

Comparison of Baudelaire and Li Jinfa's Image of "City Wanderer"

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Abstract:

In Baudelaire and 19th Century Paris, the German philosopher Benjamin first put forward the idea of "city wanderers". "City wanderers" have aesthetic vision and unique insight, they drift in the city, free from the crowd, addicted to thinking. They try to reconstruct modern urban experience and reveal the essence of modern life through individual experience. Baudelaire captured the great changes at the social level, and later depicted various chaotic and morbid modern experiences in his poetry collection *The Flowers of Evil*. Li Jinfa, who studied in Paris, France, was the first poet to introduce symbolism to China. It is not difficult to find that Baudelaire and Li Jinfa have overlapping modern urban experience, and the image of "city wanderers" appeared in their works. The purpose of this study is to explore the similarities and differences of the images of "city wanderers" in Baudelaire's and Li Jinfa's works as well as the causes, which has important practical significance and academic value for a deeper understanding of the relationship between cultural factors and individual creation in the interaction of Chinese and French literature.

Keywords:

City wanderer, Baudelaire, Li Jinfa, modernity

After the mid-19th century, Europe's industrialization accelerated, especially the emergence of a large number of industrial cities. The Industrial revolution divided man and nature, and it pushed the boundaries toward nature. People flocked to cities voluntarily or forcibly, and cities became the fields of their existence. Modern society began. Industrialization has improved the production efficiency of modern society, but it also hides many social contradictions. Under such conditions, man gradually disintegrates into a cold machine, repeating monotonous labor. The rhythm of the assembly line becomes the rhythm of the life of the whole society. Benjamin shows us the consistency of behavior and grooming, the mechanical operation of the "smiling kind" that ultimately leaves people with "reflective behavior."

It is under this background that western modernist literature came into being. Among them, the city is their main object of observation. They focus on describing various anomalies in modern society and the lack of subjectivity brought about by over-industrialization. These protagonists all have one thing in common: they all have an independent consciousness and a clear awareness of the awkward situation of people in modern cities. They live in the city and look on the city life from the perspective of outsiders at any time. "Wandering" can be understood to mean that the main body and the center maintain a state of mutual appearance and estrangement. The attitude of urban wanderers towards the city is both critical and helpless. They want to seek spiritual breakthrough, but they are trapped in the city by various factors. Baudelaire and Li Jinfa can be regarded as representatives of "urban wanderers". They are both urban observers, with similar wandering identities, in a wandering space of comparable development, and experiencing the same brief but intense instant sensations. However, in the face of the city, there are obvious differences between the two reactions. The urban space gives the wanderers different private feelings, which can be traced back to their recognition of their own identity.

I. Modernity Anxiety: Baudelaire's Image of "City Wanderer"

Baudelaire, a French poet, was born in Paris in 1821 and died in Paris in 1867. He spent most of his life in Paris, witnessed the ups and downs of Paris, it can be said that Paris is his memory field. For the hometown of Paris, Baudelaire's feelings are extremely complex. His wandering has a dual nature: on the one hand, he is wandering in the spatial level of his hometown; On the other hand, he takes a spiritual tour in his hometown. The root cause of his double wandering is his anxiety about modernity.

In the first half of the 19th century, the urban form of Paris was in the transition from classical to modern. Napoleon III's advisor Haussmann carried out a series of huge urban planning and renovation, known as the "Haussmann Plan". He demolished some slums and narrow alleyways, as well as some medieval walls and streets, and replaced them with wide and straight streets, such as the Arc de Triomphe, the Paris City Hall, and greatly improved infrastructure. This period was characterized by the prosperity of commerce and trade, as Benjamin describes in Paris, the Capital of the Nineteenth Century: "Most of the Archways

of Paris appeared in the fifteen years after 1822." Arch Street is a hub for luxury goods. The way they are constructed shows art suited to the business people." The transformation of cities has also brought about great changes in people's way of life. In short, this is an embryonic stage of urban modernization transformation.

The transformation of urban modernization has influenced Baudelaire's creative mentality, character and temperament. Having lived in Paris since childhood, he naturally wrote about the changes in the city before him. In addition, he is sensitive and withdrawn by nature, and his ability to capture changes is very precise and sensitive.

He lamented the passing of the old days, writing in a poem called "The Swan" : "As I walked through the newly built Chongwu Square/it suddenly evoked in me a rich memory/the old Paris had changed beyond recognition/The appearance of the city changed faster than the human heart, it was sad." He then constructs the site in his memory, "the wooden houses, the piles of rough/capitals and pillars, the weeds, the boulders that have been soaked with moss, the old clutter reflected in the Windows, I only see in my imagination." In the first half, the poet paints a picture of the ruins of modernity. Then the swan appeared: "I saw a swan that had escaped from its cage/rubbing the dry road with its webbed feet, and dragging its snow-white feathers over the uneven ground... The "swan" in the poem has escaped from the cage, but it cannot escape from the bigger cage - Paris in the modern transformation. The poem was published in the *Modern Review* in 1859. We can think of Paris as being in the midst of a major transformation. The reconstruction demolished the buildings of the past, and the buildings are symbols bearing the emotional memory of the subject, which brought a huge shock to Baudelaire's emotions. The Paris of memory is beautiful, the old Paris of destruction is ugly; At this time, the swan is beautiful, and the environment in which the swan lives is ugly. This poem is different from Baudelaire's expression technique of "turning ugliness into beauty", which he was good at in the past, and is more the residual rhyme left by the romanticism of "the principle of contrast between beauty and ugliness". Through the choice of his expression methods, we can also infer his nostalgia for the romantic movement in Paris. Therefore, he is destined to wander the city constantly, to reminisce about the past. He wandered through ugly cities, between memories and reality.

He was anxious about the coming of a new age. Baudelaire is nostalgic for the past, but he is also aware that he is living in a time of unprecedented change - modernity. The origin of modernity is generally believed to come from the feeling of modern life, and the most important description of modern life comes from Baudelaire's "Painter of Modern Life" : "Modernity is transitional, transient, accidental, is half of art, and the other half is eternal and unchanging." He believes that the people who best embody the "modern way of life" are the wanderers. The wanderer takes the modern city as an aesthetic object and keeps a subtle distance in it. It is because of this realization that he does not fully recall the idyllic way of life, but "dances with evil" and writes about the modern experience.

His poems are a magnifying glass of modern urban life. From the perspective of a wanderer, he shows the living conditions of all classes and the moral conditions of The Times for readers. In the poem "Dusk", the poet creates a sense of crisis in modern urban life, and he senses the deterioration of social morals and customs. At the beginning, the poet writes: "Here comes the charming evening, friend of sinners/It comes stealthily like

an accomplice." Dusk appears in a new attitude, it is given moral attributes by the poet. When people think that dusk is a time of day to let down their guard and rest, evil gradually grows under the cover of dusk. The coming of dusk also provided conditions for later poets to depict evil. "At this time, the wicked devils in the atmosphere/like industrialists open their eyes, fly about, striking the eaves and shutters," writing here, the poet seems to break through the boundary between imagination and reality, in this sinful world, people sell their souls to dance with the devil. "The hiss of the kitchen, the screams of the theater, the whine of the band." Chaotic sounds stimulate the hearing; On the other side of the orgy of the sinful world are the groans of the weak: "The suffering of the sick is increasing! / The dark night grabs them by the throat/They run out of breath and go to the public abyss." The opposition between the two sets of images creates a great tension within the poem.

2.The Other in the Mirror: Li Jinfa's "City Wanderer" Image

French philosopher Lacan believed that the subjectivity of the individual is formed through the reflection of the self in the mirror. The mirror can be any medium that reflects the individual's image. The individual can know his own image through the other in the mirror image, and form the self-identification and subjective construction from it. In 1919, at the age of 19, Li Jinfa went to Paris to study arts. He would be exposed to Western culture in the city, which had a major influence on his poetry writing. Some of his poems reflect the interactive relationship between self and "the other in the mirror" through the description of foreign city life.

Unlike Baudelaire, Li grew up in a small village in Guangdong Province, receiving traditional private school education since childhood, deeply influenced by Confucianism, and liked to read Chinese classical works as a child. He grew up in the environment of farming civilization, and the factors of urban civilization had little influence on his growth. In his youth, he gradually left his hometown, first to the county town, then to Hong Kong, and finally to France to study arts. From then on, the city, as another, entered his writing. And he is a special urban wanderer, an Oriental wandering in a Western city, a man who grew up in a farming civilization wandering in a strange urban civilization.

The child first completes the confirmation of self-integrity by recognizing the shadow of "self", that is, "other". The lack of "ideal self" in the mirror image will lead to the loss of personal self-awareness and the dislocation of self-cognition. Li Jinfa, who came to Paris for the first time, is like an ignorant child who knows nothing about the laws of city operation. Therefore, he tries to find his own identity by wandering, learning modern experiences while wandering.

He discovered French and European literature and art while wandering the city. Culture is the soul of a city, and culture shapes the temperament of a city. Compared with the wandering of footsteps, the wandering of the spiritual level is a metaphysical wandering. In his poems, readers can read about his obsession with French culture. From the surface of the text, his poems often appear in French, such as "A mon ami de la-bas", and even directly

wrote the poem "L'impression" in French. On closer reading, his text repeatedly appears to pay tribute to French cultural celebrities, in "Verlaine" in "I am lost in your chapters/with the laughter of friends." In the Talking with Verlaine, the author starts a dialogue with Verlaine in the text to express the poet's thoughts on life and emotion. Western literary imagery also appears frequently in his text, The Goddess of Beauty: "The torrent of the valley/has stopped with the passing of nymphe." French nymphe refers to the fairy who lives in the mountains and rivers in Greek mythology. This image personifies the rapids and creates a mysterious atmosphere. He once visited the Palace of Nepenthes in Potsdam and wrote: "The Palace of Nepenthes is so lonely that it cries out/and the fences of eternal silence/are weary of scrutiny." The wanderers transfer their loneliness to this ancient building, a kind of nostalgia arises. In order to adapt to the Western context, Li Jinfa must regard Western civilization as the "other" of his identity, which is reflected in the use of a large number of foreign languages and Western literary images in his texts. In the process of wandering in the city, Li Jinfa distinguished "the other in the mirror" and "self" by imitating the lifestyle, words and deeds in the western context, and finally established the self-subject consciousness.

He has an ambivalent attitude towards the "other in the mirror". In his wanderings, he also discovers the drawbacks of capitalist civilization and his awkward status as an Oriental. He sees people ruthlessly seizing wealth, "burrowing under the black market" and "cloaking its treasures" (Ugliness); Men fight against each other, as "brothers of all creatures, all born to seize and conquer" (Wail); Among them, "Whispering of Paris" is a profound description of the darkness behind the splendor of Paris: "People in the crowd/thin horses panting under the wheel", "the heavy burden on the back of the street/regardless of the roost/dust under the wheel/full of sleep on the tired eyes." He realized that as an Oriental, he could not fully integrate into Western society, and he revealed his homesickness in his poem: "Oh, the wandering years/brought us laughter, crying/only left this scar."

"Wandering" could also sum up the general psychology of intellectuals in the 1920s. The climax of the May Fourth Movement receded, and intellectuals began to feel at a loss, fear, loneliness, and pain. They wandered the roads. When the trend of Chinese modernist literature appeared, China had not yet enjoyed the benefits of capitalist industrial civilization, so it imitated capitalist industrial civilization as its "other in the mirror".

3. Intertextuality Across Time and Space

The French philosopher Julia Christeva believes that one text is always related to another text in one way or another. Any text is produced on the basis of the remains or memory of its previous texts, or formed in the absorption and conversion of other texts, because any literary work is always immersed in the cultural system composed of the literature, philosophy, religion, tradition, etc., and at the same time has a mutual influence with the culture of other nations in the world. Li Jinfa was the first poet to introduce symbolism into China, and was regarded as the Baudelaire of the East because of his study of Western

symbolic poetry and his novel and bizarre poems. The intertextuality of their poems is formed to a large extent. For example, the image of "city wanderer" in Baudelaire and Li Jinfa's poems is both related and different.

For example, the theme of "encounter" appears in both poems. The modern city is a copy of the same, the poet is wandering in this cold modern city, he wants to find poetry. Poetry exists in the moment of "encounter". Thus, "Encounter" becomes a way for poets to confront modernity. Baudelaire's theme of "encounter" is well reflected in *To a Woman Passing by* by Arm:

*The street was deafening around me
 Passing by a man dressed in mourning, showing severe sorrow,
 A slender woman with a beautiful hand
 Swaying up her lace dress;
 Light and noble, revealing legs like statues.
 From her like a storm
 Eyes of lead sky,
 I tremble like a madman,
 The ecstasy of the drink and the charm of the beauty.
 There was a flash of electricity, and then darkness!
 - With your glance
 Suddenly made me feel like a reborn, lost beauty,
 Can't I see you again except in the next life?
 Let's go! It's far away! It's too late! It may never be possible!
 Because, from now on, we're all missing each other,
 Though you already know that I once loved you!*

The first paragraph makes the reader aware that the poet is in a crowded crowd, but instead of writing directly about the crowd, he personifies the street as "deafening" when suddenly he encounters a beautiful and sad woman. The encounter made him forget the surrounding environment, the world seemed to be left only "me" and her, the eternal world condensed in this moment of encounter. The second paragraph unfolds between "me" and her, and the poet cleverly lengthens this moment of feeling. At the peak of the emotion, the turning point comes "There was a flash of electricity, and then darkness!" The image of "a flash of electricity" is exactly corresponding to the feeling of "I tremble like a mad man" in the previous paragraph, emphasizing the fleeting encounter, the poet returns to reality from mania, and then looks forward to the next encounter, "Can't I see you again except in the next life?" In this poem, Encounter becomes a device for controlling the change of time. It makes it possible to embrace the moment, and it makes the moment extend into eternity. At the same time, in the encounter, the human personality can also be revived in the modern city.

Similarly, Li Jinfa's poems also have the theme of "encounters" among city wanderers. The poet describes what he saw in the carriage in the Lyon Car. However, this poem is not only about encounters with women, it also describes encounters with scenery:

*The dim light woefully illuminates everything,
 Turning his pink forearms gray.*

*The shadow of the bonnet hid their faces,
 Like the moon disappearing in the clouds!
 The shadow of the hazy world,
 For a moment not to be missed,
 Away from us,
 Without thinking.
 The weariness of the valley is only the glow of the moon,
 And the swaying of the strip,
 Put it to a deep sleep.
 The light green of the grass shines on the cuckoo's feathers;
 The noise of the wheels tears up all silence;
 The light of the far city shines in the little window,
 But not able to reveal the cheeks of the sleepy,
 And deep in the heart of the bottom of the boredom.
 Oh, heartless night air,
 And curled my wings.
 The sound of the stream,
 Drifting with the clouds,
 Does it fade my blonde hair?
 In the unknown distance,
 The moon is like the half corner of the hook,
 Ten thousand people laugh,
 The crowd wept,
 Hiding in the same body -- a faint black shadow
 Can't tell it's blood,
 It is firefly!*

In the first paragraph, the poet describes the dark environment inside the carriage. First he encounters a group of women, but cannot see their faces clearly. The poet writes that "pink forearms, turning grey", a change that defamiliarizes perception and leaves the reader with associations that individuality in modern urban civilization is always forgotten. The last sentence is even more ingenious, comparing the "soft hat" to the "cloud" and the "face" to the "moon". The hat covers their faces like the cloud covers the moon, suggesting the poet's melancholy mood. The poet did not like Baudelaire's ecstatic psychology when he met, he just objectively presented the picture of the encounter with the woman in the carriage, did not reveal subjective emotions, even the face, the eyes did not show. In the third verse, he shifts his attention and encounters the scene outside the window. The valley, the moon, the grass, the distant light, light and sound form a hazy picture. In the last two sentences the poet returns to his subjective emotions, and he "encounters" himself. The poem presents us with an image similar to Benjamin's urban wanderer - a male observer and an independent free walker. He appeared in the modern city at night, surrounded by nihilistic emotions in a certain railway carriage, but this "encounter" made him obtain unexpected satisfaction.

The theme of "encounter" appears many times in Baudelaire and Li Jinfa's texts, which is a noteworthy phenomenon. Both of them "encounter" from the perspective of

city wanderers, the encounter is moving, the encounter is also moving, the process of "encounter" becomes the brief interaction of two strange lives, so doomed to the fleeting behavior of "encounter". The encounter also acquires an eternal experience through the gaze of the met.

4. Conclusion

As city wanderers with different identities, there are some differences in the image of "city wanderers" in the text. Baudelaire lived in the middle of the 19th century, at the beginning of modernization, and his poems describe a sense of anxiety about the end of the old era and the arrival of the new era. His wandering is time level, from "wandering in the old city" to "wandering in the modern city", the wandering field has not changed.

Li Jinfa was an Oriental student studying in France in the 1920s, and the degree of modernization was further deepened. His wandering is spatial, from the eastern farming civilization to the western modern city wandering, wandering occurs in the foreign land. In his text, there is a kind of agricultural literature temperament, which is related to his past life experience. He is good at describing natural scenery, and has the freehand characteristics of classical Chinese poetry, expressing sentimental emotions, but less grasp of modern experience. The use of urban imagery is far less intensive and deep than Baudelaire.

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