

The Theory of Humanistic Spirit Contained in Historical Records

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Abstract:

This paper studies the profound humanistic system constructed in *Historical Records*, by *Sima Qian*. Through the combination of text reading and theoretical interpretation, examples and ideological analysis, the following four care dimensions are discussed: the individual value of human and the analysis of the unique status of human in history; The integration of the concept of the times morality, ethics and historical evaluation shows the internal relationship of humanities in society; the philosophy of the indomitable spirit of human; The sublimation of individual value, from the world to the understanding and pursuit of the mission consciousness of cultural heritage. This article argues that the theory of humanistic spirit in *Historical Records*, by *Sima Qian*'s a system with rich levels and contents, which takes respect for individuals as its starting point, social construction as its link, and praises the system of fighting bravely for fate and pursuing mission. This system is a great historiography masterpiece that inherits the ancient but has pioneering significance and lays the foundation for the humanistic tradition of Chinese historiography in later generations. It is also the spiritual source of cultivating the spirit of the contemporary people, and has important enlightenment value with personal face, world connection and responsibility burden.

Keywords: Historical records; humanistic spirit; the concept of heaven and man; feelings of the country.

1. Introduction

The book *Historical Records*, by *Sima Qian* more than 3000 years from the reign of the ancient emperor to Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty. *Historical Records*, by *Sima Qian* consist of five parts: Basic Annals, Tables, Treatises, Hereditary House, Biogra-

phies, "Basic Annals", "Hereditary House", "Treatises" three parts according to the large space. Corrected: At the age of twenty *Sima Qian* toured the south travel around the customs and culture, for the world more and more experience of the world, coupled with the fate of the Li Ling Disaster. Therefore, in these three parts, the figures in special status, and the

narrative of the representatives of all social strata and surrounding countries, it combines the thoughts and feelings of Sima Qian's life experience, what he saw and heard. It is his blood-weeping „To inquire into the relationship between Heaven and human, to penetrate the changes of past and present, and to complete a unified system of all learning [1].“ in which the galloping and following with the fervent humanistic spirit. Sima Qian's thinking on people is divided into: the value and dusting of human being; Human and historical society; Human and the world. The exploration of human beings in the world of their own civilization, from the recognition of their own value to the value connection of social life. finally extended to the interaction with the world. Both of them have the same thinking extensions, which is enough to show that the exploration of the humanistic spirit of Historical Records, by Sima Qian not only embodies the deep excavation of the spiritual base of the Chinese nation, but also is an important manifestation of the development of humanistic spirit. This grand historical mission and the sadness of personal destiny are interviewed, which has created such a great work that still affects the construction of contemporary humanistic spirit.

On the academic level, Historical Records, by Sima Qian explores its humanistic spiritual philosophy, transcends the perspective of traditional historical data research, and explore its value beyond narrative itself from literature, philosophy, ethics and other aspects, deepen the study of ancient Chinese humanistic thought, and also fill the gap in the study of the humanistic spiritual system of Historical Records, by Sima Qian. On the culture level, based on its individual value dignity, the pursuit of justice values in social history, emphasis and development of historical responsibility. To research and exploration of spiritual core of Chinese excellent traditional culture, as well as a study of ancient wisdom. In the context of the contemporary era, the warmth of human nature contained in Historical Records, by Sima Qian is also worth exploring. This study is conducive to people to review the concern of the humanistic itself, the adherence to moral ideals and the indomitable struggle against fate provide spiritual warmth and profound practical significance to contemporary people.

This article will focus on: First, the individual value of people themselves; Second, people and historical society; Third, the insight and struggle between human and change and destiny; Fourth, the mission and responsibility of people, families, countries and the world, these four parts are carried out around. In terms of research methods, this article will be based on Historical Records, by Sima Qian itself, the text and theory will be combined to explain the interpretation, from the perspective of historical unity to

expand. App privately draw lessons from philosophy and ethics to analyze and refine its humanistic value beyond the significance of times, play a more in-depth interpretation of it. This article expects to supplement the profound emotional display given by Sima Qian in Historical Records, by Sima Qian, provide a new perspective for the understanding of Chinese culture, and also provide wisdom from the depth of history for the development of humanistic spirit in contemporary society.

2. The Individual Value of Human Beings is Highlighted

The humanistic spirit in *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian is most directly reflected in the unprecedented respect, recognition and manifestation of self-worth. Sima Qian's pioneering biography and narration of the world's characters and things, broke the narrative tradition centered on destiny, events and speech in historical narrative before the Han Dynasty, and no longer conceals human status behind events and times. It inspired people to emerge as independent individuals, central protagonists shaping history. The promotion of human beings will become the central role of history, an independent individual and a historical protagonist. Zheng Qiao, a historian of the Song Dynasty, praised him: "It established a model for all generations to come, which historians could not change in its method, and scholars could not do without its text. After the six Confucian Classics, this work stands alone [2]." This is a far-reaching and unprecedented humanistic historiography revolution, and also a high value of the subjectivity and diversity of individual life.

2.1 Human-Centered Biographical Examples

The humanistic consciousness in Historical Records, by Sima Qian highlights its anthropocentric style. Unlike the previous three ways, which are based on events, by words and by state, Sima Qian with the three systems of "Basic Annals", "Treaties" and "Hereditary" as the core, has jointly constructed a genealogy of grand figures covering all social strata. This structural transformation is not only the innovation of new biography subject and technology, but also a profound transformation of "humanism" in the deep. *The Basic Annals of the First Emperor* of Qin recorded in detail the process of the First Emperor of Qin unifying the six states, establishing the system and the fall of the Qin Dynasty, and summarized the lessons of history. The Basic Annals is shaped by such a number of specific and vivid figures and their historical activities.

Another example is *The Basic Annals of Xiang Yu*, who has not officially proclaimed himself emperor, gives this

supreme position, and the different identities of Chen She, who was distinguished by Treaties. The different identities in the biography also have the qualification to be recorded by history, which is recorded by its historical influence and contribution. *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian combines the actions of the individual, character, destiny and history and affirms their role in history. This in itself is noble recognition of individual values.

2.2 Grand Pedigree of Characters

The respect of individual and group values in *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian. It's deeply reflected in the imitation of non-imperial figures. Sima Qian provided a stage for people of different classes, occupations and destinies to show their historical value. He will touch the groups ignored or despised by the mainstream of society and recognize their contribution to the historical flood. Confucius was a comer, yet his legacy endures, but it was included in the Treaties. It is the high affirmation of the extraordinary and spiritual value of his school of thought, as well as the recognition and manifestation of historical status and influence, *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian also contains the courage of historians beyond the secular word. The Biographies of the Wondering knights praises the faith and moral spirit of the chivalrous folk and justifies the just force on the edge of civil society; The Hereditary of the Money-makers breaks through the traditional concept of emphasizing agriculture and suppressing commerce, affirming the pursuit of wealth value and economic development activities of business and embodies the respect for secular value; The Hereditary of Assassin's Biography documents this underrated and deeply rooted in the world's ideology, with a focus on their loyalty to fighting anti-evidence, These articles proclaim the individual excellence in any field, and show the unique creativity or lofty aspirations of man. Together, they have shaped and promoted that society should have a place in the historical footprint. The grandeur of the pedigree and the breadth of coverage greatly expand the boundary of value. This kind of inclusiveness is profound embodiment of the breadth and depth of the humanistic spirit of the grand historian.

Historical Records, by Sima Qian firmly establishes people as the main body of history, greatly decamines and highlights the main body of history, greatly determines and highlight the value of different individuals, regardless of success or failure, its role and influence are unique. It laid the foundation for the compilation of official history for two thousand years and became the law followed by later generations of historians. It also provides ideological resources for us to Judge the dignity, strength and value of life.

3. Human and History Society

Human is a unique individual, and individuals form a group, and then constitute a society. The essence of *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian is from the manifestation of individual value to the reflection on the integrity of human society. Morality and thought and ethics, an important maintenance and cornerstone of ancient Chinese society, exist since ancient times. Society is composed of individuals in small and large, and Sima Qian reflects the human nature of individuals, the moral codes of groups and the cultural background of the times in historical records, and this is also an important expression of the humanistic spirit contained in *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian. History is no longer blindly composed of objective and calm facts change and rise and fall, it is attached to the analysts of social ethics, its coexistence of people and the spiritual foundation of the world attention and concern.

3.1 The Cultural Background of The Times

Confucius resumed Zhou rites, the Western Han Dynasty respected Confucianism. The consolidation and governance of the primitive state was maintained and completed by the system of rites and music in the Western Zhou Dynasty. Rites and music are not only norms of hierarchy, but also integrate moral thinking about social humanity. „Ba Shu“ of *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian systematically discusses the basic systems of social operation, and deep explains and discusses the influence of rites and music culture in the past as the foundation of cultural order in the Han Dynasty“ Formulate rituals in accordance with human nature and create ceremonies based on human nature [3]“ is the artificial, starting point of the Rites, humanity is the core of it. A special tool and system that extends to the differentiation and harmonization of individuals among people, and then makes them complement each other to promote social harmony and stability. By shallow and deep to the person's own temperament comfort, also an important way for ancient people to communicate and resonate with each other, Music is established on the Standard of “Music represents the harmony of Heaven and Earth [4].” Therefore, the formation of a group, the heart of the people together, cohesion Sima Qian, in the era of recuperation and reverence for Confucianism, has made a profound interpretation of the Confucian rites and music of prosperity and development. In *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian, the people-oriented and extended social history are the background of this. and the important framework of social order is regarded as ritual and music. which is deepened. Its insight into each system elevates humanistic thinking from individual and social and polit-

ical aspects to profound ideological and civilized ethics. This recognition of moral norms and a deep summary of historical society, and also contains Sima Qian's Own humanistic concept.

3.2 Morai Principles between Groups

The process of history is driven by people, and it is the moral code between Social groups to study the enduring and stable foundation and deep motivation *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian has a very deep integration of the description and evaluation with the moral and ethical aspects, which makes the historical theory full of strong human ethics.

Morality is an invisible and huge historical thrust. The first is the Confucian emphasis on "benevolence" and "righteousness". Such as the reign of emperor Zhou tyrannical, the first emperor atrocity of the exacting criticism. Sima Qian harsh punishment and enlistment of people are described in deep detail, Just like a journey of benevolence and justice. In *The Basic Annals of Emperor Xiaowen*, emperor Wen praised the waste of meat, extravagance of the Han Dynasty, and the good treatment of officials and people, and the friendship of South Vietnam, which was the approval and expectation of his humanistic morality and political governance. This kind of praise and criticism is there cognition of the political concept of "benevolent people and lovers" in Confucianism, and also the attention and understanding of benevolence and people's livelihood "Righteousness" is the subjective behavior of human beings and the noble spiritual bond maintained by civil society. *The Biographies of Bo Yi and Shu Qi*, the first of the seventy biographies. As the book shown that Bo Yi and Shu Qi "On principle, they wouldn't eat the grain of Zhou" for sticking to the moral principle of seeking benevolence getting it in heart [5]. Yurang" in *The Biographies of Assassins*, repay the kindness in "A gentleman dies for one who appreciates him, as a woman makes herself beautiful for one who pleases her. I'll go and avenge Chinp[6]". All of them show the greattension between fate and morality in *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian. The moral spirit has gone beyond life and death, and has a high status between people and social existence. *The Basic Annals of Xiang Yu* links Xiang Yu and LinBang's conduct to the result, this unique Judging system is also discloses the deep connection between the historical figures' success or not and the immoral character in *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian.

Historical Records, by Sima Qian has a deep study of man and society reveals the operation of social existence. A long and peaceful society should not only focus on utilitarianism, but lack of moral and spiritual principles and

cultural cohesion. This is not a simple historical summary, but also a deep advice of The Times, from which humanistic care and social responsibility are reflected.

4. Insight and Struggle between Man and Change, and Fate

The perspective of *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian is macro and strong historiography. The law of historical development and circulation needs to be explored from the outside to the inside, from the small to the big Sima Qian magnified his horizon, and explored the causal connection behind the changes of dynasties institutions and world.

The Treatise on the Balanced Standard has an exhaustive discussion of development of Han Dynasty. From the initial economic collapse, to the peak of national strength, and then to the decline, it's objective, true and complete. It's also a revelation of internal relations among national policies, economic development and social atmosphere. The vision of *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian is not rigidly adhered to one thing at a time, let alone the rest of the constraints. In the *The Biographies of the Money-makers*, be brave to break the prevailing concept of emphasizing agriculture and restraining commerce, makes an objective analysis of commerce and point out its objective law of promoting social mobility and wealth growth:"[7]"That is to say, social division of labor and exchange is a natural trend in history, which can not be compulsorily influenced by the issuance of government decrees. This is the necessity of seeking invariability in historical change, and the rational spirit of trying to grasp the law of human development in on paper.

4.1 Reflections on the Change of Fate and the Glory of Human Nature

Sima Qian's thinking on fate is centered on the relationship between heaven and human. The "heaven" in *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian contains the color of fatalism, but it actually refers to the objective situation and historical opportunities that human being can not control. In the *The Biographies of Bo Yi and Shu Qi* [8]. This deep question of heaven, is the great, irresistible force, the external force shaped by the individual's fate, is questioned by the heart: Why do good people suffer from evil, why do bad people have fruitful life? "It is a confusion and doubt about the separation of historical justice and moral retribution, and a deep thinking against fate.

In the face of fate, the individual's choice and struggle in the established fate is highly promoted in *Historical Records*, by Sima Qian Fate may make people feel confused and minimalistic, but Sima Qian has seen the most

brilliant and tragic embodiment of these humanistic spirits under the fate. Qu Yuan was banished, while walking, he was reciting in river „[9]“ In the ill-fated situation, still stick to the real, complete the personality sublimation; Xiang Yu knew that he was going to lose, but he chanted „Song of Gaixia“ and still made the final sudden breakthrough, solemn and stirring for the round of faith, but to fail to win the eternal regret and prize; Yu Rang“[10]“to inform the grace of encounter. They are not the victors of history, but also face the pressure of fate. However, they are found in Historical Records, by Sima Qian of those who fight the huge and dazzling spiritual light and the glory of human nature, the evaluation of the characters in Historical Records, by Sima Qian transcends fame and wealth and gains and losses of success and failure, which contains profound value.

History is full of inevitable trends, and fate is changeable and unpredictable. However, in this irresistible situation, the value of human beings is more valuable and huge because of the choice of white owners, thread hence to the virtue of following, and the courage to carry out the solemn and stirring struggle. in the rise and fall of history, Historical Records, by Sima Qian eulogizes the liberation and progress of human beings under the liberation and progress of human beings under the shackles of fate, and highlights the power of life. It gives life more value and significance, so that is no longer limited to success or failure, but more itself, dependent on the humanistic.

5. The Mission and Responsibility of Human, Family, Country and World

The humanistic spirit of Historical Records, by Sima Qian eventually ascended to a grand sense of mission beyond the gains and losses of a rest, pointing to the well-being of the group and focusing on the continuation of civilization. History is the family, the country and the world, Sima Qian put the fate of the object in it, and gave it the responsibility and obligation. This is also the highest realm of the humanistic dimension in Historical Records, by Sima Qian. The value of individual life is closely related to family, country and even the whole civilization, which gives far-reaching historical significance to individual. As a result, people's self-realization has gradually transformed into the carrier of culture and the responsibility of history, which has become an important shaping of history.

5.1 The Relationship between Personality and Family

State grand sense of mission of transcending individual gains and losses, pointing to the well-being of the group

and focusing on the survival of civilization. History is the family, the country and the world, Sima Qian put the fate of the object in it, and gave it the „Those who wished to cultivate their moral character would first regulate their families [11].“Family is the embodiment of personal accomplishment and the most important frier for individuals to assume responsibility. For example, in the *Biographies of Wan Shi Zhang Shu*, the son of ShiFen, when writing a memorial, he found tha the word „horse“ lacked a stroke. in terms of panic: „The painter drew the horse with five tails, but now it has only four tails and one leg. For this fault, he was condemned and executed [12].“ Although Sima Qian was slightly ironic about him, he was enough to see that they were respectful and regarded his preserving the family. This is based on the times, but also on the traditional concept since ancient times. The family is closely related to itself, and the family responsibility is deeply integrated into the political responsibility.

Beyond the family, the scholar's higher mission is to serve the country. The individual forms the family, and the family constitutes the country together. The feelings of home and country they regard it as one, assume national responsibility, which means that they should bear from themselves, layer upon layer, and take the rise and fall of the country as their own responsibility. Guo Yukun was recorded in the *Biographies of Tian Jing Zhong Wan*, and he was a humorous and wise man of Qi Dynasty. “In the kingdom, there is a great bird that has alighted in the king's courtyard. For three years, it has neither flown nor sung [13].” Inspired the Emperor of Qi with euphemistic argot: This bird does not fly yet, but once it does, it will soar to the sky; it does not sing yet, but once it does, it will amaze all [14]. He devoted himself to state affairs, dared to rectify the monarch, and carried out the spirit of his own responsibility as a subject to lead the government to a good state.

5.2 Mind of World and Cultural Mission

The most extensive and far-reaching humanistic feelings of the world and the world are reflected in Sima Qian himself. As historian, he elevated his duties to responsibility for the whole civilization. As a historical chronicler, he devoted himself to his most sincere feelings, guarding the objective truth, as well as morality and civilization. The office passed down hereditarily within the family, with the father's ambitions being inherited by the son. In this *Autobiographical Afterword*, Sima Qian traces this historiographical tradition back to the legendary Emperor Zhuanxu, who appointed Chong of the Southam Registry to oversee celestial affairs and Li of the Northern Registry to oversee terrestrial affairs, down through the generation

of the Sima clan, it is a sacred family tradition, but also their loyalty from generation to generation. After the humiliation of castration, he still like in *Historical Records, by Sima Qian*, because “To neglect recording the brilliant virtue of wise sovereigns, to obliterate the deeds of meritorious ministers, noble families, and worthy statesmen and to betray the words of my father - there is no crime greater than this!” [15] “He is loyal to his family and country, to history, and to interpretation and survival of Chinese culture. He immersed his life in the long river of grand history and civilization, which is the most solemn and profound manifestation of the world’s feeling.

The responsibility of all countries in *Historical Records, by Sima Qian* is to explore the laws of historical change and to examine the current and future social governance. However, in terms of responsibility of home country, he also explored the internal logic of institutional, economic and cultural changes. *The Treatise on the calendar*, which describes the detailed process from ancient six calendars to the formulation of the *Solar Calendar*, records the calculation methods and debate details. The technical reform of the calendar reflects the fundamental events related to the country, such as farming, sacrifice and the calendar of a dynasty, and also his understanding of the importance of the country as „The grand cogue of Heaven and Earth“ [16]. The Calendar is related to the order of the world and the well-being of people’s lives. This is Sima Qian’s highly sensitive and respectful thinking about the connection between the world and things happened, and his solemn treatment and responsibility for the inheritance and evolution of the core cultural elements.

The concern and reflection of the humanities in *Historical Records, by Sima Qian* is the gradual progress of the mission theory of the individual’s responsibility to the family, the country even the world. From the manifestation of individual value, finally to the group’s deep concern and responsibility. The value significance of human beings is no longer limited to self-realization, but promoted to a wider community. endowed with responsibility. promoted „ego“ into „big ego“, and gave the humanistic responsibility ethics and sense of responsibility in history.

6. Conclusion

Structurally the pioneering style of *Historical Records, by Sima Qian* breaks the shackles of previous generations writing. The focus shifted to be people-oriented, describing the activities of people to reflect historical events. In terms of content, the eight book system is the biography of the representatives of various social strata, regardless of status, things bad or not. The objective evaluation of individual value makes every historical contributor qualified

and have the opportunity to be remembered. This recognition and respect for Individual value and the significance of existence is the most essential embodiment of humanistic spirit, and also makes the most basic foundation.

Above the individual is the bond between groups. Sima Qian promoted the praise of individuals to a broad network of group social ethics. In the current era, the moral standards rooted in the development of human nature are revealed in the current era and social norms. By integrating the various narration of praise and criticism, the humanistic spirit of *Historical Records, by Sima Qian* has strong realistic concern and is found to be intrinsically related to social development.

The humanistic starting point of is always based on human beings. Sima Qian thinks about the connection between man’s own moral conduct and the outcome of his success or failure. Although he was sorry for the misfortunes of fate, but also be moved by people’s faith; full of compassion for the personnel, but also to the way of heaven, explore the law of history at the same time also praise and carry forward the brilliance of human nature. This makes the humanistic spirit of *Historical Records, by Sima Qian* fill with profound dialectics. and also contains the color of tragic and stirring heroism.

The humanistic spirit has been sublimated more sublime in the mission and responsibility. The characters in *Historical Records, by Sima Qian* and Sima Qian themselves have integrated themselves into the historical torrent of family maintenance, national responsibility, world mission and even the inheritance of civilization. It is a human transcendence of self-teeth and groups, a manifestation of self-worth, a moral spirit, a contribution to society, and an uncompromising of fate. The highest level of humanistic spirit is reflected again: the responsibility and contribution of the community to which they belong is the spirit that individuals are fearless and worthy of being remembered and carried forward in the historical change.

Historical Records, by Sima Qian, the theory of humanistic spirit, in tangible events. is imbued with invisible brushwork. It is people-oriented, starting from respecting individual values, and then thinking about the maintenance of society, observing the law of history, and finally promoting the mission responsibility of People. This ideological system is an important ethical principle that not only inherits the ancient thought. but also sets the humanistic tone of Chinese official history. Today, it also spans thousands of years, providing an inexhaustible source of wisdom and a powerful spiritual force for the next humanistic thought. *Historical Records, by Sima Qian* immortal, verve forever.

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