

The Poetic Aesthetics Born of the Grief: Borges' What Can I Hold You With versus Hai Zi's Wheat Field and Poet

Wenqing Kou

Department of English Translation, Hebei Normal University, Hebei, China
Corresponding author: gongmei@ldy.edu.rs

Abstract:

Borges and Haizi represent romantic poets in Argentina and China, respectively. Borges' poem *What Can I Hold You With* depicts the poet's poetic and passionate emotions in the pain of the failure of love. The poem *Wheat Field and Poet* by Haizi is like a question-and-answer dialogue. It expresses the deep communication between the poet and the field and the poet and himself in the confusion and pain. Both poems use many desolate images, and the poets vent their inner pain with sincere and warm language to achieve the effect of full of sincere beauty. However, the source of the pain of the two poets is not the same. While the other is crying that the world does not recognize his poetic skill, the first is weeping for love. Like the moon in his poetry, Borges' sadness was gentle and full of love. Haizi's sorrow, on the other hand, poured forth like hundreds of brilliant stars and the sun. The anguish that plagued the two poets was viewed differently by them. Both are full of hope, but one is warm and committed, while the other is real and modest. This essay will evaluate the similarities and contrasts between the two poems and the two poets.

Keywords: Haizi; Borges; Poem; Pain; Love.

1. Introduction

When reading the latter part of „Reply“ of Hai Zi's *Wheat Field and Poet*, the author found that it seemed to be written to continue communicating With Borges' poem *What Can I Hold You With*. In his romantic and melancholy verses, Borges describes the poet's answer to the purest, most precious, and most important thing he possesses. Perhaps love is the surface of Borges' poem, but the connotation is a characteristic that the poet himself must and must have. So, when Haizi saw Borges' poem, he cried out in sorrow for himself and Borges. Therefore, this article will discuss these two poems in detail.

2. Similarities and Differences of Two Poems

2.1 Similarities

Borges showed a sincere and passionate expression of love in the repeated phrase “I offer you” and Haizi expressed deep despair in the repeated lines “You can't pay it back.” [1]. They all use repetition to emphasize their pain and sincerity. These very similar repetitions and the metaphorical expressions of the two poems. These repeat-

ed lines set the tone for the poem: loneliness and resentment. The suffering of the poets is about to be described in detail in a single sentence of repetition.

In his speech „The Art of Poetry,“ Borges went into great length about his perspective on metaphor, stating that „we can almost create many, many, countless metaphors“ because „all metaphors are based on the connection between two different things“[2]. Like Haizi's poem, Borges' poetry is brilliant because of the metaphors he crafts. Both writers frequently metaphorically describe the sun, moon, and stars. To communicate their unpleasant emotions, they all turn to these celestial stars. The poet's word choice is easy for readers to pick up on. There is no fancy language in these remarks; they are extremely plain. Borges waited for the bleak moonlight to rise on the deserted streets in the sunset. Haizi spoke with the wheat field angrily in the empty wheat field. The reader seems to be able to see from these two poems two lonely figures walking in the street and wheat fields, respectively.

In his speech „The Art of Poetry,“ Borges went into great length about his perspective on metaphor, stating that „we can almost create many, many, countless metaphors“ because „all metaphors are based on the connection between

two different things“[2]. Like Haizi’s poem, Borges’ poetry is brilliant because of the metaphors he crafts. Both writers frequently metaphorically describe the sun, moon, and stars. To communicate their unpleasant emotions, they all turn to these celestial stars. The poet’s word choice is easy for readers to pick up on. There is no fancy language in these remarks; they are extremely plain. There is poetry in this truth. Borges wrote in his poem that he wanted to reach across time and space to find the yellow rose with the memory of his lover’s birth. He stood searching in the deserted street and saw the yellow rose as he saw his beloved. That’s the bond between them. Standing on the sun’s rays, Haizi is also standing on the top of wheat. The wheat field is where his soul is and where he wants to put his pain. The wheat field is his ideal. Though impossible to happen, such a scene can make the reader feel the poet’s sincerity. Their expressions are sincere, and so is their pain.

The two poets wrote these lines with their truest feelings, driven by pain deep in their hearts. The pain seemed to echo across time and space. The second half of Haizi’s poem is about communicating with Borges’s poem. Borges used his poems full of romance and melancholy to describe the poet’s answer to the purest, most precious, and most important thing he has about love in the appearance of his poems; the connotation is the poet himself must and must have the characteristics. Borges asks in poetry: What can I hold you with? Haizi gave an unanswered reply in poetry:

*“I stand in the sun’s
Painful rays.” [1]*

They didn’t answer the question, but they were all obsessed with the question: What does a poet have? Only the bitter despair and the silent darkness. So, as a poet in pain, Haizi reads Borges’ poems with pain that Borges cannot express. The highest ideals are intertwined with the worst realities. Perhaps it is the same question they ask: Why are poets here? For whom does poetry sing?

2.2 Differences of Language and Structure

Haizi’s *Wheat Field and Poet* are unique in structure, consisting of two parts, “inquiry” and “reply”, and each part can be independent. Borges’s *What Can I Hold You With* is a whole; the poem’s title asks questions, and the poem gives the poet’s own answer to the poem.

Wheat Field and Poet have many colorful descriptions of the picture, such as:

*“Running through the wheat fields
The snow and the rays of the sun” [1].*

In this poetry, the „wheat field“ concept has a deep and nuanced meaning. The poet’s „green wheat field“ is full of hope for a successful harvest because green represents life and hope, and green wheat also refers to the harvest that will come shortly. There are two possible interpretations for the poem „running on the wheat field“: either the poet is running on the wheat field, or the „rays of the sun“ in the following sentence are moving across the wheat field. The poet described the natural occurrence of the angle of sunlight changing with the earth’s rotation using anthropomorphism. The vivid colors depicted in this poem have a strong visual impact. Nishikawa wrote in an article about Haizi: “Everyone who approached him, everyone who read his psalms, could smell from him the rotation of the seasons, the direction of the wind and the growth of wheat. The light and darkness of the earth, the warmth, and the harshness, became the essence of his life, his outstanding, smooth, and sonorous poetic language. It was as if the silent earth had seized him for the sake of speaking and turned him into the voice of the earth.” Professor Zhang Qinghua believes: “Haizi is the survival and writing of the stage up to think, one-time is not imitated and copied, is the writing and life practice of the complete stage one.” [3]. As an early poem of Haizi, “Wheat Field and Poet” can already reflect Haizi’s poetic ideal of “one-time writing”. All this means that the pain of Haizi brought him is not willing to resist this, and the hope and vitality constantly burst out in the repression of all kinds of suffering.

Most images in Borges’ poem *What Can I Hold You With* are cold and dim. He writes of desperate sunsets and the moon in the middle of nowhere. He tells stories about his ancestors’ tragic wars, constantly mentioning the souls of the dead and the tributes. In his poems, he is honest about his loneliness and sadness. He experienced a deep sense of loneliness as a result of his suffering. In the lyrics, Borges attempted to hide his bewilderment and incomprehension, and he wished for his beloved to comprehend his struggles and loneliness. He is modest. In pursuit of a solitary blossom, a yellow rose evoking the memory of the evening of his beloved’s birth, he was prepared to transcend space and time. He is willing to cherish a small relationship with his partner, even if it is just a flower. He whispers the most intimate stories and topics that belong only to him, hoping that his lover will see that he is opening up his heart and showing her the most sincere part of it. The picture depicted in the poem is more cloudy than in Haizi’s poem.

Wheat Field and Poet are intense conversations that burst out of pain. *What Can I Hold You With* is the poet’s sol-

em and stirring story and low voice appeal. Both poems are born of unvented pain, but one is a burst of emotion, the other a depressed, sincere whisper.

2.3 Differences of Emotion

In *Wheat Field and Poet*, the poet's response to the enigmatic voice from the wheat field may be found in the second section, „The answer“. The poet believes that the enigmatic sound coming from the wheat field is a question the wheat field is asking of those who „grow up eating wheat.“ „Questioning“ is used instead of „interrogating“ since it is effectively an „interrogation“ of his „conscience.“ The poet placed himself between heaven and earth and poured out his heart to the wheat field. The word „pain“ appears four times, determining the emotional tone of the poem, which is destined to be a „pain“ reply.

Wheat fields are experienced differently by poets than by others. Others see wheat fields as frequently a cozy, picturesque scene brimming with poetry. However, the „question“ from the wheat field is what the poet perceives. The poet takes center stage in the investigation as though he were in the judge's chair. In addition, the „questioning“ had turned into a torture that included fire scorching and even burned the poet. Haizi uses tense language in his poetry; he merely states that the poet has been burned, not how terrible it is for the poet. Rather than commenting on how pointed the questions were, he just answered, „I stand in the pain of the sun. The „light“ is both the spikes of the wheat and the sun's rays. It is a metaphor for both the pain and the burning light.

The line „I stand on the sun's painful rays“ implies the genius of the poet's imagination. Facing the question of the wheat field in his hometown, the poet stood in front of the earth to accept and answer the question. „When I stand in front of you in pain, you can't say I have nothing. You can't say my hands are empty.“ Poets think in pain and write in pain. Since there is so much suffering as the spiritual pillar of the poet, the wheat field cannot say, „I have nothing,“ and cannot say, „my hands are empty.“ Finally, the poet raises „pain“ to the level of spiritual creation and respectfully tells the wheat field: „Man's pain is the poetry and light he radiates!“ The lonely poet confesses to the earth that suffering is not for nothing: poetry is the crystallization of human suffering and the shining thought.

Borges' *What Can I Hold You With* is incredibly sincere. He said *I offer you the loyalty of a man who has never been loyal* [4]. A noble person can have no faith, not be loyal to anything external, but have a little faith spirit. Though he might not be faithful to God, the monarch, the

nation, the leader, his ancestors, the community, his family, or his lover, he must always have some faithful objects in his life that he must steadfastly defend, whether they are particular people and things or intangible ideals. What „a man with loyalty but never be loyal“ means on the surface is „I'm only loyal to you“ but essentially, it's saying that there's something like this inside the poet. The poet wants to present the loyalty left by the baptism of doubt to the lover. This is in line with Zeng, who probes the semiotics of exile [5-7].

The poem's ending is different from the other *I offer you* in the poem. It was the only sentence that became *I can give you*. Literature is universal [8-10]. Human love is the embrace of two wounded people rather than two self-fulfilling individuals conversing about the world. The pleasures and sufferings individuals share as human beings unite them in a spiritual community. It is people's shortcomings, cracks, and insignificance. His anguish was incredibly sensitive. And the poet cannot free himself precisely because of the tenderness of this pain. The pain is intense and difficult to let go of. The poet seems to have developed an addiction to this kind of pain. He had a drug addiction. These feelings tormented him, and he saw his firm love in the tormented. So he gave himself entirely to the grief of love and could not wake up. The poet had to carve out the most complete part of himself to show his lover. Let her see the poet's loneliness, darkness, hunger, and thirst are equally treasured. The poet hopes a lover can pique his confusion, danger, and failure.

3. Conclusion

The poet's wish to compose poetry genuinely touching people's hearts is inextricably linked to their genuine emotions as a writer. This holds for both Borges and Haizi. Jaspers argued that „one-off writing“ and „one-off survival“ are characteristics of great poetry. Haizi brought up the issue of „one-time poetry action“ as well. Haizi expressed the suffering of the wheat in the poem „The Wheat Field and the Poet“ by speaking as the earth's voice and the wheat field's spokesperson. He dared to take on the huge and lonesome mission of poetry and insisted on doing straightforward and impassioned wheat work. He took wheat fields as his spiritual home to fight against the degradation of agricultural civilization. These two poems, written on wheat and in love, are immortal works that burn pain to release light. Standing on wheat fields and deserted streets, Haizi and Borges felt the responsibility and pain of being poets and radiated the light of poetry

with pain.

References

- [1]Xichuan: Brothers Poems of Luo Yihe's and Haizi [M]. Nanjing: Jiangsu Literature and Art Publishing House, 2014.3.
- [2]Borges.:Poetry TMM. Chen Chongren, trans. Shanghai: Shanghai Translation Publishing House, 2011.
- [3]Zhang Qinghua: The Poetics of Guessing God [M]. Beijing: Peking University Press, 2016.6.
- [4]Borges: Selected Poems by Borges [MI Dongbiao Chen, trans. Shijiazhuang: Hebei Education Press, 2003.
- [5]Zeng, Hong. "Poetics of Exile." *The Semiotics of Exile in Literature*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2010. 33-89.
- [6]Bartosch, Roman. *Literature, pedagogy, and climate change: Text models for a transcultural ecology*. Springer Nature, 2019.
- [7]Mulyadi, Metia Setianing, and Candra Rahma Wijaya Putra. „Transmisi memori peristiwa 1965 dalam novel pulang dan amba.“ *Aksara* 33.1 (2021): 71-82.
- [8]Schreffler, Jillian, et al. "Universal design for learning in postsecondary STEM education for students with disabilities: A systematic literature review." *International Journal of STEM Education* 6.1 (2019): 1-10.
- [9]Murray, Judith A. "Loss as a universal concept: A review of the literature to identify common aspects of loss in diverse situations." *Journal of Loss &Trauma* 6.3 (2001): 219-241.
- [10]Capp, Matthew James. "The effectiveness of universal design for learning: A meta-analysis of literature between 2013 and 2016." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 21.8 (2017): 791-807.