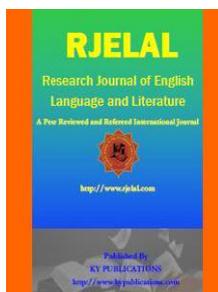




THE TRAGIC FACTORS IN "THE GOLDEN LOTUS", A NOVEL OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL NARRATIVE PATTERN

HAN RUIHUI

Humanities School, Jinan University, Zhuhai, Guangdong Province
China



ABSTRACT

The Golden Lotus narrated the life of an upstart and represented the daily life of Late-Ming dynasty by the story that happened in Song dynasty and had great status in Chinese literature history. Because that the novel gave a vicious and disastrous portrait of the environment and human suffering of that times, it would be regarded as a tragic novel. However, there was no tragedy according to the western concept of tragedy and *The Golden Lotus* was not the exception. The paper believes that *The Golden Lotus* has tragic factors but not is a tragic novel. It discusses the problem in the aspects of Chinese ancient natural environment, the Buddhism influence, the stereotyped narrative pattern of happy ending of Chinese ancient literature and the analysis of the novel content, in which the world that the novel represented was abnormal and malformed, the love and tenderness almost did not exist because of the ruthless pursuit for the material benefit.

Key words: *The Golden Lotus*; Tragic novel; Tragic factor; Ximen Qing; Happy ending pattern.

©KY PUBLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Even now, people can rarely find the unabridged *The Golden Lotus* in the bookstores in China. It is controversial for the complicated content. As one famous novel in ancient, it is different from other works in ancient China that it represents the desire for the profit but not the righteousness. So such literary representation exceeds the Confucian morality. Besides, the novel describes the sexual activities in detail even that it becomes one banned book in ancient, but fortunately the book is kept almost intact so that we can read it although some photoengraving editions contain the pages which are daubed for covering the barefaced sexual description.

Some researchers regard the novel is a tragic novel and the main character Ximen Qing is the tragic character, but some researchers believe

that Ximen Qing is the sinister and evil man and the novel represents the social canker in that times. Some people regard it as the pornographic literature, and some people think that the book is the admonishing novel. Those opinions are contradictory.

This paper will evaluate the novel in the perspective of the background of Buddhist culture and economic condition in that times. It will also reevaluate the relations between Ximen Qing and his wives.

1. Literature review

Searching the research material in the CNKI with the key topic word "The Golden Lotus", one would find 2975 results. There are diversified researching perspectives for the novel, such as the linguistics, the sex culture, the literary writing etc.

The representative research papers are following. Jiang Shoupeng analyses the trade pattern in Ming dynasty and believes that the organization forms of the economic trade unit can be divided into the joint capital, partnership, joint stock etc. In the different trades, the merchants achieve successes through the regional price differences, tax evasion, clamping on the trade peers, monopoly and advantage of the first occupation etc. (Jiang, S. 1989) *The Golden Lotus*, as a literary work represents the commerce, reflects the Ming dynasty culture, which was featured by the commerce and currency. The novel is different from other works that based on the background of the farming culture. It represents the bold pursue for the economic profit but not the righteousness. (Xu, J. 2006) Ximen Qing is the representative feudalism merchant in the capitalism burgeoning times. He is not the representative newly-developing merchant. What he insists is the most ugly matter in the feudalism. The relation of him and the women is not the feature of the new citizens life. What his activities destroyed is not the feudalism and backward factors but the most important benefit of the people in that times. (Cao, B.2006) Ximen Qing belongs to the bureaucratic stratum but not the citizen stratum. He is the prerogative merchant but not the newly-developing merchant. Such merchant is the social canker but not the new baby. He neither the function of the early capitalist nor the character feature of the capitalist. (Gao, P. & Yang, Q.1992) In the legends of the Tang dynasty, the ration and the desire coexisted, and the ration was described as more valuable than the desire. In the Song and Yuan dynasties, the ration and desire have the same status. But in *The Golden Lotus*, the writer negated the ration and enhanced the desire. (Fu, Y.2003) In the papers about the topic of *The Golden Lotus*, there are significant number of papers analyze the topic of *The Golden Lotus* in the perspective of commerce and economy, which is the noticeable phenomenon in Late-Ming dynasty.

What is worth mentioning is the scholars in Qing dynasty believed there were three topics of *The Golden Lotus*: worldly affairs, venting resentment, expostulating. (Fang, Y.2007) There is also researcher believes that *The Golden Lotus* has

pluralism topics which includes the worldly affairs, the Buddhist outlook on life and the sex. (Bai, L. 1999) The topic of *The Golden Lotus* is the reflection and analysis of the human nature especially the evil of human being. (Ma, Z. 2014) There is also the scholar believes that the novel has the topic of the religions of Buddhism and Daoism. The religious topic provide the novel with the morality, the clue of retribution for sin and the special narrative mode. (Wei, C.1999) The papers mentioned above compose the representative opinions about the topic of *The Golden Lotus*.

There are about 66 papers discuss the tragedy of *The Golden Lotus*.¹ The paper *On the Social Meaning of The Golden Lotus Tragedy* (Zhu, J. 1992), *The Discussion on the Tragedy of Classical Novel The Golden Lotus* (Dong, F.1991), *The Great Tragedy of Society, History and Human Nature: the New Understanding of the Topic of The Golden Lotus* (Wang, B.1994) and the paper *Understanding the Tragic Consciousness of The Golden Lotus in the Death of Li Pinger* (Yang, M.1995) etc all believe that *The Golden Lotus* is a tragic novel. Although I do not think *The Golden Lotus* is not the novel of tragedy, the papers mentioned above provide some valuable research materials for the article in the following discussion.

2. *The Golden Lotus* is not tragic novel

2.1 There is no tragedy in ancient Chinese literature history in an accurate sense

There is no tragedy in ancient Chinese literature history in an accurate sense. At least, the theory of the tragedy is proposed by the philosopher Aristotle of ancient Greece based on the development of the drama in his times. If one applies the theory in the analysis of Chinese literature mechanically, he or she would find it is unsuitable for Chinese literature. Chinese literature has the totally different background from that of the western literature, such as in the aspects of culture, religion, politics, economy and history etc.

In the aesthetic sphere, the ancient Greek discovered the sublime beauty, which was derived from the tragedy mainly in the art field. However,

¹The result is based on the searching in the CNKI with the key topic words "The Golden Lotus" and "Tragedy". There are 66 results of the searching.

such aesthetic experience could not be appreciated in ancient Chinese. The Greek drama is the oldest drama in the world. The primitive drama was divided into two kinds: the tragedy and the comedy. Aristotle concludes the theory of the tragedy and the comedy in his *Poetics*. He believes that the tragedy describes the upright character falls because of the flaw or defect, which results in the misfortune encountered by the main character. The effect of the tragedy is that it causes the sympathy and phobia of the audience. The tragedy is the imitation of a serious event.

Chinese drama became mature in the 13th century, which was 1,800 years after the ancient Greek drama. There was no the sublime aesthetic experience in the ancient drama at that times because the cultural background was totally different from that of ancient Greece. The Buddhism permeated every spheres of the society in 13th century already and that influenced the creation of drama. The Buddhism emphasizes the retribution for sin and good, so the drama or other literary creation would narrate such stories. The paper will analyse the influence of the Buddhism for the literature in the next section in detail. In this section, the paper focuses on the literature content of that time and the corresponding reason in the social sphere.

The audience of that time had the stereotyped mode to understand the drama, which was to apprehend the drama in the form of retribution clue. That is totally different with the drama in ancient Greece. There were only two kinds of dramas in ancient Greece, the tragedy and the comedy. The Chinese drama in the feudal times did not confirm with the ancient Greek drama. In the culture influenced by Buddhism, the audience in China would prefer the retribution clue in the drama, so the drama of the ancient Greek drama would had no market in the feudal China. The audience in China had no the aesthetic appreciation of the sublime in the drama. The other literary forms in feudal China has no the sublime aesthetic appreciation just like the drama.

2.2 The Buddhist influence

The other narrative literatures such as the novel and narrative poem in feudal China was influenced by the buddhism. The Buddhism

accelerated the birth of Chinese popular novel. Although the literary genre similar to the novel had appeared in the Weijin period of China, the novel really appeared with the sermon of the Buddhists. The Buddhist in that time tended to using the stories to propagate the Buddhism thoughts, in which course, the genre of novel began to be formed. The narrative pattern of Chinese novel at that time used the mode of the Buddhism stories.

The content of ancient Chinese novel also learned a lot from the Buddhism stories. The Buddhism representative thoughts such as the retribution, the samsara, the heaven and the hell etc. were all represented in the novel of Chinese feudal times, such as the most famous four novels in ancient China, *Water Margin*, *Journal to the West*, *A Dream in Red Mansions* and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, in which the thoughts of the retribution and samsara could be seen everywhere.

The spread of the Buddhism thoughts in Chinese folk world made such content were very common in the novels. The elite class at that time would not believe such stories contained the Buddhism factors, and they also deemed the novel as a literary genre was not a kind of elegant genre. However, the Buddhism stories were very popular in the folk world, so the content had the profound and extensive influence. As the time went on, the novels which contained the Buddhism plot became prosperous, and almost got the equal status in the literary creation field, especially in the Ming and Qing dynasties, the novels got more attention and some intellectuals of the elite class began to create the novels. The novel became the most important literary tide of that times, in which the famous novel *The Golden Lotus* appeared.

The Buddhism gave the unique imagination and the plot to the creation of the ancient Chinese novel. The Chinese ancient novel was filled with the Buddhism imagination. There was no the imagination of the world after death except the word *Dim City* simply mentioned by the poet Qu Yuan in the Warring States period. However, the world after death was described accurately and colorful in the Buddhism stories. With the prosperity of the Buddhism in China, the Buddhism stories were enhanced in the course of spread by the folk. So

when the novel genre became prosperous, the Buddhism stories promoted the artistic quality of it. The Buddhism literature was different from the literature before the Buddhism came into China. As a religious literature, the Buddhism literature was featured by the trance, symbol and illusion, especially the imagination of another world. The literature before the Buddhism came into China had no so much imagination of another world and the artistic style. However, when the novel genre became prosperous, the Buddhism imagination and artistic style played an important role in the literary creation.

The plot the novel was also enriched by the Buddhism. There were many Buddhism stories had been around for a long history, so the folk and the elite class were very familiar with the them. When many literature creation began to use the common clues of them, the clues became the literature archetype. The literature archetype was used constantly in the literature creation, so when the novel became popular in Ming and Qing dynasties, the literature archetype became more common. Of course, the most important archetypes that related to the Buddhism were the retribution and samsara. There were other archetypes that related to the buddhism, such as the Buddhism opinion that all things of visible form and substance are empty, which was embodied in the famous novel *A Dream in Red Mansions*.

2.3 The happy ending stereotype

The most obvious feature of Chinese narrative literature in the feudal period was the happy ending clue, which we could call it as the happy ending stereotype for it was so popular in the ancient literature. The happy ending stereotype was derived from the Buddhism stories, which emphasized the retribution plot.

The stories narrated by the Buddhist for propagating the Buddhism thoughts themselves had the plot of happy ending sometimes, or it had the ending that featured by the retribution for sin. Many Buddhism stories were to praise virtue and punish vice, so the ending of the stories would always told that the good people got their nice life, and the wicked got the punishment they deserved. From this point, the plot of the Buddhism stories was of happy

ending. The Buddhism thought that the retribution and samsara were very common in the world, and that was also the reason for the happy ending plot of the Buddhism stories.

The need of the reader or audience decided the ending of the narrative literature works. Ordinarily, the reader or audience tended to regarding the narrative literature works as a leisure literature. When the narrative literature first appeared in the feudal period, it was thought as a kind of literature without much elegance. So the narrative literature was mainly spread in the folk and the elite class would regarded it as a kind of leisure. So the narrative literature existed for the entertainment of people. The entertainment was formed by the happy ending plot mainly, which would brought the laugh for people. The audience or reader would not accept the tragic and serious stories, for that would not a kind of entertainment but a kind of burden for them. In the prosperity of drama in Yuan dynasty, the four most famous dramas, *Obeisance Moon Cabin* by Guano Hanqing, *Pei Shaojun And Li Qianjun* by Bai Pu, *Romance of the West Chamber* by Wang Shipu, *The Young Lady Died for Love* by Zheng Guangzu, narrated love stories were all happy ending dramas. In the beginning of the were all sad and the main characters in the dramas were trapped by some problems, but in the end of the dramas, the all the problems were solved and the lovers got together and enjoyed their happy life, just like the fairy story of prince and princess in the western world. In the course of the narrating, there were also many hilarious subplot for fun. That fully reflected the entertainment function of the dramas. similarly, the other narrative genres in ancient also had the same funciton like the dramas.

2.4 The natural environment of China and its influence on Chinese literature art

The different natural environment breeds different cultures. Different from the ancient natural environment of the Europe, which was featured by the marine civilization, ancient had the agriculture civilization. The agriculture civilization had the feature of the four distinctive seasons. As one sowed in spring, so he should reap in autumn. The environment formed the mental character of Chinese people that the one would got retribution

by what he or she had done. The thought was soaked not only the buddhism, but also by many other fields. The Chinese folk literature itself had the plot of retribution under such influence. The philology classic works in the pre-Qin period also had such thoughts, for example, *The Books of Change* believes: "Kindnesses, like grain, increase by sowing."

3. *The Golden Lotus* has the factors of tragedy

Ancient China had no environment for the tragedy, so *The Golden Lotus* was not the tragic novel, but it had the factors of tragedy. In order to analyse the issue, the paper will discuss it in the following sections.

3.1 The tragic factors of that times

In *The Golden Lotus*, the characters had to act according to the rule of that time, but the rules were full of the unfair and the injustice, and that covered the whole story with a tragic light. The world that *The Golden Lotus* represented was a world filled with the illegality, vice and corruption. In the novel, the upright one would not get the good result and the vicious one would enjoy their lives. Ximen Qing and Pan Jinlian committed adultery and were caught by Wu Da, Pan Jinlian's husband, in the act. In the process, Wu Da was gravely wounded by Ximen Qing. In the hope for survival, Wu Da told Pan Jinlian that he would not tell Wu Song, his brother, the adultery of her when Wu Song came back. However, Pan Jinlian and Ximen Qing poisoned Wu Da at last. Wu Song came back and suspected the cause of death of his brother. He found the truth and began to revenge for his brother. He sued Ximen Qing in the government, which was also the court in that time, but the governors all had intimate relation with Ximen Qing. The governor in charge played at Wu Song and tried to conceal the fact. Then Wu Song attempted to kill Ximen Qing by himself, but there was an informer told Ximen Qing and Ximen Qing escaped. The informer was beat to death by Wu Song in the angry. Ximen Qing bribed the related senior governors and got exemption from prosecution, but Wu Song was sent to a distant exile. The plot mentioned above was the most important plot in *The Golden Lotus*. We would find that the vice would filled all over the plot.

Another concubine of Ximen Qing, Li Pinger had been the wife of Ximen Qing's intimate friend. She also committed adultery with Ximen Qing, without knowing of her husband, Hua Zixu. Hua Zixu was prosecuted by his relatives because that he got the heritage that he did not deserve. When Hua Zixu was in the jail, Li Pinger transferred the wealth to Ximen Qing to prevent the wealth being occupied by the indicters and continued to commit adultery with Ximen Qing. Although Ximen Qing bribed the governors to protect Hua Zixu in the request of Li Pinger, he deforced Hua Zixu's wealth with the help of Li Pinger. Finding that his wealth were all gone, Hua Zixu died in the long disease. Then Li Pinger became the concubine of Ximen Qing on the square. Even if Hua Zixu had not dead, Li Pinger would murdered him with the joined hand of Ximen Qing. Here Li Pinger was another unfaithful wife just as Pan Jinlian.

All the sinister actions were carried out in the darkness. It seemed that there were two kinds of rules in the world of the novel. One was the apparent rules and another was the hidden rules. The apparent rules were published in the official documents and exposed to the folk. The apparent rules were often upright and of justice, and the hidden rules were often dark, unfair and of injustice. However, the apparent did not work. Although the hidden rules was not obvious in the real, but the hidden rules played an important role. Some of the hidden rules were summarized by Li Zongwu in his *Thick Black History*. He believed that "the heroes in the ancient times were nothing but the ones who were shameless and black-hearted." (Li Zongwu, 2011) The plots of *The Golden Lotus* provided the vivid examples for the *Thick Black History*.

The novel is filled with the tragic factors of the social darkness, and the world it represented was the world full of dangers, cheat, vice, hurt and the dissolute. That broke people's illusion about the world and human nature. So the novel brought the great pain in front of the readers, and at the same time it made the readers have the aesthetic feeling of sublime, with the spirit getting the catharsis and purification.

Although the ending of the novel was that the vicious main character died miserably and his wives and concubines seldom got the good ending because of their sin, and such ending conformed to the definition of the comedy to some extent, which was featured by the vicious got the deserved punishment, the novel gave the reader sorrow, pain and aesthetic feeling of sublime. The cause of the effect is not because that *The Golden Lotus* is a tragedy novel, for the novel does not conform to the definition of tragedy, but because that the novel has the tragic factors, which mainly composed by the representation of the darkness of that times.

3.2 The features of the commerce in that times and the tragic factors

The environment of the Late-Ming dynasty was in chaos, which embodied the tragic factors. The burgeoning of Chinese capitalism was recorded mainly in the Jiaqing and Wanli periods of Ming dynasty. The most famous market located in Jiangxi and Shandong provinces in China of the 16th century. Jiangxi market developed anterior to Shandong market in Song and Yuan dynasties. Shandong province, which had been the less developed area, developed fast in 16th century because of the commerce between south China and north China. According to the historic record, China was the most developed country in the world from the 15th to 1820 or so because of the mighty strength of production.

In Late-Ming dynasty, the Qinghecounty, which was located in the traffic junction of Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal, was the important commercial center. The story that *The Golden Lotus* narrated took place in Qinghecounty.

Ximen Qing made a room as study in his villa even though he did not engaged in scholarship in order to prepare the bribery for the officials. "The bookshelf decorated by the gold paper is filled with the documents about the bribery...the documents include the invitation and visiting cards, the account book of the presents in mid-autumn...the officials include Lord Cai, Grand Commandant Zhu, Grand Commandant Tong, head of the secretariat, commandant Cai..."(Lan, L. 2007) That indicated that Ximen Qing weaved a series of network for his commercial business, which was convenient for his

ordinary life. Before he became rich, he often communicated with some evil associates in the low class, but after he rised to power and position, he expanded his communication network to the bureaucrat class. He not only combined the bureaucrat class, but also keep the stable relationship with the group of the same class. So the study of him was the base of him to weave the interpersonal network.

After Ximen Qing bribed Caijing, the prime minister of that time, in Caijing's birthday with amount of treasures, he was appointed as the police chief in Qinghecounty. The stadholder of Shandong accepted Ximen Qing's recommendation to appointed two of his relatives as the officials, and they had no the quality for the positions. "The course of Ximen Qing's rising to power and position reflected some important characters of Chinese early commodity economy, which was very feudal and corruptive." (Tian R. 2006) The author of *The Golden Lotus* rebuked corruption phenomena, which seemed very common in that time.

After Ximen Qing had more money and power, he began to accumulate wealth by unfair means unscrupulously, bend the law for personal gains and have sexual relationship with both women and men.

In contrast to Ximen Qing, some honest merchants such as Miao Tianxiu had disastrous fate. He did not rely on the government for his business and seemed upright and kind, but he was killed by his servant in the journey. His wealth was carved up after his death, and the different corruptions and briberies also involved in the murder case of him.

The representation of the commerce in *The Golden Lotus* was documentary, which showed that the commerce in Ming dynasty was very abnormal and malformed. It could say that the Abnormality and dysfunction in Ming dynasty society was the very tragic factors.

3.3 The relationship between Ximen Qing and his wives or concubines was tragic

The representation of sex and love in *The Golden Lotus* was one of the most important factors of the novel. Although the representation was very pornographic unscrupulously, the novel showed the tragic factors through it seriously.

In Ming dynasty, there were many bookmen who pursued the profit in the publishing trade. In that times, the publishing would bring about huge profit, drawing lots of people in such trade. On the other hand, more readers appeared. The light literature was welcomed by the readers, so the publishers published more such literature works.

Some pornographic literature works was popular in that time. The culture changed because of the developed commerce and economy, with the phenomenon that both the folk and official class began to pursuit the luxury. They discarded the Confucian rules in the real life, even though they would learn the rules in paper. Even the emperor enjoyed the dissipated life and read some pornographic literature works, some of which were provided by the flattering ministers.

The Golden Lotus was accomplished in Longqing and Wanli periods of Ming dynasty, which was the period from 1537 to 1620. That period was the same time of Renaissance in Europe. It was interesting that lots of rebellious works boomed in Europe of that time, which was very similar to the condition of Ming dynasty in China. Such works included *Decameron*, *Canterbury Tales* in literature works and *The Prince* in politics works. The special cultural and economic condition in Renaissance gave birth to such works.

The difference between the works in China and the corresponding works in Europe lay in the purposes of the works. The works in Europe was the rebellion to the religious rules, eulogizing the human nature. But such works in Ming dynasty was mainly for the leisure and enjoyment, exposing the dissipated life to cater the need of the readers.

In such condition, sexual activity was described in detail in such works, especially the sexual activity of Ximen Qing and his wives and concubines. But that was documentary in the representation of human nature.

Although the representation of the sexual activity of Ximen Qing was pornographic, that was the only love appeared in the novel, and that was tragic. Ximen Qing's relations with his women were mainly for the money, as he earned lots of wealth in every marriage. Through the marriage with Wu Yueniang, the daughter of one rich man in Qinghe

county and who was not beautiful, Ximen Qing got the higher social position because Wu Yueniang's father was an influential official. His concubine concubine Li Jiaoer was also beautiful, but her sister was the head of the prostitution in Qinghecounty, through whom Ximen Qing could invest and make a profit. His concubine ZhuoDiuerhad lots of money, which was got by Ximen Qing through marriage. The wealth of Hua Zixu, who was one of Ximen Qing's evil associates, was got by Ximen Qing through the marriage with Li Pinger, who was the widow of Hua Zixu. Although Pan Jinlian was a real beauty, Ximen Qing had no intention to getting married with her, as the only desire of him was to have a love affair stealthily with her, because she could not brought the wealth to him. Only when the stealthy love affair between he and Pan Jinlian was uncovered and he murdered Wu Da with Pan Jinlian, he had no choice but to marry Pan Jinlian. Ximen Qing had no interest in the beauties the others introduced to him such as Li Guiqing, because they would not help Ximen Qing accumulate wealth. In the description of the sexual activity of Ximen Qing, the sexual relation was represented the most. The love between she and Ximen Qing seemed purer than other family relations in the novel. For the main characters, the material benefits surpassed the love and sentiment overwhelmingly in the novel.

The tragedy about money was very popular in history, such as Shakespear's *Timon of Athens*, which described the sin of money. According to Marx, the money is one factor that incurs the alienation of human nature, and such alienation dominates human being, but human being worships it. Marx also believes that "The people struggle all for their benefits which are related to themselves.", "The basic goal of human action is pursuingbenefit." (Karl Marx. & Frederick Engels, 1956) In *The Golden Lotus*, the money was one kind of benefit that people pursued by the improper means, which caused many disasters. Although money could brought much pleasure for the characters, the money compressed human emotion and their real happiness. The characters became the jackstraws with the function of money, the only emotion and love could be felt in the sexual activity. Although the novel described the sexual activity pornographically

and unscrupulously, which aroused much controversy, the sexual activity was the only existence that could give the characters involved some tender feelings. Such plots composed the pure tragic factor for the novel.

Conclusion

In the first glance, *The Golden Lotus* could be deemed as a tragedy. But tragedy is the concept of the western aesthetics. In the ancient Chinese literature history, there was no exact tragedy according to the western concept of tragedy. That was decided by the cultural environment of China, which was influenced by the Buddhism, and the stereotyped plot of ancient Chinese literature. The natural environment was also the most important factors that decided the thought characters of China people, which made Chinese story always had the happy ending.

The Golden Lotus was not one tragedy novel in ancient Chinese literature history, but it had many tragic factors. It could be regarded as a pornographic novel, because in the Late-Ming dynasty, the pornographic novels were very popular, with the publishers' pursuit for profit and the need of some readers. Although there were lots of the detailed description of sexual activity in the novel, it still had many serious and tragic factors. It represented an abnormal world, in which the characters almost always acted according to the hidden rules, which was very effective in the daily life and did not exist on the paper. The commerce in the novel was also malformed for the merchants had to rely on the officials, which could be bought by money. The corruption of the officials pervaded the world of the novel, which incurred the disastrous human suffering. *The Golden Lotus* was a portrait, in which there was almost no love or tender feeling except the sexual activity, especially the sexual relation between Ximen Qing and Pan Jinlian, which was described unscrupulously or even barbarously. The souls of the main characters were almost evacuated by the pursuit for money and became the jackstraws. In such condition, the unscrupulous description of sexual activity served as a foil to the cold relationship of material benefits, because it could provide little warm and tenderness.

References

- Bai, L. *The Pluralism Topics of The Golden Lotus*. Hedong Academic Journal. 1999(4), 59-62
- Cao, B. *The Merchant Stereotype in the Burgeoning of Capitalism of Ming Dynasty*. Journal of Hebei University. 2006(1) , 22-27
- Dong, F. *The Discussion on the Tragedy of Classical Novel/The Golden Lotus*. Gansu Social Science. 1991(4), 113-117
- Fang, Y. *The Interpretation of the Theme of Jin Ping Mei by Critics of Ming and Qing Dynasties*. Master dissertation paper. Central China Normal University. April, 2007
- Fu, Y. *From the Legends of the Tang Dynasty to The Golden Lotus: Investigating in the Perspective of Desire*. Journal of Ocean University of China. 2003(3).82-85
- Gao, P. & Yang, Q. *The Golden Lotus: the Undesirable Extension of a Prerogative Merchant*. Journal of Henan University. 1992(5), 51-59
- Jiang, S. *The Ming Commerce Represented in The Golden Lotus*. Journal of Dongbei Normal University. 1989(3). 35-40
- Karl Marx. & Frederick Engels, *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels*. Vol 1. The People's Publishing House, 1956, 82
- Lan, L. *The Golden Lotus*. Liren publishing house. 2007. 36
- Li Zongwu, *Thick Black History*. Liaoning Publishing House. 2011. 5
- Ma, Z. *Death Is the Ending of Desire :the Analysis of The Golden Lotus's Topic*. Journal of Zhangzhou Institute of Technology. 2014(4), 30-35
- Tian R. *The Golden Lotus and the Ming Society*. The Academic Net of Legal History. <http://jyw.znufe.edu.cn/flsxsw/articleshow.asp?id=2520>. 2006(in Chinese)
- Wang, B. *The Great Tragedy of Society, History and Human Nature: the New Understanding of the Topic of The Golden Lotus*. Journal of Xuzhou Normal University. 1994(2), 60-65
- Wei, C. *The Golden Lotus and Religion*. Journal of Xuzhou Normal University. 1999(1), 74-77

- Xu, J. The Cultural Interpretation of *The Golden Lotus'* Currency Culture. Hebei Academic Journal. 2006(2) , 128-133
- Yang, M. *Understanding the Tragic Consciousness of The Golden Lotus in the Death of Li Pinger.* Journal of Huaibei Normal University. 1995(3), 106-109
- Zhu, J. *On the Social Meaning of The Golden Lotus Tragedy.* Journal of Literature, History and Philosophy. 1992(2), 86-89.
-