Abstract

Nü Kai-ke Zhuan (《女开科传》), written by an anonymous writer in the beginning of the Qing Dynasty (清朝，1644 - 1911), is a typical Chinese romance on gifted scholars and beautiful ladies. Although it is of no great literary value, to a certain extent it does reflect the social reality in that period. Besides satirising the corrupted examination system, the author also expressed his views on women, love and marriage.

Liaozhai Zhiyi (《聊斋志异》), a collection of stories of the fantastic, especially of fox-spirits and ghosts, is one of the greatest literary works in the history of Chinese literature. Pu Songling (蒲松龄，1640 - 1715), the author, could incredibly yet so naturally transform the common affairs in daily life into surrealistc tales of fantasy. In these stories, Pu Songling reflected the corruption and incompetence of the government, dwelt on the adverse impact of the examination system on the scholarly world, eulogized the talent and the courage of the women, and expressed his support on voluntary love and marriage.

Both Nü Kai-ke Zhuan and Liaozhai Zhiyi were written in the same period. Thus, although the ideas reflected in Nü Kai-ke Zhuan are superficial, this book has some similar points compared with Liaozhai Zhiyi.

This Exercise is a comparative study on Nü Kai-ke Zhuan and Liaozhai Zhiyi on these themes: the examination system, women, love and marriage. Through this study, we can understand the trend of thought in the beginning of the Qing Dynasty.
This Academic Exercise is divided into four chapters. Chapter one examines the historical background of the two books, dwells on the lives of the authors and introduces the various editions of the two works. Chapter two compares the viewpoints on the examination system between these two books and Chapter three is a comparative study on their themes on women, love and marriage. Chapter four concludes with a summary of the above study.

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