

## Study on the description of folk customs in Xiao Hong's novels

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**Abstract:** Xiao Hong, a writer who came out of the black land, took his hometown as her spiritual mother place, and described the folk customs of the magic land in northeast China with exquisite brushwork. And this is exactly the true portrayal of the environment and the life of the northeast people at that time.

### 1. Introduction

In the literary corridor of China, all accomplished writers have their own spiritual homeland, such as Beijing of Lao she, xiangxi of Shen Congwen and chengdu of Ba Jin. These lands not only give them life, but also serve as an endless source of inspiration for their creative process, from which much of their writing material comes. On the other hand, their writing style and artistic achievements are closely related to this. Xiao Hong is the same way. The black land where she was born and grew up gives her works life and breath. Xiao Hong's character, writing style and emotional world are highly related to her hometown, which is also the soul of her works. As far as Xiao Hong is concerned, her hometown not only gives her life, but also is an important reason for her remarkable creation and high achievement. Her works not only have a group of loyal fans at home, but also have many fans abroad. The great attraction of Xiao Hong's works is closely related to the strong cultural color of her hometown. As Lu Xun said, "those with regional color can often go to the world and have greater vitality. [Lu Xun: the complete works of Lu Xun, vol. 10, Beijing people's literature publishing house, 1981] it is standing on the land of her hometown that Xiao Hong can create many works full of vitality and establish her influence at home and abroad.

### 2. A General Description of Folk Customs in Xiao Hong's Novels

We read Xiao Hong's novels, combined with her smooth plain language, readers will feel a thick northeast style. In her works, people can feel the life of the northeast people in the 1920s and 1930s extremely characteristic picture. One of the important reasons why Xiao Hong has been concerned and discussed for a long time is that her works have opened a door for people to understand the living conditions and lifestyles of people in the magical land of beidahuang in the 1920s and 1930s. She described "the northern people's strong attitude towards life and their struggle against death" with the unique meticulous observation and delicate writing style of women, which attracted readers with the strong characteristics of northeast China.

When talking about the regional color of a place, it is bound to mention the natural scenery. But in addition to the natural scenery, it should also contain the local conditions and people of a place. This is the "humanized" nature, which is integrated and inseparable with the objective nature. "Folk customs are folk customs and customs, reflecting the corresponding national cultural psychological precipitation, which not only concentrates the profound social life, but also carries our traditional culture. A writer who takes her hometown as the spiritual birthplace will never forget the unique folk customs of her hometown. It is Xiao Hong's description of the folk customs of her hometown that makes her literary works contain precious folklore value.

Mao Dun said in the preface to Xiao Hong's work <the story of Hulan river>: "it is a narrative poem... A string of sad ballads. [Mao Dun: introduction to the story of Hulan river written by Mao Dun and the story of Hulan river published by Heilongjiang people's publishing house, December 1979] the description and presentation of folk customs and features in the northern black land is a

prominent feature of Xiao Hong's novels. Open her novel, accompanied by the fragrance of the black land, greeted the picture of the life and customs of the people in the northeast: along the street of the dye VAT workshop, color shop, bean curd workshop, paper mill; Walking through the streets of the liang fen burden, peddler picky, tofu plate, ma hua boxes; In the summer slowly burning the smoke mosquito's long rope, urges the person to fall asleep to drift the artemisia argyi flavor's blue smoke; In winter, women sit on the heated kang and talk about their daily life. And the drum of the great god, who works round the clock for disaster relief and cure; The popular lady temple fair in April every year; July 15 on the upland with the Hulan river drift away with the river lamps; Lively wild stage play, gongs and drums roaring yangko singing... Xiao Hong's description of the folk customs in northeast China is unpolished and spotless. She truly describes and reproduces the living state, moral concept, behavior mode and customs of people in this black land.

### **3. Characteristics of Folk Customs in Xiao Hong's Novels**

In general, the description of folk customs in Xiao Hong's novels can be grasped from two aspects.

#### **3.1. The first characteristic of folk customs in Xiao Hong's novels**

On the one hand, the depiction of folk customs expresses the simple and honest local people, and at the same time reflects the voice of the people, hiding people's expectations and hopes for the future. Xiao hong in the novel to count the Hulan district various custom: broken straw, cross street town, wang widow room "cover" in the history of desert, in August, the women will be clothes, quilt, pound a wooden stick, and the field pick vegetables, fire basin, the behavior of the sheep, engagement to buy clothes and so on, these are simple its customs, with the northeast life characteristics. Also like the "Hulan river biography" at the beginning, the author tried his best to render the north wild "cold", although the harsh winter brought people endless desolate, but a "cold" and do not know how much to cause a number of wandering homesick feelings, I do not know how much to pull out the memory related to the thick homesickness. From the perspective of innocent girls, the author also narrates the interesting stories in the eyes of children with deep feeling: "when an old man enters the house, he sweeps the ice on his beard with a broom" [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, heilongjiang people's publishing house, page 2, 1979.12], "an old man selling steamed bread, carrying a wooden box... Just shout in the street. .... The original ice and snow covered the soles of his feet, he walked very not effective, if not very careful, he will fall. .... Fell is not very good, the steamed bread box fell over... A number of... Swallowed my steamed bread. '" [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, p. 2, 1979] the optimism and helplessness of the old man is not because of his incompetence. And the voice, accustomed in the cold, "the ground is cracked." [Xiao Hong: biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, 1979.12, page 1] "what a terrible god!" [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, p.1, 1979.12] these seemingly ordinary things, however, all contain deep feeling and rural feelings in the author's works, and they are in the author's heart. How many times has the pen end appeared the homesickness only she knows.

#### **3.2. The second characteristic of folk customs in xiao hong's novels**

On the other hand, the description of traditional customs with superstitious color. These traditional and backward superstitions and customs are not only feudal traditions, but also closely related to the backwardness and ignorance of local people. After thousands of years of feudal society in China, the feudal rule finally brought the social development to a standstill. The feudal exploitation caused the people's extreme poverty in economy, and the feudal thought that came into being also imprisoned the people, resulting in their spiritual poverty -- ignorance and numbness. However, in Xiao Hong's works, you can hardly find words to strongly criticize or deny these bad habits. She still tells her childhood memories in the tone of a storyteller and a talker, and tells the story of the ignorance of the citizens caused by the old social order and traditional customs, as well

as the tragedy brought by ignorance, causing "the attention of healing". In the biography of Hulan river, Xiao Hong devoted a whole chapter to the folk customs such as dancing the great spirits, putting the river lamp on, playing wild games and visiting the temple of the maiden.

Jumping the big god is a primitive witchcraft activity, the purpose is to cure the disease. It usually consists of a female god and a male god. "That most of female deities in ordered half came down" [XiaoHong: Hulan river ", Heilongjiang people's publishing house, 1979.12 page 38], once the upper body, god "is power and prestige, there seems to be a hammering to her head, her body is the matter, she stood up and jumping around," [XiaoHong: Hulan river ", Heilongjiang people's publishing house, 1979.12 page 38] "next to the great god and a second, god... What did the great god ask him and what did he answer? Good two gods is answer like a fish, bad two gods one not careful to say blunt big god of a word, big god will make up. [Xiao Hong: the story of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, p. 38, 1979] if the great god is not satisfied, he must burn incense and wine, even hang red cloth and kill chickens. Therefore, people are in awe of the great god. So as soon as the drums began to play, men and women, young and old, ran to the dancing houses, and the houses were full of people. And some women, with their children in their hands, were jumping over the top of the wall, crying and crying, to see the dancing god." [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's press, 1979.12, p. 38] obviously, in the dull and dull life in rural areas, dancing is not only a way to cure diseases, but also has become a kind of entertainment.

The July 15 yue lan hui, Hulan river will put on the river lights, the scene is also very noisy. At dusk, before it was quite dark, people came running to the lamp. Streets and alleys, even if the people who do not go out all the year round, also want to rush to the riverside with the crowd,... Run the streets up in smoke." [Xiao Hong: a biography of the Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, p. 39] "just as the burning clouds fell, the streets glowed with microscopic light. .... They all waited until the moon was high and the river lamp would be lowered from the water. [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's press, 1979.12, p. 39] it can be seen that this ghost festival, which is dedicated to finding a way out of death for ghosts and grievances, has become another recreation activity for people.

The wild stage play lasted for three days, which was both a carnival for the country people and a good time for visiting relatives. .... So when it came time to sing, it was not simply to watch the play, but to pick up the girl and change her son-in-law. A nursery rhyme is a good proof: "la la opera... The little grandson is going, too. [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, 1979.12, p. 47] apart from seeing relatives and friends, this is a good chance for blind dates. On the stage, the actor is working hard to roar, and under the stage flirtatious have, talk, small business have. Who can tell the difference between a play on stage and one in real life?

Temple fair is a great event in northeast China. At least in my hometown, temple fairs are held every year on the 8th, 18th and 28th days of the 4th lunar month. No matter how far it is from the place where the temple fair is held, people are willing to go there and spend money for it. Some hire a car to get there that day, and some even arrive a few days early. So in the <the story of Hulan river>, April 18 niang niang temple assembly that lively scene is very familiar."The local name of this temple fair is ramble temple, also have no cent, men and women old and young all come to ramble, but among them one woman is most." [Xiao Hong: biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, p. 57, December 1979] because they were all asking for children, "the temple fair broke up in the second half of the day... Some women who had no sons still played tricks on their mothers at the temple. .... Put a tape around her foot... The clay doll next to her was stolen and carried away. It is said that by doing so, a son will be born next year. [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, 1979.12, p. 62] in fact, this temple fair, like dancing big gods and wild stage plays, is also an interesting thing in people's boring life.

#### 4. The Deep Connotation of Folk Customs in Xiao Hong's Novels

Look at the Hulan river people these spiritual highlights, but are for the ghost and do, for the ghost and not human, not a little sad. When jumping the great god, the drum sounds so loud and the great god sings so well. It is very cold. [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, 1979.12, p. Why is that? For the mournful drumming adds to the drear gloom of human life, the parting of a loving mother from a long journey, the unhappy old man reflecting on his happy but short childhood... ", the sad song and drum let these vegetation fool man could not help but also ask the meaning of life: "life for what, just have such a bleak night. [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, p. 40] the river lamp was noisy at the beginning. Only gradually from the bustling situation, toward the road to calm. [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, p. 42, 1979] the lower the river lamp goes, the more desolate and lonely it looks. [Xiao Hong: a biography of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, 1979.12, p. 43] then, the river was in decline and the shore was deserted. This starting from the noisy noisy, finally sad empty situation, is not the real reproduction of life! There is no permanent scenery and noise, only the eternal river and the moon. < / p > < p > wild stage play after singing, everything is calm, see the mother with tears to send her daughter back to her husband's home, can not help but bursts of sadness welled up in my heart. After this kind of large "recreational activities", everywhere shows the "bustling into leaves, soldiers no wilderness" of sadness.

"The purpose of writing novels is to write about people." [Wang Zengqi: on genre paintings, Wang Zengqi's collection, Jiangsu literature and art publishing house, 1993]. Through Xiao Hong's description of these folk customs, people can see the life of people in northeast China and even China. In daily life, they don't have a life of happiness, even the feeling of life, simple life is like a piece of vitality of the wilderness, and only in some summer wind broken life, can have some spiritual pursuit, embrace some "participation" in the history of "spirit", but unfortunately, some "participation" is cruelty to the innocent life, destruction and twisted people's hearts. Old Hu's family lively lovely daughter-in-law is in such an environment, in people's laughter and indifference in the water tank lost life. What is even more incomprehensible is this: "these events are all for ghosts... Dancing big gods and ghosts and singing big plays are for the dragon king to see. On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, there will be a river lantern. April 18 is also the sacrifice of burning incense and kowtowing to the devil. In this lonely town where even a pair of plaster is too expensive to buy, only the colorful shop for the dead in the east second street is doing a brisk business. The living have to worry about the dead, have to rely on the protection of the dead, even the dead get more glory than the living, this is really an inverted world: life is worse than death, the world is hell, but the hell has become heaven. It is just like the writing of everyday life, let people feel the flavor of life, there is a strong sadness and loneliness inside the happiness, behind the lively has a thorough marrow of the desolate.

In fact, the narration and description of local conditions and customs in xiao hong's works are simple and simple homesickness, as well as ignorant and backward customs. Both the everyday life of ordinary people and the jubilant spectacle seem to be immersed in a confused atmosphere. And when readers read these words, they are also affected by such emotions, pulling their emotions to the distant Hulan river bank, to this land full of calamitous, backward and ignorant, but also full of expectation and hope. This of course has something to do with the writer's lonely mentality. In MAO dun's preface to the story of Hulan river, he said to people, "I once hoped for a better life... I am afraid words cannot describe her lonely sorrow. [Mao Dun: introduction to the story of Hulan river, written by Mao Dun, and the story of Hulan river, Heilongjiang people's publishing house, 1979.12] with the combination of contradictory words, we can feel the desolation of Xiao Hong's mood and know her inner struggle. Therefore, Xiao Hong's works, whether the description of natural scenery or the presentation of folk customs and local customs, are shrouded in a vast and desolate color because of her loneliness.

## 5. Conclusion

Xiao Hong's works are always about people's survival, but survival is the primary issue in the fragmented era. Therefore, the folk customs under her pen have a strong color of desolation and sorrow, which is the true portrayal of the life of people in northeast China at that time. Through the description of folk customs, she tells the readers that such a country and such a land have produced ignorant and dull people, and also shows the fate and struggle of people in the vast and barren northeast. Therefore, she looks like a gentle and delicate description, but it is a vast and desolate shock. Reading Xiao Hong's novels, there is a feeling of "looking back has always been bleak".

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