

Seeds of Theater: The Development of the Themes in *The Clothes of Rong Yi*

Author/LI Jing

Like any creation, drama creation is a process that lasts from "discovering and sowing seeds" to "breeding and bearing fruit". So, what are the seeds of drama? How to find the seed of a play you want to create? What will you do to make this seed bear fruit?

This lecture is not a practical combat class, but it has something to do with actual combat. The audience behind the screen is full of experts, and I am willing to share with you some views on "The Seeds of Drama" from both creative ethics and creative practice aspects. I hope you will not hesitate to enlighten me.

Let me talk about my conclusion first: this is my "personal truth", not the "universal truth". So, what are the seeds of drama? This is the spiritual theme of a play. How is this theme formed? It depends on the encounter of the creator's spiritual mind and the material used for creation, and the extraction, transformation and sublimation of the latter by the former. Let's take my recently published script "The Clothes of Rong Yi" as an example to talk about the process of searching, establishing and realizing the spiritual theme.

1. The sins of others, one's own conscience

Before establishing a theme, a playwright gets in touch with the material. The material may be a story, a piece of news, a sentence heard by chance, a scene seen somewhere... The reason why it becomes the material of a playwright, becomes the center of his/her focus, and is related to his/her personality traits, spiritual preparation, and spiritual concern.

The material of "Rongyi's Clothes" is the story of "Rong Yi removing clothes", which is written in "Mr.Lu's Spring and Autumn Annals":

Rong Yi rebelled against Qi Rulu, with a cold weather and a back door. He stayed alone with his disciples outside Guo. The cold grew even worse, and his disciple said, "Son and my clothes make me live; I and my clothes make me live. Our country's scholars cherish death for the world; they do not respect people, but lack love. Son and my son's clothes!" The disciple said, "If a man does not respect people, how can he be like a country's clothes?" Rong Yi sighed and said, "Alas! It is said that he does not help a man!" Jieyi and his disciple died in the middle of the night. The disciple then lived. ("Lu's Spring and Autumn Annals: Li Junlan, Chapter 8")

The prototype of the story stops at Rong Yi who undresses and dies, while the disciple survives. When I read this story, one question came to my mind: what kind of life will this disciple live after his survival? Is he still an "unworthy person"? Or has he reborn and become a righteous man pleading for the lives of the common people in the world? One person's cotton-padded clothes and another person's life are thus dramatically linked together. How to discover drama in it? This is not a question of screenwriting skills or storytelling abilities, but rather a fundamental question: what theme do you want to convey through the story you create? It is the theme that drives and dominates characters, the story, the structure and scenes.

People always criticize the works where a theme goes first, but their actions are wrong. All works are theme-goes-first-like. Some people might say: I am not the same, I have the image first and then the story. It is the image that leads me to the unknown front, and the charm of creation lies in the unknown. You are right, the charm of creation does lie in the unknown. But even if the theme is determined, your writing is still unknown. For example, when you come to a strange place and don't know where to go and you see a misty blue mountain at a distance, you set your mind on walking in the direction of that mountain, but you don't know what you will encounter along the way: the theme is the direction of walking. Before the theme is defined, you must go through an unknown phase of wandering, trial and error, trying to write images and scenes one by one to determine your theme. Marquez said it well: "Inspiration is neither a talent nor a gift, but a reconciliation of the writer's perseverance and virtuosity to the subject they endeavor to express. When a person wants to write something, there is a tension of mutual restraint between the person and the motif they want to express, because the writer tries to explore the theme, while the theme tries to set various obstacles. Sometimes, all obstacles will be swept away, all contradictions will be easily resolved, and many things that were not dreamed of in the past will become true."

The "theme" that Marquez refers to here is not a dead concept, but a life with free will, hiding in the dark and difficult to understand. Yes, the theme is life, or in my words, it is the seed which produces and grows according to the law of life and becomes a work; the theme is not a product manual, but rather a mechanical principle of assembling the work.

Therefore, the theme will set obstacles to the writer, rather than being clearly visible from the beginning. In the process of exploring and removing obstacles, the creator's own view of the world will be more orderly and tense, and can even change. If this change is turned into a theatrical image, it will be a fascinating journey.

When I was thinking about how to weave the life of Rong Yi's disciple after being rescued in a play, I was actually exploring the theme of this play. This theme requires the play to meet pre-existing moral beliefs in the world and respond to them. For instance, "good is rewarded with good, and evil is rewarded with evil", or "good people get no rewards, and evil people live a thousand years"...and the doubts about the value of kindness and self-sacrifice hidden in these creeds: if you admit the effects of kindness and self-sacrifice in this world, then write about a person who repents and reforms their misdeeds because of being saved, but isn't this too generalized, too wishful thinking, isn't there too little artistic persuasiveness? If you think that kindness and self-sacrifice are futile, then write about a person who survives but remains the same, or even worse, but isn't that too life-plagiarizing? Moreover, what is the meaning of the death sentence for kindness and self-sacrifice when people's hearts are broken? Of course, there is a third way: kindness and self-sacrifice are a glimmer of light. Although the disciple who is clothed and alive is still a lukewarm person, he remembers the cotton-padded coat that his master had sacrificed his life to put on himself, and puts down the butcher's knife. In fact, the third is a variation of the first possibility, but with a soothing humanity and aesthetic values, and is also a common pattern in Hollywood. I still feel that the third opportunity has its value, but it is not urgent for my desire to express myself. What am I desperately in need for?

For a long time, I could not help but focus on the question of sin and conscience. Looking around, the evils we have heard, read, watched, and encountered, large and small, have piled up all over the place, which has made it difficult for us to breathe and love. Occasionally, in the cold night, "those who hold salaries for everyone" must see them "frozen to death in the wind and snow". As for ourselves, we don't want to be evil because it's not that bad, and we don't want to be paid because it's not that good. We are just a bunch of people who are neither good nor bad. We try to maintain a balance of conscience, try not to owe anyone, and don't want to be owed by anyone. We shrink within the volume of our own existence, try to avoid the outbreak of transcendental instinct, avoid caring about "non-self-related" things, and persuade our conscience not to judge our inaction.

However, the conscience can't help but flare up and feel aggrieved: why the evil never fears the conscience? Why can't conscience stop evil? When a person is determined to follow evil, what is the process and mechanism of his conscience being wiped out? If a person deviates from his conscience and does evil, is it caused by the external environment, or is it caused by the collapse of his own inner conscience? Why is it that the wicked enjoy peace and the sinners are not judged?
...

When I am in a bad mood, I will read "The Book of Psalms" to ease the mood. The Psalms is a collection of ancient Hebrew poetry, most of which were written between 1500 BC and 1000 BC, and most of the poetry there was written by King David. I am often shocked by its naked truth and frankness, so I am comforted..because only truth can comfort people. One day, when I read the seventy-third Psalm, it sounded like saying what was in my heart:

I am sorry to see the wicked and the proud at peace.
They die without pain;

Their strength is also strong.
They did not suffer like others, nor were they plagued like others.
Therefore pride is on their necks like a chain;
Violence covered their bodies like a garment.
Their eyes bulge out of fat;
They have received more than they imagined.
They mock and speak oppressively with malice;
They speak up. Their mouths blaspheme heaven;
Their tongues speak against the whole earth.
So God's people came here and drank the cup full of bitter water.
They said: How can God know? Does the Most High have knowledge?
Behold, this is the wicked man;
As they enjoy their ease constantly, their treasures increase.
I have purified my heart in vain,
Washing hands in vain shows innocence.
For I am troubled all day long; chastened every morning. ...
When I enter the sanctuary of God, I will consider their end.
You have set them on slippery ground, and you have brought them down to perdition.
What desolation they became in a moment!
They were utterly terrified.
When a person wakes up, how does he see his dream?
God, you will despise their images just the same when you are awake.

The evildoer gains success in the world—"enjoys his ease and increases his wealth," but "I" who keeps a clean conscience and "drinks the cupful of bitter water" "in vain have kept my heart pure, / in vain have I washed my hands in innocence". These words came from the mouth of a Hebrew 3,000 years ago, but they sound like the voice of my heart which I know very well.

But at the same time of this huge anger and disappointment, a voice unfamiliar to me roared in this poem: "Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors!" This voice does not come from my own heart, it comes from another world, another kind of faith, that is: even if the wicked enjoy peace in this world, they cannot disturb the eternal spiritual-moral order. "Falling into the abyss" is their ultimate judgment.

I once envied the land where this poem originated, thinking that the blessings of justice and order had nothing to do with me, but suddenly I remembered two points in Chinese history:

One is the death of Qin Shi Huang—he was not only the first emperor to unify the world in Chinese history, the pinnacle of success in the eyes of the world, but also a tyrant with severe punishments and countless murders. He lived a glorious life, but ended in embarrassment and tragedy: he died of illness on the way to the East, just in midsummer, and his corpse was rotten. In order to cover up the stench, his close ministers had no choice but to build a carload of more smelly abalone on his body and return to Xianyang. His son Qin Ershi and the Ying family were

all wiped out by the rebel army in the end. The Great Qin Dynasty became almost the shortest-lived dynasty because of its cruelty and benevolence. This is "how desolate they were in a moment! / They were consumed with terror". This is the trial of Qin Shi Huang and the Qin Dynasty by invisible forces, and it has indeed been implemented in history. It is interesting that many literary and artistic works only promote the cultural and military achievements of Qin Shi Huang, with little mention of his tragic ending. This choice implies how insane the obsession with "wealth and jade" (Lu Xun's words) is, regardless of their origin.

The other one is Mozi's theory about "heaven" - in "Heaven's will", he said that there is a "heaven" that is high and there is "no escape": You must see it when you see it." It means that God will not ignore the remote mountains and valleys where there are no people, He can see clearly everywhere. "Heaven desires righteousness, but hates unrighteousness" - Heaven loves justice and hates injustice, so "there is life in the world where there is righteousness, and there is death if there is no righteousness; Righteousness leads to chaos." This light inspired me to hide a parallel spiritual structure in the play: on the one hand, the evil is spreading day by day on the protagonist; different people bring different results. This will be a "sin in faith revealed" drama structure. This structure is determined by the theme.

Therefore, this play tries to invite everyone to think through the actions of the protagonist: Is a person choosing to do evil purely forced by the environment, or is there an incentive to sin within himself? There is a saying in the Gospel of Matthew: "If the light within you is darkened, how great is the darkness!" The light of conscience in a person will not be extinguished and turned into darkness without his own consent—— no matter how bad the environment and the system are.

We have long been nurtured by humanitarian works, successfully portraying "complex and three-dimensional characters", but there is often a lie here, which is to regard evil as good and good as evil. Out of our sympathy for sins caused by the "evil circumstances", we believe that all sins have only one cause — the environment. Regarding this point, we can refer to the depiction of Mary Shelley's "monster" in Frankenstein: the monster was abandoned and deprived of love because scientists made him ugly, so he took revenge and killed five innocent people. The writer has great sympathy for the monster's misfortune, there is nothing wrong with this; and then she renders his indiscriminate killing as innocent — this is a disorder of moral rationality. Since then, humanitarian literary and artistic works no longer torture "the evil of human nature", but criticize "the evil of the environment" as justice. But how does "environmental evil" come into being? Where do unjust institutions and relationships arise? Our writers and artists no longer pursued this point, but started the journey of "healing the head when it hurts, and treating the foot when it hurts". The sins and evils in people's hearts are just let go. Once a writer or artist criticizes the evil of human nature, he may be charged with compromising cowardice or arrogance. You are sentenced to compromise and cowardice because "you only dare to criticize the illusory human nature, not the system with obvious crimes"; You are sentenced to be arrogant because "human beings are supreme, and they want to be loved, sympathized, understood, and comforted. Who do you think you are, how dare you whip me"? As a result, human nature itself has become an unquestionable sacred existence, and the only things that need to be examined are bad systems, bad environments, and bad relationships that seem to have fallen from the sky and have nothing to do with the evil of human nature...

Therefore, in this play, I ask Rong Yi's disciple Shi Xin to carry this question: "Are you doing evil only because of the 'forced' circumstances?" No, what drives him to act is something that seems extremely sympathetic—a desire for 'success'. Here in Shi Xin, it is the idol of "success" that gradually takes over the position of conscience, sending him to a place he dreams of, and in the end... I'd better not spoil it. I am actually very interested in the audience's reaction: when you are watching, do you really guarantee that this is just "other people's sin"?

So, how does this conscientious warrior, the sacrificial Rong Yi, view his choice, if his disciple chooses to betray him? He did righteousness and sacrificed himself because he believed that this righteousness and sacrifice could transform his disciple into "a good person". Can he get immediate good results? If this is the case, "righteousness" comes from the cheap innocence of people who are unaware of their sinful nature, and its moral value will be greatly reduced. If this is not the case—Rong Yi knows that his sacrifice will not bring about the salvation of the other party's soul, and what he saves may be an incurable person. What is the value of this "righteousness"? Is he just like those of us who think we are good people and say: I do it because it's right?

This touches upon the second level of the theme.

2. One's own sin, one's own conscience

A person who obeys the law of conscience, knows that his beliefs and actions are righteous and right, and can keep this "right", is the ultimate of "goodness" and "righteousness"?

No, he may commit another crime, which is "thinking that he is right", and then making this "right self" an idol, a creditor, a source of meaning and a standard of judgment. Then, good and evil immediately switch, and good is no longer good, but becomes evil—because this kind person may take contempt, cruelty, and contemptuous attitudes towards all "sub-good" and "unkind" people, and collect interest from lending money during his lifetime: love, respect, worship, gratitude, good name...he takes them all for granted, like being addicted to drugs, and even this interest becomes the driving force for his righteousness. Therefore, he established his relationship with others as a supply and demand relationship between "idols and believers": I provide righteousness, and you provide worship. If he fails to receive the expected interest, he will fall into great disappointment, bitterness, resentment, and revenge, and blame the defaulter: "You heartless people are not worthy of my righteousness and sacrifice!"

This is a common moral trap into which self-righteous people can fall. As Berdyaev said: "The struggle against evil often produces new evils—intolerance, fanaticism, violence, cruelty, and a sense of ferocity...Love of the good itself, the relentless pursuit of the good, often leads to cruelty to people." Viciousness in attitude, unfriendliness, and ruthlessness...the tragedy of morality is that moral consciousness cannot overcome cruelty, greed, envy, and fear, because all these emotional states have the capacity to manifest themselves under the guise of goodness. A good person is often cruel, greedy, envious, trembling with fear in his goodness. The tragedy of moral life makes us suspect that the good is problematic. We cannot break through to the other side of good and evil, as Nietzsche wished, because the evil in this world surrounds us all the time. But we cannot

stay entirely on the side of good in this world, because this good itself can easily become evil... Both good and evil have the ability to dress themselves in the most contradictory forms." (Berdyayev: "On the Mission of Man", translated by Zhang Baichun).

From our own experience, from the observation of our own hearts, we can all realize the momentary transformation of good and evil. Evil does not only belong to the evil ones and other people. Sin also resides in the hearts of those of us who think we are "good" and dress ourselves up with a good face: when we help others but feel wronged and resentful when we don't get the expected gratitude, when we are misunderstood and immediately lose our love and blessings for that person; when we see all sorts of meanness from top to bottom in a big event and sigh "this nation is not worth saving, it really deserves it"; when we think that the truth is in our hands and judge others' righteous deeds as "meaningless"... it is "sin" that works in our hearts in the face of "good".

When I realized this, I felt that the character Rong Yi had vitality, and the theme of the drama had the possibility of being deepened, that is, not only to judge the sins of others, but also to examine one's own internal sins, even the "sin" and "evil" hidden in "righteousness".

When does this inner sin manifest itself? All the time. But the most extreme touchstone is when it comes to life and death. It is the situation where Rong Yi is outside the city gate in the bone-chilling cold, and he can survive if he has an extra cotton coat, but he will die if he takes off the cotton coat. This is the real moment to test a righteous person's understanding and practice of "righteousness". It is not a philosophical question, but a life and death lesson. It is not the alienation of limited interests, but the self-deprivation of the only life. If the person to die for is really unworthy, is it really necessary to die for him? If he died, wouldn't it be "moral reverse elimination"? What would happen to a person if he did not die, but allowed the other party to die and had his blood on his hands?

When I was hesitant about this topic, I read a dialogue between a science fiction writer Liu Cixin and a science historian Jiang Xiaoyuan on the issue of "cannibalism" more than ten years ago. Liu Cixin put forward a hypothesis to Jiang Xiaoyuan: If the world ends, only the two of them and a beautiful hostess at the scene are left, "The three of us carry everything of human civilization, and we must eat her to survive. Would you eat her?" Jiang Xiaoyuan said he would definitely not eat her, because cannibalism means losing humanity. Liu Cixin said: If you don't eat her, it is tantamount to irresponsibly allowing human civilization to be annihilated. "Only by choosing inhumanity now, will humanity have a chance to re-emerge in the future."

Liu Cixin's "cannibal hypothesis" made me shudder. People do not know the Satan within themselves. They always think that they can get the greatest good at the cost of the "smallest evil", and stop at this only "little evil", after which there will be great good. He even thought that doing this "little evil" was a self-sacrifice—sacrificing his own innocence and accomplishing the salvation of all mankind. How many similar deeds have there been in history, when some "outstanding men" sacrificed others under the banner of "saving people from untold miseries", but finally won the throne of emperor for themselves.

Why do stories like this keep recurring? Because everyone thinks that they are an exception, that they can escape the control of evil. But they don't know that there is one of Satan's tricks hidden here, which is the sophistry about "preservation and sacrifice". This sophistry is to say: self-sacrifice is not an absolute moral law, it has a limit, and a "higher" life has the necessity and right to sacrifice the "lower" ones in order to preserve its "high". We want to preserve the greater and more precious value at the smallest cost—"I" could actually be sacrificed, but I happen to belong to the group of "high" and need to be preserved.

But this lie was exposed through the dialogue between Liu and Jiang. It shows that in an all-or-none, life-or-death situation, if a person chooses not to sacrifice himself, he has to choose to sacrifice others—and then he becomes a criminal. In other words, "self-sacrifice" is pure only if it is seen by the sacrificer as a way "to get rid of his own sins" and not as a "gratitude and debt" to save others. Going one step further: only when a moral person, a victim, a righteous person, and a good person realizes the crimes he has committed and may commit, and takes actions opposite to "sin", can he escape from evil and his conscience can be complete. To whom is he conscious of his sin? Not to those in power, those who rule them, but to the transcendent being, the supreme good that allows them to acquire this awareness. In "Rong Yi's Clothes", this transcendent existence is the "God" that Rong Yi always remembers, which is the "Heaven" in the Mohist classics.

Thus, the theme of "Rong Yi's Clothes" enters the second level: examine one's own sins and save one's conscience.

So, in the fourth act of the play, when Rong Yi puts the cotton-padded coat on Shi Xin, but the latter avoids him from a distance, he utters this monologue to the snowy sky:

Rong Yi (pauses, talking to the heaven) Dear God, my disciple doesn't understand my words, but you do. Do you want me to save 80,000 Lucheng people, or just one disciple? Among the 80,000 people, there are righteous men, villains, and people who are neither good nor bad. Who is the disciple? Maybe he is a selfish and greedy person, or perhaps he may do great evil in the future. Can I take the cotton-padded clothes of this possible villain and take his life in order to save those 80,000 people? Sounds like a lucrative option. But you are telling me through this snow: no, absolutely not. Once I kill this possible villain, the righteous warrior Rong Yi will become a true devil. This is what I just found out. Just now, when I pretended to snatch his cotton coat and teach him a lesson, I felt like I truly become a God of life and death. I knew it: once I become a God, I become addicted and want to be a God forever. Just like when I lift my feet and stomp the first snow, I will definitely continue to walk and stomp countless snow. The peace you have given me, the pure and flawless peace that comes from guarding every snowflake, will forever be lost. Afterwards, the devil will reside in my heart. After taking the life of my disciple, I will go to take more people's lives under the banner of greater justice. I will become the person I opposed at the beginning, the sinner in your eyes. (Pause) God, thank you for the peace you have given me. I will hold on until I see you! Thank you for holding my hand and preventing me from committing a crime! Thank you, benevolent and compassionate God! (Worship to the heavens, joy and happiness).

Therefore, in the drama "Rong Yi's Clothes", the death of Rong Yi is no longer presented as a story of "rescue" and "failure", but a story of "self-salvation" and "examining and getting rid of one's own sins". When I finished writing this play, I rarely sighted again thinking: "When will the sinners be judged in this decayed society?" Instead, whenever I was about to blurt out this sentence, I thought, "Hey! Be yourself! You are a part of the sin. What can you do to make yourself less guilty?" Writing can help transform yourself. Of course, this does not mean that the creators will no longer be sensitive to darkness and evil, but, while remaining sensitive, they will not regard themselves as judges who stay out of the situation, but let themselves become the bearers of the yoke who stay "both outside the situation and in the game."

3. The theme is the result of the playwright's conceptual integration of inner experience, and touching upon ChatGPT

The above has introduced the birth process of the theme of "The Rong Yi's Clothes" at two levels. The reason why I want to share this is because drama as I understand it is the most aggressive and most loving dialogue of the soul. Its "aggressiveness" lies in its willingness to speak out about the most pressing and offensive spiritual question that the playwright finds, which, in my present state of mind, is a questioning of inner conscience; It is thought to be "the most able to unite love" because it will honestly reveal this concern in front of everyone in the theater; it is called "soul dialogue" because as a hypothetical art, drama does not need to imitate the details of life, but only requires the strongest spirituality to be presented in a way that conforms to the rhythm of the drama.

The theme of a play is the result of the playwright's conceptual integration of the inner events he or she has experienced. This "experience" is in the sense of Ibsen. Ibsen said: "Everything I write is closely related to my experience, even if it is not my own – or real – experience." "Artists must carefully distinguish between observation and experience, as only the latter is the theme of creation." At the same time, Ibsen opposes "personal actual experiences", which means opposing external events related to his own life. He focuses on his inner life experiences, which determine his rational, emotional, and spiritual development. He also said, 'Writing poetry is to judge..judge myself'. He openly acknowledges that creation is a form of examining oneself out of a struggle of conscience. His words deeply resonate with me.

The playwright needs a heart that can freely communicate between the "above" and the "below". This heart is a radar, relying on its own nature, conscience, emotions, thoughts, and moral intuition, scanning through all seemingly unrelated events it has experienced internally, searching for common signals, and making conceptual connections and integrations.

The "inner experience" that stimulated the formation of the theme of "Rongyi's Clothes", in addition to the aforementioned "Rongyi Undressing" story and the "Dialogue of Liu Cixin and Jiang Xiaoyuan", includes two other things: firstly, in the well-known Jiangge case, Liu Xin's words and actions towards Jiang Ge's mother Jiang Qiulian, and secondly, the death of Qin General Bai Qi.

The case of Jiang Ge will not be repeated here, but Bai Qi's death can be briefly described: Bai Qi was originally an accomplished general of the Qin State during the Warring States Period, but in his later years, because he refused to listen to King Qin Zhaoxiang's orders, an envoy sent by the King of Qin gave him a sword and ordered him to kill himself. Before Bai Qi drew his sword and killed himself, he looked up to the sky and sighed: "What sin did I do to God to end up like this?" After a while, he thought of something and said: "I deserve to die. In the Battle of Changping, the Zhao army surrendered hundreds of thousands of soldiers. I buried them all alive by deception. This is enough to commit suicide!" After speaking, he committed suicide. This is the awakening of the conscience of a murderous general at the last moment of his life. It is in contrast to the admirable writing of the "Battle of Changping" in our history books. I came across this story while conceiving "The Rong Yi's clothes" and decided to use it as the "overtone" of the theme.

These four stories, in the months of inner labor, condensed into one theme. It requires the playwright to turn their daily concerns—maybe their own, others, events they have witnessed, or events reported by the media—into their inner survival, emotional and moral experience and consciously connect the sense of the present and the life found in this experience with these four different stories from ancient and modern, and let it be an "inner experience" again and finally, condense as a theme. The day when this theme is formed is when the seed of the play is born. The next thing is to let the seeds germinate slowly, break through the soil, grow into trees, blossom and bear fruit in a form of a script. Therefore, I say that after the birth of the theme, writing is still unknown—because although you are driven by the theme, you endow the characters with basic characteristics and the main functions he/she will undertake, but you still don't know the structure in which they will live and act; you have figured out the structure, but still don't know what specific event he/she is going to enter (some events are prepared in advance, but are discarded because of the structure, and some events are generated because of the structure); you know the events he/she is going through, but still don't know what he/she will say or do...you don't know all this until you come to the end of your writing-but you don't know how it all will end up. You have to read through it several times and tinker with it to make the fruit look more symmetrical.

The above is my experience on "theme salvage" during the process of writing "Rongyi Yi". When preparing my speeches, people always ask me what I think about ChatGPT's ability to write. My opinion is simple:

Does ChatGPT have a "heart"? Can it 'personally experience' internal and external events? Is there a positional relationship between it and the world others? The so-called personification relationship is what Martin Buber called the "I-you" relationship, that is, the kind of relationship between intelligent lives that is the subject of each other, flesh and soul, dynamic and unique. Art creators rely on their own hearts to extract meaningful DNA from the spiritual and physical life they experience to create their own works. Their works contain their pain, their love and hate, their laughter and tears, their wisdom and stupidity, their sensitivity and numbness, their hope and despair... No matter great or mediocre, human creators are unique, possessing free will, and because of their uniqueness, personality, and free will, we read their works, since reading is the path to a heart. Where is the uniqueness and personality of ChatGPT? Even though its "reading volume" exceeds that of all human beings due to the richness and vastness of its "corpus", the

"works" it produces according to its instructions are "excellent" and "perfect" in form, so that it surpasses all "mediocre" human author, it is nothing more than an imitative recombination of a great work—it is not of free will. Reading its "works" is a self-degradation of the personified existence of human beings—the so-called oppression and domination of people by things is not because things have "evolved" beyond people, but because humans have given up their innate divine uniqueness and positional nature, and voluntarily downgrade to functional and materialized existence, to a level below "things", absurdly placing themselves on the same track as "things". This is the result of the dissemination of the values of "abilism" and not the values of "individualism".

In the context of ChatGPT, sharing the creation process of "The Clothes of Rongyi" really amuses me. "Literature is human studies." Drama is also human studies. Man is an intelligent life that pursues meaning and freedom. People are intelligent beings who pursue meaning and freedom. When intelligent robots can threaten the meaning of human existence with "imitation of meaning", we may as well return to the creative process of drama and confirm all the good and evil, sin and righteousness, difficulties and sweetness, failure and victory hidden in this creative behavior. In short, confirm its unique spiritual light and personality.

Thank you for listening. By the way, I would like to share a piece of good news: The drama "The Clothes of Rongyi" has been valued by Director Yi Liming and will be directed by him. It will be staged at the Dahua City Art Performance Center in Beijing in the near future. Everyone is welcome to watch it and criticize it. This script was also included in my five-volume booklet "I'm Afraid of Life" last year, which was published by Shandu, Casting and Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House. Please correct me. Thank you.

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Translated by Iuliia Baturo

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