

A Study of Chengdu's Recreational Culture in Song Qi Period

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ABSTRACT. *Song Qi created some new recreational activities, built some new recreational venues, wrote poems and papers to record and spread the recreational customs of Chengdu during his time as an official in Chengdu. He expressed his support for Chengdu's recreational customs by actively participating in people's recreational activities. He played an important role in the development and prosperity of Chengdu's recreational culture in Song Dynasty. At the same time, Song Qi's recreational spirit enriched the spiritual connotation of Chengdu's recreational culture and made a unique contribution to Chengdu's recreational culture.*

KEYWORDS: *Song qi, Song dynasty, Chengdu recreational culture*

1. Introduction

As a world-famous Leisure City, leisure is the most important card of Chengdu. Life in Chengdu is a symbol of slow pace and leisure. Chengdu people love and only adapt to this kind of life. Chengdu has a long history of its recreational culture. In history, Chengdu people were rich in food and clothing, lived a quiet life, and liked to participate in recreational activities. Chengdu's recreational culture has been very prosperous in Han Dynasty. After the development of Sui, Tang and Five Dynasties, Chengdu's recreational culture reached its historical peak in the Song Dynasty. Therefore, this paper takes Chengdu's recreational activities in Song Dynasty as the starting point. Of course, the prosperity of Chengdu's recreational culture is closely related to the attitude of the local government officials towards the recreation. In history, Zhang Yong, Song Qi and other officials in Chengdu played an important role in promoting the development and prosperity of recreational culture in Chengdu. So, this paper intends to use historical method to explore the influence of Song Qi on the development of recreational culture in Chengdu during his time as the highest official in Chengdu. It is conducive to the later researchers to understand the whole picture of Chengdu's recreation in Song Dynasty on this basis.

2. Song Qi and Chengdu's Recreational Culture

2.1 Song Qi

Song Qi(998-1061)was born in Yongqiu, Kaifeng(Figure 1). In 1056, the imperial court of the Song Dynasty could not find a suitable person to be the local official of Cheng du[1]. After Peng Siyong had been acting for nearly a year, Song Renzong advocated that Song Qi should be appointed. However, Chen Gonggong, believed that Chengdu's custom liked to recreation, and Song Qi also liked to recreations, which might not be suitable. However, Song Renzong thought that he liked to recreation did not affect him as the main official of Chengdu, and finally appointed him as the local official of Chengdu. Song Qi was appointed in August 1056, he arrived in Chengdu on February 20, 1057, and left Chengdu in October 1058[2]. During his one year and eight months as the highest official in Chengdu, Song Qi personally participated in the recreational activities in Chengdu and enriched the recreational culture of Chengdu.



Fig.1 The Portrait of Song Qi

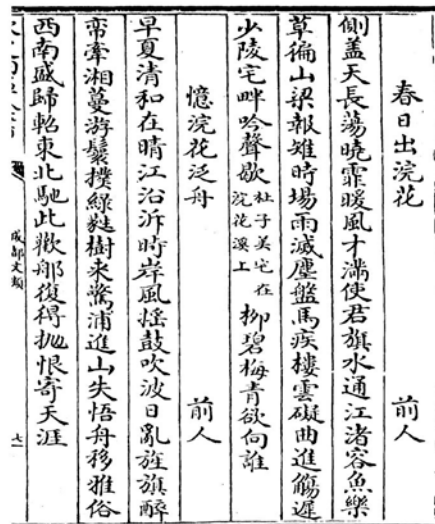
2.2 Song Qi and Chengdu's Recreational Culture

Chengdu people have a custom of recreation since ancient times. However, in the early Song Dynasty, there were three large-scale riots in Chengdu. One of the reasons for the riots was that local officials restricted people's recreational activities to a certain extent. After these riots were quelled, Zhang Yong was appointed by the central government as the official in charge of Chengdu. During his tenure in

Chengdu, Zhang Yong actively participated in and guided the people of Chengdu to have fun, and fixed the time and content of Chengdu recreational activities. After that, officials in Chengdu followed the rules made by Zhang Yong. During his tenure in Chengdu, Song Qi also followed Zhang Yong's approach and created new recreational contents, which made a unique contribution to Chengdu's recreation.

2.2.1 Actively Participate in and Lead People to Play

During his time as a local official in Chengdu, Song Qi often participated in folk recreation with people. According to the literature, on January 28, Song Qi and the people in Chengdu went to worship Baoshou Marquis and Du Cong of Tang Dynasty. After the sacrificial ceremony, they had dinner in Jingzhong Temple, then played nearby, and held a banquet in the Jingzhong Temple in the evening[3]. On March 3rd, Song Qi followed the custom of climbing Xueshe Mountain and took a trip to Wansui Pool in Chengdu. On that day, Song Qi participated in all recreational activities with people in Chengdu[4]. On March 21, Song Qi led the people of Chengdu to touch stones in the pond in front of Haiyun Temple on Haiyun Mountain in the east of the city to pray for children[5]. On April 19, Song Qi and other officials took different colored boats to play in the Jinjiang River(Figure 2). There were grand water music and juggling performances on the river, as well as dragon boat competitions. Both sides of the Jinjiang River were filled with people watching water performances, stretching for several kilometers[6].



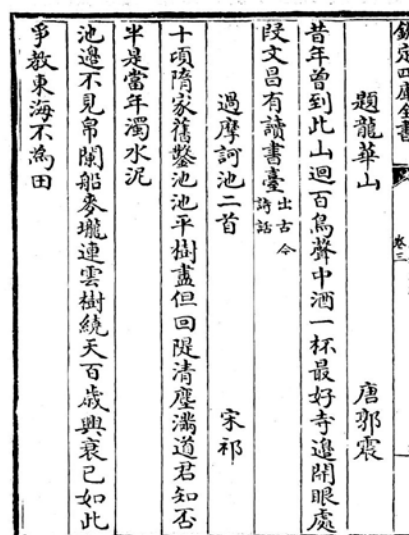


Fig.3 S about Huanhua Greek

Figure 3 Poems about Visiting Mohe Pool

In addition to participating in some folk recreational activities in Chengdu, Song Qi also led the people to travel to tourist attractions in Chengdu. During his time in Chengdu, Song Qi visited the Mohe Pool in the center of Chengdu with the people for many times(Figure 3), and wrote two poems about the Mohe Pool[7]. In summer, the weather in Chengdu was very hot. The place where Song Qi visited most was Jiangdu Pool in the south of the city(Figure 4). The Jiangdu Pool area was a place for the people of Chengdu in Song Dynasty to escape the summer heat. Throughout the summer, Song Qi stayed there to escape the summer heat, worked in office, and met officials. Outside the work, he held banquets on the boat, in the pavilion and in the hall on the shore. People also put up sheds by the Jiangdu Pool, where they had a summer feast and watched the banquets and recreational activities of officials[8]. In addition, Song Qi also visited Shuwang Palace, Mo Pool(Figure 5), Qintai, Daci Temple, Yuju Temple, Qingyang Palace and other historical and religious sites with people.

江濟亭	前入
一葦掀翅壓溪陽 史事初聞此宴居 斷岸有時通略約 輕風盡日戰拊雲 鴻送目揮絃後客 板看山柱頰餘 芙蓉蒲青來更數 江人多識使君旗	前入
夏日江濟亭小飲	前入
飛檻枕溪光 歡言客徧鵬暫雲 消樹影驟雨發荷 香翠 白橙盤熟庖刀贈 縷長蘋風如有意 盈社借浮涼	前入
司馬相如琴臺	前入

Fig.4 Poems about Visiting Jiang Du Pool

西漢文章世所知 相如閎麗冠當時 游人不賞凌雲賦 只說琴臺是故基	宋祁
揚子雲墨池 即草堂所	宋祁
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五月追涼地 滄江刺素澗 林煙昏岸日 樓影壓池天 篠窳工迷徑 荷歌巧避船 機忘史何事 魚鳥亦留連	前入

Fig.5 Poems about Visiting Yang Ziyun Mo Pool

2.2.2 Create New Recreational Activities

During his time in Chengdu, in addition to playing with people, Song Qi also created some new recreational activities. These new recreational activities were also inherited by later officials. On January 2, Chengdu's traditional custom was to go out of the city to the eastern suburbs for worship and outing. On this day, officials held a banquet at Yizhong Temple in the morning, and a banquet at Daci Temple in the evening[3]. Zhao Bian, who was an official in Chengdu following Song Qi, compiled the *Chengdu Gujin Jiji* during his time in Chengdu. The book recorded the history, culture, folklore and other aspects of Chengdu in detail. He wrote in that book: "On January 2, when the banquet was over, and the singers sang newly created songs, and served tea to the guests present. This activity began with Song Qi. One person called Zhou Zhichun was good at writing lyrics, and once wrote *Tea Ci*, and let the singer sing it for Song Qi. Since then, this activity has been inherited by later generations and has not changed." Later, in the recreational activities on January 2 of each year, after the banquet of Yizhong Temple and Daci Temple, a new recreational activity was added, that was, the singer sang *Tea Ci* written by Zhou Zhichun while offering tea to the guests participating in the activities[3]. This activity has been passed down and become a new recreational activity in Chengdu.

2.2.3 Build New Recreational Venues

During his official career in Chengdu, Song Qi rebuilt WenWeng Ancestral Hall, which later became a new recreational venue in Chengdu. *Note of WenWeng Ancestral Hall* written by Song Qi recorded: "In 1057, when I visited WenWeng Ancestral Hall, I found that the ancestral hall was narrow and messy everywhere. In 1058, I organized people to rebuild the ancestral hall, and built three rows of tall and spacious houses with gorgeous decoration. Then, the portrait of WenWeng was painted in the center of the hall, and the portraits of Sima Xiangru, Gao Shun and Jiang Tang are painted on the walls of the hall. After the rebuilding of the ancestral hall, I chosen a day to worship these ancestors"[9]. In addition to the above four people, the portraits of Yan Junping, Yang Xiong, Wang Bao, Zhang Kuan, Li Zhongyuan and He Wu were also painted on the walls of the ancestral hall. Song Qi wrote a poem next to each portrait to praise these people's achievements. After Song Qi died, people appreciated his contribution to Chengdu and painted his portrait in Wenweng Ancestral Hall. Later, the rebuilt WenWeng Ancestral Hall became a new place for recreational activities in Chengdu. The portraits on the wall, the poems written by Song Qi for these portraits and the portraits of Song Qi have become the necessary sightseeing contents for Chengdu people or tourists.



Fig.6 Wenweng Ancestral Hall

2.2.4 Create Poems and Papers to Spread Chengdu's Recreational Custom

During his time in Chengdu, Song Qi participated in many recreational activities with people. Everywhere he went, he would write poems or papers to record these activities. He wrote more than 300 poems in Sichuan, including more than 30 poems related to Chengdu's recreational activities. These poems or papers recorded the recreational activities in Chengdu comprehensively and vividly. The main contents of the poems and papers include visiting Mohe Pool, Huanhua Creek, Jiangdu Pool, Haiyun Mountain, Haiyun Temple, Mo Chi, Qin Tai, and so on; Or recorded the folk activities such as going outing on January 28, going to Xueshe Mountain, climbing on the Double Ninth Festival, and the medicine market in September. At the same time, Song Qi edited the poems he created during his time in Chengdu into *Xizhou Geigao*, which was inscribed by Duan Yi in the Dazhi Temple for people to read[10]. During his time in Chengdu, Song Qi also wrote a book that introduced Chengdu's grass, wood, insects, fish and other products, called *Yibu Fangwu Lueji*(Figure 7)[11]. In the book *Song Qi Notes*, he also recorded many various folk recreational activities in Chengdu[12]. The wide spread of these poems and papers created by Song Qi is of great help to spread the recreational customs in Chengdu.

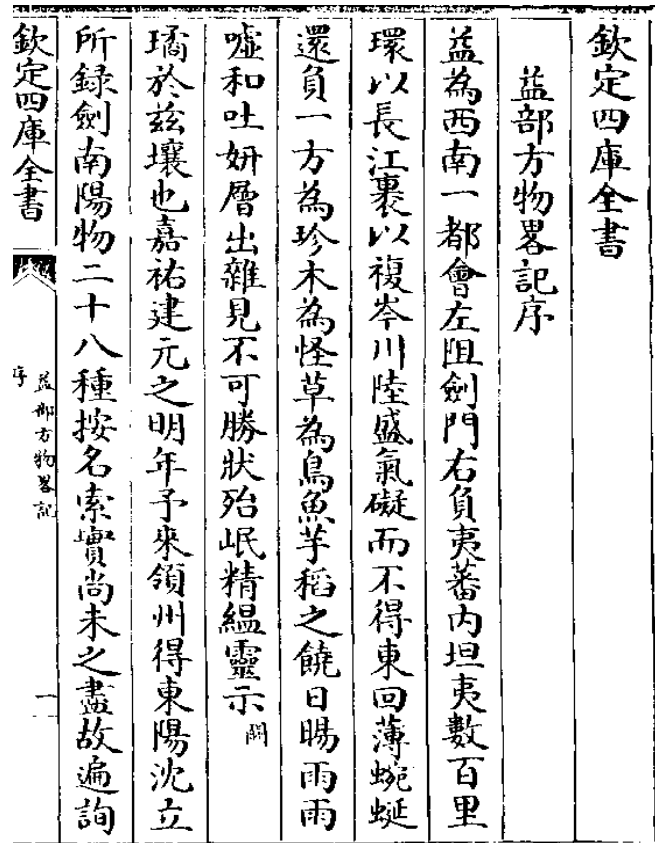


Fig.7 Yibu Fangwu Lueji

2.2.5 Enrich the Spiritual Connotation of Chengdu's Recreation

Song Qi has always liked feast and play, and always treated life with a leisurely state. Whether he was having fun with people, or when he was in government offices, he would inadvertently reveal this kind of leisurely state. Wei Tai wrote in the *Dongxuan Notes*: “Song Qi has extensive knowledge, he is good at writing. He is talented and smart. He likes to have fun. He is still compiling *Tang Shu* in his later years as an official in Chengdu. When the banquet is over, after washing, he opens the door of the bedroom, lowers the curtain, and lights two large candles. Seeing this, everyone knows that Song Qi is writing *Tang Shu*” [1].

3. Summary

Although Song Qi didn't stay in Chengdu for a long time. But during his time in Chengdu he followed the recreational custom of Chengdu and actively participated in people's recreational activities. Song Qi created some new recreational activities, built some new recreational venues, wrote poems and papers to record and spread the recreational customs of Chengdu during his time as an official in Chengdu. At the same time, he also influenced the people of Chengdu with his leisurely attitude towards life, thus enriching the spiritual connotation of Chengdu's recreation.

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