谢艳明 ⊙ 著

Narrative Patterns and Processes of Poetry:

The English and Scottish Popular Ballads and the Book of Poetry as Exemplars

诗歌的叙述模式和程式

——以《英格兰与苏格兰民谣》 和《诗经》为例

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FOREWORD

I always believe that coincidences inspire creative thinking. By sheer coincidence, Britain's *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* and China's *Book of Poetry* each contain 305 pieces in the main, and this inspired a doctoral thesis.

How can the two be comparable? Through narratological analysis, a means largely used in the study of stories and novels, but boldly and creatively used here in the study of poetry. The author, Mr. Xie Yanming, goes so far as to explore the narrative patterns and processes of poetry, and comes to the conclusion that narratological theory and methods are not only possible but also useful in the study of poetry. A unique voice, isn't it.

I published two books and three papers recording my way of teaching and research, which by sheer coincidence pushed me to the position of doctoral supervisor in 1998. Since then I have got the jitters about my task and never felt sure as to how to give guidance. There are so many things I have to know and no refresher course could give the qualification I need within a calculable period of time. Sometimes I really feel sorry for the unlucky young guys who think themselves lucky enough to come under my name. To avoid wasting youthful time, I make it a point to give full scope to their initiative in exploring fields of interest, so that they can grow to be specialists on their own.

Dr. Xie Yanming has come up against such background. Before registering in Henan University, he had been a successful teacher at Wuhan University of Technology, having published quite a few papers and translated quite a number of poems into Chinese as well as English. Some of his translations appeared in such a prestigious magazine as

World Literature. During his doctorate years he continued to publish books and translations. Through extensive references and analyses he found the use of narratology for the study of poetry. Sounds new to me. How does it appear to you? Well, the present paper is the result of his research. And I know the author welcomes opinions with open arms.

Wang Baotong
The Pool
Henan University
Kaifeng
14 January 2008

前　　言

在叙述学正式被引进学术界的四十多年里,它主要被用来研究小说。本书则试图将叙述学的理论和方法应用到诗歌的阐释之中。笔者主要以美国学者查尔德编纂的《英格兰与苏格兰民谣》和我国古代第一部诗歌总集《诗经》为例分析诗歌的叙述模式和程式。为了对诗歌叙述规律作出深刻而又全面的考察,本书还引用了英语文学和中国文学中的其他诗歌作为例证。

本书由五个章节组成。第一章总体地比较了《英格兰与苏格兰民谣》和《诗经》,给出了"民谣"的定义,并指出民谣的基本特征是非个性化、非主观性和不带自我意识。本章介绍了这两部诗集是如何编纂而成,以及它们的文学地位是如何被学者认可的;本章还综述了针对《诗经》、《英格兰和苏格兰民谣》及其编者的研究历史。

第二章主要关注叙述学及其发展历史,分析了将其理论和方法应用到诗歌研究中的可行性。

第三章论述诗歌的叙述模式。本章开头介绍了分别由亚里士多德和《尚书·尧典》给出的关于诗歌的经典定义,这两种定义规定了中英诗歌的不同叙述模式,导致了英国民谣强调故事的完整性,中国诗歌重视话语表达诗人的思想、理想和抱负。由于它们之间的不同特征,它们在选择视角模式时也不尽相同:英国民谣主要选择第三人称视角来保持非个性化和客观性,而中国诗歌主要选择第一人称来表达诗人的个人追求。然而,英国民谣的客观性叙述和中国诗歌的第三人称叙述都时常被第一人称的叙述者在文本的开端、中部或结尾部分闯入。本章用比较的方式探讨了典型的诗歌表达模式,将中国诗歌中的三种主要模式——赋、比、兴——与引语和两个西方修辞手段——隐喻和转喻——进行比较,发现它们之间的关系是叠合的。比如,"兴"可能含有隐喻或转喻,或二者都有。本章还讨论了诗歌的韵律模

式——主要是节奏和押韵,还探讨了英国民谣和中国诗歌的音乐特征。

第四章分析诗歌的叙述程式,由三个部分组成:情节设计、人物塑造和诗歌构造。中国诗歌不十分强调情节的设计,而英国民谣却把它当作是叙述的根本元素。本章使用了普罗普的形态学方法阐释一些英国民谣和中国诗歌是如何安排情节的。在人物塑造方面,尽管诗歌的人物多数是静态的,非动态的,但英国民谣和《诗经》塑造了许多丰富多彩的人物形象,如勇敢的水手帕特里克·斯本斯、伟大的王后简、绿林好汉罗宾汉、弃妇,等等。这些人物推动了情节的发展,这样,叙述文本就形成了。文本必须在一定的语境中进行阐释,一些诗歌十分依赖语境,而另一些诗歌对语境的依赖程度相对较低。本章的最后一部分还讨论了诗歌文本是如何开端、如何结尾的,并就英国民谣和中国诗歌总结了五大开头模式和两大结尾模式。诗歌的构造离不开衔接纽带的使用。除了韩礼德、哈桑的五大衔接纽带和胡壮麟的语音纽带外,本章还提出了另四条衔接方式:对立衔接、过度衔接、欠额衔接和反衔接。

第五章是对全书的总结,并得出结论:叙述学的理论和方法在诗歌阐释中不仅是可行的,也是十分实用的。当然,本书是将叙事学理论和方法运用到诗歌阐释中的一个尝试,引用《英格兰与苏格兰民谣》和《诗经》作为例证有一定的局限性。由于篇幅有限,本书研究的诗歌种类不宜过多,因而,此研究还留有广阔的延伸空间。

在此书即将付梓之际,我感慨良多,辛苦读博三年恍惚间成为甜美的记忆,常回荡脑际,而最让我难以忘怀的是与我一起共渡难关,为我付出辛勤汗水的人。在此,让我对他们表示最诚挚的谢意!首先要感谢我的导师王宝童教授,他以深厚的学识教诲着我,以清幽的性情感染着我,为我树立为人为学的榜样;同样要感谢 Shirley Wood 教授、吕长发教授、徐盛桓教授、徐有志教授、高继海教授、蔡新乐教授,他们在百忙之中通读此书稿,给我提出了许多宝贵的意见。我还要感谢美国诗人 Kenneth Rosen 博士,他在大洋彼岸一直都关心着我的书稿,并提供了许多宝贵的资料。最后要感谢我的家人,他们无私的奉献保障了我完成学业,并不断提高。

　　本人学养不深,笔力不逮,本书难免有很多纰漏和不足之处,恳请学者同仁不吝赐教,我将深表感谢!

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谢艳明

2008 年 4 月

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Contents

CHAPTER 4   **The Narrative Processes of Poetry**

CHAPTER 5   **Conclusion**

Chapter 1

General Comparison between *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* and the *Book of Poetry*[1]

The *Book of Poetry*, with its earliest poem written in about 1713 B.C., was collected around the 6th century B.C., while *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, with its earliest ballad written in the 12th century, was compiled more than 2,300 years later in the 19th century. The two books have many comparable aspects. By coincidence or intentional arrangement, the two books contain 305 poems each, although most poems in the *Popular Ballads* have different versions which total to 1247.[2] Quite a number of poems in the *Poetry* are ballads, especially those in *Guo Feng*, or *Feng* (Book of Songs)[3]. Furthermore, each can be considered an origin of national poetry and even of literature.

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[1] *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* and the *Book of Poetry* are hereafter shortened respectively to *Popular Ballads* and *Poetry* in this book.

[2] The research of this book is mainly based on Version A of each ballad in Child's collection. Unless otherwise stated, all technical parameters in the tables and diagrams are calculated on the basis of Version A.

[3] *Feng* in the *Book of Poetry* originally means "ballads of customs", as Zhu Xi says that *feng* is folk songs which denotes folk customs (风者,民俗歌谣之诗). (朱熹. 诗集传. 北京:中华书局,1958)

1.1   Introduction to *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* and the *Book of Poetry*

1.1.1   Ballad

Originally, poetry was a trinity of songs, music and dance. This feature is totally displayed in a ballad. The term "ballad" is a derivation of old French *baller*, to dance, originally meaning a song sung to the rhythmic movement of a dancing chorus. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature* defines "ballad" as "a song intended as the accompaniment to a dance; hence a light, simple song of any kind, or a popular song, often one celebrating or attacking persons or institutions. From this last is derived the modern sense in which a ballad is a simple spirited poem in short stanzas in which some popular story is graphically narrated" (Eagle, 1970: 34). This definition shows that a ballad is a poem which can be sung when set to music and it is closely related to dance. *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* regards "ballad" as "a short narrative song preserved and transmitted orally among illiterate or semi-illiterate people" (Preminger, 1974: 62). This definition points out the author groups and the receivers of ballads and how they are passed down. In his article "From Ballads to Betjeman", Carl Woodring puts forth a similar definition: Although the word "ballad" initially referred to dance, the ballad of tradition is a story set to music, passed orally among the "folk" from generation to generation (Woodring, 1994: 110).

A ballad is a narrative poem and it must tell a story. It differs from a short story or a novel in that it tells a story in a special way. In his *Introduction* to *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, George Lyman Kittredge gives a definition: A ballad is a song that tells a story. It may be defined as a short narrative poem, adapted for singing, simple in plot and metrical structure, divided into stanzas, and characterized by complete impersonality so far as the author or singer is concerned (Sargent & Kittredge, 1904: xi). Kittredge formulates a way in which a ballad tells a story — metrical stanzas. This is, of course, a very rough formulation. The narrative methods of ballads are the major concern of

this book and they will be expounded in the later chapters. Kittredge's definition exhibits three major characteristics of a ballad; they are: (1) that it tells a story in verse; (2) that the story is a single incident dramatically treated, not a continuous narrative; and (3) that its statements are impersonal and do not express the author's emotions directly.

A ballad is different from other kinds of poetry. It is poetry of the folk rather than that of art. Kittredge thinks that all poetry is divisible into two great classes — the work of conscious artists and the work of the folk (Sargent & Kittredge, 1904: xii). By poetry of art, he means that a poem is written by a certain author. Poetry of the folk is written by no particular author, and is therefore called by some scholars natural poetry. The difference between the two is a matter of consciousness of aesthetic principles (Gerould, 1932: 13). Being authorless, natural poetry does not denote the consciousness of any person, which is referred to as complete impersonality in Kittredge's definition of the ballad. A ballad has no author, and the teller of the story is as much the author as the unknown person who first put it into shape. The complete impersonality of a ballad signifies that not only the author is unknown, but also the teller of the tale has no role in it. He merely tells what happened and what people said. Arthur K. Moore says that to allow art to the ballad is to invite troublesome questions about its origin and form, though to deny art is not quite reasonable (Moore, 1958: 6). We do not quite agree with Moore. Ballads exist in two major groups. One is popular ballads, and the other is literary ballads. *Lyrical Ballads* published by William Wordsworth (1770 – 1850) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772 – 1834) belongs to the second group. A popular ballad is of unknown authorship, but this does not mean that a ballad has no art in it. It is categorized into natural poetry, being without conscious authorial aesthetic principles, but its literary values appeal to so many readers. One of the purposes of this book is to discuss the artistic values of the ballad.

Since the popular ballad has no author, who composed it? Evelyn Kendrick Wells has observed: " It is the product of no one time or person; its author, if ever known, has been lost in the obscurity of the past and in the processes of oral tradition. Its medium is word of mouth rather than print. It goes its way independent of literary influences, carrying for a while the accretions of this or that way and singer, but

sloughing them off as it passes to the next. It has no one original text, being freshly created by each successive singer as he makes his own version" (Wells, 1950: 5). There have been two schools of theorists on the authorship of popular ballads: the communal, and the individualistic, literary or anti-communal theory (Beatty, 1914: 473). The communalists represented by Francis B. Gummere (1855 – 1919) and G. L. Kittredge (1860 – 1941), by an appeal to the well-established facts of folklore and ethnology, maintain that the ballads are the products of a communal stage of society, in which the populace held festive dances and in which there was actual improvisation of certain traditional narratives. These narratives had their verse-form determined by the dance; and the whole poem from beginning to end was the product of the people, and was not in any way composed by literary persons. Furthermore, these ballads have been handed down by oral tradition, and live in the mouths of the people. Some theorists such as MacEdward Leech even think that the ballads are products of dabbling by the collective illiteracy (Moore, 1958: 7), and ballads belong to the works of lower class people. The theory of communal authorship has been strongly criticized and replaced by the theory of individual authorship. The anti-communalists, or individualists represented by John Meier and Louise Pound, hold that ballads are products of gifted individuals. Professor Child postulated as the matrix of the ballad a homogeneous community in which "the whole people form an individual" (Moore, 1958: 3).

Who are the ballad folk? There is a general impression that they are illiterate countrymen, wandering around barefoot and smoking corncob pipes. The evidence from numerous records as far back as the Middle Ages points rather to the middle class: small farmers, shoemakers, village schoolteachers, nursemaids, tinkers, wives of small tradesmen, innkeepers. Among these too are the itinerant singers of songs who go from village to village plying a small trade but concerning themselves largely with singing their stories (Moore, 1958: 7 – 8).

As for Professor Child's *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, ballads keep a narrative notion in which they are composed with no subjectivity and self-consciousness. There is no author for almost every ballad in his book. As a matter of fact, not only is the author of a ballad unknown and, so far as the effect which the poem produces on the hearer

is concerned, practically non-existent, but the teller of the tale has no role in most ballads. Unlike other poems, ballads do not purport to give utterance to the feelings or the mood of the author. There are few comments or reflections by the narrator. He does not take sides for or against any of the dramatis personae. He merely tells what happened and what people said, and he confines the dialogue to its simplest and most inevitable elements. The story exists for its own sake. If it were possible to conceive a tale as telling itself, without the instrumentality of a conscious speaker, the ballad would be such a tale (Sargent & Kittredge, 1904: xi).

In the *Book of Poetry* [1] , most poems have no author, or their authors are unknown. Only a small number of them (6 poems) have authors who can be proved by the record of historical documents and the poems themselves. *Zuo Zhuan* (the Zuo's Chronicle), a history book, claims that Lady Mu of Xu composed *I Ride, I Gallop* [2]. Apart from this one, five more poems reveal their authors at the end, and these authors are confirmed by scholars although no other documents can support the confirmation. The five poems are:

1) *Steep South Mountain*: Jiafu made this lay, king's evil deeds to display. [3]

2) *A Eunuch*: Mengzi, the eunuch, made the poem. [4]

3) *High Mountain Song*: Jifu made this song, meaning deep and long. [5]

4) *Heaven Made the Mankind*: Jifu made this song, soft as breeze for long. [6]

5) *Palace*: The new temple stands strong. It is Xi Si who made this song. [7]

Whether they were real persons or not, these poets seemed to have

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[1]   This book has quoted the translations of many lines of poems from the *Book of Poetry*. Except otherwise noted, all the translations have been done by the author.

[2]   《左传·闵公二年》记载:许穆夫人赋《载驰》。

[3]   《小雅·节南山》:家父作诵,以究王讻。

[4]   《小雅·巷伯》:寺人孟子,作为此诗。

[5]   《大雅·崧高》:吉甫作诵,其诗孔硕。

[6]   《大雅·烝民》:吉甫作诵,穆如清风。

[7]   《鲁颂·閟宫》:新庙奕奕,奚斯所作。

their real identities. Mengzi was a eunuch in the royal palace. Jifu, whose last name was Yin, could be a general in the time of King Xuan of Zhou as we can read a poem *The Sixth Month*[1] in praise of him. Jiafu and Xi Si were possibly government officials.

These six poems are different from ballads; none of them can be categorized into balladry. A vast majority of poems in Child's *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* are ballads whose fundamental characteristic is an absence of subjectivity and self-consciousness. Many poems in the *Poetry* are similar to ballads. But the difference is that they still maintain, to some degree, a sense of subjectivity and self-consciousness although they are also authorless. Most of them contain a singer or an implied poet whose identity, social status, occupation, gender and so on can be recognized by readers.

1.1.2   *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* and Its Compilation

The origins of the popular ballads are much disputed. Some theorists maintain that they were first composed by communal effort, taking shape as songs with which primitive people accompanied ritual dances. But this theory no longer seems plausible. The different versions of a ballad in Child's book show that the forms of ballads have been subjected to a continuing process of revision, both conscious and unconscious, by those through whose lips and memories they passed.

Though the English and Scottish ballads were composed during the period from 1200 to 1700, their literary value was not recognized for more than 500 years. As a matter of fact, few of them were printed before the 18th century and some not until the 19th. Bishop Thomas Percy (1729 – 1811) was among the first to take a literary interest in ballads; he happened to discover a 17th century manuscript in which a number of them had been copied down among a great volume of Middle English verse. Percy's publication of this material in his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* inspired others such as Sir Walter Scott (1771 – 1832) to go to the living source of the ballads and to set them down on paper at the dictation of the border people among whom the old songs

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[1] 《小雅·六月》

were still being sung. These collectors often found that one ballad had different versions remembered by different people. When one speaks of *Sir Patrick Spens* (Child 58) one is actually speaking of a number of poems that tell the same story in slightly or widely different words. Among the collectors of the English ballads, Child is perhaps the most distinguished.

Francis James Child (1825 – 1896) was an American scholar and educationist. He was born on February 1, 1825 in Boston, Massachusetts. Child's family was poor and he attended Boston Grammar School and the English High School, Boston's public schools. It was only through the generosity of Epes Sargent Dixwell, the principal of the Boston Latin School, who recognized Child's genius, that Child was able to enter Harvard. Being the best student of his class in all subjects, he graduated at Harvard in 1846. After graduation, he became tutor in mathematics at Harvard in 1846 – 1848; and in 1848 he was transferred to a tutorship in history, political economy and English literature. In 1849, he went to study in Europe, and two years later, in 1851, he was promoted as the Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory, and held the position for 25 years. Throughout his tenure at Harvard he collected ballad books in many languages and corresponded with scholars throughout the world in several languages. Through his efforts the Harvard library came to house one of the largest folklore collections in existence. Child never completed a doctorate. But he got three honorary ones: an honorary doctorate from the University of Göttingen when he was 29, a Doctorate of Law from Harvard in 1884 and a Litterarum Humaniorum Doctorate from Columbia in 1887.

Child studied English drama and edited *Four Old Plays* in 1848. He also studied Germanic philology at Humboldt University, Berlin, and the University of Göttingen during 1849 – 1853. He took general editorial supervision of a large collection of the British poets, published in Boston in 1853 and the following years. He edited the works of Edmund Spenser, and at one time planned an edition of Chaucer, but he was busy writing a thesis entitled " Observations on the Language of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* ". The thesis did much to establish Chaucerian grammar, pronunciation and scansion as now generally understood.

His largest collection, however, is *The English and Scottish Ballads* which grew out of an original collection in his *British Poets* series. This