

Exploring Ape Imagery in Du Fu's Poetry

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Abstract

There are many animal images in Du Fu's poems, and such images are indispensable and play a very important role in understanding Du Fu's poems. Among these animal images, the ape image is very special. In the long history of classical literature, apes have appeared many times in myths, poems, prose and other genres with their unique charms, carrying the interests and aspirations of people through the ages. Ape imagery is active in Du Poetry in various postures and is endowed with deep meanings. In this paper, we try to trace the evolution of ape imagery through textual reading and comparative study, organize the information about ape imagery in Du Fu's poems and classify the literary meaning embodied in it, analyze and elaborate our own views. Through in-depth exploration of ape imagery, we hope to study its important role in Du Fu's poetry, and to realize the deep and heavy thoughts and feelings of the poet Du Fu, which are infused in ape imagery.

Keywords

Du Fu, Ape, Imagery.

1. Introduction

Imagery is the image component of the artistic conception of poetry, and the meaning of poetry is composed of a number of imagery. Only by grasping the imagery of the work, savoring the interest contained in the imagery, feeling the mood embodied in the imagery, and comprehending the social significance and contagious effect of the imagery can we truly appreciate the ancient poetic works. Imagery originates from the heart and is expressed with the help of an image, which is the external support of the meaning. Imagery is an important support for poets to express their emotions, and its role is many, such as: rendering the atmosphere, creating the mood; emotion in the scene, the scene blending; through the scene, paving the way for the feelings; throughout the poem, become a clue.

Throughout the historical development of human culture, animals have played an important role in the development and progress of human life. In people's production and life, animals are never absent, and they are the best companions of human beings. There are many animal images in Du Fu's poems, such as swallows, eagles, gulls, horses, apes, tigers and so on. Such images are indispensable, or pointing out the time and season, or creating an atmosphere, or sending emotions, which play a very important role in the understanding of Du Fu's poems. Among these animal images, the ape image is the most special one. Humans and apes and monkeys are primates that share a common ancient ancestor. Apes have a large size and human-like appearance, which deepens the concern and affection of human beings for them. With the deepening of people's understanding of apes, as well as the reverence for apes in Buddhist and Zen culture, ape imagery has been given a deeper meaning, and is active in poetry in a variety of images, infused with the deep and heavy thoughts and feelings of the literati and writers.[1]

At present, there are not many articles about the study of ape imagery in Du Fu's poems, and the ones we found are Qu Minggang, "On the Imagery of Crowing Apes in the Three Gorges of the Yangtze River" (Journal of Chinese Culture, No. 2, 2008), Liu Liang, "On the Imagery of Apes

in Tang Poetry" (Journal of Chinese Rhyme and Literature, No. 2, 2008), Wang Fang, "Flying Animals and Beasts in Du Fu's Poems. Analysis and Teaching of Du Fu's Poetry" (Huazhong Normal University, May 2015), Ji Dandan, "A Study of Ape Imagery in Tang Poetry" (Yan'an University, April 2023)

This paper will start from the historical origin of ape imagery and trace the important role of ape imagery in poetry before the Tang Dynasty. Then, it will organize the information about ape imagery in Du Fu's poems, classify the literary meanings embodied in it, analyze it and expound its own viewpoints. Through an in-depth discussion of ape imagery, the important role of ape imagery in Du Fu's poetry is studied.

2. An Exploration of Ape Imagery in the Tang and Pre-Tang Dynasties

In the long river of classical literature, apes have appeared many times in myths, poems, prose and other genres with their unique charms, carrying the sentiments and aspirations of people through the ages. Ape imagery sprouted in the pre-Qin and Han Dynasties, and was mentioned in the Poetry Classic and the Chu Ci, but the number of times was very small. At this time, the connotation of ape imagery is also relatively single, mostly for the objective depiction of the ape's living environment, or on this basis, the metaphorical support, to express the personal adversity, inner suffering. For example, Qu Yuan wrote in "Nine Songs - Mountain Ghosts": "Thunder fills the sky with rain, apes chirp and growl at night," describing the agonizing cries of a goddess who could not pick up a mountain ghost girl, and finally disappeared into a chorus of thunder and apes, full of hopelessness and sadness. "Putting a monkey servant on the threshold of a lattice, how can I blame him for his shortcuts?" In the song, he compares himself as an ape who is unable to utilize his dexterity because he is locked in a cage, accusing the society of not distinguishing between beauty and ugliness, and the court of not distinguishing between the wise and the foolish, and expressing his own bitterness and resistance against his unrecognized talent.

During the Wei, Jin, and North-South Dynasties, literature underwent great changes from content to form. The emergence of a large number of works depicting natural landscapes made people pay more attention to nature in a broader and more detailed way, and ape imagery appeared in the poems of the Wei, Jin, and Northern and Southern Dynasties in a richer form. In this period, the ape imagery in the pre-Qin and Han dynasties described the bleakness of the environment and the frustration of the career path, and added more emotional connotations of separation, homesickness, and the beauty of the mountains, water, forests, and springs.

During the Early Tang Dynasty, poets expressed the natural scenery and sadness of traveling by describing the posture and cries of apes. The emotional connotation of ape imagery in this period was mostly inherited from the Wei, Jin, and North and South Dynasties, with sadness and desolation as the main theme. In the Sheng Tang Dynasty, ape imagery involved more diverse subjects, distributed in landscape and garden poems, reward and gift poems, relegation poems, send reply poems, farewell poems and other types of poems, and there were great innovations in the emotional connotations. At this time, ape imagery was no longer synonymous with sentimentality and bitterness, but could be used as an important subset to create a tranquil and beautiful mood. However, with the outbreak of the Anshi Rebellion, the ape imagery was combined with the social disasters and politics of the time, moving from the ego to the greater self, and expanding from the poet's own emotions to the suffering of the world's people. In the Middle Tang Dynasty, with the decline of the Tang Dynasty, there was constant social unrest and displacement of the people. Literati gradually tired of the wandering life, longing for seclusion, began to closely interact with monks and Taoists, sentimental Buddhism and Taoism, living in the mountains and forests and wild temples, so the ape imagery also shows more of a religious mentality. In the late Tang Dynasty, the ruling class had sharp

internal contradictions, the country was suffering from internal and external problems, and the wars were unceasing, and the Tang Empire was already shrouded in the air of decay and destruction. Literary people turned more from the outside world to their own inner exploration, ape imagery also showed more of the poet's inner feelings, the subject matter towards narrowing.

Ape imagery in Tang poetry, while directly inherited from the previous generation, is not lacking in independent innovation. There are many poems involving ape imagery in All Tang Poetry, and these apes scattered in Tang poems are the visual manifestation of the cultural atmosphere, social landscape, humanistic feelings, and religious psychology of the Tang Dynasty in literature..

3. The Literary Implications of Ape Imagery in Du Fu's Poems

The use of ape imagery in Du Fu's poems is one of the bright colors in his creations. Nearly forty of his poems directly or indirectly incorporate ape imagery, and its importance is self-evident. These works not only show the multi-faceted nature of apes as natural beings, but also deeply reveal Du Fu's complex and delicate emotional world. They display a variety of literary meanings in Du Fu's poems, which can be broadly categorized into five types: dexterity, plain leisure, expression of return, unfulfilled ambition and unrecognized talent, and creation of a melancholic atmosphere in the poems.

3.1. Dexterity of apes

Apes are often found in remote and steep places, in order to survive, so they are good at climbing, and their speed of movement is very fast, these kinds of characteristics allow them to live in a dangerous environment. Du Fu has two poems that mention the agility and dexterity of apes, "The lonely boat is more lush, and the remote road is very quiet. Side fright apes brisk, up envy storks and cranes orthopedic" ("Nie Leiyang to servant to block the water book to the wine and meat to heal the famine river poem to get on behalf of Huai ... moored in Fangtian") [2], "ape fast long hard to see, gull light reason not yet" ("boredom") [3]. At the same time, it should also be noted that, in the face of the dexterity and freedom of the ape, the poet's passive situation is more likely to stir up feelings of sadness and depression.

3.2. Plain leisure

"People say that on the road to Nanzhou, the mountain apes are hanging from the trees. The whole family was horrified to hear it, and sent it as small as a fist. I was worried about my face, but when I first tuned in, I saw the horse whip. If you are looking for a smart person, you will find a child who is crazy." ("Seeking a Small Husun from a Man to Send") [4] In this poem, the poet mainly describes the cute little apes and monkeys in the southern mountains, and there is no deep meaning in the poem, which is an improvisation of Du Fu. The poem was written in the second year of the Qianyuan era, Du Fu was deported to Huazhou in the previous year, and a year later he abandoned his post in order to avoid the war and moved from Huazhou to Qinzhou and Tonggu, and then to Dadeu at the end of the year, where he settled in the western suburb to build a grassy pavilion, and lived a relatively stable and self-sufficient life. At this time, although Dufu was living in another country, he was still with his family, and the Dufu Cao Tang was a cozy harbor for the family in the chaos of war. Although life was difficult at that time, he was accompanied by his wife and children, and lived a rare life of peace and leisure. Therefore, when "the man from the people" told the strange story of the Nanchuan mountain apes, the poet laughed out loud and wrote this poem with a stroke of the pen. "The color of the water contains the movement of the crowd, and the light of the morning cuts through the emptiness. Years of encroachment are often frustrating, and the sun is far away. When the apes hang, they learn from each other, and the gulls walk freely. If you want to come to Qutang in the spring,

you will have to choose a place to live in Dewuixi." ("Cold Hope in Dewy West") [5] In this poem, the flying gulls and climbing apes echo each other in the sky and on the ground, and the vast and powerful scene instantly jumps onto the paper. The sky is wide and the earth is vast, the dexterous apes are swinging and climbing freely on the rocky cliffs, and the gulls are flying freely on the surface of the river. Standing not far from the poet's back to us, we can not see his expression, but in such a majestic landscape, the chest can not help but for the broad. There are not many poems in which the image of "ape" reflects the poet's calm and leisurely state of mind, but these poems show a more realistic Dufu, a Dufu who lived in harmony with nature and wrote his own flesh-and-blood life.

3.3. Expression of return

Many of the "ape" images in Du Fu's poems appear as sounds, such as "ape's horn", "ape's song", "ape's cry", "ape's whistling", and so on. "The sound of the ape's cry is already very loud. The cries of the apes are already very mournful, and the environment of the place where there are apes is also relatively desolate. When living away from home, the mood is bleak traveler suddenly heard the sound of the ape, tears have long been unconsciously fall out of the eye sockets, "listen to the ape actually under three tears" ("Eight Songs of Autumn Xing its second") [6], "mournful apes cried a, guest tears burst forests and serval" ("Jiu Cheng Gong") [7], perennial guest Du Fu is also the same. Du Fu, a frequent traveler, is also like this. "The poor apes call for rain and snow, the old horses are afraid of the mountains." ("Sighs") [8] The apes and monkeys that can't find their way out are wailing in the rain and snow, and the old horses on their way back to their homes are looking at the mountains and weeping, so the double impact of hearing and sight is so miserable that it makes people feel scared. The poet compares himself with "poor apes" and "old horses" to express his own poverty and the sadness and despair of traveling to other places and having difficulty in returning home. The line "The wind is fast, the sky is high, the apes are wailing, the islet is clear, the sand is white and the birds are flying back." in "Ascent to the Heights" unfolds before the reader's eyes a wonderful ink landscape painting in cool colors. [9] A desolate and desolate, with cold colors of ink and ink landscape painting unfolds in front of the readers' eyes. The apes roar loudly, the sound in the vast expanse of heaven and earth constantly echoing, the poet's muddy sad eyes quietly looking into the distance. The poet's muddy and sad eyes look into the distance. The pains of being old and sick, having a wandering life, living in a foreign land, and being depressed and disillusioned are melted into the mournful roar of the apes, and are transformed into the sad and solemn autumn scenery. Du Fu uses the sound of the apes to reflect the desolation of the place where he lives, and to express his inner confusion of "circling around the tree for three turns, but what branch can I rely on".

3.4. Unfulfilled ambitions, unrecognized talents

In the second year of the Tang Dynasty Emperor Dali, Du Fu moved to DuiMiangXi, cultivated a part of the public land in DongTun, cultivated forty acres of citrus groves, and lived a life of operating a garden. The poet walked slowly in the garden with a walking stick, looking at all kinds of fruits planted with his own hands in the sunrise, glittering with light, a rare joy surged to his heart. However, "crying apes in the Chu mountain corner" ("cold rain towards the line to see the garden tree") [10], a harsh ape cries will be pulled back to the bleak reality of the poet, the heart has just risen to the joy and was replaced by sadness. The poet, who is in a desolate place, can't fulfill his ambition, and can only take refuge in the remote Chushan even, listening to the cries of the sad apes that break the soul one after another.

3.5. Creating an atmosphere of poetic sadness

Du Fu in the "ape" on the use of imagery focus on the aesthetics of the ape's voice, often with the sound of the ape cries to render the environment of the bleak and inner sadness. [11] "The

ape's cry of autumn tears is missing, and the sparrow's noise of evening sorrow is empty." ("Deafness") [12] The poet had long heard the ape's cry countless times, and now because of old age his ears were gradually going deaf, but he was therefore glad that he did not have to hear the ape's cry, which was another sadness to the point of chilling him to the bone, any more. But suddenly a burst of autumn wind blew, yellow leaves falling from the mountains, the autumn gradually thick, the depression to the extreme, that one after another even if you can not hear but has been engraved in the bones of the mournful cries of the apes and ringing in the brain, the poet was shocked at the end of the day did not hold back the "caller to ask for the north wind" [13]. Du Fu was born in the chaotic world, but young ambition, worry about the people, but the late years of poverty, depression, a cavity of indignation can not be released, "eyes again when dark? Ear from the previous month deaf" [14], since the reality is so heartbreaking, it is better not to hear. However, although old and frail, deaf and blind, Du Fu still can not abandon the country and the people, all the time do not care about the people's plight, this is the poet saint's life of sorrow.

4. Conclusion

Ape imagery was created from the very beginning, developed and enriched through the Wei, Jin and Six Dynasties, and finally shone in Tang poetry, witnessing the rise and fall of the times and carrying the bitterness and sorrow of the Tang people. There exists an ineffable tacit understanding between the ape image and Du Fu, the great poet who is honored as the "Sage of Poetry". Du Fu's poetic style is mournful and somber, with deep insight and sympathy for the suffering of the world, which coincides with the poignant and lonely beauty of ape imagery. In Du Fu's writing, ape imagery often becomes the medium through which he expresses his personal misery and the impermanence of the country's rise and fall. Whenever the poet's innermost heart is surging with an indescribable sense of sadness, ape imagery is naturally integrated into his verses, becoming an outlet for emotional catharsis, making the poems richer in emotional level and more far-reaching in meaning. Through the in-depth study of ape imagery in Du Fu's poems, we can not only have a glimpse of the poet's delicate and sensitive emotional world, but also feel his profound thinking about life, society and history. Therefore, the study of ape imagery in Du Fu's poems is not only a retrospective look at ancient literature, but also a profound exploration of the nature of human nature and emotional resonance.

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