

# Famous Reading: ‘ Red Mansion Imprint ‘ in Eileen Chang’s Novels

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**Abstract:** A Dream of Red Mansions has influenced the novel creation of later generations with its unique charm. Among them, Eileen’s novels have a very obvious “Red House mark”. A Dream of Red Mansions is a classic reading item for middle school students. Starting from the close reading of the text, this paper studies the inheritance relationship between Eileen’s novels and A Dream of Red Mansions, which has certain practical significance for middle school students to better understand the classic.

**Keywords:** Eileen; A novel; A Dream of Red Mansions; Classic reading

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## Introduction

In modern literary history, many people were influenced by A Dream of Red Mansions, especially Eileen. Eileen Chang once said in her essay "On Writing" that she would read A Dream of Red Mansions once every few years, and each time she read it, she would have a different perception. "It can be seen that A Dream of Red Mansions has a deep influence on Eileen. Therefore, it is inevitable that she has left a lot of "Red House mark" in her novels. This paper starts from the close reading of the text, and makes some climbing comb collation in the content, and adds a brief comment.

## 1. For the boudoir biography

### 1.1 The classical beauty of smartness

A Dream of Red Mansions is intended to be a "biography of the boudoire". The author says at the beginning: There are some people in the boudoire, and they should not be wiped out because of my unworthy, self-protection and shortcoming. It can be seen that Honglou women have a large number of talents, all of which are different, graceful, smart and intelligent. On their bodies, they embody a kind of classical beauty and beauty. Similarly, Eileen Chang's novels also inherit this writing style, and the heroines in her novels are all spiritual and exude a kind of classical charm.

No matter Lin Daiyu or Bai Liusu, they all carry the author's imagination of the classical beauty in his mind. They are weak but not fragile, they are smart and intelligent, and they carry the most beautiful gifts from heaven. Just as Fan Liuyuan said, "Real Chinese women are the most beautiful in the world and will never be out of date."

### 1.2 Tragic destiny

Every time after reading A Dream of Red Mansions, there is always a sense of loss, lamenting the beauty of the woman in the Red Mansion, but also sad for her tragic ending.

Most of the women in " A Dream of Red Mansions " and Eileen Chang's novels end in tragedy. What on earth leads to the occurrence of these tragedies? Reading the content of the novel carefully, we will find that the malformed society under the domination of male power is the reason for the tragic fate of women. women's status in Chinese society is subordinate to men's. Beauvoir said, "Women exist for men." Ask, a woman surrounded by male power, how can break through the shackles of male power? We can also say that the better a woman is, the more tragic her life is.

Moreover, under the shackles of male power, women will be alienated. They're either paranoid, crazy, irrational, or stuck in a hopeless marriage. In "A Dream of Red Mansions", the author once said a passage by Jia Baoyu, to the effect that unmarried girls are dazzling priceless jewelry, married women, the brilliance of beads will gradually lose, and no matter how old they become, they will become fish eyes.

### **1.3 Have the courage to fight and pursue**

The images of Dai Yu and Bai Liusu have always been popular with readers, not only because of their classical beauty images but also because of their brave spirit of struggle and pursuit.

In the face of love, they are willing to bear the risk of "disgrace" for love, and even willing to become mistresses for love. They are courageous women, they are willing to give their whole lives to love, they are fearless.

## **2. The theme of glitz and desolation**

### **2.1 The rise and fall of the family**

In "A Dream of Red Mansions", there are a lot of ink to describe the prosperity of the four families, The so-called good times did not last long. Finally, the four families end up no more. Just like the downfall of the families in A Dream of Red Mansions, Eileen Chang's family also quickly declined. From flowers to decay, it is easy for the reader to read a sense of decay. Can not help but want to ask: how did such a prosperous family decline? The author analyzes the following reasons.

The first is that the government is empty, the economy is failing, and the government is not making ends meet. Their nephews only know how to have fun, spend so much but not very much money, the old house of silver has been empty, there is a deficit. And so the family went down.

The second is the contradictions within the family, the family branches are numerous, the population is complex, due to interests, it is easy to produce a variety of contradictions. The most prominent conflict is brother discord. Of course, there are also internal contradictions in Eileen Chang's novels. In "How Much Hate", father and daughter turn against each other. As the saying goes, everything is prosperous. On the contrary, family discord only leads to decline and fall.

Then there is the incompetence of the descendants, resulting in no successor to the family. There is no hope of future generations falling, and the family's decline is only a matter of time.

The decline of the family in Eileen Chang's works also stems from the degradation of men. The men who should hold up the whole family business have become moth worms. They are not productive, but sink in the existing life. .

### **2.2 Disillusionment of love**

Every time we read "A Dream of Red Mansions", we are touched by the love between Baoyu and Daiyu. Their love is crystal clear, pure and touching. Moved at the same time, but also for their unable to tie the knot and sigh. The disillusionment of love also often appears in Eileen Chang's novels. Whether it is Gu Manzhen and Shen Shijun in "18 Spring", or Nan Gong Hua and her husband in "Sanxi", their love also gradually dies out in the direction of fate and is nowhere to be found.

Both Eileen Chang's novels and "A Dream of Red Mansions" show the process of family prosperity to collapse, love from fiery to disillusionment, and life from wonderful to ruin. In a word: the glitz is gone, the sadness is done.

## **3. The bleak mood**

### **3.1 The image of the moon**

The most frequent image in Eileen Chang's novels is the moon, and the moon under her pen has a unique connotation. Liu Fengjie believes that "Eileen Chang expresses people's lust and suggests people's psychology through the moon, and finally creates a desolate realm, allowing readers to appreciate the beauty of desolation". This moon belongs only to Eileen Chang, with unique beauty and artistic conception.

There are also many images about the moon in the "Dream of Red Mansions". The imagery of the moon suggests the fate of the characters. Daiyu burial flower section can best reflect. At this time, the meaning of grief and desolation is expressed in the image of the moon.

### **3.2 The image of the mirror**

The image of mirror can be seen everywhere in Eileen Chang's novels. "Eileen Chang makes the people in her stories live in a world full of glass and mirrors, which has profound meaning". The world Eileen Chang sees is the same as the world in "A Dream of Red Mansions". It is a world in which reality and illusion intertwine, and people can't tell whether it is reality or illusion. As she said, "Nothing in this world can be trusted. It will be shattered by a pinch." Through the image of the mirror, we can realize that the world is originally a real and false world. What the two authors convey to us is also that life is illusory and sad everywhere.

## **4. The transformation of the "Red House Mark"**

### **4.1 The early thick "Red building breath"**

The "Brand of the Red Chamber" of Language. Eileen Chang's early works have a strong "Red House style", especially in

the language style of her novels. Reading Eileen Chang's novels, it is easy to associate with a Dream of Red Mansions, which is not only imitation, but also a kind of natural revelation engraved into the bone and blood. Lv Qixiang said, "This is Eileen Chang's, and it is really from the Dream of Red Mansions."

The "Red House Brand" of Character Image Building. Reading Eileen Chang's novels, we can easily relate to some people in A Dream of Red Mansions. Bai Liusu and Lin Daiyu have many similarities. They are all born, are so inspired, there is a kind of Chinese classical beauty charm. Both were lonely and sad, in the care of others. They do not yield to fate, and struggle with fate. Their social status is a good lady, with their own persistence and dignity for their lovers.

Cao Xueqin is good at creating characters through clothing. Those who have seen A Dream of Red Mansions will never forget the scene when Baoyu appeared. Eileen Chang's novels also have a lot of ink on the description of clothing, heavy ink, gorgeous abnormal. "Probably not since A Dream of Red Mansions has a Chinese novel taken such a realistic approach to the boudoir," Xia said.

## 4.2 The internalization of "Red House Breath" in the later period

In Eileen Chang's later works (referring to those made by Eileen Chang when she migrated overseas), the style began to change, and the "Red House mark" began to change and gradually internalize.

The tone of his later works is very flat, and there is no obvious emotional catharsis. It is as if the author is just narrating a plain story, but the reader can feel a surge of emotion in the narration. In Eileen Chang's long posthumous work Little Reunion, it can be seen that the author pursues a feeling of "seemingly insipid, but actually full of life's sadness". This is in line with the overall feeling of "A Dream of Red Mansions", which also describes the events in the life of the characters in the Red Mansions, and promotes the development of the plot through the narration, so that readers can feel the emotional changes of the characters in the progress of daily life.

The second manifestation is the dilution of the plot of the novel. In Eileen Chang's novels, the plot gradually fades away. The most typical is her long posthumous work Little Reunion, the whole novel is just the heroine's growth fragments together, the plot is close to nothing.

Later language also tends to be plain and natural. Different from the earlier kind of legendary meaning, thick color gorgeous language, some images in the later period give people a feeling of sparse light and simple. This is closer to the Dream of the Red Chamber, because the characters described in the Dream of the Red Chamber are ordinary people.

The internalization of Eileen Chang's later novels "Mark of the Red Building" is also due to the use of white painting techniques. Eileen Chang once said, "She always yearned for traditional white painting." And "A Dream of Red Mansions" in the use of white painting techniques is more.

## 5. Conclusion

For more than 60 years, the relationship between Eileen Chang and A Dream of Red Mansions has been a cultural phenomenon that attracts people's attention. It is of great significance to study the relationship between Chinese traditional literature and modern literature to explore the inheritance relationship between Eileen Chang's novels and A Dream of Red Mansions by means of text close reading and to analyze how Eileen Chang's inherited the essence of Chinese traditional literature A Dream of Red Mansions. This subject still needs further study.

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