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Women's Writing in Xinjiang from the Perspective of Gendered Spatial Negotiation—Take Eighty-Eight Cavalry, Centennial Blood, and Winter Ranch as Examples

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Abstract. This research draws on Xinjiang-related writing as its background, responds to the daily experiences of women that are easily obscured by macro narratives in existing discussions, and puts forward the research theme of "how space generates experience". The article chooses Eighty-eight Cavalry, Centennial Blood, and Winter Ranch as the core text. It employs careful reading and comparative analysis of the text. Starting from the action details and physical feelings in the narrative, it examines how the living environment and community order specifically stipulate the boundaries of liveable, feasible, and bearable. The research results show that all three works write space as a condition for continuous pressure, so that the experience is gradually formed in the process of maintaining livelihood, travelling through migration and responding to discipline, and presenting the temporary order generated by night road deflection, survival maintenance, and boundary review in the context of disaster, and nomadic life respectively. The position change and language deformation brought about by "entering". From this, the study further concludes that Xinjiang women's frontier experience does not come from the thematic a priori generalisation, but is generated in the interaction between spatial conditions and daily practice. Therefore, "negotiation" has become a key entrance to understanding women's frontier writing.

Keywords: Xinjiang writing, women's frontier literature, spatial experience, daily practice

1. Introduction

In recent years, the literary research on Xinjiang has been increasing. The discussion is mostly carried out along the macro vein of historical memory, national narrative, and border writing, emphasising the position of the region in national narrative and cultural imagination. However, the meaning of frontier is not only the limitation of political geography, but also extends to a kind of psychological domain, a situation of contact, a staggered or isolated situation of ethnic groups, culture, economy, and trade, and even a projection of imaginary time and space [1]. However, when "Xinjiang" is repeatedly explained as a holistic space, how individuals are placed and restricted in specific living conditions, and how to maintain themselves in daily practice - especially women and how women-centred care networks continue to live in the midst of illness, hunger, migration,

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discipline, and lack - are often easily obscured by the grand framework. The "women's frontier literature" mentioned in this article is not only the works with women as the author or protagonist, but also refers to those who specify the spatial conditions of frontier life (migration, labour, resource shortage, system and community boundaries, etc.) into women's daily life, and make women's experience in care, physical endurance, relationship position and language The type of writing that is manifested in the deformation of words/identity. In other words, the core of its focus is not on the abstract generalisation of "women's fate", but on how women's experience is continuously generated by the border space.

Based on this, this article takes "space as an experience generation mechanism" as the research theme, and selects three texts of Eighty-eight Cavalry, Centennial Blood and Winter Ranch as core materials, and establishes a contrast in narrative scenarios with significant differences: from the institutional threshold and the life-deflection of the night path, to the famine landscape and the care and maintenance of temporary habitat, to the reassembly of the body in migration labour, the continuous deformation of the media conditions and the relationship position [2-4]. The three works jointly reveal that frontier experience is not first expressed as an abstract theme, but is implemented in trivial but hard daily actions - care, feeding, binding and carrying, building and maintenance, crossing and waiting - these actions constitute the minimum order for survival to continue, and also sink women's experience from the "narrative of fate" to a verified chain of actions and physical feelings; at the same time, the works present a differentiated adjustment path, providing a clear scale for comparison.

In terms of research methods, this article is based on the detailed reading of the text, giving priority to cutting in from the fragments with the most spatial pressure and physical consequences in the narrative, and presenting how space is written as "conditions" rather than "sets" through details such as action chain, direction and path, objects and labour, physical sense and emotional rhythm. At the comparative level, this article does not simply jaxtaposition them with the subject similarity, but takes the mechanism of "how space is forced to adapt" as the axis, examines the generation mode of survival order in different texts and its differences, and further analyses the changes in the position of the narrator/character in the relationship network to avoid simplifying complex life to a single position or concept label.

This article aims to explain: in Xinjiang-related writing, how space generates experience through specific conditions such as habitable and inhabitable, passable and impassible, edible and inedible, and thus presents the daily analysable structure of women's daily life - not only to see how survival practices maintain life, but also how to shape the relationship between thresholds and discipline. Place, to provide a more detailed and comparable explanation entrance for understanding women's border writing.

2. Literature review

On the discussion of "borderline literature/border writing", one of the consensuses in recent years is that the so-called "borderland" is not a simple geographical designation, but a naming with a methodological meaning, involving the generation of the narrative structure, historical experience, and sensory structure of the centre/edge. In the relevant discussion, Liu Daxian emphasised the relationship between the concept of "borderland" and China's political geography, border Defence pattern and cultural succession, suggesting that "borderland" can be used as a research perspective to understand "complex China"; Li Sen reminded that "borderland literature", as an external naming mechanism of critical discourse, is easy to obscure the internal aesthetic complexity of the work in typification; Ji Jin and other studies further understand "borderland literature" as an accumulation of

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history and experience, and is also a "feeling structure", and thus emphasising the importance of starting from specific experience rather than the surface landscape [5].

Echoing the above-mentioned orientation of "borderland as a problem and method", the relevant theory of spatial research provides an operable analytical language for text reading: The Production of Space understands space as a social relationship field to be produced, so that "space" can be regarded as a condition for the intertwining of system, labour and daily practice; The Practice of Everyday Life uses "daily practice" to reveal how individuals can reoccupy space through actions and strategies in the established structure, so that trivial actions become the key incision for the generation of experience and order; Feminist geography further emphasises the intrinsic relationship between space and gender. Space, Place and Gender proposes that space is the confluence product of social relations. Gender differences and power structures will be concretely reflected in spatial organisations, while Feminism and Geography reflect on the gender blind spots in geography/spatial discourse from the level of knowledge production, and promote research back to physical, daily life and location [6-9].

As far as the specific research of Xinjiang-related texts is concerned, the more enlightening path in the existing results is not to stay at the reconfirmation of "regional style/national customs", but to understand the work from the perspective of "limited personal" and the orientation of non-fiction writing: Liang Hong, in the identification of the rise of non-fiction, once took Winter Ranch as an example to point out that the narrator is both an outsider and an insider. The limited nature of his "present" and self-educational observation makes the experience present a complex texture closer to life itself [10]. On the other hand, the comments on Centennial Blood also pay more attention to its family life as the starting point, weaving the tension of individual fate, social change, and ethnic/community order into daily details, so that "family affairs" become the entrance to understanding historical experience [11]. These studies commonly suggest that instead of abstracting the theme first, it is better to track how the spatial conditions fall on the body and action at the detailed level of the text, and how to generate a comparable empirical structure through daily practice - which is also the docking path selected in the analysis of Eighty-eight Cavalry, Centennial Blood and Winter Ranch in this article.

3. Text analysis: presentation of women's experience under different spatial conditions

3.1. Eighty-eight Cavalry - war flow and temporary order

In Eighty-eight Cavalry, the writer tells the story of an old man who was on the verge of "death" four times, and his strange experience made his life endless. The novel calls for calmness and tranquillity in the face of death. These unusual views on life, time and space, and the universe impact readers' understanding of "existence". The characters and stories written by Yerksi explain the shaman's philosophy to a certain extent and reflect the psychological formula of Kazakh culture [12]. Eighty-eight Cavalry advances the narrative with a strong sense of body and movement path: the characters are not placed in a stable "home" or "social order", but constantly migrate between illness, fear and escape. Therefore, space is not a set, but a condition for compressing "life/death" to a close range. The following takes the passage of the old cavalry escaping from the hospital and crossing the banks of the Ili River at night as a clue to examine how spatial writing is entangled with pain experience and generates a temporary order "to survive".

"That night... He jumped off the windowsill of the ward with his bare feet... He crossed a grove, jumped over several small canals, stepped on a soft dirt road, and after running more than ten miles,

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he sat under a date tree by the Ili River... On that empty night with only the sound of the wind, the old cavalry sat alone under the date tree, thinking about the truth of life and death."

This narrative organises the sensitivity of "escape" with continuous spatial nodes: window sills, weeds, groves, canals, dirt roads, the Ili River and under the jujube trees, forming a path that must be crossed by the body section by section. In particular, the detail of "barefoot" makes the risk and roughness of night travel directly into the physical level: escape is not romanticised as a heroic action, but a survival movement in contact with the skin and the land. Space thus has a double meaning: on the one hand, it creates danger and uncertainty with geomorphology and distance; on the other hand, it also provides the possibility of leaving the operating table and passive disposal.

At the same time, the text describes the experience of pain as a kind of "internal violence". Gallbladder stones are compared to "cicadas" and "bullets", and the pain is described as "tidal worms whose legs are pulled out" rolling on the ground; this metaphor is not just rhetorical praise, but transfers the "battlefield" to the body at the narrative level: life and death do not occur in the distance, but are repeatedly launched in the abdominal cavity. It is in this sense that the hospital and the operating table represent not a simple medical space, but an approaching threshold; and the night road and escape constitute a temporary deviation from the threshold. At the end of the paragraph, this deviation is fixed with the direction metaphor: the contrast between "pulling the reins to the left" and "pulling to the right" transforms the approach and distance of life and death into a controllable spatial choice, thus giving the subject a minimum of active imagination - even if this imagination is still based on pain and risk.

At the same time, the author not only lets the space carry fear, but also lets it carry a breathable rhythm: cricket singing, the evening breeze brushing the grass, and the "night elf"-like waiting, so that the night is not a pure threat, but a sensory order opposite to the ward order. In addition to the "passive disposal" pointed out by the ward and the operating table, the night road provides "still available" time and space with the sound of wind, insects and shadows of trees; even if the night car bell "jingle" and "full of fear", it is still included in the possibility logic of "bringing him home". Therefore, the "joy of escape" at the end of the paragraph is not the lyricism of dispelling suffering, but points out an empirical structure: when "life" is re-perceived as an object that can be distanced, the subject can temporarily withdraw from the imminent pressure of death; the so-called happiness is the feeling of regaining space in extreme situations.

3.2. Centennial Blood - survival conditions and threats and order

In Centennial Blood, the narrative often unfolds in the form of family history. Characters are forced to resettle due to migration, disease, and hunger, and women's experience is precisely in this "resettlement". Instead of starting from the concept, it is better to start from the key scenes of the text: care and feeding in temporary dwelling places, begging for food in the famine landscape, and marriage judgment on the canal bridge. The following takes the original fragment as the starting point to observe how space is written as the boundary of survival conditions and order, and generates the daily situation of women in it.

3.2.1. Survival conditions and daily maintenance

Let's see how the author writes "perching" as a forced marginal state, which thus leads to the difficulties of care labour.

"When I got off the train in Urumqi, a chickenpox greeted my mother. She had a high fever and couldn't retreat. Her body and face were covered with blisters. Grandma took my mother and aunt to

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live in a stall in the stone mine in the suburbs of Urumqi... Grandma bought medicine and came back. Grandma boiled water and waited for my mother to wake up from sleep and drink the medicine. The hungry aunt thought that grandma had bought something delicious and swallowed all the pills in the paper bag into her stomach... When the mother woke up, she asked for water to drink. Grandma couldn't find the medicine. She saw the aunt leaking pitch-like dark filth outside. A person's stomach can hold so much water and thin stool, and her aunt's bulging stomach is as flat as a pot. A handful of medicine was right to save my aunt's life."

The strength of this paragraph is that it makes the space and the body hard at the same time. Suburban stone mines and "horsesheds" are not ordinary place words, but nailed to the place of life outside the urban order. Then, the narrative is not promoted by prosecution, but by action: buying medicine, boiling water, waiting, and feeding medicine. These actions are a kind of daily maintenance in themselves. Under the condition of a lack of institutional care, Grandma built a temporary order with the most basic materials and steps. "Hungry eyes" clears the boundary between medicine and food: the pills in the paper bag are swallowed as "delicious food", and the lack directly intervenes in the care process. The narrative immediately completed a "inside and outside" space allocation: the sick body and letharma remained "inside", and excretion and danger were moved to "outside" - grandma couldn't find the medicine, and saw her aunt outside "discharging pitch-like dark filth as asphalt" outside. Care takes place in the temporary habitat of the horse shed, which is paralleled by excretion, fear, and disorder: boiling water, waiting to wake up, feeding medicine, and the panic of "not finding medicine" exist at the same time. In the end, "a handful of medicine saved my aunt's life", fixing this period of survival experience on misunderstanding and luck: it was not the precise choice that brought a turning point, but an accident that supported the result.

3.2.2. Threslement order and marriage adjudication

If the previous part is about the difficulty of "living", then this paragraph is that even if you live, life may not gain autonomy because of it. The author completes a marriage on the border between the canal and the bridge, so that the order is no longer abstract, but becomes something that can be seen and intercepted.

"At this time, my father was also transferred from the garment factory in Urumqi to the southern slope across the river from Shawozi. My father and mother built the canal between the south slope and the sand nest, and the two got to know each other. Krimu, a friend who was decentralised with his father, said to his grandfather. When my grandfather heard that he was a Uyghur, he was more than 20 years older than my mother, and he refused. Grandma was silent. Maybe she couldn't forgive my mother for letting go on the train. She thought my mother was a "guilty" person. She actually agreed to the marriage. My mother had no idea about it herself, so she let her grandfather and grandmother do everything.

On the day of the wedding, my grandfather stood on the canal bridge to stop my mother's carriage and threatened that if my mother got married, he would jump into the canal. Finally, my grandfather sent someone to persuade him to go back. In this way, my father drove the wagon to pick up my mother across the canal.

The old Hui man in the village scolded his grandfather in person: "How can you marry your granddaughter to a Uyghur?"

This paragraph materialises the conflict with canals and bridges: the canals separate the two places, and the bridge becomes a must-pass. Grandpa stood on the bridge, stopped the carriage, and said, "If you get married, you will jump into the canal." The threat pushes the border from

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geographical separation to physical risk. "Unpassable" is no longer a route choice, but a life-to-life competition. The marriage was pushed to the bridge to be completed: not the ceremony in the house, but the release and interception at the threshold.

The position of the mother in this threshold scene is also written by the action. She had "no idea" and was handled by the elders; her father drove the carriage to "take her over the canal". Who decides, who drives away, who is taken away, the order is clear. The carriage takes on the function of "handing over" here: sending her from one shore to the other, and pushing the relationship into the established. Then there was a "face-to-face reprimand", and the questioning took place in front of everyone, and the question directly pointed to the identity of the ethnic group. Marriage has changed from a family affair to a public event, and has been included in the visible scope of community order, becoming a choice that needs to be explained and defended. Bridges and canals provide the shape of the boundaries, and public statements give the boundaries the voice of judgment; under the superposition of the two, women are arranged as those who must cross the bridge, but do not get the corresponding position.

3.3. Winter Ranch- migration labour and location entry

In Winter Ranch, Li Juan equally shows the bitterness and joy of life in the frontier pasture. It is not simply beautifying or overly ugly, but carefully records what she has seen and heard every day in life, and shows every day and night in the winter pasture with a "selfless" attitude [13].Winter Ranch describes "Winter Nest" as an operable and pressurised living environment [14]. Weather and road conditions determine the way of travel, livestock and materials affect the daily rhythm, and the difficulty of communication can change the distance between people and the outside world at any time; these conditions are not outside the narrative, but directly fall on the body, in the steps of action, and also in the self-feeling of "where am I in this home". Therefore, the narrative of the text does not pursue the scenic arrival from the beginning, but makes the "entry" visible in the details of clothing, shoe size, carrying, and binding: the body is forced to adjust, the action is forced to rewrite, and the position of the relationship moves slowly in this adjustment.

3.3.1. Migration labour and physical debugging

Entering the winter nest is not marked by "arrival", but by whether the body can bear it. The author wrote the preparation process in detail: the change of clothes, the exaggeration of the shoe size, the layering of thick socks, and repeated try-ons and replacement plans. Space experience is implemented in these trivial steps - instead of having a concept of "winter pasture" first and then matching life, but first making choices in the feasibility of wearing, keeping warm, and moving, and then it is possible to go on the road.

"In the winter nest, there is either snow or sand... Ordinary herdsmen... They will choose two sizes bigger shoes... After thinking about it, I wore a pair of eight sizes bigger... So, I wear more socks than anyone else."

"Snow/sand" is not a scenic word here, but a direct regulation of materials and body: it determines whether the shoes are worn out and how many pairs of socks to wear to be "reasonable". More importantly, the author takes the herdsmen's experience as a learnable technology (two yards larger, wearing thicker socks) into his own debugging process, and pushes the debugging to the extreme (eight yards larger). This is not simply an exaggeration, but presents the price of "entering" at the narrative level: to survive in long-term riding and cold, the body must accept indecent, uncomfortable, and even inconspicuous states. The transformation of the subject in space does not

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begin from "arriving there", but has already occurred in the repeated try-on and replacement plan before departure.

This process of body transformation is further concretized into a kind of "weight-bearing movement" operation after being on the road:

"The clothes are too thick... If you want to look back at the movement behind you, you have to lead the horse to turn around... Whip, reins, camel reins, thermometers... Cheese... Cameras, DV... Tie the whip to the wrist, thermometer tied to the gloves... Hanging all over the body, like a Christmas tree."

"Thick" here is not only the feeling of temperature, but also a rewriting of the ability to move: the neck is stuck, the field of vision cannot rotate freely, and even "looking back" must be completed with the help of "directing the horse to turn". The cold enters the body structure through the thickness of the clothes, thus changing the way of observing, turning around, and cooperating with livestock; at the same time, the item-by-item listing of things carried (whips, reins, thermometers, food, imaging equipment) makes "riding fatigue" no longer an emotional statement, but the result of task load. To avoid the chain risk of "it's troublesome if you drop it", the object is re-bound: tie, tie, tie, tie, hang - the body is forced to become a hanging and fixed system. The so-called "jingle" is self-deprecating on the surface, but in fact, the survival logic on the migration path is written into a visible material structure: space forces the subject to complete debugging in action, vision, and object management through cold and mobile tasks; and this debugging itself is the way of experience generation.

3.3.2. Media conditions and location integration

When the "entry" at the physical level is completed, the text further advances the spatial experience to another level: in a winter nest where communication is extremely difficult and materials are scarce, "whether to contact the outside world" is not an abstract problem, but a technical labour that requires wood, cables, and maintenance. What the author writes here is not just "installing the phone", but also how the media conditions in the frontier life are spatialised:

"To set up a telephone antenna... Three thin straight pine trees more than three metres long... Hang the antenna and plant it next to the nest... But attract all the cows to rub it... "We don't have wood, so we can't install an antenna." ...Soon after, Juma... brought back a new wireless landline and really did as I said... This is my most helpful suggestion to this family."

This narrative describes "can you contact the outside world" as a specific operation, and also describes the presence of the narrator in a limited way: she can participate and propose solutions, but she does not occupy the central position of explaining life. The key here is not "the advice is very smart", but how to specify the medium in space: without wood, the signal cannot be "elevated"; the cow's body will use the antenna rod as an itching tool, forcing "rescue every three and five"; hanging the antenna on the dune iron frame will lead to the spatial distance problem of "whether a 500-metre telephone line". Therefore, communication technology is not the natural arrival of modernity, but the result of repeated folding by landform, livestock, materials, and labour. The author's "helpfulness" is precisely reflected in a kind of reorganisation of spatial conditions: letting the telephone line droop and turning "calling" into an action of holding the telephone and walking under the iron frame. Therefore, this proposal has a contrasting weight in the narrative - it is the most definitely effective intervention in "a whole winter", which just reflects that the author's position in this home is not stable.

This unstable position is written by the author with a very honest self-assessment:

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"Other than that, what else have I done for this family? ...It's not all indispensable to me... Its existence has almost no impact on this family. On the contrary, it is I who is affected... Unconsciously, I also use the grammar and expression habits of the Ha language..."

Here, "integration" is no longer a warm narrative, but a structural experience with friction: on the one hand, participation at the labour level (backing snow, chasing calves, chasing sheep, sewing, etc.) is not enough to establish "irreplaceability"; on the other hand, the real irreversible changes occur in the self - language begins to deform, and grammar and expression habits are quietly pulled by the environment. The "being taken away" of language is more likely to explain the location than the "what to do" of labour: the author enters a self-sufficient family system in daily operation. Outsiders can participate, but it is difficult to become the core; outsiders are more likely to be rewritten by space and lifestyle, and may not be able to rewrite the space itself.

The last paragraph pushes this position to the extreme: long-term stay brings "everyone begins to worry about how to arrange me in spring", and even forgets "only experiencing one winter", indicating that the author is indeed accepted at the relationship level; but at the same time, the consciousness of "redundant and embarrassing" continues to emerge - there is a gap that is difficult to solve between "understanding, paraphrasing" and "life itself".The confusion here is not pretentious, but a kind of self-restraint on the experience of the border: in nomadic life, space is not an object that can be easily summarised; the more you try to "be in line with reality or intention", the easier it is to feel that the words are not enough. Therefore, Winter Ranch writes "locational entry" as a two-way role: the author is gradually incorporated into labour and relationship, and at the same time, it is continuously rewritten in language and feeling; space is not the object to be described, but the condition of transforming the narrator itself.

3.4. Summary

It can be seen from the detailed reading of Eighty-eight Cavalry, Centennial Blood, and Winter Ranch: "Border Space" is not a narrative background, but a set of continuous living conditions and order devices. Cold, hunger, illness, road, lack of materials and community norms, specifically shaping the body and actions: care, feeding, bondage and carrying, construction and maintenance, time travel and waiting and other trivial practises, constitute the minimum order that can be maintained for survival, and make women's experience sink from "fate narrative" into an analyseable action chain and physical feelings. The differences between the three works are also clear: Eighty-eight Cavalry presents the "temporary order" from the threshold of the ward/surgical table to the night road; Centennial Blood juxtaposition of survival maintenance and threshold regulations, marriage rulings on the canal bridge and face-to-face questioning push private life into public review; Winter Ranch emphasises technical progress Entry and positional deformation, physical debugging, media construction and change of language habits together point to the tension of "integration" and "redundant". It can be concluded that space is written as an experience generation mechanism in these texts, and "adaptation" has become a continuous form of life.

4. Conclusion

The research results of this study show that in Eighty-eight Cavalry, Centennial Blood and Winter Ranch, space is not a narrative background, but the living conditions and order boundaries of continuous operation. The text implements the generation of experience at the daily level: survival and maintenance, limited behaviour and relationship discipline jointly shape women's physical feelings, action paths and presence positions, and present different coping methods and experience

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forms in different narratives. Thus, it is further concluded that the experience of women's frontier writing in Xinjiang does not rely on the a priori setting of grand themes, but is generated in the interaction between spatial conditions and daily practice; "adulation" therefore constitutes an important entrance to understanding women's border writing.

This research provides valuable reference for the future research in this direction: it promotes the discussion from the macro-generalisation of "female image" to the detailed logic of textual evidence, so that spatial research no longer stays at the descriptive level of "landscape" and "geography", but can be carried out through details such as action chain, path and orientation, object and labour, physical sense and relationship position, thus improving the probability and comparability of border writing research. More importantly, it gives an operable understanding of "women's frontier literature": instead of simply labelling the gender of the author or character, but how women maintain, endure, and negotiate the boundaries of the survival conditions and order of the border, and how they are placed and rewritten in the relationship network, as an entrance to judgment and analysis.

Future research can continue to expand text samples and genre genealogy, and test the commonalities and boundaries of different "negotiation paths" in a broader Xinjiang writing; it can also promote differential analysis more meticulously, and ask how ethnic groups and language differences, intergenerational structure, migration experience, and media technical conditions can change women's spatial behaviour and narrative strategies. If the perspective of oral history, field materials or media research can be introduced under the premise of maintaining the intensity of detailed reading, the hidden but hard generation chain between space and daily life will be illuminated more clearly - we will be closer to the true weight of these texts: they are not talking about the "borderland", but about how people live in the frontier.

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