

A contrast of morality and individual feeling

Experience, Human Nature



Name: Tutor: Course: Date: A Contrast of Morality and Individual Feeling As all other social instruments, Literature serves a great function in society.

It passes history, information and culture across generations. Chinese literature in the early years highlighted the ways of the people in China and the issues that affected them. It also recorded the ways in which the Chinese resolved their contentions and challenges. The ancient Chinese authors wrote in their Chinese dialect. China was among the earliest places that preservation of history in writing took place. A common phenomenon across the world society is Love passion and sex.

Patrick Hanan takes on the task of translating two books written a short period apart. The two books, Wu Jianren's *The Sea of Regret* and Fu Lin's *Stones in the sea* took to revolutionize China's conception of passion, love and sex. In ancient China, the idea of sex and romance was a reserve for the married couples.

Unlike other societies, Chinese strictly adhered to this practice. They instilled this practice in their children and taught their girls especially to preserve themselves for their husbands. Families booked girls in advance for their boys. This kept off other interested people.

These people would not therefore seek after the girl, as she was a wife technically. This preserved the respect for young women. *The Sea of Regret* and *Stones in the Sea* are two books written in close succession. The thought that the books require the reader to read them together remains controversial. To begin with, the authors are two different individuals with independent minds. They therefore had their unique message to their

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audiences. Despite of a few similar features of the works, these works are independent. The similar features are universal and, as such, there are no limitations to any author to use any of these features in their works.

Human experiences can be similar. This similarity could account for the same story line. However, the works normally are distinct. Looking at the two stories, there are distinct features in as much as there are similar traits. The author in *The Sea of Regrets* chooses to use a distant storyteller. Fu Lin, on the other hand, chooses to make his speaker a character in the story, the main one for that matter. In his story, Fu Lin allows the death of the main character Arens.

This is similar to Jianren's *Sea of regrets* where at the end of the story, Bohe succumbs to the opium addiction and eventually dies. These two authors have succeeded in creating classical romantic disasters. This success is an achievement to their intentions and fulfillment of their obligation to literature to create a romantic disaster. To the audience though, there is a disappointment. Both the authors do not create a resolution that pleases the audience.

Morally, it is not fair for one to disappoint the people he ought to make happy. In as much as some moral stories pass across, like drug addiction leads to death, the authors ought to satisfy their audience by creating a happy conclusion. The death of Bohe in *The sea of Regrets* and that of Arens in *Stones in the Sea*, are an anti-climax. They fail to teach the audience that despite humongous challenges, a relationship can still wither these challenges and lead to a happy marriage. In these regard, the Authors

Interest clouded their moral duty. This displays selfishness on the part of the authors as they put their interests before that of the audience. In as much as one is creating a story, He/she ought to pass on the good morals of society.

Jianren in his book *The Sea of Regret* manages to do so. He does not allow Dihua to get so close to Bohe before they get married. He displays decency in the character of Dihua who was even afraid of sleeping in the same room with her husband to be. This is a positive lesson to the audience that benefits from this moral story. Jianren succeeds in maintaining the Chinese culture that proposed sexual purity before marriage. In not allowing Dihua to spoil herself, the author passes on a culture from one generation to another.

This is one of the moral functions of literature. Fu li, on the other hand, allows the two main characters to engage in unlawful romance. At one time, Arens and Qin while alone, engage in cuddling which was a sexually arousing act. To begin with, he shows the audience this act. An author has failed in his efforts if he shows his audience the wrong way of doing things. This is failed state of Stones in the sea. He does not take time later to condemn this act.

As well, he does not conceal matters considered private. He fails to conceal activities that are sexual in nature. This is another moral failure. In his work as well, the two Characters let their individual feeling before moral. When they engage in sexual activities before marriage, they clearly oppose Chinese moral. There is a struggle between feeling and moral within Dihua and Bohe. Dihua and Bohe's families are strict followers of Chinese Moral life.

These two do not engage in any unlawful act. On their way to Tianjin, while boarding in one of the Inns, Dihua cannot get herself to sleep because Bohe was in the same room. Her conscience could not allow her to sleep in the same room with her fiancée. She weeps from time to time when they separate with Bohe, who disappears in crowd of men that sweeps him while on their way to Tianjin. She even makes efforts to write posters for Bohe to locate them only because she loves him.

Even when they get to Shanghai, she begs her father to let Bohe stay with them. During this time, she struggled to maintain Moral over felling by not letting herself get involved in any immoral way with Bohe. Bohe on the other hand succumbs to his own feeling over morality. First, he manages to swindle six chests of valuables and then moves to shanghai. While in Shanghai, he gets involved with a prostitute who swindles him as well. He becomes a pauper and losses himself in tobacco addiction. Bohe lets his feeling take over in two instances.

When he swindles and when He marries a prostitute. In addition, involves himself in tobacco. He gets involved in these social crimes. These traits make him a poor example of a morality. Bohe even gets a second chance while in shanghai from his fiancees family.

Instead, he occasionally disappears with valuable goods from the house to feed his addiction. Dihua was willing to become his concubine but he did not heed to this moral woman. The author in this segment educates the audience by creating a failed character. Given that Bohe was a main character in his work, he had the opportunity of making a hero. However, he

gave up this feeling for a moral function. He educates the audience on the effects crime, immorality and substance abuse. At the end of it all, he suffers swindling; he is addicted to tobacco and ultimately dies. This is a lesson to the audience not to engage in the social crimes that Bohe engaged in.

In both the books, the author has showed the importance of family institutions. The families of Dihua and Bohe and the families of Arens and Master Qin show support to their children. In both, the parents and uncles play a major role in the engagement of their children. It is the uncles and parents of Bohe that make the proposition to Dihua's family for a hand in marriage. As they flee to Tianjin, we see Bohe being a support for Dihua's mother and herself along the journey. When Dihua's mother fell ill, Dihua took care of the mother until the time she eventually passed on. Qin's father supported Arens mother because of his love for his son Qin.

He sent her money and encouraged her not to grieve a lot upon her daughter's death. Conclusively, one would consider the moral or feelings of both authors. Fu Lin and Wu Jianren both depict style in their writing.

They both employ their artful ness to create fully developed works. In both the novels, they use romantic tragedy as a major leader to their writing. However, Fu Lin is successful in his depiction of a love that is bound to fail perhaps as a warning to their audiences.

Fu Lin creates an illegitimate love. Love void of social moral. This loves fails. This shows the audience that the only way for a marriage to work is to follow the required regulations before marriage. It advocates for delayed feeling to

adhere to moral. Jianren on the other hand creates a perfect story with all the morals maintained. However, at the end of the story, this love does not lead to an eventual marriage. This is a failure on the part of the author.

Instead of being a proponent of purity before marriage, he goes ahead and creates a tragedy. This is out of personal feeling and the need to create a work of art for classification as a romantic tragedy. In this Jianren has failed.

The purpose of art cannot be subject to feeling of the author and the need for classification. Rather works of art should be for the good of the audience. The proximity in production of these two works is questionable.

They pose as a competition to each other. Their themes are the same, their characters are slightly different in behavior, and the story line is the same. The location, the setting and the category is the same.

Could it be that these authors were competing with the latter hoping to produce a better work than the earlier? If so then Stones in the Sea is not a work based on moral function of art, rather feeling. Works of art inform and educate. The failure to create another independent work of art is a clear depiction of a failed responsibility of the author on moral function.