



# 中国文学批评 现代转型发生论

1897-1917年间的  
中国文学批评生态研究

● 庄桂成 著

中国社会科学出版社

# 中国文学批评

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## 内容提要

近年来，众多学者一直在研究中国文学批评的现代转型问题，但中国文学批评到底应该怎样转，学者们是见仁见智，众说纷纭。笔者认为，真正要弄懂这个问题，我们应该回到中国文学批评转型发生的原点，研究当时中国文学批评为什么会发生转型，文学批评家们又是如何进行转型的，他们为什么会这样转型，以及他们的转型实践对当今中国文学批评发展的启示。

但是，要研究中国文学批评现代转型的发生，首先必须弄清楚两个问题，即什么是中国文学批评的现代转型，中国文学批评的现代转型发生在什么时候。任何时代的一种文学批评，其构成要素主要包括批评主体、批评对象、批评文本、批评功能等。一般来说，文学批评方法的改变，还不能说是文学批评的“转型”，因为倘若主体、对象、功能没有变的话，其基本的“型”就还未变。例如 20 世纪的西方文学批评，各种批评方法潮起潮落，但它们都同属西方的“现代”型文学批评。只有当批评主体、批评对象、批评文本、批评功能发生了实质性的改变之后，文学批评才能说是发生了“转型”。中国文学批评现代转型究竟从何时开始，这一直是个有争议的问题。但是在诸种意见之中，呼声最高的是“五四”说，这以我们各种版本的中国现代文学史以及部分中国现代文学批评史为代表。但是笔者不这样认为，中国文学批

## 2 中国文学批评现代转型发生论

评现代转型的发生并不是起于“五四”时期，长久以来，我们的学术界陷入了一个误区。中国文学批评的现代转型应发生于晚清的 19 世纪末 20 世纪初。

中国文学批评发展到晚清为什么会出现转型？首先是因为社会历史危机。到了 18 世纪末，清王朝的统治开始衰落，逐渐陷入严重的社会危机。但是，在沉重的社会危机面前，治古文经学的汉学家们却束手无策。乾嘉古文经学没落导致今文经学兴起，而今文经学兴起致使经世致用思潮复活，经世致用思潮要求文学批评的功能发生转变。其次是因为西学东渐。晚清西学大量涌入，中国传统文化发生危机，儒学正统地位逐渐丧失。而儒学正统地位丧失导致新式教育兴起，新式教育的兴起又为中国培育了大量的新型知识分子。新型知识分子成为批评主体，必然会导致中国文学批评发生转型。再次是因为文体变革。中国传统文学的主要文体是诗词，小说等不受重视。但晚清之时，小说地位日益提高。而文学文体和文学批评文体二者之间存在一定的依存关系，即文学批评文体发展是基于文学文体的变化。因此，当文学批评对象发生改变的时候，中国文学批评发生转型也就在所必然了。前两者属文学批评转型发生的“外发型”原因，即中国文学批评转型的“他律性”规律，而后者则属于文学批评转型发生的“内发型”原因，即中国文学批评转型的“自律性”规律。

中国文学批评的转型到底是怎样发生的，也就是说转型发生的路径是什么？如果对中国 19 世纪末 20 世纪初的文学批评作一总体概括的话，应该说大致可以分为三类：一是以梁启超为代表的文学革，命它包括“诗界革命”、“文界革命”和“小说界革命”；二是王国维等人的西体中用，如《红楼梦评论》；三是以章太炎等为代表的文学复古。这三种文学批评各有其不同的文学观念和主张，但却又一致地实践着中国文学批评的现代转型。例如，中

国文学批评的主体发生了改变，以前为封建士大夫，现在的梁启超、章太炎、王国维等均现代中国的知识分子；批评对象发生了改变，晚清以前的中国文学批评，其批评对象主要是诗歌和散文，不重视小说等叙事文学，而现在梁启超高举“小说界革命”大旗，王国维发表《〈红楼梦〉评论》，章太炎为《洪秀全演义》作序；批评文本发生了改变，中国古典文学批评文本体式，主要是序、纪传体、品语、诗体以及评点体等，梁、章、王等都发表了一些专门的文学批评论文，它们不同于古代文学批评中那些散见于子书中的某些章节、片断的文论，也不同于笔记体的诗话、词话和小说戏曲评点；批评功能发生了改变，中国古代文学批评的功能主要在于维护封建道统、文统、义法等，梁启超等文学批评家们，其文学批评功能转变的关键点就在于人本思想的出现。

中国文学批评现代转型的路径有文学复古、文学革命和西体中用三条。那么，为什么在社会急剧变动、中西文化冲突的时刻，他们会做出以上不同的选择，即他们进行文学批评转型的立场是什么？笔者认为，批评大师们之所以对文学批评转型各自选择自己的道路，主要是因为受现代中国的基本意识形态影响所致。梁启超等进行文学革命，是因为受了进化论启发和影响，章太炎提倡文学复古，是为他那民族主义思想所左右。王国维思想较为复杂，本文暂且存而不论。进化论和民族主义是现代中国的基本意识形态，是中国近代以来种种历史行动的理由和依据。但是，也并不是说梁启超等只受进化论所支配，章太炎只受民族主义左右，其实，进化论与民族主义作为近代中国的意识形态，其影响是广泛的，而不只是某个人或某类人，它是一种全民族的意识形态。例如，梁启超就也受民族主义影响，章太炎也赞同进化论，只不过其文学批评主张各受某种影响相对深刻一些。

20 世纪初的中国文学批评现代转型的发生，能给现在的我们留下什么启示呢？笔者认为，无论是梁启超的文学革命，还是王国维的西体中用，抑或是章太炎的文学复古，其文学批评转型的最终指向都是文学批评的科学化、人本化。再来反观 20 世纪末的文学批评发展。90 年代中期曾兴起“古代文论的现代转换”大讨论，有人提出以中国古代文论为本根，重建中国文论话语，或者是挖掘中国古代文论的现代意义（如曹顺庆、童庆炳等），有人反对以中国古代文论为本根，而要在吸收、融合了西方文论的中国现当代文论新传统上发展（如朱立元等）。但此两者都是在强调文学批评的现代性因素之一——科学性，都想使文学批评成为一种客观的科学研究活动。还有 20 世纪 80 年代爆发的“文学主体性”论争，其目的是强调中国文学批评的人本化，反对文学批评中的以人为工具的庸俗政治批评。20 世纪末的学者们，虽然对建设中国文学批评的路径各异，但如 20 世纪初的先哲们一样，其内在目标却都指向科学化和人本化。科学化和人本化是中国文学批评现代转型的必然选择。

**关键词：**中国文学批评；转型；社会危机；西学东渐；文体变革；文学革命；西体中用；文学复古；进化论；民族主义；科学化；人本化

# Abstract

In recent years many scholars have been studying the modern transformation of China's literary criticism. But how on earth should China's literary criticism transform? As for this issue, different scholars have different views. In the author's opinion, in order to understand this problem really, we should return to the origin of the transformation genesis of China's literary criticism to study why China's literary criticism has made the transformation, how the literature critics have made the transformation, why they have acted like this and also the enlightenment that the transformation has showed on the development of China's literary criticism nowadays.

However, to study the modern transformation genesis of China's literary criticism, we should at first make clear two problems, that is what the modern transformation of China's literary criticism is and when the modern transformation of China's literary criticism took place. In any times the literary criticism mainly consists of criticism subject, criticism target, criticism text and criticism function, etc. Generally speaking, the change of literary criticism method doesn't mean the "transformation" of



literary criticism because the basic “pattern” has not changed yet, if the subject, target and function has not changed. For example, as to the western literary criticism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, all kinds of criticism methods rise one after another but they all belong to the western “modern” literary criticism. Only when criticism subject, criticism target, criticism text and criticism function has changed essentially we can say literary criticism has made the transformation. It has been a controversial issue when on earth the modern transformation of China’s literary criticism took place. Among all the opinions, the “May Fourth” version has the most powerful voice, which is represented by all versions of modern Chinese literature history and part of China’s modern literary criticism history. However, the author doesn’t agree with it. The modern transformation of China’s literary criticism is not originated from the “May Fourth” period. For long time China’s academic circles have fallen into a mistaken idea. The modern transformation of China’s literary criticism should be dated back to the late Qing Dynasty period between the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Why has China’s literary criticism transformed in the late Qing Dynasty? First it is because of social history crisis. In the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the governance of Qing Dynasty began to decline and gradually fell into the serious social crisis. But facing the serious social crisis, the scholars who study the Confucian classics of ancient Chinese prose were at a loss what to do. The decline of the Confucian classics of ancient Chinese prose in Qian Long and Jia Qing period caused the rise of gentle study of Con-

fucian classics of today, which made the ideological trend of causing to use by generation revive. The ideological trend requires that the function of literary criticism changes. Second it is because of the spread of western science in China. In late Qing Dynasty the western literature poured in in a large amount, thus traditional Chinese literature was in a crisis and the Confucianism's orthodox status lost gradually. While the loss of the Confucianism's orthodox status caused the rise of new-type education, which in turn fostered a large number of modern intellectuals. The modern intellectuals become the subject, which inevitably leads to the transformation of China's literary criticism. Lastly, it is because of the change of style. The main style of traditional Chinese literature is poesy and novels are not paid much attention to. While in the late Qing Dynasty the status of novels was improved gradually. There is much close relationship between literary style and literary criticism style, that is to say, the development of literary criticism style depends on the change of literary style. Therefore, when the target of literary criticism changes, the transformation of China's literary criticism is inevitable. The first two ones are the external reasons, namely, the law of "disciplining by others". While the last one is the internal reason, that is the law of "self-disciplining".

How on earth did the transformation of China's literary criticism take place? That is to say what the route of the transformation is. If we summarize China's literary criticism in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it can be divided into three categories. The first is the literature revolution

represented by Liang Qichao consisting of “revolution of poem circle”, “gentle circle revolution” and “revolution of novel circle” . The second is “western system applied by China” represented by Wang Guowei, such as “Comment on A Dream of Red Mansions” . The third is the restoring ancient ways of literature represented by Zhang Taiyan. The three kinds of literary criticism have different literature ideas and advocating, but they all carry out the modern transformation of China’s literary criticism. For example, the subject of China’s literature criticism has transformed from feudal court official to the modern China’s intellectuals such as Liang Qichao, Zhang Taiyan and Wang Guowei. The criticism target has also transformed. Before the late Qing dynasty the target is poem and prose, paying no attention to narrative literature. While today Liang Qichao held the banner of “revolution of novel circle” high and Wang Guowei published the article “Comment on A Dream of Red Mansions” and Zhang Taiyan made the preface for “Hong Xiuquan’s historical romance” . Criticism text has changed too. The model of criticism text of Chinese classic literature is preface, chronological records, appreciating language, poem and annotations etc. Liang, Zhang and Wang have published some specialized essays on literary criticism that are different from those scattered in some chapters and passages in philosophical works and also are different from random notes and comments on classical poets and poetry and annotations on novels and opera. The criticism function has changed. The function of Chinese classical literature mainly lies in maintaining feudal Confucian orthodoxy, gentle interconnected

system and justice law etc. While for those literary critics such as Liang Qichao, the key point of transformation of literary criticism function is the appearance of people's thought.

There are three routes for the modern transformation of China's literary criticism: the restoring ancient ways of literature, literary revolution and "western system applied by China". Then why will they have different choices when facing abrupt social changes and the conflict between Chinese and western culture? Namely, what is the standpoint for them to carry out the literary criticism transformation? In author's opinion, the reason why the critics choose their own different ways is that they are influenced by the basic ideology of modern China. Liang Qichao and others carry on the literature revolution is because of the enlightenment of evolutionism. Zhang Taiyan advocates the restoring ancient ways of literature is because of his nationalism thought. Wang Guowei's thought is very complicated, so it is not mentioned in the text for the moment. Evolutionism and nationalism are the basic ideology of modern China, which has offered reason and basis for all kinds of historical actions in modern China. However, we can not say Liang Qichao is only influenced by evolutionism and Liang Qichao is only influenced by nationalism. In fact, as modern China's ideology, evolutionism and nationalism have widespread influences but not only on some single person or single type of person. It is an ideology of a whole nation. For example, Liang Qichao is also influenced by nationalism and Zhang Taiyan also approves evolutionism, except that their advocating of literary criticism is influenced relatively deeper by one

of them.

What can we learn from the modern transformation of China's literary criticism in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? The author thinks that the final aim of the literary criticism transformation is the scientificalization and people-orientation to literary criticism no matter for Liang Qichao's literary revolution or Wang Guowei's "western system applied by China" or Zhang Taiyan's restoring ancient ways of literature. Then we study the development of literary criticism in the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the middle of 1990s, a discussion of "the modern transition of ancient literary theory" rose. In the discussion some scholars think that we should rebuild Chinese literary theory system on the basis of ancient Chinese literary theory or explain the modern meanings of ancient Chinese literary theory such as Cao Shunqing and Tong Qingbing etc. Some people disapprove of the above idea and think that we should develop literary criticism on the basis of modern Chinese literary criticism that has absorbed and mixed together western literary theory such as Zhu Liyuan. Both of the two ideas emphasize one of the modern factors of literary criticism—scientific and want to make literary criticism become an objective scientific study. The dispute of "literary subject" in 1980s aims to emphasize "people-orientation" of Chinese literary criticism and disapprove the vulgar political criticism which looks people as tools. The scholars in the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century choose different ways to develop Chinese literary criticism but like the former philosophers in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, their internal target is scientificalization and "people-orientation",

which are the inevitable choices of the modern transformation of China's literary criticism.

Key words: China's literary criticism; transformation; social crisis; the spread of western science in China; style transition; literary revolution; western system applied by China; the restoring ancient ways of literature; evolutionism; nationalism; scientificization; people-orientation

# 目 录

内容提要·····	(1)
Abstract ·····	(5)
引言·····	(1)
第一节 问题的缘起、目标和方法 ·····	(1)
一 为什么要研究中国文学批评现代转型的 发生? ·····	(1)
二 研究中国文学批评现代转型的发生应 达到什么目标? ·····	(6)
三 如何研究中国文学批评现代转型的发生? ·····	(9)
第二节 研究的对象、历史和现状·····	(13)
一 研究的对象及其范围 ·····	(13)
二 研究的历史及其进程 ·····	(17)
三 研究的现状及其不足 ·····	(22)
第一章 中国文学批评现代转型发生的“义界” ·····	(28)
第一节 中国文学批评视野中的“现代转型” ·····	(28)
一 中国文学批评视野中的“转型” ·····	(29)

## 2 中国文学批评现代转型发生论

二	中国文学批评视野中的“现代” .....	(32)	
三	中国文学批评视野中的“现代转型” .....	(36)	
第二节 中国文学批评现代转型发生“五四说”			
	批判 .....	(40)	
一	“五四说”的局限 .....	(40)	
二	“五四说”存在的根据 .....	(44)	
三	“五四说”批判的意义 .....	(48)	
第二章 中国文学批评现代转型发生的缘由 .....			(53)
第一节 社会危机与中国文学批评的现代转型 .....			(53)
一	晚清社会危机与今文经学的兴起 .....	(54)	
二	今文经学与“经世致用”思潮的复活 .....	(57)	
三	经世致用与晚清文学批评转型的发生 .....	(60)	
第二节 西学东渐与中国传统文学批评的转型 .....			(64)
一	晚清西学东渐的历史进程及其特点 .....	(64)	
二	中国传统文化的衰落与新式教育的兴起 .....	(68)	
三	晚清新型知识分子与中国文学批评的转型 .....	(71)	
第三节 文体变革与中国文学批评的现代转型 .....			(76)
一	中国文学的文体发展轨迹描述 .....	(77)	
二	中国文学批评文体发展轨迹描述 .....	(80)	
三	文学文体变革与文学批评的转型 .....	(84)	
第三章 中国文学批评现代转型发生的路径 .....			(90)
第一节 文学革命与中国文学批评的现代转型 .....			(90)
一	百余年来晚清文学革命研究的成就与不足 .....	(91)	
二	晚清文学革命中文学批评主体的转变 .....	(94)	



三	晚清文学革命中文学批评对象和文本的转变 .....	(97)
四	晚清文学革命中文学批评功能的转变 .....	(101)
第二节	西体中用与中国文学批评的现代转型 .....	(105)
一	晚清时对待中西文化的四种态度 .....	(105)
二	中国文学批评史上西体中用的最初表现 .....	(109)
三	《〈红楼梦〉评论》与中国文学批评的现代转型 .....	(113)
第三节	文学复古与中国文学批评的现代转型 .....	(118)
一	中国文学复古的源流及其特征 .....	(118)
二	章太炎文学复古的主要观点 .....	(122)
三	章太炎与中国文学批评的现代转型 .....	(126)
第四章	中国文学批评现代转型发生的立场 .....	(131)
第一节	进化论与梁启超等的文学革命 .....	(131)
一	进化论与文学革命发动的原因 .....	(132)
二	进化论与文学革命发动的过程 .....	(137)
三	从自然科学学说现代中国意识形态的进化论 .....	(142)
第二节	民族主义与章太炎的文学复古 .....	(148)
一	章太炎现代民族主义思想的产生 .....	(148)
二	民族主义与章太炎复古文学观的形成 .....	(153)
三	民族主义与章太炎文学复古的局限 .....	(158)
第五章	中国文学批评现代转型发生的启示 .....	(164)
第一节	中国文学批评现代转型中的科学化 .....	(164)
一	20世纪初中国文学批评转型中的科学化	