

The Academic Historical Significance of the Publication of Hu Jichen's Studies in Chinese Folk Songs

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Abstract: Hu Jichen's "Research on Chinese Folk Songs" has an important position in the academic history of modern folk literature. The book covers a wide range of contents, first defining folk songs, and then sorting out and explaining the ancient and modern Chinese folk song materials, which mainly involves ancient ballad proverbs, ancient lyrical short songs and other short songs, ancient narrative long songs, narrative long songs into dramas, modern lyrical short songs and other short songs, modern narrative long songs, and the difference between folk songs and non-folk songs. These folk songs are extremely rich in both genre and circulation, and have made a relatively comprehensive exposition, providing reference materials for later scholars to carry out folk song research. Its publication has promoted the discipline and systematization of Chinese folk song research. At the same time, due to the limitations of the times and the characteristics of the author's own academic research experience and concepts, the book also has some inadequacies. But all in all, the value and significance of the book in the academic history of modern folk literature is worth mentioning.

1. Introduction

Hu Jichen was one of the scholars who were active in the literary circles in China in the 1920s and 1930s. Born into a family of scholars and scholars, he was influenced and taught by his parents and brothers since childhood, and he read poetry and revealed his talent for writing poetry. In the recollection of his elder brother, Hu Pu'an, a famous modern philologist and poet of Nanshe, "Sending dust to read from Park An at the age of six, he taught the Analects, Mencius, The University, and the Zhongyong, but he could not read catchy, and if he was taught five or six words of poetry, he recited it." At the age of seven, he can compose five poems, and at the age of nine, he can distinguish four voices, and only then does he have the nature to cover poetry^[1]. Hu Jichen's association with poetry stems from his own nature on the one hand, and on the other hand, it is closely related to his family's influence and his own intelligence and diligence. Hu Pu'an wrote in the "Preface to Hu Huaichen's Poetry Series", "Sending dust to the thirteenth year, that is, hand-copying more than ten thick books of ancient and modern poems, applying words without work, and destroying them, but his poems have become strong and half can become recitations", "After the weak crown, learn Tang, song, and Han Wei, and ponder bitterly, do not take a word, but its success, but return to nature, Gaiji is almost

proud of the ancients." [2]. It can be seen that Hu Jichen's diligence and special talent in learning ancient poetry have laid a solid foundation for his lifelong academic creation and research. However, with the influx of Western new ideas into China, deeply feeling the backwardness of the feudal rule of the Qing Dynasty, Hu Jichen continued to study in poetics with the support of the spirit of the ancients, and on the other hand, he was deeply encouraged by the new western ideas. Study Progressive Western books, such as those translated by the Western missionary Matteo Ricci. In 1906, through the introduction of his brother Hu Pu'an, he became acquainted with people of insight, joined the Society for the Preservation of Traditional Chinese Studies, and became the editor of the Journal of National Essence. Since then, Hu Jichen has begun his lifelong editing career and has been unable to receive anything. After that, he joined the Nanshe Society, which advocated the revolution, and successively served as the editor of various newspapers and periodicals such as Shenzhou Daily (1910), "Alarm" (1911), "Pacific Daily" (1912), "Zhonghua Minbao" (1913), "Guangyi Bookstore" (1916), "Novel World" (1928), some for the revolution, some from tradition. From the perspective of literature and art, we will explore academic issues. During his tenure as editor, he did not abandon the creation of literature and academic research, and created and published a large number of works covering a wide range of topics. At the same time, he has also taught at Hujiang University, Zhizhi University and other major colleges and universities, mainly teaching courses such as the history of Chinese literature and the history of Chinese poetics. All in all, throughout Hu Jichen's academic life, in his limited academic career, he has dabbled in the fields of philosophy, poetics, literary history, local history, examination and evidence studies, and primary education, as well as novels, poetry and other traditions. The creation of literature also summarizes, discusses and achieves folk literature. His achievements in folklore are mainly reflected in folklore, fables, myths, proverbs, children's literature and folk songs. Folk literature has always been despised by traditional scholars, believing that it cannot be elegant, but since the eighth year of the Republic of China (that is, 1919), Hu Sent Dust Deeply aware of the brutality of the Western powers and the corruption of state affairs, in order to invigorate the people's prestige and publicize Chinese civilization, he advocated that "poetry is based on words, do you care about rhymes", and created some vernacular poems in plain and easy-to-understand popular words, hoping that more laborers, such as shop clerks, coolies, and children, will have the opportunity to draw tenacious, confident, and patriotic strength from these literary works. Hu Jichen's move became a joke in the literary circles at that time, but he never gave up his enthusiasm and popularization of civilian culture, and he was still in folk literature the field has been worked hard and the achievements have been remarkable. His achievements in the field of folk literature are mainly reflected in representative works of folk literature such as "Studies in Chinese Folk Songs" (1925), "Studies in Chinese Fables" (1930), "Survey of Folk Literature Books" and "Buddhist Fables". At present, the academic community evaluates "Chinese Fable Research" and believes that "the pioneering role of this book and its influence on the study of Chinese fables after this cannot be ignored." Although China experienced wars in the 1930s and 1940s, the monographs on Chinese fable studies that emerged after liberation basically inherited the ideas and methods of cross-cultural comparative research of predecessors, and still took this road" [3], while "Chinese Folk Song Studies" is regarded as "The first monograph in the academic history of modern Chinese folk literature to comprehensively discuss Chinese folk songs." [4] It can be seen from this that the significance and value of the publication of "Chinese Folk Song Research" in the study of folk literature and the development of academic history are worthy of our in-depth exploration.

2. The definition of Chinese folk songs is extremely valuable

The book "Studies on Chinese Folk Songs" was first published by the Commercial Press in September of the 14th year of the Republic of China (1925), and was one of the most influential

"Encyclopedia Small Series" edited by Wang Yunwu during the Republic of China period. The author uses an easy-to-understand style to transcribe and organize the excellent folk songs of different periods and different genres he has seen into a volume, as the author said in the preface, "I dare not say that the research has been successful, but at least it can be said that it is enough material for others to study"^[5], providing valuable material for researchers of folk literature. However, in terms of the value of this book alone, it not only provides materials for the study of folk songs for later researchers, but also clearly puts forward his own understanding of Chinese folk songs and discusses the value and significance contained in folk songs.

The author begins by raising questions such as "what is a folk song" and "how to distinguish between folk songs and other poems", which shows the depth of his thinking about Chinese folk songs. At that time, there were two main definitions of "folk songs" in the academic circles: one was derived from its literal meaning, that is, the folk song was "a poem circulating in the mouth of the common people"; Another definition is the full acceptance of Western folk song theory, and the treatment of folk songs as "long chronicle poems circulating in the folk", which has been greatly criticized and denied by the author. He argues that "we can only believe that the long poems of the chronicle are part of the folk songs", in addition to lyrical short songs and other short songs should also be included. Chinese folk songs are different from Western folk songs, so in answering the question of "what is a folk song", it is necessary to combine the reality and tradition of China's native, blindly pandering to or accepting Western concepts and theories is biased, the author believes that "the poetry circulating in the mouth of the common people is purely a song of the life of the common people, not stained with the color of the nobility; It is a natural sound, without carving kung fu, called a folk song^[6]." So, what does folk song originate from? One of the author's basic views on this is that "all poetry originates from folk songs" and "folk songs are poems, and poems are folk songs". To understand this view, it is necessary to examine the reasons for the "occurrence of poetry". In his interpretation of the work, Hu Jichen said that poetry does not occur for about five reasons, that is, the role of poetry: For the medium of love between men and women, for the expression of depressed knots when laboring or for pleasure, for the use of encouraging the spirit of martial arts in war, for singing to flatter the gods when worshipping gods, and for arranging the language into a neat and rhymed poetic style to make it easy to memorize. These five functions, for the early people's era when there was no other cultural form, poetry has been extremely developed, and at the same time these poems are transmitted to the people's mouth, without modification in singing the life of the common people. Thus, he made it clear that "no matter which country's poetry is always the earliest folk song." Later, the poems of non-folk songs were all changed from folk songs", thus further supporting his "all poetry originates from folk songs". This view is at odds with the views held by scholars in the traditional literary circles, where the value of folk songs has not been recognized, and folk songs are not considered to be a kind of poetry. However, the author uses ancient ballads, poems, Chu Ci, etc. as examples, and strives to argue his own view that "poetry originates from Chinese folk songs, and folk songs change from poetry". The author believes that the folk songs circulated orally by the people are the result of changes in poetry, and that there can be no clear line between the two, but there is an extremely close connection.

Just as the author talked about the reasons for the "occurrence of poetry" before, he believes that poetry mainly has the functions of entertaining the gods, expressing people's joys and sorrows, helping the war, and facilitating the people's memorization, and folk songs evolve from poetry, so the role and value of folk songs are self-evident, and both. But in addition, folk songs also have some roles and characteristics that cannot be ignored, that is, the occurrence and circulation of folk songs are "geographically different, politics are different, and human customs are different; These many differences are expressed in their poems. This shows the true value of folk songs." If you avoid this point and talk about folk songs, it seems that you can only flow to the surface of folk songs, unable

to go deep into the folk songs, or basically unable to interpret the value of the folk songs themselves. In addition, in the last part of the book, the author discusses the advantages and disadvantages between folk songs and non-folk songs, arguing that the advantages of folk songs are "pure nature, not false modification; Pure truth", which is beyond the reach of the poet; The poet's creation needs to be slightly embellished and cut, so that the narrative is more exciting and attractive. Therefore, it can be said that folk songs are the outpouring of natural emotions that are not modified in the mouths of ordinary people, and through folk songs, they can know people's feelings, understand customs, and provide countermeasures for the stable development of society.

3. The sign that Chinese song and ballad studies is moving towards a discipline

Hu Jichen's *Studies in Chinese Folk Songs* was published earlier than Zhong Jingwen's *Selected Collection of Songs and Ballads*, the former published in September 1925 and the latter in September 1928, a full three years apart. The book is the first monograph on folk song research in Chinese academic circles, with a wide range of materials, some directly from historical classics, some with the help of the power of newspapers and periodicals at that time, such as the *Republic of China Daily*, *Effort Weekly*, *Song Weekly*, etc. At that time, the oral circulation of songs and folk songs, at the same time, these songs and customs were divided according to the circulation area, and the discussion was carried out, which was systematic and comprehensive in terms of folk song research data.

From the perspective of folk song materials, the folk songs selected by the author are more from the texts called "folk literature" in later generations, such as peacock southeast flying, Hu Di eighteen beats, pipa music, etc., while there were very few folk songs circulating orally at that time, such as the issue of song and women's marriage in the *Song Weekly* at that time. The discussion of hot social issues such as song and democracy is not included in Hu's works, and the shortcomings and deficiencies in this regard should be mainly attributed to the work he engaged in and the limitations of his time. Although there was a lack of folk songs and social issues that were hotly discussed in the academic circles at that time, the folk songs selected by Hu Zhu were also very rich, extensive, and seemed to be complex, but when the author sorted out and edited them, he divided them according to the different regional and genre characteristics of the folk songs. Class, it seems more clear and clear. From the second to the seventh chapter of the book, it mainly involves the composition of Chinese folk songs, including ancient ballad proverbs, ancient lyrical short songs, ancient narrative long songs and their transformation into drama scripts, modern lyrical short songs and modern narrative long songs. At the same time, the content of these different genres of folk songs is divided in detail according to the region, and the characteristics and value of these folk songs are highlighted through comparison. For example, in the third chapter of ancient lyrical short songs, the ancient folk songs are divided into the national style circulating in the Yellow River Basin, the folk songs circulating in Wuchuyue in the Yangtze River Basin, the Eighteen Beats of Hu Fu under the influence of the life of the Hu people in the north, and other Hu songs. The Jiangnan Wusheng song represented by the *Midnight Song*, the *Western Song* song in the Jingchu region, the bamboo branch words that prevail in Bayu Yuanxiang, and the lotus flowers and Taoist sentiments sung by beggars and the like for selling money. Although most of the above folk songs are recorded in ancient classics, we can feel the spiritual connotations of folk songs in different regions, different era backgrounds and different cultures in China. Folk songs are the expression of regional culture, and these folk songs and songs that ordinary people live in orally tell or sing have expressed folk customs to varying degrees, expressing people's voices and emotional needs. As Hu Jichen said, because the folk songs are spread "different in geography, politics, and human customs", different forms of folk songs have also gained their unique practical and artistic value.

The sixth chapter of the book is devoted to the discussion of modern lyrical short songs, most of

which the author saw and recorded in the various periodicals and newspapers founded at that time. This chapter is also a summary of these local folk songs according to the region, so that in the past, we can know the customs of different places more clearly through folk songs. Here, the author mainly lists and analyzes the Beijing folk songs, the Fengyang flower drum between Jianghuai and Jianghuai, the Yangzhou xiaoqu that circulates in yangzhou, the Suzhou mountain songs that express the beauty of mountains and rivers, the things that men and women are happy with, the folk songs between Jiangsu and Zhejiang, the Cantonese praises of Guangdong, the mountain songs of Liangguang, and Miao Yao Other ethnic groups are used as love songs for male and female matchmakers, and by reading or listening to the content of these folk songs, we can know their circulation areas and the psychological feelings of local people. However, it is difficult for non-native Cantonese people in Guangdong to understand its contents, because there are many Cantonese sayings and customs in them, which are extremely difficult to read without annotation or translation, but through the use of these common words, the emotions of the people who are the main body of the folk songs can be vividly expressed, which cannot be expressed by other words. However, in this chapter, the author only uses the folk songs of these regions to represent the entire modern lyrical short song of China.

There are some deficiencies and limitations, as Zhong Jingwen said, "Manchu, Mongolian, Hui, Tibetan ethnic groups, needless to say, such as the flowers of Gansu, the mountain songs of Yunnan, the folk songs of Huainan, the Buddhist songs of Sichuan, and the love songs of the Servants of Guangxi, the folk songs of Yunnan, and so on. Each has a special custom and content, which is sufficient to represent the thoughts, emotions and customs of a region or a nation^[7]." This chapter would have added a lot of color to this book if it paid attention to the different folk songs circulating in more regions, but in the context of the times, scholars and editors in the field of poetry and fiction began to shift their academic horizons to the study of folk songs.

4. Conclusions

Therefore, from the overall point of view, The author believes that "Chinese Folk Song Research" at that time has been a more comprehensive and systematic attention to and discussion of the composition and characteristics of Chinese folk songs, its publication means that the study of Chinese folk songs has begun to move towards the road of scientific and disciplinary, opened the way for the study of folk songs in later generations of folk literature, and provided more valuable text materials for future generations of researchers.

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