

On The Northeast Regional Culture in Xiao Hong's Novels*

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As the literary pride from the black land of northeast China, Xiao hong's works show the unique regional culture of northeast China. With her meticulous brush strokes, she showed us the distinct geographical environment of the four seasons in north China, the strong local flavor and people's sentiment, as well as the servility and ferocity of the people in the northeast. Xiao hong's criticism of callous and ignorant servile characters and his praise of the consciousness of resistance and the indomitable life form, prompts us to think about the "national character" of northeast China and makes us feel the tragedy of society, the philosophy of life and the spirit of poets.

Keywords: Xiao Hong's novels, Northeast culture, Local characteristics

Xiao Hong, a writer from northeast China, writes with deep affection and love for his country, the black land and the people. Her works show the local conditions, customs and life of northern China, opening a window for people to understand the magical land and living conditions of northern China in the 1920s and 1930s.

The Unique Geographical Environment of Northeast China

Northeast China is a large geographical and economic region in China. Northeast culture is also called black land culture. Dense grass, sparse land, snow and snow all determine the regional characteristics and cultural features of the northeast.

Geography

Located in the remote northeast, Hulan city is a small county town along the Hulan river on the northeast border. It is small, closed, and communication with the outside world is very rare and inconvenient.

In the novel *Biography of Hulan River*, the author uses a lot of words to depict the big mud pit in the local east second street. This big mud pit is very dangerous. It often drowns chickens, ducks, pigs, horses and even takes the lives of unfortunate children, even small swallows flying in the air can't escape being stuck if they want to use their wings for water. But the public welfare is ignored, people live in peace of mind, no one is willing to use their own strength to change the status quo. The author is good at reflecting people's ignorance through regional features.

Climate

Xiao hong reproduces the natural scenery of north China and presents the climate characteristics of northeast China vividly. The beginning of *The Story of The Hulan River* reads, "the severe winter has frozen the

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earth. The old man swept the ice off his beard with his broom when he entered the house.” In an instant we were brought to the freezing northeast. *The call of the wilderness* begins with the description “the wind is merry”, introduces more than 30 scenes of high winds, showing us the overwhelming winds of the northeast wilderness through the combination of sight and sound. It can be seen that the extreme climate of northeast China also symbolizes the wanton acts of the Japanese invaders on northeast China and the destruction of northeast people.

Nation

Regional culture is the proof of national character. It can stand the baptism of time and the havoc of war and represents the indomitable vitality. The northeast region, with Han culture as the main body, integrates Manchu, Korean and other multi-ethnic cultures, has a subtle influence on the life of the northeast people. In *The Story of Hulan River*, there is a kind of “fighting dog”, which is a kind of food from Manchu. Xiao Hong also uses a lot of words and satirize attitude to describe the unique activities of the jumping god in northeast China, which has many similarities to the dancing god of the Manchu shaman. As formed by primitive native people, the dancing god follows the music melody in the memorial service and prayer, imitates the dancing posture and manner of animal gods and spirits, and highlights their dancing characteristics. This kind of “ornamental value” activities gradually formed the northeast national culture and entertainment tradition, which was integrated into the daily life of the northeast rural areas, in fact, it was the great god who used the ignorance of the villagers to make some small profits for himself. It reflects the absurdity, boredom and superstition and closure of thoughts of people living in the small town with the closed Hulan river.

The Unique Language and Customs of Northeast China

Pure and Authentic Northeast Dialect

The northeast dialect is straightforward, just like the northeast people's straightforward personality, they tend to speak short, aggressive and energetic. Influenced by Manchu and other cultures, the eastern and northern languages have some unique pronunciation, which is a phenomenon of misreading of positive characters. In *The Story of Hulan River*, Uncle You'er always says “this” as “jie ge” when talking. “Gan ha” means “what to do”; Blind and blind is blind. “Rare” means “like”. The northeast dialect is also good at expressing a form or sound with overlapping words. For example, Uncle You'er is described as “draggled” or “in plastic” when walking, every time he moves, he kicks against the heel of the plastic and strikes the soles of the shoes. This description reminds us of the way You'er walks, and also reflects the character of You'er's unscrupulous characters.

Unique Festival Customs

Xiao hong is obsessed with childhood memories and carries the local customs and customs of the northeast rural areas. In *March of The Town*, writing about the Lantern Festival, a group of young men and girls hustled in front of the city to see the lanterns: “lion, dry boat, dragon lantern, Yangge, so much so that the eye also spent.” *The Biography of Hulan River* says that the people of Hulan county cure with the dancing god, send the victims by the river lamp in the festival of Hulan, play a role in the wild platform to thank the god, etc., all of which are written in vivid and charming style. ‘Life in Hulan river town is not without sound and color,’ Writer Mao dun said. “In the four seasons of the year, along with those grand and lively festivals that come in turn like walking lamps, in front of the grey background of daily life, it presents a thick red and green color

with original nature.”^{[1] (P.8)}

Unique Kang (a heat brick bed) Culture

The harsh natural environment in northeast China cannot be separated from kang, a heating facility. As a folk culture in northeast China, “fire kang” is also a special scene in Xiao Hong's novels. “Kang” is a space for rural women in northeast China to release their loneliness in their leisure time. They talk about everything here, discuss about the things of their neighbors, tell about the difficulties in life and comfort each other. “Kang” is also their disaster site. Yueying was the most beautiful woman in the fishing village. She suffered from paralysis and spent the rest of her life on the kang. Her husband did not give her anything to eat or cover, but only with bricks. Here, originally a “kang” for people in the northeast, became a tomb for Yue ying, who groaned every night in pain.

The Northeast Cultural Immersion Under The Character Image

Foolish and Ignorant Submissive

Farmers in northeast China, who are mainly engaged in agricultural production, have been confined to narrow land for a long time. They sow spring and reap autumn harvest in the spring.

The innocent daughter-in-law little Tuanyuan was pressed by a stupid and ignorant mother-in-law with strict discipline, living to torture death only because she did not know shy; The forthright, warm and kind-hearted Dajie Wang was disliked by many for her self-assertion of marrying the Slanting Mouth-Feng. The tragedy of the daughter-in-law little Tuanyuan and Dajie wang is inseparable from the “concern” of the neighbors. Female images in Xiao hong's works are the focus of her writing. They are victims of patriarchal society Aunt Fu fa, Yue ying and Jin zhi all suffer from both mental and physical suffering in the pain of no love. They, as human beings, have no dignity or value as human beings, only the mutilation and oppression of another sex. Xiao hong wrote about male indifference and suffering as a woman, revealing the deep tragedy of women.

Fearless Protesters

On the one hand, Xiao hong writes a large number of lonely, ignorant and cold hearts, as well as the backward traditional consciousness that makes the nation stagnate. On the other hand, it also writes about the northeast people's unyielding and fearless spirit of struggle. In *The Life and Death Field*, Old woman Wang Po suffered many hardships in her life. However, she was straightforward and persistent in life. In the northeast rural area under the oppression of male power, she dared to refute herself and win dignity. She encouraged her husband to resist the oppression of the landlord; in the face of imperialist aggression, she helped communists hide their identities and stand sentinel for secret societies. This shows the author's exploration of human life dignity, and reflects the indomitable and indomitable fighting spirit of the northeast people.

There was Zhao san, who was determined not to be a slave to the country, and even when he died, he would “plant the Chinese flag on the top of the grave”. Li qingshan, the former leader of the Scythe Club, vowed to heaven that he would rather have his head full of all the trees in the village than drive out Japanese invaders. Even Erliban, who spent all his life guarding his beloved goat, after witnessing the tragic death of his wife, said goodbye to the goat and went to the People's Revolutionary Army. They finally understand that passivity is only to be beaten, and that only by making themselves strong can they save the land, the nation and themselves.

The Deep Local Feeling in the Northeast Culture

The vast and sparsely populated geographical environment in northeast China determines the lifestyle of farmers in northeast China. They have lived in the black land that makes them proud for generations. The land is their home and the farmers have shown a strong “love for the land”. In *Death Field*, farmers work in the wheat fields every day, hard but never tired. Here are Erliban who thinks more valuable than the life of a goat, and Wang po who regards grain of wheat as more important than their own children. When she told us how her child had died, her cool manner made us feel infinitely sad. The story of Wang Po in ordinary years reflects the real living condition of peasants in that era, who lack humanistic care. But when Japanese imperialism disrupted their primitive and peaceful life and trampled their land, the strong sense of home and land urge them to stand up. This is enough to show that they have a hard feelings for the black land in the northeast, and they have no fear for the land and even give up their lives.

Walking into Xiao Hong's world, we read about her loneliness when she was a drift all her life. In her memory of her hometown, we learn about the special regional culture of northeast China, which is the philosophy of land and the poetry of life.

References

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