

Comparing the Heroines of "Dream of Red Mansions" and "Jane Eyre" from a Cross-Cultural Perspective

Jiayan Pan

College of Forestry and Landscape Architecture, South China Agricultural University, Guangzhou, China

Misty1594889650@gmail.com

Abstract. From the perspective of cross-cultural comparison, this paper compares and studies the images of Lin Daiyu in "Dream of Red Mansions" and Jane Eyre in "Jane Eyre". The study mainly analyzes the similar growth experiences and different personality traits formed by the cultural differences between China and the West: Lin Daiyu is talented, sensitive and thoughtful, self-expression is implicit and introverted. Although she pursues ideological emancipation and freedom of love, she has always been deeply bound by Confucian etiquette and patriarchal system in the cultural context; Jane Eyre lived in the background of the British Industrial Revolution, she was able to be rational and independent, courageous to fight, defend her self-dignity through straightforward expression and decisive action, and pursue the equality of the soul, reflecting the influence of the awakening of women's consciousness in the social context. The difference in image between the two is essentially the result of the difference between traditional Chinese and Western cultural values in literary works.

Keywords: Dream of Red Mansions, Jane Eyre, Cross-cultural, Comparative Literature

1. Introduction

"Dream of Red Mansions" is an ancient Chinese novel in the style of chapters, with a total of 120 editions. It is generally believed that the first 80 episodes were written by the Qing Dynasty writer Cao Xueqin, and the last 40 episodes were continued by Gao E. The novel is based on the rise and fall of the four major families of Jia, Shi, Wang and Xue, and takes the tragedy of love and marriage between Jia Baoyu and Lin Daiyu and Xue Baochai as the main line of the story. Lin Daiyu is undoubtedly one of the tragic female images with high classics. Her classicism is first highlighted in her talented female image. Her well-known poetry works, such as "Funeral Flower Song", have separated from the plot of the novel itself and have become independent literary classics.

"Jane Eyre" is a novel written by British female writer Charlotte Brontë, which is autobiographical. In the novel, Jane Eyre's life pursuit has two basic melodies: passion, fantasy, resistance and perseverance; The desire for freedom and happiness on earth and the pursuit of a higher spiritual realm. The theme of this novel is to successfully create an image of a woman who is uneasy about the status quo, unwilling to be humiliated, and dares to fight through the bumpy life experience of Jane Eyre, an orphan girl. It reflects the frank outpouring of an ordinary heart and

expresses Jane Eyre's desire to pursue the equality of everyone's soul. The image of Jane Eyre has thus become a model of the literary image of the heroine who pursues independence.

In view of the fact that the characters of the two heroines are very typical and have strong literary representation. There are also certain commonalities between the two, such as Lin Daiyu and Jane Eyre, both of whom died of their parents when they were young, and they were sent to the fence. But there is still a big difference between the characters of the two. Therefore, this paper makes a different comparison of the images of Lin Daiyu and Jane Eyre from a cross-cultural perspective.

The research questions in this paper can be divided into the following three parts. First, what are the similarities and differences between Lin Daiyu and Jane Eyre's background experiences, and how does it affect their character images? Second, what is the impact of Lin Daiyu and Jane Eyre's cultural background on their characters? Third, what are the similarities and differences between the two women's self-expression? Your paper will be part of the journals therefore we ask that authors follow the guidelines explained in this example, in order to achieve the highest quality possible.

2. The Characters of Lin Daiyu and Jane Eyre

2.1. Commonality and different circumstances

Lin Daiyu was born into a scholarly family, and her parents unfortunately passed away when she was young. She had to live under the fence and in her grandmother's house, which is the background of the novel, Jiafu. She spent a relatively free youth with Baoyu and her sisters in the Grand View Garden. They can recite poems and hold poetry clubs, which is also the warmth and comfort in her life. She was sent to the fence, but she was loved by her grandmother Jia's mother, and her life in Jiafu was not difficult; her material life was rich, and there were maids to serve, and no one dared to bully her. In the background of Jiafu, she met her love - Jia Baoyu [1].

Jane Eyre lost her parents when she was a child and was forced to live in her aunt's house, her cousins and cousins bullied her, and her aunt hated her. When her cousin injured her and her aunt locked her in the Little Red House to make her feel seriously insulted, she insisted on leaving the environment and sending herself to the Lowood School [2].

Lin Daiyu and Jane Eyre both have the commonality of having both parents dying, living under the fence, and growing up in an uneasy and turbulent childhood environment. Their tragic childhood also laid the foundation for their characterization, making their hearts more resilient and their thoughts more mature and powerful. The two grew up in Grand View Garden and Lowood School respectively, and spent their youth, and Grand View Garden and Lowood School became their spiritual growth space.

However, there were also many differences in the growth of the two. Although Lin Daiyu is in a prosperous place, favored by Jia's mother, and is accompanied by sisters and Baoyu, she has always haunted the consciousness of 'sending people under the fence' in her heart. Deep down, she always knows that this is someone else's home. In contrast, Jane Eyre's living conditions were very poor, not only was she abused at her aunt's house, but the living conditions at Lowood School were unsightly, and the friends she made at school even died of illness. However, her spiritual side has always been abundant; she knows what she wants and needs, and has always worked tirelessly for it, longing for true independence.

In terms of the social support the two received during their growth, Lin Daiyu grew up with confidants and sisters, and she could laugh. Jia's mother also doted on her very much, and the social support she received was not barren; and it could even be said that she was favored in Jiafu. Jane Eyre was relatively isolated, she did not have a good relationship with her relatives when she was

young. Her only friend also died of illness in Lowood School, and her esteemed teacher Miss Tan Bo left the school to get married and start a family. She did not have a relatively stable friendship or family affection to support her growth. It wasn't until she started working and met Mr. Rochester that she began to really think about and pursue love.

2.2. Character building

Lin Daiyu is as everyone knows, she is talented, sensitive, solitary, sincere, and rebellious. As a famous lady, she has been influenced by the family style and tutoring of scholar-officials since she was a child. Her father, Lin Ruhai, was a traditional literati and doctor, and her mother, Jia Min, was the youngest daughter of Jiafu, which made her education from an early age mainly in the form of traditional Chinese aristocratic education. When she was young, she strictly adhered to the feudal dynasty's tradition of "avoiding taboos" and avoiding her mother's name, and her teacher said that whenever she encountered the word "Min", she would subtract one or two strokes when writing, or deliberately read it as "Mi" when reading. The third episode of "Dream of Red Mansions" writes that Lin Daiyu first entered Jiafu, and she gave the reader the impression of a cautious girl, although she was still young, but the etiquette and etiquette were very thorough, and she would imitate the rules of Jiafu in time and change her past habits at home to adapt to the new environment.

Lin Daiyu's pursuit of love directly rebelled against feudal etiquette, but she was a non-complete rebel, and her living environment did not allow her to be unscrupulous. In the novel, Lin Daiyu mistakenly thought that she had eaten Baoyu's closed soup and wanted to conflict with Baoyu head-on, but she thought that "although my aunt's house is like my own home, it is a guest in the end." Now that his parents are dead, he is helpless, and he is dependent on his family. Now it's seriously naughty, and I feel bored. It is not difficult to see that Lin Daiyu always remembers her situation under the fence, for fear that she will be ridiculed if she makes a mistake. She is eager to pursue her love, but she is trembling.

Jane Eyre has had rational thinking since she was a child, can correctly consider her situation and needs, she always understands what she needs, and pursues self-realization. Jane Eyre is also a classic female figure who moves forward to realize her self-worth. She longs for freedom and independence, longs for equality, and longs for a beautiful love based on feelings that does not need to be exchanged for personal dignity. When Rochester was about to marry Miss Ingram, Jane Eyre said angrily and bluntly to him: "Do you think that because I am poor, lowly, not beautiful, and short, I have no soul and no heart? You are wrong - my soul is just like yours, and my heart is exactly like yours! This famous phrase was widely disseminated, not only expressing her truest thoughts, but also her lifelong pursuit of equality and respect. She always strives to maintain her dignity in love, and never puts aside her dignity because of love [3].

In the fourth chapter of the novel, Jane Eyre and her aunt Mrs. Reed have a fierce conflict. Jane Eyre scolded her, "You don't have the slightest pity, I can't forget it until I die, how you pushed me—how rough and fierce you pushed me—pushed me back into that red house and locked me inside." No matter how much pain I am, no matter how much I scream..... Others think you are a good woman, but you are bad, you are cruel, you are deceiving." This was the first outburst of Jane Eyre's spirit of resistance, and she began to directly challenge her aunt, who represented authority, with fierce and accurate words. She does not hide her anger and hatred, and does not please, which clearly shows her life values, no matter how powerful the other party is, as long as she suffers injustice, she should bravely resist.

2.3. Cultural background

Culturally, Lin Daiyu lives in a country where Confucian culture is the mainstream culture, and the patriarchal system is still deeply rooted in the upper aristocracy, and almost everyone in society is invisibly constrained by feudal etiquette at the ideological or practical level, especially the scholar-official class. Feudal etiquette pays attention to morality and emphasizes the need for people to obey, which is a virtue in human nature. Lin Daiyu's actions during her time in Jiafu also revealed the moral code of Confucianism, including the "Three Principles", "Five Constants", "Six Disciplines", "Three Obediences", "Four Virtues", "Seven Outs", etc. [4]. These guidelines firmly regulate everyone's behavior, making them unable to do as they please, and their freedom is severely restricted.

In addition to secular Confucianism, her fate was shrouded in supernatural fatalism. Lin Daiyu's life is combined by the author with mythological stories and influential religions such as Buddhism and Taoism, and arranged with a strong fatalistic color. When Jia Baoyu was sleepwalking in the fantasy realm, he learned the final ending of the female characters through the book of the Twelve Hairpins of Jinling, and the text hinted at the fate tone of the whole book through the song "Dream of Red Mansions", a song sung by the fairies. However, the corresponding emotional expression is still relatively implicit and symbolic, making it difficult for people to interpret the meaning directly. For example, "jade belt hanging in the forest" is widely considered to describe Lin Daiyu's final fate [5].

Jane Eyre was deeply influenced by the spirit of Western Christianity, pursuing a strong sense of personal morality, self-discipline and emphasis on the value of the soul. In the Lowood School, despite the harsh environment, students engage in religious activities for up to five hours a day, which shows the permeable influence of Christianity on people's minds [6]. At the same time, British society at that time was in the stage of the Industrial Revolution, and with the breakthrough of industrial development, the productivity of society was greatly improved, and people's minds were liberated, gradually getting rid of the stage of long-term oppression and constraints. During this period, women's consciousness in society also began to sprout, and Jane Eyre lived on the eve of the rise of the first wave of feminism. At this time, literary female characters represented by Jane Eyre began to pursue their own freedom from marriage and economic freedom, longing to be respected and recognized in their souls, preserving their dignity, and hoping that everyone would be equal [7].

In the text, Jane Eyre decisively rejected St. John's proposal. She refuses to be a male vassal, she needs a partner with a soul and emotions, not a "subpriest", believing that love must be a spiritual union based on equality and love. She is also deeply aware of the importance of economic independence, which can lay a good foundation for the spiritual independence she pursues. Eventually, she received her uncle's inheritance, which allowed her to reunite with Rochester, who had lost her property and health, on a completely equal basis to achieve the marriage and happiness she wanted.

2.4. Self-expression

In the very different cultural backgrounds of China and the United Kingdom, Lin Daiyu and Jane Eyre are both obsessed with constantly expressing their true thoughts in different language forms, and yearn for true liberation and freedom at the level of mind and soul [8].

In Lin Daiyu's era, she demanded the development of her personality, abhorred feudal power and hypocrisy, and her ideas were incompatible with the feudal environment in which she lived. She can

only be forced to develop more subtly and restrain herself in the environment, maintaining superficial obedience to collectivism and being polite and sensible. The elders of Jiafu have greater power, and almost all important decisions are made by the elders, and the environment does not allow Lin Daiyu to "have the final say" on her life and marriage matters. In this context, she had to use poetry to express her inner emotions [9].

One of Lin Daiyu's classic works is the popular "Funeral Flower Yin", in which the emotional expression is highly artistic, as she vaguely laments her life experience. She was turned away because she had gone to Yihong Courtyard the night before, and she heard Baochai laughing in the courtyard, and she felt sad. She wrote a sad sentence like "360 days a year, wind and frost and swords are forced", which is undoubtedly her profound indictment of environmental oppression. Jiafu's complex interpersonal relationships, her situation under the fence, and the rumors of a good relationship of gold and jade all severely persecuted her sensitive heart, causing her to be depressed all day long.

Jane Eyre lives in a social environment that is relatively tolerant of self-expression, and her expression is the unity of reason and passion. In critical moments, reason is often able to overcome her emotions and urge her to make the right choices [10]. After the wedding was interrupted and he learned of the existence of Rochester's crazy wife, Bertha Mason, Jane Eyre overcame her love for him and chose to leave Thornfield despite Rochester's pleading. Her inner monologue is "I care about myself." The more lonely, the more unrelated, unrelated, and unreliable, the more I have to respect myself. Her departure was not an impulsive decision, but a choice after deep consideration. She adheres to principles and laws, as well as her inner self-esteem, and she does not allow anyone, including herself, to violate her principles and trample on her own values [11]. This monologue demonstrates Jane Eyre's strong moral power and self-control, and her departure is a powerful proof in her actions that her mind is definitely not empty talk.

3. Conclusion

Lin Daiyu and Jane Eyre have similar upbringings, but live in very different cultural backgrounds in the two countries. As a result, their characters and self-expressions have many differences at the level of cultural influence.

The Grand View Garden where Lin Daiyu lives is still shrouded in the shadow of feudal society and the patriarchal system, limiting her self-expression. The core of Jiafu's power is in the hands of the elders, not that she can change it personally, and she does not have the ability to survive independently from Jiafu. Although she pursued the freedom of her soul and the liberation of her mind, she could not get rid of the rules of society on her own. Even the expression of emotions is restrained and implicitly restrained, and in terms of women's ideological emancipation, they are seriously bound by Confucian etiquette and limited by the times.

Jane Eyre is the unity of reason and passion. She makes choices with actions, and proves her self-worth, and is the image of a woman who moves forward to realize her self-worth. In the context of the British Industrial Revolution at that time, she was driven by the social tide and found a job to support herself. At the same time, she also longs for freedom, independence and equality, hoping to have a beautiful love based on feelings that does not need to be exchanged for personal dignity, and the relationship and soul of the two are equal, not limited by factors such as appearance and money. The straightforward and emotional language she uses to express herself can show Jane Eyre's indulgent side and complete catharsis of her emotions in the pursuit of personal values.

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