

# The Theoretical Connotation of Various Schools of "Chinese Literature Consciousness Theory"

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## Abstract

In the past century, there have been many factions of "Chinese Literature Consciousness Theory", and the theoretical connotation has also undergone qualitative changes. The representatives of "Theory of the Wei and Jin Dynasties" valued the development characteristics of the literary pursuit of beauty and the pursuit of its own value in the Wei and Jin Dynasties, and believed that it was China's "literary Self-consciousness". While insisting on this view, scholars of "Han and even the Warring States period or earlier" basically used the criterion of "Wei Jin theory" to examine the literature of the Han and even the Warring States period or earlier, and they tended to find a specific Literary genre, based on the argument of "Chinese Literature Consciousness". The same emphasis is placed on the significance of the existence of genres for "literary consciousness", which is different from the emphasis placed on the characteristics of a particular "genre" by scholars who focus on "Han and even the Warring States period or earlier". Scholars of " Song Qi's theory " pay more attention to the results of literary classification research, and regard it as one of the criteria for "Chinese literary Self-consciousness". This is the characteristic of "Song Qi's theory", but their "literary Self-consciousness theory" is still in line with the theory of the meaning of literary existence in pursuit of beauty and the value of literature itself.

## Keywords

Theory of Self-consciousness in Chinese Literature; Rheology; Theoretical Connotation.

## 1. Introduction

In the past century, there have been many factions of "Chinese Literature Consciousness Theory", and the theoretical connotation has also undergone qualitative changes. The writing team of "History of Ancient Chinese Literature" edited by Yuan Shishuo believes: "Since the 1920s, the academic world has mainly advocated the 'theory of Self-consciousness in Wei and Jin literature'. However, in recent years, many scholars have questioned this. There are three main points of view: one is to trace the beginning of literary Self-consciousness back to the Western Han Dynasty and even the Warring States Period or earlier, and there are Gong Kechang, Zhang Shaokang, Zhan Furui, Li Binghai, etc.; During the Song and Qi Dynasties, there were Liu Yuejin, Yuan Xingpei, etc. [1]

## 2. The Historical Development of "Chinese Literature Consciousness Theory"

### 2.1. Theory of the Wei and Jin Dynasties

The representatives of the main "Wei Jin theory" include Guo Shaoyu, Liu Dajie, Wang Yao, Li Wenchu and so on. Putting Guo Shaoyu at the top is because Guo Lao's theoretical influence is relatively large. Guo Shaoyu believes: "During the Wei and Jin Dynasties, there were only special essays, and some of the essays also focused on pure literature scholars, and they had entered a

period of Self-consciousness." [2] Guo Shaoyu believes that special literary works were born in China during the Wei and Jin Dynasties, the content of the discussion focuses on pure literature, so the Wei and Jin Dynasties are the era of "literary consciousness" in China. The great change in the characteristics of literary theory was naturally caused by new literary concepts. Since there was no clear expression of the different literary concepts between the two generations, Guo Shaoyu's "Chinese Literature Consciousness Theory" brought about the greatest influence. Influenced by him, many scholars regard "literary Self-consciousness" as the meaning of the birth of a certain literature that conforms to the new literary concept. For example, in the Wei and Jin Dynasties, literary theories that emphasized pure literature were born, which marked the "consciousness of Chinese literature". In addition, Guo Shaoyu did not understand the meaning of the term Self-consciousness in the time point in the theoretical origin, and did not find that "Dian Lun · Essays" was the first special literary theoretical work with imperial decree-like power in China, and the turn of literary concepts in it was completed. The positioning of the time of the arrival of "literary Self-consciousness" expands the Self-consciousness into a time period. As a result, he could only look at the characteristics of literary theories in the time period, but he could not find that the literary concept was changing rapidly at a point in time, which aggravated the variation of his views on the theoretical connotation.

Liu Dajie, Wang Yao, and Li Wenchu have gone more and more "broad", bringing the proposition of "literary Self-consciousness" into the fields of literature, literary theory, philosophy, aesthetics, humanistic thought and other fields. Liu Dajie said: "The Wei and Jin era was the era of conscious literature. The characteristics of literary thought in this era were to get rid of the shackles of classics, to explore the characteristics and laws of literature, to clarify the concept of literature, and to improve the value and social status of literature. Both the construction and the development of literary criticism have made achievements." [3] Liu Dajie believed that the achievements of literature in the Wei and Jin dynasties in all aspects meant "literary self-awareness". Although there is a saying of "clear literary concept" in the items he listed, this is only a small part of the theoretical content he identified, and the inclusions can prove that Liu Dajie does not understand the "literary consciousness" at the source of this theory. definition. Wang Yao said: "In the pre-Qin and Han Dynasties in China, although there are many literary works, the chapters of the special papers were only available in the Wei and Jin Dynasties; in the history of literature or literary criticism, the Wei and Jin Dynasties can be said to be the period of Self-consciousness." [4] In the Wei and Jin Dynasties, it was Wang Yao's criterion for "consciousness of Wei and Jin literature". He believed that the Wei and Jin Dynasties in China were the period of Self-consciousness in the history of literature and literary criticism. Liu and Wang's theories relate to the characteristics of literature in the Wei and Jin dynasties after "Self-consciousness", that is, the development characteristics of literature and its related fields after the transformation of literary concepts.

Li Wenchu said: "Literature 'consciousness' is a fundamental trend in the development of literature itself. It is not only a 'qualitative' leap, but also a gradual historical process." But this is a qualitative leap in what material, Li Wenchu thought it was literature, but did not think it was a literary concept. There is a momentary awakening in the change of ideas. Li Wenchu believed that the conscious subject is literature, and literature adapts to the change of ideas to show a different appearance from the previous generation. Of course, it needs "a gradual historical process", not like the concept of literature. Change requires a time node. He said: "I think "literary consciousness" is a new trend that emerged from the development of Chinese literature in the Wei and Jin dynasties, and it is an integral part of the new ideological emancipation trend after the domination of Confucianism (specifically, the classics of the Han Dynasty) was overwhelmed. It is also a new thinking, new understanding, and new practice of the nature and value of literature itself through the readjustment and construction of various departments in the field of ideology and culture. [5] His theoretical focus is on the influence of

new social thoughts on literature, and the "new thinking, new understanding, and new practice" exhibited by literature therefore, he found some reasons for "literary Self-consciousness". But these are only related to the new changes in literature in the Wei and Jin dynasties, not the connotation of "literary Self-consciousness". "Literary consciousness" is indeed a qualitative change, but it is not a qualitative change in literature, but a qualitative change in literary concepts. It should be said that Li Wenchu's "literary Self-consciousness theory" also regards "literary Self-consciousness" as the significance of the birth of a certain literature that conforms to the new literary concept.

The representatives of "Theory of the Wei and Jin Dynasties" valued the development characteristics of the literary pursuit of beauty and the pursuit of its own value in the Wei and Jin Dynasties, and believed that it was China's "literary Self-consciousness". While insisting on this view, scholars of "Han and even the Warring States period or earlier" basically used the criterion of "Wei Jin theory" to examine the literature of the Han and even the Warring States period or earlier, and they tended to find a specific Literary genre, based on the argument of "Chinese Literature Consciousness".

## 2.2. Han and Even the Warring States Period or Earlier

The representatives of "Han and even the Warring States period or earlier" include Gong Kechang, Zhang Shaokang, Zhan Furui, Li Binghai and so on. Gong Kechang believes: "The 'conscious age of literature' can be advanced to the period of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty. The reasons are: 1. The basic characteristics of literature and art have been fully expressed. For example, writers have been able to use image thinking more consciously, and further developed romanticism. Second, a relatively systematic proposition for literary and artistic creation has been put forward, thus entering a new stage of conscious and active creation." The starting point of the era, our reasons are these." [6] Gong Kechang's Chinese "literary Self-consciousness theory" has completely become a Han Fu that conforms to the literary concept of pursuing beauty and self-value, and even refers to Sima Xiangru's Han Da Fu, Its birth has the meaning of literary history.

Zhang Shaokang believes: "From the perspective of the development and evolution of literary concepts, the emergence of professional literati creation and the formation of professional literati teams, the development and maturity of various literary genres in the Han Dynasty, the characteristics of the development of literary theory and criticism in the Han Dynasty, etc. He consciously has a long development process, it first appeared in the late Warring States period, and it was quite clear in the middle of the Western Han Dynasty, and the completion of this process can be used as a basic symbol of Liu Xiang's classification of books. In "Bie Lu", poetry and fu are listed in a special category as a symbol." [7] Zhang Shaokang's point of view is similar to Liu Dajie's, and the concept of literature is also included in the criterion of "literary consciousness", but it is only a small point among many factors. , his emphasis is on Chinese literature from the late Warring States period to the mid-Western Han Dynasty, which is in line with the pursuit of beauty and the pursuit of its own value, and its existence marks China's "literary Self-consciousness". He attaches great importance to the classification behavior of this period of literature, and believes that the appearance of this feature in this period of literature is a sign of the completion of "literary Self-consciousness", especially Liu Xiang's "Bie Lu" in which poetry and fu are listed in a special category. Zhang Shaokang's "Literary Consciousness Theory" shows unique characteristics that are different from each other. Because of this, this is a mutated "Literary Consciousness Theory" and it is true.

Zhan Furui believes: "The rise of scholar-professional essayists in the Han Dynasty and the tendency to become literati promoted the rapid formation of writers' conscious awareness... The focus of literary criticism in the Han Dynasty shifted to essayists and their works... The pursuit of diction And the establishment of Li's literary concept is a meaningful event in the

history of Chinese literature development, and it is also a great progress in Chinese literary concept." [8] Zhan Furui's "literary Self-consciousness theory" involves the literary concept of Li by writers of the Han Dynasty and their works. This is the most discerning point of view in all research on "literary Self-consciousness". However, the "literary consciousness" at the source emphasizes the transformation of literary concepts. Although there are writers and their works who take care of Li's literary concepts, the literary concepts of the Han and Han dynasties are dominated by morality and literature. Changes occur, and this concept is rectified, which is not qualified to be called "literary Self-consciousness".

Li Binghai believes: "The appearance of Cifu is a revolution in the history of Chinese literature, not only because it is a new literary attempt, but more importantly, it is a sign of literary independence and Self-consciousness." The reason is that "the appearance of Cifu marks the beginning of the stage of pure literature in ancient China" "literary Self-consciousness is usually referred to as the following signs: the awakening of people's consciousness of life, the general attention to individual values, the construction of literary theories, and the confirmation of the independent status of literature. In terms of this aspect, it is historically realistic to set the period of Cifu generation as the initial stage of literary consciousness." [9] Li Binghai believes that Cifu, as one of the pure literary genres, its appearance is a sign of "literary consciousness" in China. He believes that the subject's life consciousness, individual value demands, literary theoretical viewpoints, and independent literary thoughts are all signs of "literary consciousness", and they are all included in Cifu literature. Therefore, the birth of Cifu literature means "Chinese literature". conscious".

Gong Kechang took the great fu of the Han Dynasty during the period of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty, especially the creations of Sima Xiangru, as the category of his essays, and argued that "Chinese literature Self-consciousness". Zhang Shaokang discusses "literary Self-consciousness" from the perspective of the integration of poetry and poetry and the identification of style. Zhan Furui's works of essayists who use beauty as beauty have nothing more than the meaning of Han Da Fu. He believes that the germ of the literary concept of beauty as beauty in Han Da Fu is "literary Self-consciousness". Li Binghai argues "literary consciousness" based on the characteristics of Cifu literature. These four people have found literary characteristics in their favorite literary genres that are in line with the pursuit of beauty and the value of literature itself, and based on this, they argue that "Chinese Literature Consciousness". Their "literary Self-consciousness theory" is the characteristic meaning of a specific genre, and has nothing to do with the theory of the transformation of literary concepts. The same emphasis is placed on the significance of the existence of genres for "literary consciousness", which is different from the emphasis placed on the characteristics of a particular "genre" by scholars who focus on "Han and even the Warring States period or earlier". Scholars of "Shuo" pay more attention to the results of literary classification research, and regard it as one of the criteria for "Chinese literary Self-consciousness". This is the characteristic of "Song Qi's theory", but their "literary Self-consciousness theory" is still in line with the theory of the meaning of literary existence in pursuit of beauty and the value of literature itself.

### 2.3. Theory of Song and Qi

The representatives of "Song Qi said" include Liu Yuejin, Yuan Xingpei and so on. Liu Yuejin believes that: "'the independent subject of literature', 'discrimination of writing and writing', 'the discovery of four tones', with the changes in the above three aspects as significant signs, ancient Chinese literature has truly entered the era of Self-consciousness." [10] The research experience on the connotation of "the theory of Wei and Jin", "the Han and even the Warring States period or earlier", "the independent subject of literature", "discrimination and analysis of writing style", and "discovery of four tones" are all related to the development of literature

in the Song and Qi Dynasties. The emphasis and exploration of the value of literature itself. Liu Yuejin defines China's "literary Self-consciousness" according to these definitions, and his "literary Self-consciousness theory" is to regard "literary Self-consciousness" as the meaning of the birth of certain literary theories that conform to new literary concepts. Yuan Xingpei believes: "The consciousness of literature is a very long process. It runs through the entire Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, and was realized after about three hundred years. The so-called self-awareness of literature has three signs: first, literature begins from a broad academic perspective. Differentiate and become an independent category. Second, have a more detailed distinction between various genres of literature, and more importantly, have a clearer understanding of the system and style characteristics of various genres. Third, on literature The aesthetic characteristics of literature have been consciously pursued." [11] Yuan Xingpei's "literary Self-consciousness theory" is the Self-consciousness theory of literature in the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties. Literature is independent, literary genres are subdivided, and literature pursues aesthetics. Literature with these three characteristics is conscious. literature, and this Self-consciousness lasted for about three hundred years.

### 3. Conclusion

Through comprehensive research, it is not difficult to find that Chinese literature developed to the era of Emperor Wei Wen, and after the previous generation's scrutiny and discussion, its nature has gradually become known to the world. At the right time, as a king Cao Pi who is rich in literature and literary theory, he used a special literary theory work to summarize the nature of literature, and asked subsequent literature to develop consciously according to it. Suzuki Huo and Lu Xun saw the significance of what Cao Pi did to the transformation of ancient Chinese literary concepts, and logically defined it as "Chinese literary Self-consciousness". The descendants of Lu Xun thought that "literary self-awareness" must be found in literature. With the standard of "art for art's sake", they looked at different eras or types of literature, and defined "Chinese literary self-awareness" according to their own standards, the connotation of its theory has been quite different from the source.

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