

# Reinterpretation of Literary Classics: The Aesthetic Value of Liaozhai Zhiyi Characters in Pu Songling's Works

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**Abstract:** This paper probes deeply into the aesthetic value and shaping mode of the characters in the works of the Tales of Liaozhai by Pu Songling, a Chinese writer in Qing Dynasty. By analyzing Pu Songling's writing style, aesthetic concept and the shaping way of several typical characters, this paper reveals his unique aesthetic pursuit and literary talent in his works. The contrast of the images of gods, demons and human beings, the characteristics of characters and the description of images all show Pu Songling's deep thinking about human nature, fate and supernatural power. The influence of the ancient aesthetic concept on his works and the re-interpretation of the characters under the contemporary aesthetic concept are also discussed. The characters in Pu Songling's works not only have historical significance, but also radiate new vitality and significance in the field of contemporary literature, bringing readers profound thinking and aesthetic experience.

**Keywords:** Pu Songling, Liao Zhaodi, character image, aesthetic shaping, ancient aesthetic concept.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Introduction to Pu Songling and Tales of Liaozhai

Pu Songling (1640-1715) was a Chinese writer in the Qing Dynasty. His famous literary work Liaozhai Tales is famous for its unique style and mysterious plot. Liaozhai Tales is a collection of ghosts, fairies, and fantasies. It contains 491 short stories, covering all kinds of supernatural phenomena and characters, showing Pu Songling's rich imagination and unique literary talent.

### 1.2. Research background and purpose

The characters in Pu Songling's works play an important role in Liaozhai Tales. They are not only the promoters of the plot, but also the carriers of the author's aesthetic ideas and literary skills. The purpose of this paper is to explore the aesthetic value of the characters in Pu Songling's works, and to deeply analyze the artistic method and the meaning behind the image building. Through the aesthetic analysis, this paper reveals the aesthetic connotation of the characters in Liaozhai Zhiyi, and probes into the contribution and influence of these images to the whole literary works.

In Tales of Liaozhai, Pu Songling created a variety of characters, such as supernatural gods and demons, as well as vivid and concrete human images. Through the description of characters' personalities, physical features and behaviors, he creates lifelike characters, making readers feel as if they are in it, experiencing a fantasy and supernatural world.

The exploration of aesthetic value not only involves the aesthetic evaluation of the external form of the character image, but also includes the interpretation of the culture, emotion and spiritual connotation behind it. The characters in Pu Songling's works not only show the ancient aesthetic understanding of beauty, but also reflect the author's personal aesthetic taste and literary pursuit. Under the influence of contemporary aesthetic concepts, we can re-examine these characters and explore their significance and value in contemporary literature and aesthetic fields.

Through the in-depth analysis of Pu Songling's character image and aesthetic judgment, we can better understand the position of this literary master in the history of literature and the unique charm of his works. The characters he created are not only of historical significance, but also of profound reflection on human nature, emotion and life, which brings endless imagination space and aesthetic enjoyment to readers.

## 2. The Aesthetic Shaping of Characters in Pu Songling's Works

### 2.1. Describe Pu Songling's creative style and aesthetic concept

Pu Songling is a writer with unique aesthetic taste and literary talent. He shows his unique writing style and aesthetic concept in Liaozhai Tales. Using delicate brushstrokes and a rich imagination, Pu blends the supernatural with everyday life to create breathtaking characters. His depictions of human nature, fate and supernatural forces show profound humanistic concern and aesthetic pursuit [1].

### 2.2. Analyze the ways of shaping the images of several typical characters in Liaozhai Tales

#### 2.2.1. Comparison of the images of gods, demons and human beings

In Tales of Liaozhai, Pu Songling created many characters with the status of gods and demons, which not only show the mysterious atmosphere of the transcendent, but also reflect the emotions and fate of the human world. By contrasting the images of gods, demons and human beings, Pu Songling shows different levels of aesthetic values and moral concepts. The fairy image represents the purity and nobility beyond the earthly world, the demon image reflects the distortion of human nature and the temptation of desire, and the human image carries the suffering and struggle in real life.

#### 2.2.2. Character characteristics and image description

Pu Songling in "Tales of Liaozhai" through the character characteristics and image description of careful shaping, portrays the colorful character image. He is good at showing

the inner contradictions and struggles of the characters through meticulous description, making the characters more three-dimensional and full. Whether it is a kind and generous old man, a beautiful and charming woman, or an evil and deceitful demon, each character has distinct personality characteristics and vivid image performance, leaving a deep impression on readers.

Through the aesthetic shaping of the characters, Pu Songling not only shows his exquisite literary skills and rich imagination, but also deeply probes into the complexity of human nature and the mystery of life. His works are not only literary classics, but also profound reflections on human emotions and the meaning of life, which bring endless thoughts and insights to readers. Through aesthetic analysis, the unique characters in *Liaozhai Tales* will remain in readers' hearts forever, inspiring people's pursuit of beauty and understanding of human nature.

### **3. Discussion of Aesthetic Values**

#### **3.1. The influence of ancient aesthetic concepts on Pu Songling's works**

The ancient aesthetic concept has influenced the shaping of characters and aesthetic expression in Pu Songling's works to some extent. In the ancient Chinese cultural tradition, aesthetic concepts focus on the integration of moral ethics, natural beauty and spiritual beauty. This aesthetic concept runs through the shaping process of the characters in *Liaozhai Tales*, which makes Pu Songling's works full of inner beauty and moral feelings. The fairy image represents the moral nobility and transcendent beauty, the demon image reflects the distortion of human nature and the temptation of desire, and the human image presents the truth of life and the richness of emotions. This ancient aesthetic concept endows Pu Songling's works with profound cultural connotation and aesthetic value, making them classic works in the Chinese literary tradition[2].

#### **3.2. Reinterpretation of Pu Songling's character image under contemporary aesthetic concepts**

Under the influence of contemporary aesthetic concepts, the characters in Pu Songling's works can be interpreted and understood in different ways. Contemporary aesthetics pay attention to the expression of individual emotions, multiculturalism and modernity, so readers may re-examine Pu Songling's characters from different angles. The fairy image may be interpreted as freedom and innovation beyond traditional concepts, while the demon image may be understood as the complexity of human nature and the challenges in modern society, and the human image can be endowed with more modern emotional and social significance. This reinterpretation makes Pu Songling's works radiate new vitality and significance in the field of contemporary literature, and brings readers richer aesthetic experience and thinking space[3].

#### **3.3. The aesthetic significance of Pu Songling's character image and its position in the literary tradition**

The characters in Pu Songling's works have profound aesthetic significance, which not only shows the author's pursuit of beauty and aesthetic concept, but also reflects the

thinking of human nature, morality and destiny in the Chinese literary tradition. These figures occupy an important position in the literary tradition and become indispensable classics in the history of Chinese literature. Through the aesthetic interpretation of Pu Songling's characters, we can not only feel the charm and wisdom of ancient culture, but also draw inspiration and reflection from it, leading us to re-examine contemporary society and human nature issues. The aesthetic significance of Pu Songling's character image will be spread in the history of literature for a long time, providing precious cultural heritage and emotional resonance for future generations. His works will continue to inspire people's pursuit of beauty and in-depth discussion of thought, and maintain the eternal artistic charm and aesthetic value.

### **4. Reinterpretation and Contemporary Significance of Literary Classics**

#### **4.1. Classic status and influence of Pu Songling's works**

Pu Songling's work *Liaozhai Zhi Zhi*, with its unique literary charm and profound human nature thinking, enjoys a high classic status and has far-reaching influence. This work not only occupies an important position in the history of Chinese literature, but also is regarded as one of the treasures in the treasure house of world literature. Pu Songling shows the exploration of humanity, fate and supernatural power through the wonderful creation of gods, demons and human images, leading readers into a fantastic and mysterious literary world. His works not only inspired the pursuit of beauty and thinking of human nature, but also made an important contribution to the development of classical Chinese literature and influenced the literary creation of generations[4].

#### **4.2. The possibility and challenge of contemporary literature accepting Pu Songling's character image**

In the field of contemporary literature, the characters in Pu Songling's works still have strong attraction and expression, but they also face new challenges and interpretations. With the development of society and the change of values, the acceptance of Pu Songling's character image in contemporary literature needs to give it new era connotation and modern significance on the basis of inheriting the classics. This means reinterpreting and reinterpreting Pu Songling's works to suit the aesthetic needs and cultural background of contemporary readers. At the same time, contemporary literature also needs to face how to continue and develop Pu Songling's aesthetic tradition in the new literary context in order to maintain the vitality and influence of his works.

#### **4.3. The contemporary significance and enlightenment of the aesthetic value of the characters in Pu Songling's works**

The aesthetic value of the characters in Pu Songling's works is still of great significance and enlightenment in contemporary times. His exploration of human nature, fate and supernatural power, as well as his pursuit of beauty and expression of aesthetic concepts, have provided valuable cultural heritage and ideological resources for contemporary literature. The characters in Pu Songling's works not only show the charm of ancient aesthetic concepts, but also provide

reference and inspiration for the development of contemporary aesthetic concepts. Through the aesthetic interpretation of the characters in Pu Songling's works, contemporary literature can draw on their wisdom and emotion, expand their aesthetic vision, enrich their literary expression, and lead readers to think deeply about the meaning of life, humanity and beauty. The aesthetic significance in Pu Songling's works is not only a tribute to the past, but also an inspiration to the contemporary literary creation, which provides a valuable reference for the re-interpretation of literary classics and the exploration of contemporary significance.

## 5. Conclusion

Pu Songling is an important writer in the history of Chinese classical literature. His work *Tales of Liaozhai* not only enjoys a high reputation in ancient times, but also has far-reaching influence and significance in contemporary times. Through the discussion of the aesthetic concept, character image and literary tradition in Pu Songling's works, we can see the unique charm and profound thought of this literary master, as well as the important position and value of his works in the history of literature.

Pu Songling's works are a combination of ancient aesthetic concepts and modern emotional expression, through the creation of gods, demons and human images, showing the reflection on humanity, morality and fate. His works not only occupy an important position in the ancient Chinese literary tradition, but also provide valuable cultural heritage and aesthetic enlightenment for contemporary literary creation. Under the influence of ancient aesthetic concepts, Pu Songling's works are full of inner aesthetic feeling and moral feelings, reflecting the ancient people's pursuit of moral ethics, natural beauty and spiritual beauty. Under the influence of contemporary aesthetic concepts, Pu Songling's character image has been given a new interpretation and understanding, which has injected new vitality and significance into contemporary literary creation.

In the field of contemporary literature, the classic status and influence of Pu Songling's works can not be ignored. With its unique literary charm and profound human nature thinking, his work *Liaozhai Zhiyi* continues to influence readers' aesthetic feelings and literary experience. To accept the possibility and challenge of Pu Songling's character image in contemporary literature, it is necessary to give it new era connotation and modern significance on the basis of inheriting the classic. This reinterpretation and

reinterpretation can not only continue the vitality and influence of Pu Songling's works, but also provide new ideas and inspiration for contemporary literary creation.

The aesthetic significance of the characters in Pu Songling's works is still of great significance and enlightenment in contemporary times. His exploration of human nature, fate and beauty has provided valuable cultural heritage and ideological resources for contemporary literature. The characters in Pu Songling's works not only show the charm of ancient aesthetic concepts, but also provide reference and inspiration for the development of contemporary literary aesthetic concepts. Through the aesthetic interpretation of the characters in Pu Songling's works, contemporary literature can draw on their wisdom and emotion, expand their aesthetic vision, enrich their literary expression, and lead readers to think deeply about the meaning of life, humanity and beauty.

To sum up, the classic of Pu Songling's works lies in his enduring literary charm and profound human nature, as well as his exploration of beauty, morality and humanity. His works not only occupy an important place in the ancient Chinese literary tradition, but also continue to play an important role in contemporary times. The aesthetic and contemporary significance of the characters in Pu Songling's works will continue to stimulate people's pursuit of beauty and thinking about human nature and destiny, and provide valuable reference for the development of literary creation and aesthetic concept. The value and significance of Pu Songling's works will be passed down in the history of literature for a long time, leaving precious cultural heritage and emotional resonance for future generations.

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