

Inextricable Hallmarks of the Era: The Breakthrough and Predicament of Liang Xiaosheng's Writing

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Abstract

Novels of the educated youth brought great fame to Liang Xiaosheng, but meanwhile they hindered him from proceeding with the times. In the time when various avant-garde writing techniques are bombing in the literary world, Liang also tried to make a breakthrough in his writing ideas; he drew inspiration from Chinese traditional novels and western works, and innovated structure layout and language. However, the "Cultural Revolution's" moral critics and hallmarks of the era clearly remained in his works. Although Liang Xiaosheng failed to break through his inherent writing model, his spirit of pursuit is admirable; as one of the new period writers who "seek for change", he is quite representative.

Key words: Liang Xiaosheng; Breakthrough; Memories of the cultural revolution

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INTRODUCTION

For a long time, Liang Xiaosheng insisted on the writing method of realism. As a witness of Cultural Revolution, his novels of educated youth in 1980s reproduced their suffering and struggle, which roused the special memory of a generation of an era. In the 1990s, Liang Xiaosheng turned to the underclass, representing the stories of all walks of life in commodity economy times, and called for

the return of the true, the good and the beautiful. However, as his writing goes deeper and the demand from social culture became diverse, his writing entered a bottleneck period for his usual writing method of realism became out-dated in the continuous renewing literature flow of 1990s. Therefore, he began to make a breakthrough in his writing model consciously.

1. VARIOUS TRIALS IN WRITING METHODS

Liang Xiaosheng started to read Chinese and foreign masterpiece at an early age, "I started to read novels when I was in fifth or sixth grade of elementary school. Modern or ancient, Chinese or foreign, I diligently read any book I can borrow" (Liang, 1997). Books endowed him with more happiness than material could provide in his impoverished boyhood, which also comforted his spirit in his depressed life as an educated youth, and empowered him to make ceaseless efforts in his career of writing and teaching. Thus, Liang Xiaosheng is adept at imbibing resources, and fully expresses them in his writing. Liang Xiaosheng's trail of breakthrough mainly started in two aspects: the imitation of the traditional novel writing and study of western writing techniques. Imitation of Chinese classical literature is mainly manifested in the imitation of the form and recreation of the effects. In form, the classical Chinese version of *Red Mill*¹ inherited the characteristic of the legends of Ming and Qing dynasties, and tales of humility. He narrated the plots of the legendary story by someone's memory; and Mr. Zhai's curse before death and the odd phenomena in the *Red Mill* enriched the mystique of the story. At the

¹ *Red Mill* is revised by the writer for several times, there are three versions in total: the vernacular version, classical Chinese version and drama version, the plot, theme and character depiction are almost the same, the difference lies in characters' names.

end of the story, the “Yishishi comments” is an obvious aspect of biographically historic literature, and Liang Xiaosheng simply used hundreds of words to express the profound theme of the novel. The biographic description about Mr. Zhai is also an inheritance from traditional classical Chinese novels: narrating the characters' names and family background at the beginning, then their deeds, and at the end setting the characters' fate according to good and evil standard; after Mr. Zhai's wife's death, Tao Te Ching is the only thing she left behind, which is a sharp contrast with her former merciless deeds. Another novel *The Death* bears some similarities with tales of mystery and the supernatural, in which the author tried to explore human nature and the meaning of living by the conversations between the human and the dead. The novel depicts a traditional Chinese female ghost, and presents an unique picture for the readers. The description about the appearance and acts of the death is deeply affected by classical novels, “gently tiptoed to the bedside”, “She finally opens her mouth, her voice is as beautiful as the singing of the warbler and swallow, and as clear as jade beads falling on a plate. After finishing her words, her even teeth gently bite her lower lip, her shining eyes staring forward, which are seriocomic.” These classical Chinese descriptions add the mystique of the story, and made readers feel transcending time and space. However, the latter half of the novel returns to vernacular Chinese. This virtual-real combination is a new trail of Liang Xiaosheng's writing. “The form of dream provides comparatively broad narrative space for the narrator. The illogicality of dream eliminates the real-life limitation for ‘me’, and the ‘me’ need not be conceived or narrated based on the logicity of daily life, whereas from one's own purpose totally. The can writer surpasses the restriction of time and space can organize the materials freely”(Fang, 2005, p. 248). Liang Xiaosheng brings us to a mysterious dreamland, from dream to reality, and the intersection of genuine and sham expresses the perseverance on traditional morals, in the dream the man destroyed the death and regain his life, which exactly represents the author's appealing for the return of moral virtues. But meanwhile, Liang Xiaosheng's new trail also suggested his inability to save the reality and then retreat to psyche experience, by which he proves his helplessness to extricate from reality. Liang Xiaosheng extends his writing scene to unknown space, which brings fresh new experience to readers with deep artistic appeal.

Except for seeking inspiration from classical novels, Liang Xiaosheng, like most of his fellow avant-garde writers, vigorously learned writing experience from western literature, which showed in his learning of expressing and artistic techniques. Kafka and Zola exert great influence on Liang Xiaosheng's writing. Kafka grasps the detailed living condition of human beings, and uses seemingly grotesque but penetrating methods of expression to criticize and expose reality, “there has been

some tendency in modern history, that is: Kafkaesque things has come into being in a broad social environment: sacred power gradually becomes centralized; and transforms all organizations into endless labyrinth, that is, the transformation the social behavior of bureaucracy; thus individual's non-individuality has come into being” (Dong, 2004, p.133), for Liang Xiaosheng, the reality is exactly what he want to represent, so he learns a lot from Kafka in writing. He tried to use some extremely exaggerating even grotesque techniques of expression to show human instinct, depicted the perverted human nature, explored human's unconscious subjective feelings, and by which he exposed the predicament of the human being's living.

An absurd story *Floating City*, a representative book written by Liang Xiaosheng in the 1990s, reveals the burden and cruelty in reality. In this novel, a vast city separated from the mainland overnight and then became a drifting island. The island put on all kinds of bizarre stories with a growing air of panic. All these plots are extremely absurd: the struggling between gulls and human for living space, a letter to the citizens drafted by a middle school geography teacher, people's insane fight for buoys, the overstate about Ma Guoxiang's unusual occupational skills and mutually the distrust of the illness among mayor, mayoress, Ma Guoxiang and his families. However, “the appearance of absurdity endows and presents a lot of thoughts to a thinker at a maximum level. That is to say, it is the refining and blurring of reality, namely the higher reality. In *Floating City*, the absurdity worked as a very property and exercise to a certain degree which facilitates the author's omitting plenty of superficial narrations and foreshadowing that may occur, but also showing essential reality in an intensive, concise, deep and clear way. It is worthwhile to ruminate that turning reality into unreality together with turning unreality into reality integrates appropriately” (Liu, 1998). The catastrophe the city underwent is exactly a great metaphor. It is a true reflection of Chinese society in the 1990s: through human's madness in despair and helpless, it mirrors good and evil. “Differing from the theatre of the absurd in western modernism which is concerned with the alienation and the distinction of the human's existence, Liang Xiaosheng is more anxious about the current Chinese cultural environment which has become worse. In other words, he cares about the loss of faith and principles of life. Although it is the theme of his realistic writings, his theme develops further and deeper in the air of the ridicule. This is Liang Xiaosheng's effort to attempt to hew out a new path of the art”(Yang, 1997). Historical scenes reappear by means of the description of absurd events. For example, people's insane fight for buoys reproduces scenes of ransacking and blabbing in the Cultural Revolution; the polarization of three political powers in the island reflects the confrontation of various trends of thoughts in the 1990s; the forming of

different student associations based on different political positions represents the antagonism between royalists and revolutionaries at that moment. Meanwhile the book also exposes the dark side of reality deeply, such as, in the opening part, their ugly faces of petty bureaucrats when they were teased in public; bureaucrats' panic and fleeing together with the faithless and the heartless as well as the selfish and revenge among people when they met the catastrophe; and the ideas of equality in the sub-consciousness of citizens. By exhibiting these ugly pictures of reality before the readers, Liang Xiaosheng reveals the profoundness of his critique.

Although Liang Xiaosheng drew lessons from western writing methods widely, he was also selective, in which the reference of Zola was quite paradoxical. Compared with Zola, works of revolutionary realism which Liang Xiaosheng had read for a long period have a significant difference. That is, "in the novel of revolutionary realism, people will see that lower-class people had a destitute and miserable destiny, but at least they owned a hopeful thing—that was the quality and the capital to build self-esteem and to change their fates. Moreover, they also possessed a love which was always depicted as a beautiful, unswerving and enviable, and could stand the testing of destruction. These two necessary factors in the novels of revolutionary realism are rare to be found in Zola's works of critical realism. Zola's critical realism is distinct from other critical realisms; in particular, he has a frozen style so which suggests a kind of writing style under a feeling of zero..." (Liang, 2010, p.110). The difference in the aesthetic kept his distance from Zola's realism, nevertheless Liang Xiaosheng had to acknowledge the critical power of Zola, "when I wrote *The Fear*, there is only an idea in my mind: I want to write a Chinese version of *Nana*" (Liang, 2010, p.53). Thus he decided to practice Zola's realism and show his cruelty, draw inspiration from the entanglement between soul and body of *Nana* to expose the human nature, and stretch out the modern female's experience under the influence of money-worship that they tangled with men and sacrificed their bodies for material satisfaction like *Nana*. In this book, Liang Xiaosheng manifested moral decay and deviation of value in society through Cao Di's situation: Distorted personality, acquisitive tendencies, life crushed by cruel reality and even hatred and kill in revenge in the past all took on to the life in it. Furthermore, complicated relationships and abundant scenes in *The Fear* widened the scope of reality. Yet repeatedly dramatizing excitant scenes inevitably made the novel so vulgar that it affected its sense of beauty.

"Liang Xiaosheng struggled between Zola's critical realism and the intention of Kitsch catering to the market, and he almost slid into the latter irredeemably"(Liang, 2010, p.113) . "If *The Fear* criticizes money-worship in commercial age only from the perspective of moral

decline in sex, then the concept of *The Fear* is too old, and it can not easily rouse people's indignation. The appeal of the novel roots is in its sexual description, in its detailed and exaggerated description about the psychology of sex, psychological distortion and sex perversion of characters, in fully arousing readers' pleasure of reading. If all the authors criticize on money like this, it is rather horrible"(Wang, 2000, p.170). At that time, Liang Xiaosheng's learning on writing techniques from the western writers still stays at the level of imitation. He learns a lot from Zola to portray a modern version of *Nana*, what he emphasizes is to represent a tragedy of a woman who lacks faith and morality, but his descriptions of society and analysis of reality are still far from enough. On the contrary, he led this story into a manifestation of vulgar lust so that the work is short of the depth of thoughts and the sense of aesthetics in art.

2. THE TRANSITION IN LANGUAGE STYLE

Liang Xiaosheng's novels have always been known for his plain and easily understandable language. But in the meantime, these colloquial and simple expressions weaken the artistic beauty of his works. He once admitted, "As I had limited time and much work to do, some novels were finished with defects in wording and phrasing, and some were shallow in meaning" (Liang, 1997). In his view, there are historical reasons that result in his shortage in language. He says, "At the beginning of new China, the object of literary writing changed. Most words and phrases that our ancestors passed down were banned. During the Cultural Revolution period, almost all depiction and writing could be done with only about 3,000 words. So, when our generation started to write, we even cannot find a reference. We grew up in such a relationship with Chinese language. Later when it began to record the experience of our time, the self-deficiency manifested in language use is much more backward than the literate youth of any other period in China." His long time language habit has made his novels a similar style. Therefore, to enhance the expressive force of language, Liang makes changes in his language style intentionally.

Liang tries to write his works in classical Chinese. *Da Niao* is an example of the mixed use of modern vernacular Chinese and classical Chinese. Through some description of the campus friendship between me and *Da Niao*, the author presents us a lively, intelligent and righteous image of *Da Niao* in vernacular Chinese. However, after *Da Niao* chooses to become a business man, great changes take place in his life. Here, the writer shifts vernacular Chinese into classical Chinese and depicts *Da Niao*'s dwelling house in great detail to show his extravagant life. The novel writes:

After going through several moon gates, a totally different scene shows up: The pool in front is quiet without wave, and feet-long fishes are swimming in the water. Artificial hills in different shapes stand beside the pool, with a corridor behind whirly stretching to the sole pavilion on the water. The garden is full of flower in blossom. Colorful flowers along with lush vegetation present a vigorous picture. The water in the artificial fall and fountain splashes like crystal. Buildings arranged in order are surrounded by quietness. This tranquility is disturbed only when birds sing... This dwelling house is really an earthly paradise. (Liang, 2009, p.188)

Liang spent a lot of effort to depict the beauties and luxury in this heaven-like dwelling house. The peace inside this classic courtyard brings strong contrast to the chaotic metropolitan life outside, the giving readers' confusion of time and space. At the same time, the description implies that Da Niao's behavior goes against the social rules. Just as his magnificent house can't blend in the chaos outside, his luxurious life is destined to be transient and illusionary. Afterwards, Da Niao was arrested for the exposure of his crime. Liang describes his appeal on the court in detail. The use of powerful classical Chinese presents his anger thoroughly.

If I am the only person to be punished, it's the luck and blessing for the country and all the people. If fraud is a dead crime, how about cheating or take away by force? Everyday countless money was wasted in holding banquets and entertaining guests in this country. Those grabbers gluttonize money from people and wasted money more than millions a day. Don't you feel angry about that? Dare you arrest all those people? (Liang, 2009, p.210)

The debate is much more like a passionate speech. The use of classical Chinese conveys a stronger appeal than vernacular Chinese does. In the novel, when *Da Niao* is on trial, one of his mistress Xiao Wan claims "I'm ready to die with you!" The simple conversation illustrates the fearlessness of these two girls. The author uses brief sentences to highlight the characters, which also convey his resentment to the unfair reality.

On one hand, the application of classical Chinese in Liang Xiaosheng's novels enhances the expressive force of the story; on the other hand, it is a result of his deliberate self-regulation intentionally. In the moral education that Liang and his peers have received, sex and desire are what should be suppressed to the least and also are shamed to show in literary works. When Liang uses sentence pattern mixed with classical Chinese and vernacular Chinese to depict the lavish lifestyle of me, Da Niao, Xiao Qian and Xiao Wan, classical Chinese fully illustrates its feature of delicacy and simplicity. It not only avoids the over-exposure of sex and desires, but also discloses the corruption and conveys the implied themes. This change in language can be viewed as a correction of the excessive sexual depiction and vulgar tendency in his previous novel *The Fear*.

Apart from that, Liang attempts to change his calm and deep tone of narration which he used to apply in his works. He tries to add teasing and banter color into his

works and to create a joyous atmosphere with humorous language. It is also an attempt to change his writing style. Take the novel *Deafen* as an example, the story is developed according to the monologue of a deaf man. It presents the heroine's ridiculous behavior vividly. "The day I learn to use chopsticks I pick them up with my right hand. This is what ordinary people do. In 'the day', I didn't rebel this rule on a whim. I sat on a chair and put my bowl on the table rather than sat on the table and put the bowl on the chair" (Liang, 2009, p.215). This kind of dramatic description can be found everywhere in the novel. Excessive wordage and meaningless expression enhance the absurdity of the character. In the novel *The Tail*, the depiction of residents' growing tails is also comical, "My mouse tail grew to two chi (a unit of length = one-third meter) long at night. My wife cut off all my trousers' pockets to roll up my tail and hide it in. She also reminded me not to carry money or something else in the pocket any more. The pocket would be used to hide my tail only from then on" (Liang, 2009, p.147). Expressed in humorous language, those imaginary stories attract reader's interest and the expectation of reading. Those absurd plots are not only reflection of social reality; they are also a disclosure of the hypocritical bureaucracy and the public self-deception from a unique and profound perspective. Nifty language makes the novel brighter and relaxing, providing readers a chance to acquire critical thinking about the real life through a pleasant reading process.

3. THE MORAL FETTER IN MAKING BREAKTHROUGHS

Liang Xiaosheng's breakthrough trial breaks his traditional writing styles, which has a positive effect on broadening his way of writing. However, in terms of the learning of classical literature and the practice of western writing methods, we can still see from his works traces of his unique creation endowed by the era. His works in the early 90s are distinctive in moral enlightenment. Long passages of emotional relief create an overemphasis of his moral themes, which greatly affects the artistic quality of his works. He also tried to do some formal changes to make up for the defect. Despite that the fantasy and absurd plots and metaphorical narrations had somehow reduced the moral color of his works; the deeply-rooted moral themes have still been embodied in his works.

Compared with the 80s works characterized by the writing pattern of binary opposition and the emotional bias of good-versus-evil, the contemporary works are more apt to show their moral stance by preconceived lead-ins and allegoric endings. In the vernacular version of *Red Mill*, for example, to minimize his comments on moral enlightenment, the author shows the readers the theme at the very beginning that "if grace changes into debt, it is a

kind of corruption, a two-way corruption of psychological state and mental outlook—and grace is very likely to change into debt” (Liang, 2004, p.3). And the following contents are just for the deduction of this thought. In his narration, the author gives up the emotional relief prevalent in his previous works, and has the plots moved forward independently. However, the writing method has already presupposed an ending before telling the story, which will inevitably hinder readers’ imagination during the reading process. In addition, to fuse the theme and the plot better, the author creates images with special meanings and sets up an allegorical ending during his narration. In *The Demon*, Liang Xiaosheng creates a distinctive image, a demon, which is originated from evil. By describing the process of a livestock turning into a person and a person turning into a livestock, Xiaosheng demonstrates the greed and ignorance of Zhai village people. At the ending part, the demon’s crazy revenge symbolizes that people will eventually pay for their own greed. He intends to tell readers that we need to keep a cool head in the cash society, or greed will bring us devastating disasters. In the classical Chinese version of *Red Mill*, there is also a very special image—the Moulin Rouge, which is a very special building in the village, and also a symbol of the villagers’ desire. Zhaisheng shows his gratitude to the villagers by working day and night, but it’s obvious that the villagers’ desires are far from being fulfilled, which can be shown by their attitudes towards Zhaisheng and Yue. They cover up their inner desires under the guise of morality, and are eager to turn gratitude into discipline by power so as to rationalize their desires. At the end of *Red Mill*, both beautiful love and happy life are strangled by hypocritical moral ethics and hideous desires. What’s more, the ending is very ironic. The site, which has a symbolic meaning for desires, has been developed into a tourist attraction. The indifferent spectators take the tragedy as a joke, unaware of their own ignorance. The novel criticizes not only desires and evil thoughts under the veil of morality, but also numbness of soul and spirit of the modern people. Through his novels, Liang Xiaosheng demonstrates his thinking on the time to readers. He also tries to warn readers by allegorical descriptions. Besides, due to his serious writing attitude and the influence of his early writing habits, he was unable to tell stories slowly and step by step, thus inevitably expressing his exciting feelings from time to time during his narration. In his *Deafen* and *The Tail*, such sentences as “My dear readers” and “Everyone! My dearest compatriots and brothers!” always appear to remind readers to pay attention to his viewpoints. Liang tells stories in the first-person perspective. However, because of his outspoken emotional expressions in the narration, a separation between the narrator and the author is produced, which affects the narrative expression of the story and the integrity of the novel.

Liang Xiaosheng’s writing technique of presupposed thoughts is a continuation of his early creative composing characteristics. He still sticks to the literary view of the time of educated youth and his faithful conversion to traditional values. Whether in terms of his unconscious demonstration in the early years or his intentional omission later on, it has already been a habit hard to change in his writing. His strong senses of morality and social responsibility are what motivate him to take pens as flags. If the articles can be combined with his intentions to a total natural extent, his works will be much more convincing.

4. LIMITATIONS OF LIFE EXPERIENCES AS AN EDUCATED YOUTH LABORING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The living environment is of vital importance for writers’ writing. Writing roots in life. In most cases, living surroundings will be prototypes of writers’ literary works. Liang Xiaosheng is a realist, whose life is the primary source of his literary creation. Educated youths are a group of people most familiar to him and they act as protagonists in his novels all the time. Yet this writing object is so single that it strictly restricts the breadth of his works. In his 90s works, he began to switch his attention to the village and created a number of works reflecting the rural life. Whereas, his limited life experience extremely affected the depth of his works. Liang Xiaosheng once stated frankly:

I am rather awkward actually. One of my feet steps into the newborn middle class, but the other foot sole is painted with glue and firmly sticks to the civilian class, which is immovable even if I want to. Some of my novels reveal my awkwardness naturally. (Liang, 1997)

The awkwardness mainly manifested in his real life and the rural life he depicts. Liang Xiaosheng’s country experience is extraordinarily narrow. He lived in the tenement courtyard during childhood, and led such life as being marginalized by the city. His seven-year experience as an educated youth laboring in the countryside helped him have some knowledge of villages. While in the subsequent decades, he lived in the city ever since. He left the village where he worked as educated youth many years ago, so now the remaining memory in his mind mainly comes from the village at that time. Therefore, he had to get information about village life only from migrant workers in cities, whose descriptions were lack of temporality of rural experience. Owing to shortage of personal experience, he could merely comprehend a contemporary village in his own perspective. In this case, two problems exist in his village-theme novels.

To begin with, Liang Xiaosheng depicts villages and peasants as concepts without uniqueness. In *Red Mill*

and *The Demon*; he summarizes all his understanding of villages as a core image, which is Zhai Village. It stands for a backward Chinese village hiding chronic social malady. It is impoverished and uninformed, and villagers are numb and uneducated, apathetic and emotionless. Stories happening in Zhai Village are generally cruel and gloomy, which are epitomes of contemporary village issues in China. Zhai Village in drama version of *Red Mill* is a village abandoned by democracy and legality, in which freedom and humanity are trampled randomly. Greed with "morality" dominates this land. Love between Zhai boy and Xiao girl is the only warm element in Zhai Village, and the author regards the love as a spiritual force for resistance to oppression and pursuit of freedom. It highlights the force, but at the same time attaches absolutely hideous images to all the other people and things. The whole village is filled with foul air on account of such states as men's greed, women's inner emptiness, the old people's supremacy and the young's apathy. By the same token, in Zhai Village of *The Demon*, descriptions of villagers are similar. We can make out the ugliness of human nature under the rule of desire for money from bloody slaughter and bystanders' apathetic faces. Liang Xiaosheng reveals evil by exaggerating ugliness, so readers can see the barren and desolate vision, feeling despair and pain. Due to his insufficient practical knowledge of peasants' living conditions, he is only able to write about villages from the cognition of traditional conception. So his novels lack of authenticity. As with earlier works about educated youths, modern peasants' character is still as single as hypocritical and selfish, foolish and numb, which are common genes every peasant has. Hence, the diversity of things is neglected in such scene and character design, which leads to singleness of the plot inevitably. When peasants and villages are abstracted into concrete concepts, his writing seems to be rigid and loses of dynamic.

Next, Liang Xiaosheng is short of deep knowledge of village, so he cannot dig into the fundamental causes of some problems, but only unfold those issues before readers' eyes. He thinks and even discloses matters in a rather superficial way, lacking of real fact-investigation and thought-accumulation. Liang Xiaosheng keeps a watchful eye on the village, but cannot go deep into it. In the vernacular version of *Red Mill*, the protagonist Xiao Qin struggles against oppression with her own life, which makes her lover Zhuo Ge keep thinking about her with tenderness. Nevertheless, the rise of tourist business in Ziwei Village for that reason is the continuation of villagers' numbness. In *The Demon*, the author punishes those senseless villagers in the form of death-like end. Liang Xiaosheng stops here abruptly, but evil never stops. What is worse, through punishment, it is powerless for thousands of "Zhai Village" in China to wake up. For this, Liang Xiaosheng argues soberly that, "writers are not politicians after all, nor economists. It is out of the

question to reverse social issues by literature. No matter how much social and political reality writers focus on, they cannot be anything but to concern and never join. Still, the first and best thing writers should do is to pay close attention to characters' minds, and show their inner world, and then arouse the true, the good and the beautiful"(Liang, 2005). Liang Xiaosheng reminds us favorably that we cannot provide effective recipe without causes. He only leaves us two words: to be continued. However, if reformation in the village only relied on peasants' self-awakening, this would be a long way to go.

CONCLUSION

Liang Xiaosheng's breakthrough spirit of embracing change is rare and praiseworthy. He attempts in such aspects as narrative style, symbolic images and artistic skills, which infuse new blood into his writings. Thus, contents and styles of his novels are increasingly rich and versatile. It is unfortunate but inevitable that moral traces and life memory of the Cultural Revolution era seep into his works. The only point that he can change is the type of writing, but such contents as his life focus, humanistic concern and pursuit of the true, the good and the beautiful will never change. Moral factors engraved in the subconsciousness cannot be deviated by emotion, which have become a part of Liang Xiaosheng's life and peacefully lie in the secrecy of his own heart.

Liang Xiaosheng's transformation is an ordinary example in the literary circle. We can see from him that modern writers are actively drawing close to the society and seeking more suitable writing styles for the time and readers. His efforts might be considered as deliberate imitation and piece-together. Besides, secular and commercialized depictions may not be able to avoid in his works. But on the whole, Liang Xiaosheng still persistently sticks to his own writing position. As he said, "I am a writer consistently adhering to reality, not so-called realism, but persist in reflecting real life and even real living status of masses of ordinary people, especially common people"(Wang, 2000, p.109). "I wish that my pen could transform ceaselessly between hardness and softness. That is to say, I am willing to console lower class in China with my novels. Right now it should have more tenderness, sympathy and deep affection. For another, I hope that my novels or other literary forms could really like a spear or arrow that pierces mask of corruption and evil, thus making it show its true colors"(Liang, 1997). He writes with his own conscious from the beginning to the end. Perhaps his works are still a little stiff when learning western writing techniques, and cannot achieve mastery through a comprehensive study of the subject or go straight to the heart of the matter. But we obviously felt the author's strong sense of social responsibility and critical spirit. Those tough words will remind us

every minute to stay clear-minded, which is where the significance of Liang Xiaosheng's works lie.

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