation, but did not exclude western modernism. Jia Pingwa said in *"My Pursuit-Explanations at a recent novella seminar"*: Chinese ancient art should be said to be relatively single, while modern art is diverse. However, the development of real life to this day is extremely complicated. To fully reflect it, we must integrate the traditional ancient art with the anti-traditional modern art, and make free choices for our use [34].

Jia Pingwa hopes to build an image world on the basis of reality. He said: Art is a fictional thing. I want to build my own symbol system and image world on the basis of reality. Don't be obsessed with whether that detail is true or not. It can give you an inspiration and an aesthetic pleasure [35]. Jia Pingwa said in *"'Hometown' Postscript"*: My own idea of this paragraph is to express the induction of the human universe, explore the most touching interest, and build an image world on the basis of existence [36].

Literature is a human study, and one should write one's ideals and ask one's own questions. This is the right way and the only way [37]. Paying attention to society, caring for life and caring for spirit are the most basic things of literature, and also the avenue of literature.... You can't write an outstanding work if you throw away the avenue of literature [38].

6 Conclusion

Through combing and explaining Jia Pingwa's basic views on the essence, noumenon, function and creative principle of literature and art, Jia Pingwa's literary thought system has been established. Jia Pingwa's literary thought is the summary of his creative practice experience, and it is also the result of extensively absorbing Chinese and western literary theories and practical experiences. Jia Pingwa's literary thought has rich historical connotation and theoretical value. First of all, Jia Pingwa's literary thought advocates that Literature and art are the writer's lyrical unique consciousness of heaven, earth, nature and life, and that art is a "thing" of emotions, with social emotions and individual life emotions. Jia Pingwa thinks that emotion and ideology are the value of art. Secondly, the form is the content. Language ontology is an important feature of Jia Pingwa's literary thought, and it is also one of the core contents of Jia Pingwa's literary thought. Wen Yiduo and Wang Zengqi have the same understanding of literary language. Thirdly, in the theory of artistic aesthetics, Jia Pingwa advocated that the connotation and realm of the works should be modern, and the form should have the flavor of national tradition. This is the uniqueness of Jia Pingwa's literary thought, and it is most worthy of the vigilance of Chinese writers. Jia Pingwa's artistic aesthetic theory holds that Chinese

national spirit is not only the cultural spirit of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, but also the spirit of literature and art, Jia Pingwa's aesthetic theory of art has gradually been accepted and practiced by various art forms in China, which is one of the core contents of his literary thought and the most valuable part. He advocated realistic literature, and at the same time established his own symbol system and image world on the basis of reality. He comprehensively accepted traditional ancient art and anti-traditional modern art, and freely chose them for my use. I agree with Jia Pingwa's realistic principle, but I hold a negative attitude towards his literary view of establishing an image world on the basis of reality, because I have seen the failure of the image world established by his image novels "Heavenly Dog" and "Wu Kui". The novels should follow the principle of literary authenticity, and don't forget that literary authenticity includes the unity of phenomenon and essence, truth and false image, fair and reasonableness.

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