

# Transformation and development of digital literary criticism in China

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**For citation:** Fu L., Li J., Dai Y. Transformation and development of digital literary criticism in China. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Philosophy and Conflict Studies*, 2023, vol. 39, issue 2, pp. 355–367. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu17.2023.211>

This article analyses the digital literary criticism, which got rid of the obsession of academic Babylon in the field of literary criticism in the 1980s and revealed a more diverse field of voice, inspiring endless possibilities of variation in the transformative stage of criticism. The advent of the Internet has created a participatory field for literary criticism and a platform to weaken the distinction between identity and power. Equality disrupts the validity of authority and the structure of the knowledge circle, which is also the reason why digital literary criticism has a certain degree of carnivalesque traits. The authors believe that literary criticism in a digital context is no longer obsessed with the confusion of history and the uncertainty of time. While capturing the pulse of globalisation, it at the same time ardently embraces the value of desire endowed by consumer culture. The article points out that Chinese literary criticism in the new era is a product of the construction of multidimensional relations in a digital context, which sheds the shackles of historical context and rushes into the age of digitalisation. With the rapid flow of consumption, a very open, inclusive, and complex space of media discourse has emerged. The results of the study show that a group of numerous critics belonging to the postmodernist perspective is forming in the digital world. The authors conclude that in the confrontation between tradition and modernity, in the complex interweaving of elitist consciousness and mass consumption, in the struggle for discursive position between media and literature, digital literary criticism differs from traditional in terms of aesthetic standards, criticism style, criticism language and media platform, creating the macro future development of Chinese literary criticism with its independent attitude, revolutionary impulse and irresistible courage.

*Keywords:* philosophy of literature, digital context, digital literary criticism, transformation, literary studies.

## Introduction

“The changes in literature are related to the world, and the prosperity and decline are related to the time sequence” [1, p. 43]. Different stages of historical development naturally accepted the literary criticism marked with the characteristics of this era. The introduction reveals the transformation of literary criticism based on the historical context of literary criticism since the reform and opening-up policy in China.

The main research object of this paper is the transformation and development of digital literary criticism in China. Transformation refers to the modernity and diversity of literary criticism different from that in the 1980s, and development refers to the historical

tradition of Chinese literary criticism, with certain characteristics of the new era. To better describe the transformation and development of digital literary criticism, this paper first compares the context of literary criticism in different periods from a macro perspective by using historical documents. Secondly, this paper summarizes the new groups of digital literary criticism from the perspective of the participatory observation method, including academic critics, traffic reviewers and folk reviewers. Finally, this paper analyzes the multiple construction of the digital literary criticism discourse system from the micro point of view by using discourse analysis method. The most important objective of this study is to reflect on the modernity of digital literary criticism and the impact of the development of media technology on literary criticism and modern human life. Most of the references in this paper are Chinese references, to better understand the local characteristics of Chinese digital literary criticism. It is emphasized that this study was carried out by three collaborators.

*Context of literary criticism in the 1980s.* The introduction of the reform and opening-up policy 40 years ago has largely reversed the overall form of China's social development and raised a storm of flexible transformation in literary and art critics. In the 1950s and 1960s, political criticism under the influence of national ideology and internal criticism composed of national cultural institutions such as the Chinese Writers Association (CWA) changed from slow to urgent in the 1980s to professional criticism which was homogeneous with "cultural wave" and professional criticism composed of colleges, universities, and literary federations. It is worth mentioning that, taking the period around 1985 as the watershed, the literary criticism in the 1980s reflected the characteristics of successive stages.

The literary criticism of the early 1980s (1980–1984) was just as Gu Yuanqing mentioned: "From bring order out of chaos to reflection, literary theory criticism not only recovered its original state, but also began a diachronic transformation" [2, p. 4]. It's not just literary criticism. In the field of film, criticism is on the right track, this is mainly due to the overall recovery of the film industry after the stagnation era. Several films with a strong spirit of realism have sprung up like bamboo shoots after a spring rain, which has led to an upsurge of critical enthusiasm. It can be said that from 1980 to 1984, Chinese literary criticism was experiencing a steady development trend. Bold reflection in history and careful research became the key words of literary criticism in the early 1980s.

In the middle and late 1980s (1984–1989), a "cultural fever" swept across China, and literary and artistic creation entered the common imagination of contemporary literature, Chinese literature and art critics also show systematic tendency of theoretical specialization and comment professionalization, increasingly diversified group tendency, active alienation from national ideology and comprehensive acceptance of Western humanistic thoughts. From the perspective of the criticism group, the simultaneous emergence of the critics in this period showed the background of their identity given by *The Times*, the multiple mixing of disillusionment of political belief and pursuit of self-confusion, the integration of thinking and the acceptance of new knowledge, which became the main reasons for the diversification of the critical discourse in this period. But, the academic critics, represented by Chen Sihe, Wu Liang, Ding Fan and others, who rose in the middle and late 1980s, inherited the habit of the knowledge system of the old era in their thoughts. And they lead the mainstream of the development of Chinese literary criticism in the early 1990s with their unique professional theoretical perspective of intellectuals, their brave attitude of opening-up new frontiers and embracing the world with a broad mind.

Just as Cheng Guangwei said, “the emergence of professional critics such as ‘avant-garde literature’ around 1985 will have a great impact on the traditional literary system and management mode” [3, p. 117]. This kind of cultural change in the flexible transformation is due to the freedom from the constraints of a single tone of political commentary, and by virtue of the reform and opening-up, Chinese cultural status has been elevated.

*Context of literary criticism from the 1990s to the present.* “We opened the door of the 1990s in a confused historical context” [4, p. 22]. If the context with confused emotional factor in the 80’s, 90’s digital context is along with the globalization of capital virtualization as a result. Consumerism culture, which takes people’s desire as the logical starting point and the final appeal, has greatly changed people’s thinking process and behavior mode, while the network literary criticism generated in the new context shows the tension of breaking through the traditional comment space and the bursting force of the new era.

With the gradual deepening of digital technology, China’s Internet has undergone transformation and upgrading from PC era to the mobile Internet era, providing users with more personalized experience and creating a parallel space in the world of literary and artistic criticism where virtual and real-life blend. The year of 2014 was a dividing line in the development of the Internet in China, the emergence and comprehensive coverage of 4G have become the discourse benchmark and realistic conditions for opening the post-PC era, and the digitization degree of our country produced qualitative leap. From the traditional popular digital literary criticism relying on computer, such as forum, post bar and blog, to the personalized digital literary criticism based on mobile phone, such as WeChat, Douban, Sina Weibo and other apps, technological progress provides not only the extension of platform and media, but also the expansion of individual discourse power. Mobile phones, as the “fifth media”<sup>1</sup>, provide an opportunity for literary criticism to become a daily aesthetic. In the same year, President Xi Jinping mentioned in his speech at the Forum on Literature and Art that “we should steer literary criticism to the right direction and use historical, people’s, artistic and aesthetic perspectives to judge and appreciate works of art” [5]. It provides guidance for the healthy development of digital literary criticism in China in the future.

Just as Mikhail Bakhtin said: “The freedom and equality of people become the essential part of the whole carnival world” [6, p. 250]. On the other hand, the new equality relationship brought about by digital technology also promotes the transformation of the identity of literary and art critics. Identity is Ariadne’s thread to reveal the similarities and differences between digital literary criticism and traditional literary criticism. Specifically, the identity of commentators in the era of digital literary criticism mainly consists of three groups.

*Academic critics.* This kind of critics is represented by a group of scholars working in universities and literature and art organizations, such as Lei Da, Ding Fan, Nan Fan, Chen Sihe, Meng Fanhua and so on, who rose from the mid-late 1980s to the early 1990s. They retain the grand vision of reform and the afterglow of the cultural ebb tide, but they have not yet fully acquired the skills to navigate cyberspace. On the one hand, the academic height of the group endowed by the profession makes it difficult for them to actively degrade themselves psychologically to conform to the popular trend. On the other hand, after recognizing the powerful impetus of digitalization, some college-educated critics have

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<sup>1</sup> The five forms of media include newspapers, radio, television, Internet, and mobile phones.

begun to work on emerging communication platforms. One is to open WeChat account and Sina Weibo in the form of individuals, which is a rare approach among academic critics, and often reduce the power of communication because of the high cost of individual operations.

Another common and popular way is to cooperate with traditional journals to run public accounts. Such as *Chinese Literary Criticism*, *Literary Criticism* and so on. Based on the authority of academic journals in the field of traditional knowledge, from the salon in the living room to the picnic outside, what unchanged is that the readers from the professional category are still retained, and what changes is the extension of the academic communication platform. Just as Wang Yichuan said, “Some academic critics infiltrate or expand into the Internet crowd through the emerging media and exert some influence on the Internet crowd by virtue of the ‘cultural capital’ and ‘social capital’ in Pierre Bourdieu’s sense” [7, p. 128].

Of course, with the continuous development of mobile Internet technology, more college critics have broken their own barriers and started on site public accounts and creative sharing apps, such as audio sharing platform “Himalaya APP” and digital education platform “MOOC APP”, which makes literary criticism with professional knowledge become a common dish in ordinary people’s dining tables.

We cannot deny that there are still some academic literary critics who are infatuated with the status pleasure brought by the authority of knowledge, turn a blind eye to the ever-changing Internet literary phenomenon, and stay in the repetitive chewing of old texts. Or they look at the emerging forms of literature and art with a pair of colored glasses and measure the literary works of the new era with traditional aesthetic standards and theoretical models. However, often, the academic critics are in the contradictory movement of change and invariability, groping their way in the anxiety of sticking to the academic Babel or moving towards the civic folk.

*Traffic reviewers.* With the continuous popularization of mobile terminal technology and the blowout development of “we media”, “traffic” has become an important symbol that is different from the pre-Internet era. A series of emerging cultural phenomena are also born around “traffic”, such as traffic star, traffic text, traffic TV series, etc. Traffic reviewers refers to a comment group formed under the fermentation of attention economy based on media platform and oriented by the acceptance of the audience, which focuses on the Fan effect in the consumption era and digital context.

It is a complex group and has the closest relationship with the media. Due to their inherent affinity style and populist perspective, they take the lead in the aesthetic field of daily life. Many fans actively gather to form a traffic circle, making them “web celebrity” in the personalized market. The mass foundation of “web celebrity” lies in the large-scale disenchantment movement from top to bottom since the reform and opening-up, which has a strong folk nature and popular color. If literary critics in the 1980s were disenchantment of political commentary, then the rise of traffic reviews in the 1990s was disenchantment of elite culture and epistemology with the cooperation of media.

Now, the “disenchantment” of this time is not only the disenchantment of “revolutionary literature” and “model opera”, but also the disenchantment of elite intellectual literature and elite culture [8]. Take the WeChat public account “Six Gods Leilei” with 100,000 followers as an example. The “we-media” provides him a platform to introduce Jin Yong to the public. The title placement of popular elements, the eloquence of the com-

mentary language, the eye-catching text perspective, and the clever seamless soft broad style all show unique charm. Like traditional critics, most traffic reviewers are not confined to a small area but dabble in a wide range of cultural fields. Take Ma Boyong as an example, whose review articles cover science fiction, literature, history, paranormal, reasoning, animation, and other fields.

Traffic reviewers, as the newest banner in the digital context, takes the lead among the three in terms of creating economic benefits and leading social trends. How to give full play to the social influence of traffic reviews and guard against the extreme mass culture orientation of “entertainment to death, audience is king”, is of great significance to the shaping of literary criticism and the healthy development of social and cultural thoughts.

*Folk reviewers.* The folk reviewers in the digital age refer to a group of network aboriginals who publish their perception, understanding and judgment of digital literary and artistic works on new social platforms for their own entertainment. It is worth noting that in China, comments originated from the folk have a long history, and the constant extension of cyberspace in the new era is the quickening agent for the folk comments to multiply and become younger. Karen Horney, a famous American psychoanalyst in the last century, mentioned three concepts of “real self”, “ideal self” and “realistic self” in the theory of personality structure [9, p. 158].

Behind the mask of “network”, media platforms such as Douban comments and Sina Weibo discussions, provide a path to “real self” for folk reviewers. Due to the anonymity of the comments and the grass-roots identity of the reviews, we often feel an extreme exaggeration behind the mask, full of real emotions and even grotesque faces. This is the folk response to comment aphasia caused by the historical context. Take Douban as an example, user ratings often become the market vane for film and television screenings and book publishing, while comments with a different professional perspective have also become a unique scenery line for digital literary criticism.

If the official critical discourse is a dissimilated form of language, full of seriousness and enlightenment, and aesthetically isolated from interest, then the folk discourse in the digital context, namely the square discourse under Bakhtin’s theory, is Janus with two faces [6, p. 187]. Diderot once said: “A man’s taste in art grows in direct proportion to his imagination, his sensibility and his knowledge.” We cannot deny that the folk reviews sometimes go into vulgar or extreme ways due to the limitation of knowledge and ability, but often, the folk reviews have become a force that cannot be ignored in the contemporary digital literary criticism group in China by virtue of their wisdom, vastness, and diversity.

## Results

*The Ontological process of literary criticism media.* In the traditional sense, compared with the subject and object of criticism, the media is the external feature that distinguishes digital literary criticism from traditional literary criticism. But in fact, the contemporary mass media has moved away from its marginal status as a tool to its dominant position as an ontology. The media shapes the identity of the critic, provides an interactive platform for literary criticism, participates in the creation process of the text, influences the acceptance of the audience, and even takes itself as the core, forms a selected trading market for it, and influences the production and consumption of comments. Media criticism has become a unique phenomenon in the digital context. We should see that the natural evo-

lution of media from its instrumental value to its ontological value is closely related to the historical transition from traditional literary criticism to digital literary criticism, and the evolution of media status is also the key to analyze the similarities and differences between them.

“The reason why people say the age of media is not only because digital media is covering and changing the whole social life, but more importantly because the nature of media and its relationship with human beings are undergoing fundamental changes” [10, p. 11]. From agricultural society to industrial society and then to digital society, media plays different roles in literary and artistic criticism. Media is not only the intermediary between man and the world, but also the carrier of man and history, and more importantly, as an ontology of existence. The change of media is closely related to the progress of technology.

Technology is the first prerequisite to judge the attributes of media, and media is the inevitable result of the development of technology. “New technologies constitute a new cultural system, which in turn constructs an entire society” [11, p. 17]. The technological and economic basis on which the media depend changes from land to energy to information, which greatly influences the change of its transmission mode. In agricultural society, the social family structure based on land is limited by space and region. Information transmission is usually based on oral transmission and handwritten, face-to-face interpersonal communication is its main feature, and the main content of information is only related to official announcement and sorcery and blessing.

As the media in this period was only a spontaneous tool carrier, its relationship with literary criticism was not as close as it is now, and its influence on the audience was very limited. On the contrary, the communication effect of literary criticism was often distorted due to the mistakes of hand printing or hand copying. The dialogue based on the traditional economic development mode has become the most important way of interaction between the audience and literary works. In China, in ancient times, a table, a fan and a Xingmu were the stage for literary criticism. And storytellers are the living medium on the stage, the living fossil of inheriting folk literature and art.

With the progress of technology, the system of industrial production has created favorable material conditions for the emergence of mass communication. The so-called mass communication “is the large-scale information production and communication activities carried out by specialized media organizations with advanced communication technologies and industrial means to target the general public in the society” [12, p. 12]. Printing media improves the transmission speed beyond the reach of traditional media, breaks through the space limit of communication, and sends out sparks of convergence of thoughts.

Take the great debate on the press during the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement as an example. During this period, the *New Youth* and the *Weekly Review* became the main field of contention in various literary schools. The review magazines are of great value in introducing western thoughts, enlightening people’s wisdom, and creating new knowledge. It can be said that the prosperity of printing media during the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement promoted the process of Chinese ideological liberation, and its prosperity also depended on the diversity of literary criticism in this era. During this period, the instrumental value of media also assumed an important social function. Media and commentary rode together.

At the end of the last century, the popularization of network information technology has made the media communication attribute change qualitatively. Media gets rid of

its instrumental value as a medium and starts the process of ontological with symbolic value and cultural value. Relying on the Internet platform and mobile media, it has greatly raised its social status and changed its relationship with literary criticism. This is mainly reflected in three aspects: first, digital media platforms provide many information texts for literary criticism. Just as Marshall McLuhan said, "Media is message". Technological progress makes the media become the main "supplier" of social knowledge, influencing, and controlling the production and dissemination of knowledge discourse. Compared with their predecessors who lived in the era of material and spiritual scarcity, literary and artistic commentators in the digital context have richer information materials, broader view of criticism and more diversified stage of criticism.

It cannot be ignored that, on the one hand, the choice of a large amount of information falls into the hands of the media, and the information alienated by the media becomes the rafter tile for modern people to construct the building of self-cognition.

On the other hand, the fragmented reading mode caused by the information explosion is also quietly changing the reception psychology and aesthetic habits of the literary criticism audience, which makes more and more literary criticism styles in line with the public taste. Second, in the post-mass communication era, new media has made it possible for literary criticism to communicate on an equal footing across circles. On the one hand, "the freedom of the digital platform is a primitive state of barbarism, which brings double opportunities for the individual subject to grow up and get out of himself" [13, p. 6].

Academic literary criticism is no longer confined to self-cultivation, but a rebirth after breaking through professional limitations. With the help of the media, the handshake between the master and the folk, and the interaction between the critic and the author are realized. For example, the launch of Tencent "Great Master" column successfully attracted more than 50 well-known writers with strong influence in the society by signing contracts. On the other hand, the media not only gives space for free communication, but also tightens the rope of free creation.

The frequent communication and interaction on the media platform are often at the expense of the independent thinking space and aesthetic personality of the creators, which tends to materialize while catering to the market demand. In the relationship between production and consumption, literary criticism becomes the broker of capital. For example, literary critics will create many fashionable critical works based on the popularity of the market. These works are full of buzzwords and eye-catching sentences.

Third, digital media has created a solo arena for the personalization of commentary. If literary critics in the 1980s pursued personalized creation with the spirit of freedom and resistance in that era, then in the 1990s, under the overstepping of the media, mass literary criticism deepened the spirit of resistance in cultural ideological trend and moved from personalized creation to personalized voice. The media era has built an independent discourse space for the mass comment group between the private and public spheres. The media platform enables the mass comment group to participate in the public topics with their private identities and demonstrate their independent self-worth in the public communication. "Community communication" and my world "are often the two essential features of commenting social software to attract users. In Habermas's view, groups in the public sphere "are free to assemble, free to express and open their opinions" [14, p. 446].

To some extent, this freedom will also make the Internet a disaster area where extreme discourse is rampant, and literary criticism will fall into the deadlock of "general-

ized comments". The event-based orientation of mass media in the era of consumption makes literary criticism go to extremes to attract enough "attention" and "communication power", which overwhelms the meta-value of artistic texts.

*Generalization of aesthetic standard and vision in literary criticism.* Literary criticism is a kind of aesthetic practice, the uniqueness of literature itself and literary critics personal experience, psychological characteristics, regional attribute, the religious belief determines the aesthetic experience and significance in literary criticism to interpret the uncertainty and diversity. With the deepening of digitalization in China, the media, while building a Shared platform for the production and exchange of literary criticism, has also awakened the aesthetic anxiety of literary criticism workers of different identities. "Decentralization", "multi-vision" and "generalized-aesthetics" have become important characteristics of the aesthetic orientation of literary criticism in the new era.

The main representation of aesthetic anxiety is the imbalance between art and the public brought about by the aestheticization of daily life. The topic of "aestheticization of daily life" was first explained by Mike Featherstone. The aestheticization of daily life is eliminating the distance between art and daily life, transforming life into art and art into life at the same time. In China, this kind of aesthetic transformation that breaks through the circle began to ferment at the end of last century. On the one hand, it originated from the aesthetic return after literary criticism broke through the politicized historical context. On the other hand, the more important reason is the self-survival method of literary criticism under the consumption myth system.

In the 1980s, literary criticism dispelled the authority, sublimity, and elitism of knowledge, and turned to the aesthetic analysis closer to people's daily life and behavioral psychology. In the 1990s, this aesthetic experience gained deeper and broader practice. The market constructs a daily life myth in line with the spirit of consumerism, and behind this myth is full of the secularization logic of social development and the power relationship of capital circulation. Aesthetics becomes a member of resource allocation, and mass aesthetics influences the production and consumption of literature and art. With the continuous improvement of Internet technology, the aesthetics of daily life has moved to a new dimension, which is full of symbols and images and pays more attention to sensory power. With the continuous generalization of daily aesthetic, aesthetic anxiety is naturally generated.

*Professional aesthetic anxiety and the mass aesthetic anxiety.* Professional aesthetic appreciation refers to the aesthetic orientation of literary criticism based on a certain theoretical accomplishment and from the perspective of professional analysis and elegant and accurate standard language. This kind of aesthetic way, which is close to "pure aesthetics" and "only aesthetics", makes the object of literary and artistic criticism become the typical image and the protonym of elegant culture in human history, and embodies the critic's sacred and lofty emotional principle and aesthetic ideal of pursuing truth. However, due to the limitations of its aesthetic horizon, professional aesthetics often loses out in the literary criticism market dominated by the consumer market.

Since 1828, Hegel put forward the idea of "the end of art" in a speech, the whole western post-modernism culture has been moving forward anxiously in the atmosphere of the dead art. The rise of mass culture is marked by the decline of artistic elitism. "As a new cultural subject removed from the 'historical form', 'the public' begins to break this myth and breed a 'popular authorship text' (Fiske), namely the mass aesthetic culture" [15, p. 49].



The public aesthetic orientation in literary criticism has gained more market recognition because it breaks through the tradition, pays attention to the image of the common people and hot events in daily life, replaces the elegant language with the folk spoken language, and replaces the discourse feature of thinking with the visual sensory experience. This makes literary and artistic critics deepen the influence of capital on aesthetic creation consciousness in the creation that caters to the market, on the other hand, they seek for the modern law in sticking to the traditional criticism attitude.

*Anxiety of knowledge experience and life experience.* In the 1980s, due to the influx of western thoughts, Chinese literature and art criticism also set off a theoretical innovation. Fashionable western professional criticism terms shook people's thinking nerve, and "formalism", "psychoanalysis" and "reception aesthetics" became the proper terms representing leading technologies in literary criticism. With the invasion of consumerism in the 1990s and the rapid development of modern reproduction technology, the aphasia sequelae caused by excessive theoretical analysis fell into self-doubt. The emasculated literary criticism lost its pursuit of original beauty and perception of subtle life experience and became the appendage of market capital and cultural power. In the new era, under the historical proposition of rebuilding the Chinese discourse system, it is equally important for digital literary criticism in the digital age to construct a theoretical building with national attributes and regain the wild aesthetic spirit.

Baudrillard once lamented in *The Fate of Art* that "modern art has lost the desire for illusion and incorporated everything into the aesthetic mediocrity" to maintain the restoration of the original wildness of art, which refers to the untamed vitality of human beings and the uniqueness of artistic works. Zhu Guangqian, a master of Chinese aesthetics, once said that "criticism itself is another work", which means that literary criticism itself is an independent existence of beauty.

Chinese culture takes emotion as its root and reason as its use, which reflects the aesthetic feeling as the original experience of the Chinese nation flowing in the collective unconscious. In the digital context, technology also mercilessly deprives us of the sense of things when it provides us with the convenience of rapid flow of knowledge. Zero-distance information shells fill *Peopl's Daily* life, and the aesthetic feeling as life experience is suppressed by the thick and chaotic sense of network, thus falling into deep dormancy.

Literary and art critics need to restore the aesthetic freedom and full of poetry to express their own personal perception and life experience, as well as the aesthetic observation with great talent, to reconstruct the aesthetic spirit of literary and art criticism.

*Anxiety of aesthetic socialization and aesthetic personalization.* Marx pointed out in *Manuscript of Economics and Philosophy* in 1844 that "man builds according to the law of beauty." And literary criticism is the practice of artistic creation based on the law of beauty and aesthetic value of social reality. On the one hand, literary critics endowed the interpretation text with unique personal style, emotional psychology, and aesthetic tendency in the process of excavating the value of artistic works; on the other hand, they showed keen observation, deep understanding, and value judgment of the reality they were in.

Personal attributes of aesthetic are an inexhaustible source of diversified literary criticism, as Kant said: "beauty is a kind of without the purpose of existence". Digital world creates elastic space for aimless creation, and digital literary critics can form unique aesthetic perception according to personal feelings, preferences, and styles. However, exces-

sive personalization tends to indulge sensory aesthetics, body aesthetics and desire aesthetics, becoming a sub-healthy aesthetic state.

Since ancient times, the aesthetic orientation of Chinese literary criticism from theoretical construction to work analysis has been socialized. Such as poetic theory “The article, therefore, expresses the situation of all things in the universe” [16, p. 21].

Another example is literary criticism, *A Volume of Contemporary Rural Social Customs Painting — A Brief Discussion of Furong Town* (Lei Da). When literary and art critics care about the crisis of real life with the ultimate ideal of humanistic care and the consciousness of seeking for problems, they also put into understanding and prospect while recording the history of human civilization and sufferings again and again. Thus, literary and art critics realize the practical significance of social value.

## Discussion

Language is the first representation of a critical text and a mirror of the creator’s psychological mechanism, personality style, ideological content, and values. From the perspective of pragmatic behavior theory, language is also an important manifestation of social group identity.

Different from the traditional elegant and regular comment language, the popular language has given up the strict restriction of words and sentences, showing the novelty, simplicity, non-standardization, and other new fashion of pursuing the foreignization of the text. The overspeed transmission of information in the digital age determines that the language selection of digital literary criticism is inclined to the creation mode dominated by attracting readers.

How to stand out from the tens of thousands of information sources with a personalized attitude is the primary concern of digital literary criticism language. Lengthy and technical comments no longer attract people’s attention. Short and concise article structure, well-illustrated orderly typesetting, and unconventional language have become effective means to gather fans. For example, the word “vicious gossip” has been used in China for a long time. Its extended meaning is equivalent to speaking maliciously and saying hurtful things.

In the online world, the meaning of “vicious gossip” is more borrowed from the Japanese culture. It refers to a person who is kind-hearted but harsh in speech, giving people a sense of anger and laughter. A digital literary criticism titled *Vicious Gossip Eileen Chang* breaks through the professional approach of traditional criticism to the linguistic analysis of Eileen Chang, captures Eileen Chang’s sarcastic and slightly sad language style, focuses on the current culture of vicious gossip, highlights the personalized characteristics of comments, and successfully focuses on the fan group.

Because of the openness of the Internet, more literary and artistic critics from non-professional fields use a variety of expression methods to break the tradition, which highlights the highly personal comment style and promotes the innovation and diversified development of the comment language. However, due to the non-standardization of network language, the public trust and cultural value of comments are greatly reduced, which hinders the process of literary criticism becoming a classic.

In Jet Verschuer’s view of language, a dimension of language description is referred to as “adaptation of context relationship”. He said, “Expressing meaning in language is a

dynamic process, and the relationship between context and language structure changes due to the different degree of people's awareness of language adaptation, thus affecting the understanding and expression of meaning" [17, p. 85].

From a macro point of view, the change of context becomes the growth soil for the update of comment language, and the emergence of digital context is the fundamental reason for the continuous emergence and fermentation of network buzzwords. From the micro perspective, the proliferation of Internet language and the formation of a cultural phenomenon are endowed with new symbolic meanings because of the adaptation of language to the environment, which is also the way for individuals to find group identity through language.

The integration of popular languages makes the identity of individual critics more obvious. It not only integrates into the ideal community, but also influences the shaping of the whole literary criticism group.

As an important tool of human thought expression and social communication, language is inevitably affected by social relations and power distribution. "Discourse is power" (Michel Foucault) reveals that the construction of discourse order is inevitably related to the role of power as a subsequent system. Zhu Liyuan said, "A discipline is to define an object field by virtue of discourse, to set up a legal perspective, and thus to set up constantly changing historical laws and regulations as a criterion for value selection" [18, p. 274].

The emergence of popular words broke the comfortable isolation area of traditional comment discourse, and as the saint of power disenchantment, drew a picture of a language scenic spot that broke through the tradition and set up new rules from the public perspective. On the one hand, it is manifested as a return to the emotional nature of the original language. As Cassiel quotes Democritus in his book *An Essay on Man*, "human language originates from certain syllables of a purely emotional nature" [19, p. 196]. Although the term is not comprehensive, it is deeply practiced in popular language. For example, the advertising "Duang" has become a synonym for fun in game reviews. On the other hand, popular expressions are also reflected in the subversion of traditional critical grammatical structures and the digestion and expansion of semantics.

As a new generation of Internet age, popular language must have its basis and value. Different languages aim to achieve the same goal, which is to better guide our perceptual world. Therefore, popular languages need to be correctly guided and carefully regulated in literary criticism.

## Conclusion

To sum up, the digital literary criticism group in the digital context has two significant characteristics different from other times. One is the anxiety of identity duality. For academic critics, it's the anxiety of sticking to the academic and reaching out to the public; For traffic reviewers, it's the anxiety of retaining traffic benefits and moving towards a meritocratic culture; For folk reviews, it's the anxiety of cling to liberalism and move toward professionalism. The mobility of identity is possible. From the academic circle to the media circle, from online to offline, from anonymous to reality. These identity characteristics will also create opportunities and challenges for the development of Chinese literary criticism in the future.

The development of digital literary criticism in the digital context is an epoch-making change, a vision innovation based on inheritance and a crossover confluence based on respect. To cultivate a new ecology of literary criticism, it is necessary to explore the proposition of literary criticism, build an open field of criticism that connects traditional and modern, virtual, and real, pay attention to the aesthetic perspective with personal life experience, and return to the rhythm of textual criticism with literariness and internal fluidity, to encourage group debate on literary criticism of China's comments in the system building.

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Received: October 25, 2022

Accepted: February 17, 2023

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## Трансформация и развитие цифровой литературной критики в Китае

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**Для цитирования:** *Fu L., Li J., Dai Y. Transformation and development of digital literary criticism in China // Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. Философия и конфликтология. 2023. Т. 39. Вып. 2. С. 355–367. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu17.2023.211>*

В статье анализируется цифровая литературная критика, которая избавилась от навязчивой идеи академического Вавилона в области литературной критики 1980-х годов и открыла более разнообразное поле голоса, вдохновляя бесконечные возможности вариаций на трансформационном этапе критики. Появление интернета создало поле для участия в литературной критике и платформу для ослабления различий между идентичностью и властью. Равенство нарушает обоснованность авторитета и структуру круга знания, что также является причиной того, что цифровая литературная критика имеет в определенной степени карнавальные черты. Авторы считают, что литературная критика в цифровом контексте больше не одержима путаницей истории и неопределенностью времени. Улавливая пульс глобализации, она в то же время горячо принимает ценность желания, которым наделена культура потребления. В статье отмечается, что китайская литературная критика в новую эпоху является продуктом построения многомерных отношений в цифровом контексте, который снимает ограничения исторического контекста и устремляется в век цифровизации. С быстрым потоком потребления возникло очень открытое, инклюзивное и сложное пространство медиадискурса. Результаты исследования показывают, что в цифровом мире формируется группа многочисленных критиков, принадлежащих к постмодернистской перспективе. Авторы приходят к выводу, что в противостоянии традиции и современности, в сложном переплетении элитарного сознания и массового потребления, в борьбе за дискурсивную позицию между медиа и литературой цифровая литературная критика отличается от традиционной в плане эстетических стандартов, стиля, языка и медиаплатформы, создавая макробудущее развитие китайской литературной критики с ее независимым отношением, революционным импульсом и неотразимой смелостью.

*Ключевые слова:* философия литературы, цифровой контекст, цифровая литературная критика, трансформация, литературоведение.

Статья поступила в редакцию 25 октября 2022 г.;  
рекомендована к печати 17 февраля 2023 г.

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