

## Analysis of the Female Image and Tragic Roots

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### Abstract

Zhang Ailing's novels make good use of beautiful rhetorical devices to express the love tragedy between men and women in Shanghai and Hong Kong during the Republic of China, mainly focusing on women, mostly wrapped in the shell of the new female image in the changing times, but hiding the old female image. Although these female characters have different personalities, ages and family backgrounds, the endings all show endless feelings of sadness and thought-provoking. In fact, the cause of the tragedy are closely related to the trauma of Zhang Ailing's childhood, the tragedy of her family life and her failed marriage with Hu Lancheng. Of course, the fundamental reason could not be separated from the turbulent background of the time. The tragedy of Eileen Chang's characters also reveals the weakness of the traditional female image and the distress of people full of money and material desires in the flashy society at that time.

### Keywords

Zhang Ailing; Female Image; Construction Reasons; Source of Tragedy.

### 1. Introduction

Eileen Chang's novels are full of care and love for women. From a unique God perspective, she reveals the vulnerability and sadness of women in the semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. The reason is inseparable from Zhang Ailing's personal growth experience and the environment of The Times.

### 2. Research of Female Characters Written by Zhang Ailing

Eileen zhang's novel in personal unique perspective, is given priority to to focus on the character characteristics of women, shaped a series of different female image, whether feudal family, or linger in the upper society, or mother, educated students, or women in love marriage, she is from the perspective of female, with unique art in the background of specific times, the tragedy of female fate and the distortion of human nature.

#### 2.1. Mother of the Feudal Family

Since ancient times, the image of the mother has always been synonymous with gentle, virtuous, is the husband's silent dedication behind the woman, is the dependence of the children, up to now, the greatness of maternal love has been praised by people. But Eileen Chang is abnormal, subverting people's cognition of the previous mother image, from virtuous to evil, from selfless to selfish, fully exposing the evil and inferiority of human nature. The image of the evil mother is an important driving force for the development of the mood and the plot of the novel heroine. "Love in the City" in the white tassel is a person who lives in his mother's home after divorce, in the white family such a big mansion, the feudal legacy is still alive, in the face of divorce and return to the house is how shameful matter. And his own mother in the face of the divorced daughter's marriage regardless of, but to the common daughter in every way to take care of, afraid of being said gossip, harm their own interests. When Bai Liusu suffered to complain to

her family humiliation, she was just helpless "turn over to sleep", and said, " the world does not come to an end, you follow me is not a long-term plan. But go back is a serious, get a child to live, through more than ten years, there is always your head." After all, her daughter's happiness can not be equal to the secular vision and their own vital interests [1]. In the Golden Lock Book, Cao Qiqiao's "evil mother" image is shown incisively and vividly. From the original young girl, spicy rich style of hemp oil shop boss daughter, to human nature twisted, cruel and cruel mother, became the slave of money. Cao Qiqiao herself can not get love, the repressed human nature and desire let her revenge this tragedy on her children, destroy the children's marriage in every way. Seeing her daughter-in-law enjoying the "sexual" happiness she had never had, she tortured her daughter-in-law and made her suicide; her daughter Chang 'an easy happiness, but she interfered, destroying her daughter's life happiness.

## 2.2. For Women Lost for Love

Love is an indispensable part of human social life, but also the main theme of Eileen Chang's novels. In Eileen Chang's novels, it is mostly a tragedy of love, love but not or after getting, do not cherish the ruined marriage, or its own marriage is a transaction with monetary value.

In the novel "Half Body", the protagonist Gu Manlu's life was originally happy, because of the family fall, in order to support their family, gave up the love with her boyfriend, did a dancer. Gu Manlu at first can also rely on their own beautiful appearance to maintain the life of the whole family, but the appearance has been gone, flowers blossom Xie end sometimes, his gradually aging face has not been enough attraction, so had to get married to her husband Zhu Hongcai. But who ever thought of the husband's marriage, romantic, and at this time life to a heavy blow, because their illness a, resulting in not give birth, make Gu Manlu's heart is worse. In that feudal society aftertaste still exist, a woman who cannot bear children will suffer and suppressed by inhuman public opinion, in order to retain their dignity and marriage, in order to keep her husband firmly tied, do not hesitate through "borrow children" to save the marriage [2]. Every time I saw her husband's eyes looking at her sister are full of desire and ambiguous, Gu Manlu struggled in the family and marriage, and finally is rational can not resist the secular desire, her sister imprisoned, forced her to give birth to her husband, and the ultimate purpose of this is to retain her husband and marriage. Such a simple purpose makes her work hard, distort human nature, and abandon conscience, which reflects the humble status of women in the old society.

## 2.3. Women Who became a Male Power Vassal

Both Mrs. Liang and Ge Weilong are typical examples. This kind of women have some economic initiative, but this economy is still attached to men, becoming a material and carnal reveler, and becoming a vassal of male power.

Ge Weilong was originally an ordinary Shanghai girl who focused on pursuing her studies and was disgusted with the world full of material desire and flesh desire, but she came to Hong Kong to pursue her studies. "As for me, I both walked into this haunted world, if in the evil, who do I blame? This is the first and their own natural Wei dragon, have a firm confidence not to be corroded by it. From her describing her aunt's living environment as ghost and "evil", you can see that she is a woman disgusted and despised this material-filled life, which also shows that Ge Weilong's image also contains the independent self-improvement ideology of new women. In his novel, Villon opened the closet, but it is full of clothes, resplendent... can't help but lock the door and secretly try it on. Through describing, we can see that the most real face of people is sinking in the beautiful trap of money and material. It was what Geelong's heart longed, for what she never had, satisfying the vanity and satisfaction her age exposed. Perhaps her aunt had also experienced, happened to take advantage of this point, most female weakness, to make it slowly tame. Human desire is infinite, and when you stare at the abyss, it also looks at you. No matter in which society, the matter has the absolute temptation to pull you from the clean to the source

of all evil. From the beginning out of the silt and not dyed, to the end to make Ge Weilong completely fell into the turbidity is the man."I love you, what you, strange also can't blame your head" Ge Weilong love humble, love warm, but this is just unilateral love, she know Qiao Qi Qiao does not love her, just want to use her, maybe she also know her aunt is also conspiring Qiao Qi Qiao consumption her, but she will not be investigated now, because she doesn't care. In material things, money, love, even in false love, she has already become a person like her aunt. In the reader's opinion, Geelong's matching social flower title is equal or even inferior to the inferior prostitute. Because prostitutes have no choice in the face of the pressure of material life, they are forced, but Ge Weilong is voluntary, and still indulge in the cheap love of the society at that time, for their own self-righteous happiness and lose themselves.

### **3. To Explore the Root Cause of Zhang Ailing's Tragic Female Image**

Tragedy consciousness is the unique emotional characteristic of Eileen Chang's novel, and the artistic creation of the novel cannot be separated from the emotional experience of the writer itself and the change of the environment of The Times. The tragedy of the family of origin, the misfortune of their own marriage and the influence of The Times have greatly affected the construction of the emotional tragedy of Eileen Chang's novels.

#### **3.1. Trauma of the Family of Origin**

Psychology shows that her early growth experience plays a key role in shaping one's character, world outlook, outlook on life and values. It can be said that Zhang Ailing was born and grew up in an unloving family, which has an important impact on her creative style [3].

Eileen Chang was born in Gao Gate and was born with a golden spoon. Although Chang's parents were born, they had two different pursuits, her father did not formally work, lived on ancestral assets, and had the habit of smoking; while her mother wanted a modern free lifestyle in the West, the two different values will inevitably lead to the breakdown of marriage. For Eileen Chang, her mother is a sometimes absent existence, as she once said: "There was no one such as my mother at home, and I could not feel any defects." Eileen Chang lived at first living with his father, but his father remarried, let him suffer long father and stepmother bullying and domestic violence, after going abroad to follow his mother, but the original foreign life is not as beautiful as Eileen Chang imagined, mother abroad just did the obligation to raise Eileen Chang, did not let her get due mother's love. The indifference of her mother and stepmother and the long lack of maternal love, and the misfortune of childhood life doomed her desolation and indifference, which is one of the reasons for the "evil mother" in the novel.

#### **3.2. Regret of the Marriage with Hu Lancheng**

At the age of 23, Zhang Ailing met Hu Lancheng, who is 14 years older than her. His tenderness made Zhang Ailing feel the missing father's love and the warmth of her family. At this time, the rising period of her career was engaged to Hu Lancheng, opening this short and vigorous love story. But who ever thought that Zhang Ailing meet people is not shu, Hu Lancheng around the source, repeatedly derailed, hurt her again and again, has brought her great trauma. Although Zhang Ailing chose to divorce, but Hu Lancheng gave her the unexpected father's love and family warmth, so that Zhang Ailing lost herself in the marriage, even after the divorce, Hu Lancheng also gave a helping hand." Death is rich, say with Zicheng; hold your hand, and you grow old together' is a sad poem, but its attitude towards life is how certain. I don't like heroism. I like the tragic and stirring, more like the desolate .....The desolation has a deeper aftertaste, because it is like green green with peach, is a poor control [3]." This huge contrast is like Hu Lancheng's betrayal and her infatuation. The failed marriage also shines into Eileen Chang's novel, "leaving flowers from the humble dust" is women's admiration for men, but also let the novel have a more bleak sense of tragedy.

### 3.3. The Influence of the Times

Eileen zhang was born in 1920 in Shanghai public concession, the new culture movement has begun, the western cultural concept gradually into the east, of course, in the prosperous concession western style more strong, feudal ideas and new culture new ideas impact, fusion, on the one hand, people retain the feudal norm, on the other hand and the pursuit of equality, freedom of culture, become a incomplete transformation, wearing new thought of old thinkers. What we call Eileen Chang's novel is a lament about civilization and human nature, but her works rarely show the criticism of society, and more show the degradation of human spirit and the distortion of human nature in the background of the colony and the semi-colony, all of which are closely related to the era background of Eileen Chang's growth. Born in decline, under the new western concept, but also suffered by feudal residue, can be seen in the novel ailing zhang women or have old elegant culture, or foreign education in foreign students, but in the face of turbulent environment still cannot alone, with money and material desire, or spiritual emptiness and uneasiness, lead to the original human change distortion, depicting a "new thought" appearance under the old female image.

#### 3.3.1. Lack of Objective Understanding of Sex Education

In "the second furnace incense", the elder sister invincible lisheng did not accept sex education, think her husband is pervert, and the younger sister su fine also did not have sex education, in the wedding night think her husband is pervert and escape, finally cause the husband can not stand the accusation of public opinion and the tragedy of suicide. The husband is a foreigner with open thought, Su fine is a young lady that accepts a new thought, but because the mother lacks of its sex education, and brew a tragedy. Eileen Chang is good at using the impact of values to cause conflicts and opposition of the plots, promote the development of the novel plot, and deepen the ideological connotation of the novel. By describing Su fine's ignorance of sex, they satirical the women who did not completely transform the old ideas, and criticize the groups who highly praised the pure women, and obscure the disregard and ignorance of sex education by the public in the era with their personal story, so as to accuse the view of marriage and values at that time.

#### 3.3.2. Incompleteness of the Eradication of Feudal Family Thought

In the social background of the coexistence of the old and new ideas at that time, Zhang Ailing grasped the overall situation of the thought of The Times, and deeply captured the distortion of the human values caused by the feudal thought and the capitalist thought, especially the great pain and harm to the weak women from the body to the mind. In the love of the city, the white family was a rich family, but with the change of times, the white family eat empty, in order to solve the material problem, marry his daughter as money to decadent master tang one yuan, affected by the new thought of white tassel in front of the big feudal family is also powerless resistance, become the victim of the pursuit of material desire, thus leading to its tragedy. Behind the construction of the desolate image, Zhang Ailing tried to show the fact that the social family was still subject to the feudal thought wreckage in the flood of new thoughts, as well as the irony and criticism of Bai tassel (weak new thoughts will and left by the old thoughts).

## 4. Conclusion

"The moon had already sunk thirty years ago, thirty years ago the people died, but the story of thirty years ago is not over the --". Eileen zhang's powerful influence on literature like this sentence, whether at that time or now, still has extraordinary value, its profound analysis of the society and detailed depiction of the old and new ideas of women, presents the artistic conception of desolate scene, presents a strong literary expression and rendering of the readers,

female thought distortion and tragic fate let us think more deeply about the value of women themselves.

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