

# Literary Criticism History: The Emergence in China

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**Abstract:** The emergence of the discipline of Chinese literary criticism history is closely linked to the establishment and development of Chinese literary history, as well as the compilation of textbooks. This point has not yet received sufficient attention in academia. The common academic path of early literary critics such as Hu Xiao Shi, Chen Zhong fan, Guo Shao Yu, and Luo Genze was to start with teaching, researching, and writing about Chinese literary history, paying attention to literary criticism issues, and then extending to teaching, researching, and writing about the history of literary criticism. The reason lies in the fact that "literature and history" or "poetry and prose criticism" in traditional bibliography are the main materials they can learn from when writing about the "imported product" of literary history. At the same time, because literary criticism is a category of literature, the concept that "the history of literary criticism is a branch of literary history" is accepted by most scholars, and literary history works also discuss the content of literary criticism. The cohesive relationship between literary history and the history of literary criticism, which helps and uses each other, is reflected in the fact that literary history not only makes the history of literary criticism pay attention to anthologies and selections but also provides knowledge reserves for teaching and learning. In turn, the purpose of the history of literary criticism is to substantiate literary history. Clarifying these issues is beneficial to the study of the emergence of Chinese literary criticism history and the teaching of the discipline of literary criticism history today.

**Keywords:** Literary History, History of Literary Criticism, Emergence Research, Hu Xiao Shi, Guo Shao Yu, Luo Genze

## 1. Introduction

The new concept of "literary criticism" has been solemnly accepted by the general public, "enhancing the status of literary criticism—poetry and prose criticism—in China" [1], making the writing of the history of Chinese literary criticism a natural progression. This task essentially involves sifting through poetry and prose criticism materials with the concept of "literary criticism," and then organizing them into a conscious system along historical threads to present the evolutionary history of Chinese literary criticism. This process is inextricably linked to the establishment, development, and compilation of textbooks for the "Chinese literary history" discipline. At present, academia mainly investigates the emergence of the discipline of Chinese literary criticism history from several aspects such as the concept of "pure literature," literary criticism, scientific methods, and historical materialism, with insufficient recognition of the role of Chinese literary history in promoting this development. In the early years of the Republic of China, the Ministry of Education's regulations on curriculum setting and textbook compilation gradually formed the myth of "literary history." According to Chen Yutang's "Bibliographic Notes on the History of Chinese Literature," nearly a hundred works on the history of Chinese literature were published between 1904 and 1937 alone. Looking back at the academic history, we can find that some of the earliest scholars to study the history of literary criticism essentially started by engaging with Chinese literary history.

## 2. From Literary History to the History of Literary Criticism

According to Zhou Xun Chu's recollection, "Some scholars in the Nanjing area were the first to offer courses on the history of Chinese literary criticism at universities. When Mr. Hu Xiao Shi lectured on the history of Chinese literature at Jin Ling University, he began to accumulate materials on the history of

Chinese literary criticism. Chen Zhong fan, on the other hand, offered this course at Southeast University" [2]. In fact, Hu Xiao Shi had been lecturing on literary history at Beijing Advanced Normal School for Women since 1920, and in September 1924, he became the head and professor of the Chinese Department at Jin Ling University. In December of the same year, Chen Zhong fan moved south to become the head and professor of the Arts Faculty at Guangdong University. The two were together in Nanjing during the fall semester of the 1924 academic year, "where they jointly planned the construction of the history of Chinese literary criticism, often exchanging materials and insights. Later, Mr. Chen Zhong fan handed over his lecture notes to Zuo Shun sheng, who was working at the Zhong Hua Book Company, and they were published immediately". However, Hu Xiao Shi "also planned to compile a new 'History of Chinese Literary Criticism' when lecturing on this subject at Jin Ling University, but only completed the manuscript and did not finalize it. Later, due to the turbulent situation, he was forced to stop" [2]. Regrettably, Hu Xiao Shi's lecture notes on the history of literary criticism eventually disappeared without a trace. However, another piece of material can confirm that Hu Xiao Shi indeed lectured on the history of literary criticism at Jin Ling University. Cheng Qianfan, when recalling the education he received in college, mentioned studying the history of literary criticism from Hu Xiao Shi [3]. Checking the "Private Jin Ling University Overview" (for the year 1932), the Chinese Department had a course called "Literary Criticism," which "explains the principles of literary criticism, the standards of criticism through the ages, and evaluates the value of various schools of literature and art" [4], and was a required course for major students. Cheng Qianfan studied at Jin Ling University from 1932 to 1936. Although the "Literary Criticism" course did not specify the teacher, it is presumed to be Hu Xiao Shi. However, the course "Literary Criticism," which focused on criticism through the ages, became "History of Literary Criticism" in Cheng Qianfan's memory.

Fortunately, Chen Zhong fan's "History of Chinese Literary Criticism" was published in 1927. Chen Zhong fan wrote an article for the 20th anniversary of the Chinese Learning Society, "Twenty Years of National Heritage Organization in Our Country," introducing the literary history on the market. In addition to highlighting Hu Shi's "History of Vernacular Literature," Qian Jibo's "History of Modern Chinese Literature," and Feng Yuanjun and Lu Kan Ru's "History of Chinese Poetry," he also mentioned his own work: "Chen Zhong fan once wrote 'Chinese Literary Review,' with the history of literary criticism as the preface; Zhong Hua Book Company then printed it as two separate volumes: 'History of Chinese Literary Criticism' and 'General Discussion of Chinese Rhyme Literature'." [5] It can be seen that the original name of Chen Zhong fan's work was "Chinese Literary Review," and the publishing house divided it into two volumes: "History of Chinese Literary Criticism" and "General Discussion of Chinese Rhyme Literature," without the original name, only marked as "The First and Second Series of Literary Books." Moreover, according to Chen Zhong fan, the history of literary criticism, like other works of literary history, belongs to the category of Chinese literary history. The reason is that literary criticism, like rhymed literature, is also a category of Chinese literature.

Unlike Hu Xiao Shi and Chen Zhong fan, Guo Shao Yu had a clear description of the process of entering the history of literary criticism from literary history: "The courses I taught at Fuzhou Union University and Kaifeng Zhong Zhou University were all basic courses, such as literary history and philology. Later, when I arrived at Yanjing University in Beijing, there were many teachers, so I didn't have to teach courses like philology. So within the scope of Chinese literature, I wanted to offer a course on the history of Chinese literary criticism." [6] Of course, before this, Guo Shao Yu was not without relevant knowledge accumulation. When he read "Han fenlou Ancient and Modern Literary Selections" and "Han fenlou Literary Talks" in his early years, he compiled the language of the papers and was very interested in it. Later, he organized and published a series of "Literary Criticism Series" in the simple society founded by Gu Jie gang, including Liu Shi Pei's "Random Notes on Literary Studies" and Sun Mei's "Preface to the Collection of Six Articles." At the same time, he taught Chinese literary history in the university and paid attention to the collection of literary criticism materials, and started teaching the course on the history of Chinese literary criticism at Yanjing University in 1927. However, when he talked about the path to the history of literary criticism, he emphasized the preparatory stage of teaching literary history courses many times: "I started this course at Yanjing University, based on many years of teaching Chinese literary history at Xie he and Zhong Zhou Universities. To be specialized, one must first seek breadth. Only breadth can be wide, and only specialization can be refined." [6]

Luo Genze started with the study of various schools of thought and began teaching at Henan University in the autumn of 1929, where he started teaching literary history and compiled "History of Yue fu Literature." In the preface, he stated that he drew on the compilation method of foreign literary history "to divide into categories first, and then narrate according to the times," and was determined to compile a Chinese literary history compilation, including eight categories: folk songs, Yue fu, lyrics, opera, novels, poetry, fu, and parallel prose. In 1932, he succeeded Guo Shao Yu in teaching the history of literary criticism at Tsinghua University, and he incorporated literary criticism into his own compilation plan. In the preface to the 1934 edition of "History of Chinese Literary Criticism (I)," he stated this change at the beginning: "This 'History of Chinese Literary Criticism' is one of the Chinese literary history compilations I plan to compile. My plan to compile the Chinese literary history compilation did not originally include literary criticism (see the preface to my compilation of 'History of Yue fu Literature'); later, I felt that literary criticism, although not a creation as some people with prejudice said, is indeed a guide to creation and has its indispensable value in the history of literature, so I included it." [7]

In addition, there were Li Chang Zhi and Ren Fang Qiu, among others. In 1940, due to financial difficulties, Li Chang Zhi was given the title of researcher at the Ministry of Education by Gu Yutang, the vice minister of education, and the research topic was the history of Chinese literary criticism. Later, he was recommended by Zong Bai Hua to teach the history of literary criticism at National Central University, and he also wrote many related articles. However, his initial idea was to write a history of literature, and then he turned to the history of literary criticism: "I used to want to write a history of Chinese literature, and Mr. Lao She warned me that I might feel sad after finishing it. I finally didn't write this history of literature. Now I have a rough understanding of the history of criticism, but I really feel that it is desolate and fragmented." [8] Ren Fang Qiu compiled a lecture note on the history of Chinese literature while teaching at Luoyang Normal College (1934-1939), narrating literature from ancient times to the Yuan and Ming dynasties. In 1943, he offered a course on "Chinese Literary Criticism" at Henan University and compiled three volumes of lecture notes on the history of Chinese literary criticism (from the pre-Qin period to the early Ming Dynasty). Xie Zhi xi, who sorted out his manuscripts, said: "Since Mr. Ren stepped on the academic path in the late 1920s, he has been very interested in the issues in the history of Chinese literary criticism. He had independent thinking in the 1930s, and some of the results have been written into the 'Lecture Notes on the History of Chinese Literature.' Since then, he has continued to study and think deeply..." [9] Ren Fang Qiu's transition from the history of literature to the history of literary criticism is also obvious.

Of course, not all scholars who study the history of literary criticism started with the history of Chinese literature. Zhu Dong run only taught English to university preparatory students before he came into contact with the history of literary criticism, and he did not have in-depth research on the history of literature. However, Zhu Dong run's offer to teach the history of literary criticism was due to the advocacy of Wen Yi duo. Wen Yi duo was the dean of the college at this time and was a professor of the foreign language department, but he had already focused on Chinese literature. It is difficult to say that Wen Yi duo's idea of offering the history of literary criticism in the Chinese language department is unrelated to his study of the history of Chinese literature.

In general, entering the history of literary criticism from the history of Chinese literature was a common academic rule among a group of scholars at that time. They either came into contact with the issues of literary criticism while teaching the history of Chinese literature, started to consciously collect relevant materials, and finally embarked on the road of studying the history of literary criticism, such as Guo Shao Yu and Luo Genze; or they temporarily focused on the history of literary criticism due to the needs of teaching, and later changed to other fields and achieved greater success, such as Hu Xiao Shi, Chen Zhong fan, and Zhu Dong run. However, the common point is that for them, the history of Chinese literature was a preparatory stage for the history of literary criticism, from which they could enter the hall. However, why do these scholars present this academic research path almost simultaneously? That is, why do they pay attention to literary criticism when studying the history of Chinese literature and thus enter the field of literary criticism?

The early writers of Chinese literary history were nothing more than following the Western literary concept and properly cutting the materials of literary history to compile a systematic work. Since there were no examples to follow, in order to avoid feeling unfamiliar and at a loss for this imported product, they

needed to find its genetic genes in the traditional academic field to connect with the new literary history, among which the closest to the history of Chinese literature is probably "literature and history" or "poetry and prose criticism" in bibliography. Therefore, Liu Shi Pei proposed a temporary measure for the compilation of the history of literature: "Now Zhi's book has been lost for a long time, and there is no perfect textbook for the history of literature. It seems appropriate to imitate Zhi's example and compile two books, 'The Record of Literary Articles' and 'The Differentiation of Literary Articles,' as the national textbook for the history of literature, and also as a resource for the literature biography in the general history." [10] Xie Wu liang said in "General History of Chinese Literature": "The Song Dynasty's 'Zhong Xing Book Catalogue' said: Literature and history are to criticize the gains and losses of literary figures. Therefore, its style is similar to today's history of literature." [11] Hu Huai Chen said in "Outline of the History of Chinese Literature" that poetry talks, literary talks, lyrics, literary biographies, and artistic records "can be fragmented literary histories." [12] These materials such as poetry talks, lyrics talks, literary talks, opera talks, and novel reviews are effective resources that can be used when initially writing the history of literature. The writers' evaluations of literary works and their diachronic narratives of Chinese literature are mostly based on this. Therefore, Ling Du ji saw in the "Outline of the National Language Literature History" that people at the time were only "looking at the 'Yiwen Zhi' to see what kind of works they have, and from the literary reviews - 'Wenxin Diao long' 'Dian Lun'..., poetry reviews - various poetry talks - and prefaces, to cite their work reviews." [13] The compilers of the history of Chinese literature took materials from the poetry and prose review materials, naturally had a conscious awareness of the issue of literary criticism, and took pleasure in collecting discussions on poetry and prose. Writing the history of literary criticism is an academic career that comes naturally.

### 3. The History of Literary Criticism is a Branch of Literary History

Luo Genze included the history of literary criticism as one of the compilations of Chinese literary history, alongside the histories of Yue fu (Music Bureau), poetry, drama, and fiction. This view was not isolated; many scholars at the time considered the history of literary criticism a branch of Chinese literary history.

As mentioned earlier, Chen Zhong fan included his own history of literary criticism when summarizing the achievements of literary history in "Twenty Years of the Organization of Our Country's National Heritage." Zhu Xing yuan's "China's Literary History Exoterics" discussed the classification of Chinese literary history in a special chapter, where Chen Zhong fan's "History of Chinese Critical Literature" was listed alongside Lu Xun's "A Brief History of Chinese Fiction" and Lu Kan Ru's "History of Chinese Poetry." When introducing the writing of Chinese literary history in the section "Compilation of Historical Books and Organization of Historical Materials" in "Contemporary Chinese Historiography," Gu Jie gang specifically mentioned the histories of literary criticism by Guo Shao Yu and Luo Genze [14]. Wang Fuquan advocated the "Chinese Literary History Research Association," which was divided into two groups, A and B. Group A was the main business, divided into the "History of Chinese Literary Creation" and the "History of Chinese Literary Criticism." The "History of Chinese Literary Creation" also included the history of trends, poetry, fiction, and drama [15]. It can be seen that he divided Chinese literature into two categories: creation and criticism. The history of literary criticism, like the history of creation (history of trends, poetry, fiction, drama), is a branch of Chinese literary history. Wang Yao reiterated when reflecting on the study of Chinese literary criticism: "Now when we study the history of Chinese literary criticism, we must not only not separate it from the development of literary history, but also the history of literary criticism is indeed a type of literary history, just like the history of novels and drama." [16]

Since the history of literary criticism is a type of Chinese literary history, some works on Chinese literary history have arranged special chapters to discuss literary criticism. Here are some rough examples: Hu Xing Zhi's "Talks on the History of Chinese Literature" has special sections on "Literary Criticism and Selections" and "Literary Criticism and Compilation" during the Six Dynasties and the Song Dynasty; Liu Lin sheng's "History of Chinese Literature" has chapters on "Fiction and Literary Criticism" and "Anthologies and Literary Criticism" in the fourth and fifth volumes of "Wei and Jin Dynasties Literature" and "Literature of the Northern and Southern Dynasties"; Zheng Zhen duo's "Illustrated History of Chinese Literature" has arranged three chapters on "The Beginning of Critical Literature," "The Revival of Critical Literature," and "The Progress of Critical Literature" in the first volume "Ancient Literature" and the second

volume "Medieval Literature." Although it is a summary, it outlines a clear evolutionary thread of literary criticism from Confucius to the Ming Dynasty's Seven Masters. Although Liu Da bai believed that "Chinese literary criticism has never been well-developed" [17], his "History of Chinese Literature" still introduced Liu Xie's "The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons" and Zhong Rong's "Poetry Grades." Tan Pumo's "Outline of the History of Chinese Literature" has a special section on "The Birth of Critical Literature" during the Wei and Jin Dynasties and the Six Dynasties. Yang Yin Shen's "Outline of the History of Chinese Literature" focuses on the three major critics in the chapter "The Beginning of Critical Literature," namely Liu Xie, Zhong Rong, and Liu Zhi ji. Ren Fang Qiu's "Lecture Notes on the History of Chinese Literature" has a special section on "The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons and the Literary Criticism of the Northern and Southern Dynasties" in the "Literature from the Han to the Sui Dynasties," discussing the literary views of Liu Xie, Zhong Rong, Xiao Tong, Xiao Gang, Xiao Yi, and Yan Zhi tui.

If the above books are somewhat one-sided, with literary criticism occupying a very small part of the entire literary history, then Hu Xiao Shi, who paid attention to literary criticism materials earlier when lecturing on literary history, interspersed a large amount of literary criticism materials. He explained the distinct literary critical attitudes of the Jian 'an period from three aspects: the status of literati, the gains and losses of literary families, and the emphasis on genius. Then he divided the literary critical trends of the Jin Dynasty into four parts: criticism, introduction, organization, and annotation, and summarized the literary criticism of the Qi and Liang Dynasties into three factions: the pro-literature faction (Pei Zi Ye's "Insects Carving Theory"), the anti-literature faction (Liu Xie, Zhong Rong), and the compromise faction (Yan Zhi tui). When evaluating Li Bai and Du Fu, he also focused on their literary propositions. Even when narrating Han Yu, Liu Zong yuan, Yuan Zhen, and Bai Ju Yi, he also involved more of their views on papers and poetry. Liu Da Jie's "History of the Development of Chinese Literature" "pays attention to connecting literary criticism to grasp the changes of literary trends, and the thread of the history of criticism is still traceable in this work of literary history" [18]. It not only has special sections on "The Construction of Literary Theory" during the Wei and Jin Dynasties, literary criticism in the Southern Dynasties, the literary thoughts of Yuan and Bai, Huang Ting Jian's poetic propositions, and the poetry theories of Jiang Kui and Yan Yu, but also arranges a special chapter on "The Literary Thoughts of the Ming Dynasty." Foreign Sinology and the history of Chinese literature in a certain period also involve the part of literary criticism. Aoki Masaru's "An Outline of Chinese Literature" introduces linguistics (six scripts, explanations, and phonology) and a general outline of literature (the development of literary thought, the development of various literary forms), and then lists four chapters, each with poetry, prose, drama, and fiction studies, although the study of criticism is still brief, but it has already shared equal status with other literary forms. Wang Yao's "Discourses on the History of Medieval Literature" is divided into three parts: literary thought, literary life, and literary style. "Literary Thought" includes two articles, "The Development of Literary Theory" and "The Establishment of Style Discrimination and Anthology," which reveal the two main threads of author theory and style theory in the literary criticism of the Han, Wei, and Six Dynasties.

In addition, we can also see this from modern literary history or new literary history. Qian Jibo's "History of Modern Chinese Literature" involves both poetry talks and literary talks because he believes that "as for Lin Shu's literary talks, Chen Yan's poetry talks, Kuang Zhou Yi's lyrics talks, and Wu Mei's opera talks, they reveal the heart of literature and discuss the emotions of things, which is enough to see the reasons for the rise and fall of literature, and to delete its essentials and write in the article" [19]. Zhu Zi qing's lecture notes "Outline of the Study of New Chinese Literature" are divided into two parts: "General Discussion" and "Specific Discussion." The "Specific Discussion" has five chapters, which are divided according to the type of literature, and they talk about poetry, novels, drama, prose, and literary criticism in turn. In the autumn of 1932, Su Xue Lin taught the "New Literature Research" course at Wuhan University, "This course teaches the national literature after the May Fourth Movement. First, it narrates the movement of new literature and the factions of the literary world, etc., to outline the outline. Then it is divided into five parts, commenting on new poetry, essays, novels, drama, and literary criticism" [20]. The course description and the above "Outline" show that in the eyes of the lecturers of new literature, literary criticism, like new poetry, prose, novels, and drama, is an indispensable part of the history of new literature. Wu Wenqi's "Outline of Modern Literature Teaching" at China University in Beijing is also divided into general discussion and specific discussion, and the specific discussion is also divided into categories according to the type of literature,

divided into poetry, novels, prose, and drama. Although literary criticism is not classified as a category, when talking about each type of literature, it is divided into two parts: theoretical criticism and creation.

In summary, the history of literary criticism is a category of literary history. The reason for this is that literary criticism is considered a category of literature itself. Although scholars at the time did not have a unified answer to the question of what constitutes literary criticism, some believed that literary criticism is a form of creation, similar to poetry, prose, and novels, while others considered literary criticism a science, an objective set of principles. However, these views were largely based on Western theories of literary criticism, drawing from a wide range of ideas and integrating various schools of thought, often leading to inconsistencies and contradictions. When some theorists discussed the types or classification of literature, the situation was different. They generally reserved an independent space for literary criticism within the realm of literature, alongside other literary forms.

Zheng Zhen duo, in his article "The Classification of Literature," divided literature into poetry, fiction, drama, essays, personal literature, and miscellaneous categories. To make the classification more meticulous and appropriate, each category was further divided into several subcategories, with the essay category including literary criticism [21]. In another article, "New Approaches to the Study of Chinese Literature," Zheng Zhen duo categorized Chinese literature into nine major types: anthologies and selections, poetry, drama, fiction, Buddhist music and clapper talks, prose collections, critical literature, personal literature, and miscellaneous works [22]. Zhang Yin Lin was not satisfied with this classification, believing it to be incomplete and inappropriately categorized, and that the arrangement was also improper [23]. Therefore, he reorganized it, reducing the nine categories to eight, but the status of literary criticism as a type of literature remained unshaken, only moving from the seventh to the eighth category. The Literary Research Association organized reading groups, using literary classification as the standard for grouping. They were first divided into two parts, A and B; Part A was divided by country, and Part B was divided into four groups according to literary style: fiction, poetry, drama, and critical literature [24]. Although this was the classification for reading groups, it showed the organizers' concept of literary classification: literary criticism, along with fiction, poetry, and drama, is considered one of the four types of literature.

Inspired by the Western academic study of literary criticism as a specialized discipline, there is a trend towards the independence of literary criticism. At the same time, the traditional concept of poetry and prose criticism being at the end of the collection category often lurks, leading some theorists to view literary criticism as a type of literature, naturally giving it a certain space when writing literary history. Even after the history of literary criticism became a separate volume, part of its purpose was still to verify literary history and solve some problems in literary history, indicating that the history of criticism has not completely separated from literary history. As Guo Shao Yu said, "When a discipline has not yet become an independent discipline, it is often attached to its neighboring disciplines." However, "learning must be divided into subjects, but if it is divided too finely and strictly, it may sometimes not be practical. This is because neighboring disciplines are all interconnected." [25] As can be seen below, the cohesive relationship between the history of literary criticism and literary history lies in the fact that literary history needs the verification of the history of literary criticism, and the history of literary criticism requires the knowledge reserve of literary history.

#### 4. Mutual Assistance and Mutual Use

Since a group of scholars began writing the history of literary criticism from the study of literary history, the knowledge accumulated during the preparatory stage of literary history not only influenced the compilation of the history of literary criticism but also had certain requirements for the teaching of the history of literary criticism.

Firstly, the emphasis on anthologies and selected works is a direct inspiration that literary history provides to the history of criticism. Scholars at the time not only recognized the great influence of anthologies and selected works in literary history but also fully understood their theoretical critical characteristics. Zhu Guang Qian believed that "a good selection should reflect a special taste and represent a special tendency" [26]. This "special taste" and "special tendency" represent not only the selector's literary propositions but can also reflect the literary critical trends of the times. Li Chang Zhi divided the science of literature and art into two paths: literary history and literary criticism, and "the selection is an exemplar book

of these two paths" [27], and "the standards for selection are only two: one is literary criticism and the other is literary history." In ancient times, there were many selections that started from literary criticism, such as "Tang Poetry Selection" and "Ancient Prose Selection." Su Xue Lin believed that the selection was very important because "when the ancients selected a book, they made it complement and assist their literary propositions that they had always held. And their opinions are often scattered in the selected works' comments, which are endless when combed and used" [28]. Therefore, the compilation of the history of literary criticism has to consider anthologies and selected works.

Among many histories of criticism, Fang Xiao Yue's "Chinese Literary Criticism" is the most valued work for anthologies and selected works. He claimed that "all collections of poetry and prose should be included in the study of criticism" [29]. Therefore, the two longest sections of the book are the discussions of Fang Hui and Fang Wang xi, both over ten thousand words, focusing on the former's "Ying Kui Lu sui" and the latter's "Qin ding Sishu Wen" and "Gui fang Ping Dian Shi ji." Zhu Zi qing, in his review of Guo Shao Yu's history of literary criticism, pointed out that it did not pay enough attention to the selection: "In the Tang Dynasty, there were many prefaces or comments in the selection of Tang poetry, such as 'He Yue Yingling,' 'Zhong Xing Xian qi,' and other collections, which are sufficient for research. These people discussed poetry and selected poetry, forming a school of their own, and it seems that a special chapter should be listed to discuss them." [30] Later, Luo Genze discussed Yuan Jie's "Qie Zhong ji," Rui Ting Zhang's "Guo Xiu Ji," Yin Fan's "He Yue Yingling Ji," and Gao Zhong Wu's "Zhong Xing Xian qi Ji" in the section on Tang Dynasty literary criticism. In the Song Dynasty section, he also examined the literary propositions and trends of the time through the selection and study of Li Du Han Liu Ji. Zhu Dong run pointed out in the introduction to the "Outline of the History of Chinese Literary Criticism" that there are six sources of historical materials selected, among which two are selected works, one is the "positioning selected works" that "select from various schools," such as Yin Fan's "He Yue Yingling Ji" and Gao Zhong Wu's "Zhong Xing Xian qi Ji"; the other is the selector "with occasional comments," such as Fang Hui's "Ying Kui Lu sui" and Zhang Hui Yan's "Ci Xuan." [31]

Secondly, early researchers in the history of literary criticism mostly began with teaching courses on the subject. With teaching comes learning; they studied the history of literary criticism due to the curriculum and wrote textbooks and works because of the curriculum. They passed down their knowledge and had certain requirements for the curriculum and for the students learning the history of literary criticism. This indirectly shows that literary history indeed paved the way for the history of literary criticism. Guo Shao Yu taught the history of literary criticism at Yanjing University as an elective course for junior and senior students. According to the "Yanjing University Undergraduate Course List" (for the academic year 1928), the course description specifically indicates: "Preparation in Chinese literary history and philosophy is required." [32] Guo's work begins with the explanation that the evolution and transformation of Chinese literary criticism have two aspects—literary and ideological relationships. Therefore, reviewing literary and philosophical history can provide a knowledge background for studying the history of literary criticism. When Guo Shao Yu taught the history of literary criticism at Tsinghua University, the course was scheduled for the fourth academic year. The department head, Yang Zhen Xing, wrote an article titled "The Purpose of the Chinese Literature Department and the Organization of the Curriculum," which explained this arrangement: "By the fourth year, everyone has been personally involved in the various forms of literature and then integrates it with the history of Chinese literary criticism." [33] Zhu Dong run also arranged the history of literary criticism course at Wuhan University for the fourth academic year. It is not a coincidence that the history of literary criticism courses in the three universities are in junior and senior years because it is necessary to study Chinese literary history in lower grades before studying the history of literary criticism. Since the establishment of the modern education system, the course in Chinese literary history has become a major course in the Chinese Department, mostly scheduled for the first and second years. For example, in the academic year 1931, in the first year at Tsinghua University, there was Zhu Xi Zu's "History of Chinese Literature" course, and in the second year, there were Liu Wen Dian's "Fu" (rhetorical prose), Zhu Zi qing's "Poetry," and Yang Shuda's "Prose" and other divided-style courses. In the view of the teachers, after completing the history of Chinese literature and various forms of literature in the first and second years, and then taking the history of literary criticism is a step-by-step approach. Since literary criticism is based on

specific writers and works, and then summarizes several theoretical principles and aesthetic standards, without familiarity with literary history, studying the history of literary criticism becomes rootless.

Ye Gong chao, although teaching the history of Western literary criticism, also criticized the prevailing trend at the time of only studying the history of literary criticism: "Nowadays, the history of literary criticism in various universities seems to be cultivating this erroneous concept. The textbooks used by students are mostly theoretical selections, only knowing the theory, and not studying the works and times based on each theory. Such knowledge is better not had than had. The reasonable approach is to read the works first, then the criticism, so every literature course should have attached criticism." [34] Decades later, Guo Shao Yu still remained true to his original intention. According to Wang Yunxi's recollection, in the early 1960s, when Guo Shao Yu recruited graduate students majoring in "History of Chinese Literary Criticism," he believed that "the current graduate students did not read many classical literature books during their undergraduate studies, and their foundation was not solid," "It is best to let the undergraduate graduates do a few years of graduate students in the 'History of Chinese Literature' major first, and then study for the 'History of Chinese Literary Criticism' major, which is easier to delve into" [35]. Similarly, in 1962, Yang Hui recruited graduate students majoring in "History of Chinese Literary and Artistic Thought" at Peking University, and the reading list included not only important monographs on ancient literary theory but also many important original works of ancient literature, such as "Mao Shi" (Book of Songs), "Chu ci" (Songs of Chu), "Du Shi Xiang Zhu" (Detailed Annotations on Du Fu's Poetry), "Li Tai bai Ji" (Collected Works of Li Bai), etc. Because he believed that studying the history of Chinese literary and artistic thought should adopt the perspective of "combining literary and artistic theory with literary creation" [36]. The above-mentioned scholars all unanimously emphasized that studying the history of literary criticism requires connection with literary creation. As a discipline, the history of literary criticism needs to be independent from literary history, but literary criticism is based on literary creation, which determines that the history of literary criticism and literary history are difficult to truly separate.

Literary history serves as a preparatory stage for the history of literary criticism, providing a knowledge background for it. In turn, since literary criticism takes literary works as its subject of evaluation, the history of literary criticism can naturally deepen the understanding and recognition of literary history. According to the views of early authors of the history of literary criticism, the purpose of the history of criticism lies in the history of literature. Guo Shao Yu's initial intention was to compile a history of Chinese literature, but because the project was too huge, he had to retreat and instead started writing the history of literary criticism: "To verify the history of literature from the history of literary criticism and to solve many problems in the history of literature." The author spent several years collecting and organizing materials, hoping only that "people can see some of the changes in literature from these materials." [37] Luo Genze also believed, "Since literary judgment in literary criticism follows creation, and literary theory leads creation, to thoroughly understand literary creation, one must rely on literary criticism; to thoroughly understand the history of literature, one must rely on the history of literary criticism." [38] Fang Xiao Yue stated that the purpose of studying ancient and modern literary criticism "is to enable people to understand the true face of a country's literature through these criticisms." [29]

Literary history and the history of literary criticism complement each other, forming a phenomenon of mutual assistance and use. Li Chang Zhi used a vivid metaphor to cover up this relationship: "A literary history without a critical eye is just a shadow of a walking corpse or a pile of dead wood and bamboo stones, and literary criticism without a literary history is just an isolated island in the ocean, a fallen leaf in the autumn wind, it has no connection, no root." [39] However, the two are not combined, after all, literary creation is different from literary criticism. Even though both literary history and literary criticism take literary creation as their object, the two are different. Li Chang Zhi made a distinction. The two are different in terms of application scope, object, order, and mutual supplementation. Literary history belongs to history, the object is literature, first, to provide examples for literary criticism; literary criticism belongs to aesthetics, the object is pure literature and art, later, to provide hypotheses for literary history [40]. Qian Zhongshu believed that the two systems were very different: "Literary history records its genetic traces to highlight the importance of its position; literary criticism expounds its creative strengths to highlight the quality of art. One focuses on facts, and the other focuses on appreciation." [41] In other words, although literary history and the history of literary criticism both belong to the branches of history, they are different and cannot



replace each other. Luo Genze had a clear understanding, for example, when narrating the three hundred poems, literary history does not need and should not adopt the ancient and modern literary criticism of beauty and satire, but the history of literary criticism cannot ignore this kind of interpretative criticism.

## 5. Conclusion

Through the examination and analysis of the academic paths, concepts, and works of Hu Xiao Shi, Chen Zhong fan, Guo Shao Yu, Luo Genze, Li Chang Zhi, Ren Fang Qiu, and others, we find that the establishment and development of the discipline of Chinese literary history and its popularization in the higher education curriculum system are important factors in the emergence of the discipline of Chinese literary criticism history. It is precisely because higher education institutions generally offer courses in literary history that a group of scholars, while teaching courses and compiling lecture notes, noticed the "poetry and prose criticism" materials in traditional bibliography, and began to expand their research field to the field of literary criticism history, teaching courses, and compiling lecture notes. Since then, the history of literary criticism, as a course, work, and knowledge system, has truly been established. Although influenced by Western concepts of literary criticism, literary criticism gradually became independent from the category of literature, it was still prevalent at the time due to the traditional "poetry and prose criticism" being one of the categories of collection, and most scholars accepted that the history of literary criticism was a type of literary history. At that time, many works on Chinese literary history basically narrated the content of literary criticism, including ancient literary history, new literary history, as well as dynastic literary history and literary history written by foreign Sinologists. This innate dependency determines that the history of literary criticism cannot be separated from literary history, and literary history also cannot be separated from the history of literary criticism. The two reflect a cohesive relationship of mutual assistance and use. Specifically, literary history not only makes the history of literary criticism pay attention to anthologies and selected works but also provides knowledge reserves for its teaching and learning. In turn, the purpose of the history of literary criticism is to verify literary history and solve many problems in literary history. Understanding these aspects gives us a new perspective on studying why the history of literary criticism was born in the 1920s. In addition, although it may seem that the history of literary criticism has an independent academic attribute today and no longer needs to rely on literary history, and its purpose is not just to verify literary history, the academic trajectory and concepts of predecessors still have important implications for the development and teaching of the discipline of literary criticism history. How can one study literary criticism, which takes writers, works, and literary trends as its objects, and even write the history of literary criticism, with a mindset of "understanding and sympathy" without in-depth research and academic reserves in the aspects of writers, works, and literary trends of literary history?

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