

## The Spiritual Connotation of Family and Country Feelings in Jin Shengtian's Selected Poems of Du Fu

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**Abstract:** Jin Shengtian's Du ShiJie, as his masterpiece, reflected the complexity of his thoughts and the characteristics of the times, which was beyond the other works. During the reformation of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, scholars often felt that the country had broken down and the family had died. He reflected on the theory of the rise and fall of their country, redefined the social ethical relationship between the monarch and minister, and emerged progressive and innovative thinkers such as Huang Zongxi, Gu Yanwu, Wang Fuzhi and Lu Liuliang. Under such a background, Jin Shengtian's literary criticism was unconsciously influenced by it. In Tang Dynasty Du Fu's poems, the family and country feelings of loyalty to the monarch and the country "to the monarch Yao and Shun, and then to make the customs to customs" revealed the signs of sublimation in Jin's works. Based on DuFu's poems, historical materials and other works of Jin's, this paper made a preliminary study on the changes of the Confucian concept of family and country, in order to provide a deeper understanding of the evolution of the Confucian concept of family and country.

Jin Changwen, the cousin of Shengtian, said in his article "The Book of the Fourth Talented Scholar": "I have read Du Shaoling's poems over and over again, then I knew that since the Tang Dynasty, there was nothing that Shaoling can not write, and there was nothing Changjing can not criticize ... Du Fu was a loyal and filial piety scholar. He could not be rebellious because of his loyalty and filial piety." Although there were some exaggerated elements, they were not totally unreasonable. Shengtian's literary comments were often unique and unusual in subtle ways. Liao Yan, a Qing man, said in his biography of Mr. Jin Shengtian that he was a man with unique vision and technique, who started a style of comments. In fact, before Shengtian, the annotation of Du Fu's poems was a commonplace. In the Song Dynasty, there were "thousands of annotations of Du Fu". Qiu Zhaoao, Qian Qianyi, Pu Qilong and others who studied Du Fu's poems during the Ming and Qing Dynasties were even more famous. Why could Shengtian's "Interpretation of Du Fu's Poems" be unique in the numerous annotations of Du Fu's poems? In the final analysis, it was only because Shengtian's comments had more age's characteristics. Not only his bold comments on current politics, but also the criticizing of stereotyped writing habit-decomposing DuFu's poems, both them reflected the age's characteristics at that time. It was not only communicated ancient and modern times, but also expressed one's own thoughts. It had the characteristics of combining classics with current consciousness. Shengtian was in the era of the alternation of Ming and Qing Dynasties. It was well-known that when a dynasty had changed, new ideas would come into being. This article was focusing on two clues, from the background of the time and the Confucian concept of family and country, to see the sublimation of the connotation of family and country feelings in Du Fu's poems written by Shengtian.

## **1. The background of the times and the regional characteristics**

Any thoughts can not be produced without the social environment at that time, as did the literature. Shengtan was born in the 36th year of Wanli in the Ming Dynasty (1608 A.D.) and died in the 18th year of Shunzhi (1661 A.D.). It can be said that Shengtan was in the era of alternating Ming and Qing Dynasties. At that time, Zhu's future declined, there were many changes in the world, including the continued natural disasters, and bandits swarmed up, as well as Manchu and Qing nationalities entered the Central Plains. In this context, Shengtan wrote at the wind morning and the moon evening, he drank a lot and woke up with inspiration, that's why Du Shi Jie came out.

### **1.1 The year of the book**

According to anonymous "1661 Ji Wen", Sheng Tan said "Hai Zi was engaged in Du Fu's poems". Hai referred to Ji Hai, the 16th year of Qing Shunzhi (1659 A.D.) and Zi referred to Gengzi, the 17th year of Qing Shunzhi (1660 A.D.), but it was only two years. However, referring to the historical fact that Sheng Tan died in 1661, it was not difficult to draw the conclusion that this was Sheng Tan's work in his later years and his thoughts were very mature already. At the same time, Jin Changwen's preface also mentioned a key sentence: "Changjing was fascinated to Siji in early years". It was mentioned in the Book of Rites. Zheng Xuan noted that "Chen Dengyuan, a scholar of the Republic of China doubted this. He said: "Annotation of Du Fu's poems at the age of 15 was very capable. It is rarely possible. " Chen Dengyuan's assertion can also be supported by the above words that "there was nothing Changjing can not criticize". After all, Jin Chang, as a loyal admirer of Shengtan, who had praise in the preface to the book was understandable. Therefore, we could not believe this remark completely, but we could cautiously draw the following conclusion: For Du Fu's poems, Shengtan began to brew when he was a teenager. After a long period of deliberation and consideration, he finally chose and annotated them in the last two years. As for the manuscript, the preface also stated, "I was glad to have a brief decomposition of Tang poetry. What should Zhuang Sao Madu do? I felt that I wanted to carve all the manuscripts... searched for them in many ways and made up for them." Two conclusions can be drawn from this paragraph of material: firstly, the book was still unfinished before the end of the Shengtan's live; Secondly, the current "Du Shi Jie" was a collection of posthumous manuscripts by Shengtan's relatives and friends.

### **1.2 The custom in Wuzhong**

Shengtan was from Changzhou, a part of Suzhou. Wuzhong area was a land of fish and rice in the south of the Yangtze River and had always been rich. The prosperity of economy would definitely led to the opening of culture. In addition, paper-making and book-engraving industries in the south of the Yangtze River in the late Ming Dynasty had a rapid development. In order to attract readers and open up a market, many publication kept some "comments" in the book broadly which had made a leading effect to the readers. This was the underlying economic reason for Shengtan's literary criticism. Secondly, the popularity of celebrities in Wuzhong was very popular, and the number of scholars were arrogant. This point was discussed in details in Chen Dengyuan's Biography of Jin Shengtan: "At the time of Wanli, the style of celebrities in Wuzhong was already flourishing, and they liked to be free and not restrained. Viewing Tang Yin and Zhong Bojing, one or two people could be found. It was not strange that Shengtan was influenced by it. This made us understand that the wild and unruly and good words of Shentan were not only caused by the personal character of him, but also the atmosphere in Wuzhong. Shentan unconsciously made some grotesque theories under its influence. Chen's "Biography of Jin Shengtan" quoted Zhao Yi's "Notes

on Twenty-Two Histories" as saying: "In the middle of the Ming Dynasty, talented people were proud of their birth... Since Zhu Yunming Tang Yin's generation in Wuzhong, their talent was light and bright, they were passionate, they were free and unruly, and they were famous outside the country... They were also called by the officials for their discipline and guidance, and the officials urged them repeatedly so they were angry that there were a lot of people did not want to listen. This can be used as a reason why this land affected his thought. "In addition, Wuzhong, as the place where the Donglin Party's restoration society gathered, it was not surprising the comment custom has spread to Shengtan because the habit of commenting current affairs was so popular in the village.

## **2. The traditional root of the home-country feeling**

As a traditional scholar's internalized feeling, the concept of family and country must first explored its origin in order to observe its core. Because it was rooted in China's traditional way of governing the country, economic production mode, cultural tradition and moral education, I will discuss it from the following aspects:

### **2.1 The Governance Model of Homogeneous Structure of Family and Country**

Since the western Zhou dynasty, "the state was founded by the state and the state was established by the government", the way of running the country in China has been formed by the political construction of national unity. After Qin and Han dynasties, they gradually changed to prefectures and counties, but they still followed the ethical standard of "after the death of the father, the son, and after the death of the brother". For this point, Mr. Feng youlan had a discussion based on historical materialism in the chapter "on the new world", which would not be repeated here. Based on this, it was natural that the scholars regarded the country as the "big family" responsibility came into being.

### **2.2 Household-by-household small-scale peasant economy**

China had always been founded on agriculture. In traditional society, the small-scale peasant economy, which took one household as a unit, has long been the foundation of the national economy, so the production system was compatible with the social system. Liang Xuming quoted Mr. Lu Zuofu as saying in "The Essentials of Chinese Culture": "Because the economic unit of the agricultural nation was very simple, as simple as one economic unit only needed one family, the social life of the agricultural nation was family life. Even though it sometimes went beyond the scope of the family, it was also the expansion of family relations." This kind of social relationship expanded by family relationship was the deep soil formed by the concept of family, country and world. As individuals relied on their families for a long time in social life, they had a strong love for their families. When they expand and spread, they have formed a feelings for their hometown and the country. Chinese people "move back to their hometown" and "the rise and fall of the country is the responsibility of ordinary people". Such local and national views came out from here.

Secondly, the ethical-based economy formed by taking the family as the basic economic unit. According to Mr. Liang Xuming's meanings of "sharing wealth", "general wealth", "dividing talents" and "caring for each other in economic and being responsible for each other", from a certain perspective, this kind of economic relationship was based on ethics, which was reasonable due to emotion. Also, it made people understand their own obligations. This kind of obligations and responsibilities were not fixed, but will become wider with the development of people's abilities. This was why there was "if you were far away from the power, you will worry about the monarch; If

you were far away from the Jianghu, you will worry about your people." This sense of obligation triggered by the economy has risen to become a feeling of family and country.

### **2.3 The cautious and prudent ancestor worship**

There has never been a true religion in China. It was the Chinese people's ancestor worship in a cautious and prudent way that played a corresponding role in society. "The 13th year of Chenggong in Zuozhuan" had the following: The important events of the state are the sacrifice and the military. The sacrifice and the war were put in the same important position. The word "to remember the dead person " came from "the study of Confucius" , which meant to remember the distant past through the sacrifice activities of the ancestors. This had fostered our nation's cultural tradition of respecting the heavenly father and remembering the past . Such cultural traditions had a powerful effect.Mr. Gu Hongming said, "Such a kind of country was an absolutely solid and permanent and made people realize the infinity and permanence of social development, thus made the Chinese felt that they are intelligent. At the same time, the ancestral worship preached by Confucianism was based not so much on the belief in the immortality of the race as on the belief in the immortality of the race, so the ancestral worship and loyalty of Confucianism was a way of giving the Chinese people a sense of permanence while they were alive, and a source of solace when they face death. Mencius said: "There were three ways to be unfilial, and the worst is one man has no son". This was also the reason why the immortal eternal feeling of race was generated by connecting ancestors and descendants through ancestor worship, which was the source of China's absolutely firm thought. At the same time, the estrangement between loyalty and filial piety has been broken through. Under the Confucian system, only loyalty to the emperor and filial piety to parents were required. In this way, two simple reasons had completed the religious task of racial sustainability. Therefore, Confucianism had replaced religion and made the public feel no need for religion.

## **3. The Sublimation of Jin Shengtan's Family and Country Feelings**

Jin Shengtan's sublimation of the feelings of family and country expressed in Du Fu's poems was mainly reflected in the following two points:

### **3.1 A Dialectical View of Loyalty and Patriotism**

For more than 2,000 years since Qin and Han Dynasties, due to the continuous strengthening of imperial power and centralized power, people naturally linked the monarch with the country, and the emperor was the representative of the whole country. The typical embodiment of this point in Du Fu's poems was "to the monarch Yao and Shun, and then to make the customs to customs". Yao and Shun were recognized by Confucianism as virtuous monarch. In Du Fu's mind, the premise to realize the harmony and peace was to make the monarch wise and then achieved the goal of social stability. It was obvious that the state and the monarch were considered as one, but Shengtan disagreed. For example, this strange theory in "Quotations Compilation" said: "It was just one virtue disappeared when nine virtues are among ten virtues .But it is impossible to write nine characters if there was no virtues in there. It was not enough nine virtues, but only the ninth virtues, which was the son of heaven,the most important one for the world. However, whether the people were good or evil, each of them should take care of himself. Therefore, every single person had one virtue. The system of Jingtian was calculated from here.That was to say, one virtue proved by all the people in the world was the virtue that the emperor did not own. "

However, this almost made the emperor irreconcilable with the people. Jin Shengtan's bold criticism of the imperial court and the monarch were often seen in Du Shi Jie. For example, Du Fu's

remark in "Climbing Yanzhou Tower" that "floating clouds connected mountains and fields entered Qingxu" had attracted Shengtan's sentiment : "When entering Qingxu, which was far away from thousands of miles., one was so abandoned. Such a court should not be a good court; Such kind of people should not be good people." I really did know whether he was talking about Du Fu's Tang Dynasty or his own Ming Dynasty. In "Three Quatrains about the history of Killing in Yuzhou the Year before Last", his comment became more bold. Du Fu's original poem "I heard that many people were killed in Hanshui, but women left in military camps" was criticized by Jin: "It was said that military forces in front of the temple were thieves... It was said that all the people in the world were poisoned by prostitution and killed... They did not know whether they were poisoned by group theft or official army? Who owned the power? Who made his royal highness?" It was so rarely at that time to point out the profound contradiction between the feudal rulers and the people so bluntly.

However, the thought of Shengtan was complicated and profound. We should see that Shengtan was deeply influenced by the Confucian concept of loyalty and filial piety. While deeply understanding the contradiction between the monarch and the people, Shengtan was able to observe the festival for the Ming Dynasty after the death of the Ming Dynasty. It was a model for scholars at that time. According to Liao Yan's Biography of Jin Shengtan, "After the revolution, I never wanted to be an official." Mr. Chen Dengyuan also said: "The heyday of Shengtan was actually at the same time as the national subjugation of the Ming Dynasty, and he accepted all the judgement." In fact, whether loyalty to the monarch conflicted with patriotism depended on the monarch himself can represent the overall interests of the country. Shengtan saw this and distinguished the two. However, his behavior just showed that he was sticking to the Confucian cultural tradition of "loyalty to the monarch" silently.

### **3.2 The Double Differentiation of "Loyalty"**

As one of the eight virtues of Confucianism, "loyalty" was an important part of ancient social ethics. The so-called "monarch envoys courtesy, ministers serve monarch loyalty." Stressing the harmony between the monarch and the minister. The original interpretation of "loyalty" in Shuowen Jiezi was "respect ", that meant the monarch and the minister respected each other. However, with the strengthening of imperial power, it had become an obligation to require "loyalty". Zhu Xi's "Four Books and Annotations" interpreted "loyalty" as "loyalty to the best of one's ability". As a scholar deeply influenced by Confucianism in the Song and Ming Dynasties, Shengtan could not avoid affected by his concept. This concept was reflected in the comments of the poem "Northern Expedition". We can first had a limited view of one thing or two from the explanation of the title of "Northern Expedition": "The whole poem is full of worries about the labor court". This was the setting tone of the whole article, with the focus on "I think I was ashamed, because I was the only one who had suffered the favor of the emperor. The emperor personally ordered me to go home to visit relatives." One comment said: "The so-called family was solid minister's family. The minister was so evil that he did not think about it. He was also a king. However, he did not receive a letter. How dare he went by himself?" This was the best footnote to "do your best to be loyal". Even if you wanted to stay or not, you had to be loyal. The above is Shengtan's understanding of "loyalty" and the other level was "loyalty and forgiveness". In the third preface to the Water Margin, there was: "You should know that the method of studying things was to take loyalty and forgiveness as the door. What was loyalty? Therefore, loyalty did not need to be learned, as loyalty was natural in the world and cannot be disloyal." Shengtan used the Buddhist karma to break away from the shackles of Song Confucianism. Loyalty was a natural thing, which was not necessary to learn because one

cannot be unfaithful. What a double differentiation theory of "loyalty" is!

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