Abstract

This Academic Exercise (A.E.) is a study on the hero and heroine in *The Peach Blossom Fan* (桃花扇), a drama written during the Qing Dynasty by Kong Shangren (孔尚任).

Many studies have been done on *The Peach Blossom Fan*, most of which focus on the aspects of the theme, the author’s motives in writing this piece of work, and Kong Shangren’s life. However, fewer studies have been done solely on the hero and heroine, which is of great research value.

The aim of this A.E. is therefore mainly to gain an exploratory and descriptive insight into the creation of the images of the hero and heroine in *The Peach Blossom Fan*. This study looks into the background for the creation of the two characters, the allegorical and tragic elements embodied in these two characters, and the components in their images which reflect the special features of the late-Ming society.

This study shows that the images of the hero and heroine created by Kong Shangren are, to a great extent, different from those created by other writers before him in the history of Chinese drama.

It is hoped that the findings of this thesis will be able to contribute to the study on *The Peach Blossom Fan* and other related fields.