Abstract

Liang Shiqiu (1903-1987) was a contemporary writer and literary critic. His old-fashioned family provided him an excellent training in classical Chinese literature. He spent three years studying in USA during which he had close contact with Western literary theories and art. Thus, he was well-versed in both Chinese and Western literature. His learning is clearly reflected in the bound volume of Yashexiaopin which not only displays his ingenuity but also a unique charm.

My first chapter accounts for a strange phenomenon: in China Liang Shiqiu is ignored in the field of contemporary literature, but he is regarded as one of the most important literary figures in Taiwan’s literary circles.

The second chapter studies the development of contemporary Chinese prose and Liang Shiqiu’s life in order to find out the reason why his prose has such an attractive style.

The third chapter analyses the content and thought of the Yashexiaopin and concludes with five points: his prose satirizes social injustice, admonishes people to do significant things, points out human weakness, criticizes corrupt customs and habits, and finally recalls his hometown Beijing. Through these focuses, we can see Liang Shiqiu’s ideal and hope is to pursue a peaceful life for mankind.

The fourth chapter analyzing the artistry and techniques of the Yashexiaopin contains five major points: his prose is concise and rich in meaning, humorous and jocular, displays broad learning in quoting all times and countries’ literature, employs exaggerated description, and uses irony to express his views. In order to bring out the characteristics of the Yashexiaopin, in the fifth chapter, I compare the Yashexiaopin with Zhou Zuoren's (周作人) prose at his early stage.

From the dissertation, we can conclude that Liang Shiqiu through his humor and a leisurely and carefree style, he shows us a true, good, and beautiful world. He should be recognized as an important treasure of contemporary Chinese literature.