

# Research on Ecological Aesthetic Implication of Chinese Classical Literature Liaozhai Tales Based on Ecological Aesthetic Theory

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**Abstract:** Liaozhai Tales, a classical Chinese literary work, mainly shows ecological aesthetic implications from three aspects: man and nature, man and society, and man and man themselves. Tales of Liaozhai not only depicts the true character and the amiable nature, but also highlights the intimacy and integration between man and nature in the life world. It shows the integrated relationship between man and nature with the story of the fate of man and natural objects and the sharing of life and death, which implies the ecological aesthetic connotation of harmony and unity between man and nature. The ecological aesthetic implication of Liao-zhai Zhiyi has a multi-level influence on the development of later literature and ecological aesthetic theory. The work continues the natural writing which is isomorphic with human life in Liao-zhai Zhiyi, and at the same time, it enters into a deeper spiritual connection and gives out practical significance. In A Dream of Red Mansions and The Transparent Carrot, nature is regarded as the symbol of life force. The former expresses the author's philosophical thinking on human destiny with the complexity and tragedy of "the union of wood and stone". The latter connects nature with man and constitutes a force that surpasses modern moral discipline, which both inherits and further develops from Liao-zhai Zhiyi. It is a new practice of ecological aesthetics, and it makes a new contribution to the construction of Chinese discourse of ecological aesthetics.

**Keywords:** Liao-zhai; Ecological Aesthetics; Pu Songling; Man and Nature

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In terms of the dimension of the relationship between man and nature, Liao-zhai Tales not only depicts the true character and the amiable nature, but also highlights the intimacy and integration between man and nature in the life world, showing the integrated relationship between man and nature with the story of the fate of man and natural objects and the sharing of life and death, which implies the ecological aesthetic connotation of harmony and unity between man and nature. Based on the text and ecological

aesthetics of Liaozhai Zhiyi, this paper starts from the concept of ecological aesthetics in a broad sense, and examines the ecological aesthetic implication embodied in the work from the perspective of human and nature. In the context of literary history, this paper examines the development of the ecological aesthetic implication in the later literary works, and summarizes the contribution of the ecological aesthetic implication to the discourse construction of contemporary ecological aesthetics in China.

## 2. THE BLENDING OF MAN AND NATURE IN LIAOZHAI TALES

### 2.1 Man's Protection and Rescue of Nature

In ancient China, "releasing live animals" is a common folk custom. For example, "Lieti · Shuofu" describes the story of "Zhengdan's release of life", which is the earliest record on the release of life in China. In order to please King Jianzi, the people of Handan offered doves to Jianzi on the first day of the first month, so that Jianzi could experience the joy of releasing life (Zhang et al., 2014). But in fact, it is indirect killing, because only civilians catch doves, can Jian Zi "release" for. Finally, under the persuasion of the doorman, Jianzi ordered that the people should not catch the dove. In the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties and Tang Dynasties, the widespread popularity of Buddhism pushed the custom of free life to the extreme. Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty wrote that vegetables and fruits were substituted for wine and meat as sacrificial articles in the temple, and the activities of releasing animals were extremely abundant. The prominent expression of the theme of release in the literary works of this period is that the theory of Buddhist results is taken as the logic of story development. The chapters involving "release" in Liaozhai Zhiyi are exactly the same as those in the previous generation, that is, there are inheritances, but also obvious transcendence and innovation. What is particularly outstanding is that the individual chapters of Liaozhai Zhiyi can experience the fate of natural objects in a universal life value with a sense of life common beyond self-centeredness. In addition, Liaozhai Tales also depicts the punishment of those who do not cherish the life of animals from the opposite side, but many of these "killing" stories are essentially the expression of Buddhist retributive thoughts and lack aesthetic value. Generally speaking, the stories involving the release and killing of living creatures in Liaozhai Tales generally include the following sections (Pu,

1989).

Table 1: Stories Involving the Release of Life in Liaozhai

Serial Number	Volume	Table of Contents	Object of Release	Reason for Release	Result of Release
1	Volume 5	West Lake King	Chinese alligator	Compassion	A good woman serves
2	Volume 5	Aunt Hua	River deer	Compassion	Back from the dead
3	Volume 2	Fourth Sister Hu	Fox	Compassion ; love	Be degreed as ghost fairy
4	Volume 1	Qing Feng	Fox	Compassion	Enjoy family happiness
5	Volume 7	Xiao Cui	Fox	Compassion	Be admitted as a scholar
6	Volume 5	Lotus three maiden	Fox	Love	Receive medicine
7	Volume 5	The Woman in the Green Suit	Bees	Love	write a word "Xie"
8	Volume 10	Long pavilion	Fox	Love	Reconciliation between husband and wife
9	Volume 6	The Eight Kings		Compassion	Get a "turtle treasure"
10	Volume 1	snakeman	Snake	Friendly feelings	Quiet mountain road
11	Volume 6	Righteousness dog	Dog	Compassion	Make a successful escape

Table 2: Stories Involving the Killing of Life in Liaozhai

Serial Number	Volume	Table of Contents	Object of Killing	Cause of Killing	Result of Killing
1	Volume 9	pitcher	Chinese alligator	Gluttony/Sellin g	The waves rolled
2	Volume 9	Put the dish	Butterfly/ Donkey	Eccentricity/ Debauchery	It was widely criticized
3	Volume 12	Scorpion	Wolf	Sell	Turn to blood
4	Volume 12	Fox of Zunhua Bureau	Fox	Remove the Evil	Die in a disaster
5	Volume 2	The Nine Mountains King	Fox	Thoughts of Killing	Be captured

From these representative articles, it can be seen that the motivation of releasing and saving lives in *Liaozhai Zhiyi* is mainly due to the hero's hidden heart towards animals and humans and the emotion between different species. In the middle of the contradiction between saving and not saving, many protagonists in *Liaozhai Tales* refused to listen to the advice of the Taoist priest and insisted on letting go the fox girl who was banned in the Taoist altar, which is exactly the case in the *West Lake Lord* and *Hu Sijie*. There are stories in which the hero has no emotional connection with the object being saved, but only offers a helping hand out of a spontaneous moral feeling in the heart, as if the hidden heart were a human instinct. Such as "Green Phoenix" Geng Sheng left after the Qingming tomb, see two small foxes for the dog chase, small fox saw Geng Sheng when he fled (Li & Che, 1990). When Geng Sheng saw this scene, he was very compassionate and wrapped the little fox in his clothes and took it home. This is obviously a kind of help to those who see it when they are in trouble, and the kindness of life is touching. In traditional Chinese culture, "compassion" and the habit of his friends "love life" have influenced Pu Songling. In addition to the life-saving stories in *Liaozhai Zhiyi*, Pu Songling also wrote articles related to free life, such as "Releasing a Living Pool into a happy Fu", "Releasing a crane and calling a Crane Song Orderly" and "Releasing a Living Pool Stele". These chapters, together with *Tales of Liaozhai*, reflect Pu Songling's recognition of "compassion" in traditional culture, which is also the cultural and regional root of tales of *Liaozhai* and *Tales of Liaozhai* (Cassirer, 1985).

## 2.2 The Gift of Life by Nature to Man

In *Tales of Liaozhai*, nature not only exists as an environment outside man, nor is it just a concrete thing that has nothing to do with man. In fact, nature means a life force, which helps people break through the shackles of life and let life unfold freely. That is to say, nature in *Liaozhai Tales* is a strange force that penetrates into people's lives. Especially in the love stories in the works, in order to repay people for saving lives, the natural spirit often turns into a woman and returns human kindness in the way of love. Cassirer once said: "Myth is the product of emotion, and its emotional background gives all its products its own characteristic color" (Li, 2018). Although *Liaozhai Tales* is not a myth, it has the mythical thinking mentioned by Cassirer, which makes all the creatures and flowers in the text imbued with emotional colors, thus producing beautiful emotions with people. These flowers all show vigorous vitality, highlighting the power of "life". *Tales of Liaozhai* makes all things in the world communicate through

life and emotion. These images of active vitality, poetic environment full of infinite business and the story of meeting with natural gifts as the core build a beautiful vision of the unity of all things with life force as the bridge.

### 2.3 Man and Nature Share Life and Death Together

From the guardian and rescue of nature and the gift of life from nature to man in *Liaozhai Tales*, it can be seen that man and nature have established a life connection to some extent, and natural things participate in the symphony of life together with man. In "Orange Tree", "Shi Qingxu", "Xiangyu", "Huang Ying" and "Suqiu", Pu Songling described in detail the integration of life and nature, and expressed the beauty of the unity of man and all things through the coexistence of life and death between man and nature.

## 3. THE VALUE STUDY OF THE ECOLOGICAL AESTHETIC IMPLICATION OF LIAOZHAI ZHIYI

### 3.1 Promoting the Development of Ecological Literature

As the peak of short classical Chinese novels in ancient China, *Tales of Liaozhai* is legendary and classic. Its legendary character is reflected in the mysterious plot and colorful images, and the classic character is the criticism of the cruel and cruel officials and the description of the distorted spirit of the scholars who are harmed by the imperial examination. What is more rare is that the ecological aesthetic meaning expressed in *Liaozhai Zhiyi* has many similarities with the ecological aesthetic meaning in many later works. This is not only the classic embodiment of the ecological aesthetic meaning of *Liaozhai Zhiyi*, but also the development and extension of its ecological aesthetic meaning in later works.

#### 3.1.1 Nature is Isomorphic with Human Life

For Pu Songling, the natural world is not an objective thing external to human beings. In the ethical concept of human beings, natural creatures at the second level have something in common with Pu Songling, who has been in the field of science for a long time and ended up without a right. Pu Songling, unable to obtain the external affirmation of self-value in real life, moves towards the mysterious nature and starts a dialogue with nature on a broader level of life. Therefore, we can find in the story of *Liaozhai Tales* more rich and wonderful relationship between human and nature in the spiritual level, cultural and psychological level. Similarly, whether it is a

Dream of Red Mansions, which was written later in *Tales of Liaozhai*, or the works of Mo Yan and Chi Zijian among contemporary writers, we can see the isomorphism of nature and human life reflected in the works. Among the three, although only Mo Yan explicitly stated that his works were deeply influenced by *Liaozhai Tales*, the description of the isomorphic relationship between human and natural life in the latter three works is actually a continuation and development of the ecological expression of *Liaozhai Tales* from the point of view of the sequence of writing time and the similarity of theme expression. In *Tales of Liaozhai*, natural images and human life interact and interact. The change of people's fate and the growth of the orange tree keep the same rhythm, the orange tree with the arrival of the husband Liu, but because of the separation of Liu, "not beautiful"; "Shi Qingxu" chapter death stone and people end, and people to want to be martyred stone, stone and people together to help; The flower God and human beings share life and death, and all things are integrated. The life of man and nature belong to a big life world in the description of *Liaozhai Tales*. This ecological implication is also directly reflected in *A Dream of Red Mansions*. "A Dream of Red Mansions" not only describes personnel, but also describes the natural beauty of Jia Mansion, especially the Grand View Garden. Moreover, there is an isomorphic relationship between nature and man. In the overall arrangement of the novel, Jia Fu's family fate from prosperity to decline echoes the changes of the four seasons in the work: "Dream of Red Mansions" from the first to the fifth account of two "fantasy" travel - Zhen Shiyin's summer sleepwalking to Jia Baoyu's early spring sleepwalking environment, the story time begins in summer and ends in spring. And in the fifth description of the early spring season, Ningguo Fu plum blossom, all in the garden will Fang to enjoy the flowers to play, when Jia Fu sheng. And in the autumn when Feng sister's birthday (the 43rd), Jia mother for its birthday had to ask everyone to raise money according to the generation, which has implied the change of prosperity and decline. Until Jia mother's eightieth birthday in the autumn (71st, 72nd), Jia Lian had to borrow money from Yuanyang to raise gifts, and Mrs. Wang also needed to pawn to raise expenses, which was a positive reflection of Jia's money beyond his means. The final time of the story of "A Dream of Red Mansions" is frozen in winter, when Jia's house is raided, "descendants are scattered", "a complete defeat", Jia Baoyu "gives up on the cliff" and "abandons himself as a monk". The change of the four seasons coincides with the rise and fall of Jia Fu, which is not only the author's carefully constructed time narrative strategy - "such arrangement not only enriches the content of the book,

but also adds the invisible tragic force" (Zheng, 2008), but also the author's indescribable understanding of the unity of humanity and heaven. In the description of characters' fate, the natural things in *A Dream of Red Mansions* have the same life essence as human beings. The 63rd Baoyu and the girls "occupy the name of the flower", one drew a flower tag. Xue Baochai's signature, "signed with a peony, the title of 'Yan Guan Qunfang' four words, and below there is a small engraved Tang poem, the way is: any is ruthless also moving"(Cao & Gao, 2005). The word "beautiful crown Qunfang" not only describes the position of peony as the first among the group of flowers, but also describes the character and beauty of Bao Chai. Baochai plump body, muscles and bones Ying, fat crisp arms, and graceful behavior, a lot of knowledge, human practice, all have peony graceful atmosphere temperament. The author takes the peony as the representative flower of the hairpin, not simply "xing" and "metaphor", the temperament of the peony flower in the novel is "the ubiquitous Holy Spirit", which is parallel to the characters in the novel and explains each other. To some extent, Cao Xueqin does not use flowers as a metaphor for human beings in *A Dream of Red Mansions*, but communicates with the characters and natural objects, and regards them as living bodies that take care of each other. The eldest servant girl Qingwen's representative flower - begonia died in the spring half of the reason, shortly thereafter Qingwen also died of a serious illness. Cao Xueqin explained this in the book by the mouth of Baoyu: "Not only the plants and trees, all the things in the world are rational friendship, but also like people, when they have a friend, they are extremely effective..." Therefore, the begonia should also die."(Molony, 2018) This is similar to the way in which the son of Gejin, the goddess of peony, was transformed into a peony on the spot after his death in *Tales of Liaozhai*. In the two works, people and flowers have the same life essence and destiny. This is the specific logic of Chinese traditional culture in understanding the relationship between man and nature, that is, to develop one's rational psychological ability in the way of perceptual metaphor, so as to "discover or establish a broader rational connection between the object and the object" (Meng, 2004). As Mr. Meng Peiyuan said, the great tradition of Chinese philosophy lies in "the occasion of investigating heaven and man" - "exploring and solving the problem of the relationship between man and nature" (Chi, 2020). In *A Dream of Red Mansions* and *Tales of Liaozhai*, this tradition is embodied in the author establishing the isomorphic connection of life between man and nature, and talking about life in the communication of emotional metaphor. In this regard, "the study of heaven and man" is not only a great tradition of Chinese philosophy,

but also a great tradition of Chinese literary theory. In the novels of contemporary writer Chi Zijian, we can also see the inheritance and development of this tradition. Chi Zijian's stories radiate from the Arctic village and draw on the natural environment and human customs of the Northeast region. In the novel "Fireworks", Chi Zijian uses "sparrowhawk" as the narrative device of the work, making the city in the work compatible with nature, humanity and spirituality. The sparrowhawk was encountered by the protagonist Liu Jianguo when he was out of town. Liu Jianguo repeatedly tried to fly it, but was unable to do so. "The eagle must have lost its way and flew to the man who saw a city light and did not want to enter the city, but it exhausted its strength and could not return to its old nest, so it was waiting for someone to save it" (Zheng, 2002). This sparrowhawk, called the "Little Sparrow" in the unmodernized Seven docks, has spiritual properties. It forages for food without being fed, "stubbornly retaining its connection to nature." This is just like its later owner Huang E, Huang E and sparrowhawk from the seven docks. Everything about her has not yet been regulated by morality and reality. She "walked alone on the Thumb and Deer rivers, and it was nice to be able to talk to the branches hanging down from the banks, to the fish in the river, to the birds in the gray clouds" (Cao & Gao, 2005). Such a woman who can perceive nature and echo the spirit of nature is equally bold in her temperament and affirms her inner natural desires. Whenever she drives a small motor boat on the way to see men and women alone, the heart of lust naturally ignited, unconsciously with male tourists to have sex. Whenever such things happen, Huang E is not afraid to cheat her husband, nor to defend her cheating behavior, but to confess everything to her husband without confessing. In a way, Huang E, who roamed the city in her natural way, was the sparrowhawk who rejected the urban bird-feeding methods. They came to the city from the former modern seven docks, but they did not admire the city or tame the civilized rules of the city, but kept their natural endowments and integrated into the city with their natural vision, taste and lifestyle, thus opening a new gap in the value system of the city and providing a spiritual aspect different from the complexity of the city.

### 3.1.2 Nature as a Symbol of Life Force

The nature in Liaozhai Tales, as a transcendent life force, helps people escape from the predicament and bondage of life. In the story, man and nature form a guard-return interaction, and the natural spirit turns into a woman in order to repay human kindness, so as to fulfill human (mainly male) desire for sincere love. The story of nature's return to human



kindness with emotion is embodied in the story of "the Union of wood and stone" in the Dream of Red Mansions. Jiang Zhuxian grass felt grateful for the "day with nectar irrigation" of the Shenyang waiter in the Chixia Palace, so that it could be extended for years, and wanted to repay it with tears, this story of gratitude is the source of Bao Dai's love. Thus, the most meaningful love story in A Dream of Red Mansions, like most of the love stories in Liaozhai Tales, stems from a strong mysterious force in the vast universe, a kind of precursor. However, compared with the simple depiction of this "frontier" in Liaozhai Tales, "Mu Shi Qian Meng" has a richer and deeper connotation in Cao Xueqin's pen. It not only arranges the beginning of the whole novel, but also tells the reader that the love between Bao and Dai is doomed in a previous life, but at the same time, this relationship is doomed to be a tragedy. For crimson is repaid with tears, and in this world the Toad had advised that Daiyu's illness was only "never to see crying; Except for parents, anyone who has relatives and friends of other names will not be seen, and only then will this life be safe" (Yang, 2023). Returning grace with tears and "do not hear crying" form the paradox in the novel, which is destined to lead to the tragedy in the novel. The monks in the novel want to avoid tragedy and give advice to Daiyu's family, but they are creating tragedy again. "Because it is they who brought the 'stone' to the earthly Jia Mansion, and it is they who concretely deduced the divine marriage of the 'Mu Shi Qian Alliance' to the earthly tragedy" (Lu, 2007). Therefore, in the interpretation of A Dream of Red Mansions, the natural force gives human beings beautiful emotions by "margin", showing its transcendence but also showing its powerlessness before the tragic fate of human beings. Although the basic structure of "Mushi Qianmeng" is still the karma model, its complexity and tragedy show the author's deep insight into the fate of mankind and philosophical thinking, which is the place where the karma narrative model of "Dream of Red Mansions" surpasses that of "Liaozhai Zhiyi". If nature, as a transcendent force, is mainly a power of "feeling" from the vast space and time and the world in Tales of Liaozhai and A Dream of Red Mansions, then in the works of contemporary writer Mo Yan, the transcendent force of nature is mainly reflected in the power of "living". This "raw" power is often associated with the "land" image in the works, such as the sorghum field in the Red Sorghum family, the "jute field" in "Transparent Carrot" and the cotton crib in "White Cotton", and the mother in "Large Breasts and Wide Hips". The "jute field" of Transparent Carrots is both a small area of natural biosphere - "the jute field is filled with birdlike music and musical autumn insect songs." The escaping mist hit the jute leaves and the deep

red or pale green stems, making a deafening noise. The sound of a grasshopper clipping its wings is like a train crossing an iron bridge "(Mo, 1985). It is also an "anthropological scene". Whenever a lark's cry rang out from the "jute field," Kiuko girl began to fidget and slip away to find a small stonemason "tall and tall, with a face like a scholar and a body like a tree." In the work, the wild union between the strong young stonemason and the rich and warm Kiuko girl in the "Jute Land" not only symbolizes the endless life force held by human beings in the fate of suffering, but also means the liberation of human nature through the moral imprisonment. Just as in the "Red Sorghum Family" when "my grandmother" peeks out in the sedan chair, the beautiful tall legs, broad shoulders and the vast sorghum field together constitute a wild life scene. Behind the wild marriage on the land and the wild growth of red sorghum, the bloody power of individuals and nations permeates in the works, which is the power burst out by Mo Yan's unification of human body and earth in his novels. Bakhtin, in his analysis of the unmodern nature of Rabelais' world, points out that "all physical things are here so vast, so exaggerated, so immeasurable." This exaggeration has a positive, affirming character. In all these images of material-physical life, the dominant factors are richness, growth, and emotional exuberance" (Bakhtin, 1998). In this way, the human body in Mo Yan's works is equally appropriate to the earth, and the human body and the land are connected to each other in his works, which together constitute the tenacious temperament of life, thus surpassing the standard of modern moral discipline. From the nature as a force with transcendental "feeling" in *Tales of Liao-zhai* and *A Dream of Red Mansions* to the power of "living" in Mo Yan's works, the ecological description in ancient and modern works contains the special life experience of Chinese people to the natural world, reflecting the national cultural psychology that human life communicates with the vast natural life. Therefore, although the word "ecology" comes from the Western old German, Chinese culture also contains rich ecological thought resources. From the perspective of the continuation and development of the ecological aesthetic implication of *Liao-zhai Tales* and the subjective thinking of the construction of China's ecological discourse, the expression of the ecological aesthetic implication of *Liao-zhai Tales* can still contribute its own value to the construction of China's ecological discourse.

### 3.2 Promoting the Theoretical Construction of Contemporary Ecological Aesthetics

In the dimension of the relationship between nature and man, *Liao-zhai*

Tales describes the harmonious friendship between man, natural creatures and ghost fox spirits, highlighting that the natural world contains the most original agility and liveliness of life, and shows a kind of natural ecological aesthetic interest in the pursuit of the harmony between man and nature. Starting from criticizing the ugly social phenomenon and imagining the ideal social ecology, the work expresses the author's expectation for a harmonious and symbiotic society. The muddiness of the real society and the innocence and beauty of nature urge the author to go to the world of gods and monsters to think about the problem of his own survival, which not only affirms that people pursue material interests and express their inner desires through proper means, but also separates themselves from the material desires of the passions, and completes the redemption and transcendence of themselves in the depiction of true feelings and the search for the essence of existence. The description of the work is a kind of Chinese ecological aesthetics practice, which is of great significance to the construction and development of China's ecological aesthetics theory at present.

### 3.2.1 Highlight the Ecological Ethics of "Conserving Life" and "Protecting Students"

The development of ecology changes people's ethical concepts and gives rise to ecological ethics. In the theoretical system of ecological aesthetics, ecological ethics is the ideological basis, and ecological aesthetics is an aesthetic activity based on ecological ethics. In relation to the other, traditional ethics mainly refers to the "other" to the "other", while ecological ethics extends to the whole earth community. "Something is right when it helps to preserve the harmony, stability and beauty of the living community, and wrong when it goes the other way." Leopold's earth ethics seems to be absolute, but it has a ground-breaking significance in the history of aesthetics. It makes us realize the deficiency of the aesthetic paradigm of anthropocentrism, and realize the inherent connection between aesthetic value and other values (such as ecological value). When today's living environment is getting worse and worse, the theoretical construction of ecological ethics has become more and more important in the system of ecological aesthetics. Although Liaozhai Tales was not born in the modern society with severe environmental problems, the compassion and the common sense of life beyond self-centered embodied in the novel resonate with contemporary ecological ethics. It presents a natural world in dialogue with human beings in a rich imagination and ingenious way, reflecting the ancient Chinese tradition of "cherishing life"

and "protecting life". In the dream world of *Liaozhai Tales*, the author extends his vision to all kinds of creatures in the universe, and he does not regard them as strange, but thinks from the perspective of animals and plants. This attitude fundamentally affects his aesthetic preference and choice of aesthetic objects, making the slightly ordinary objects or scenes in the life world, such as silverfish, bees, mice, orange trees, winter resistance, cemeteries, ancient temples, and wilderness, become aesthetic objects that can bring rich aesthetic experience. Based on the Confucian "love life" advocacy of "love life" (Leopold, 2016a), and the Buddhist tradition of "protecting life" (Su, 1992), "above and below people, but can save the death of ants, all of them are released", *Liaozhai Zhiyi* describes a series of stories related to the folk "release life" custom, which not only demonstrates human compassion, but also demonstrates human compassion. It also goes deep into the life situation of each individual, and reflects the various survival difficulties of all sentient beings with the story structure of "dilemma - release of life", reflecting the rational thinking of respecting life and viewing all things equally. The creation of *Liaozhai Tales* is not out of ecological consciousness, but the "love of things" characteristic of the cultural context naturally leads the author to pay attention to and care for the natural life, which is exactly the possibility of ecological aesthetics in *Liaozhai Tales*. Leopold recorded his ecological aesthetic experience in the *Sand Country Almanac*, where a Wolf cub's "painful, dying green glow in his eyes" made him understand that it was not the "fewer wolves, more deer" truth that almost began to form his land ethics. Similarly, it is Pu Songling's open attitude towards all things natural and respect for their existence, as well as the experience of several years of lonely sitting in the museum, that makes it possible to create the strange novel which embodies the ecological aesthetic significance. Therefore, it is an aesthetic paradigm of love, respect and tolerance for the "other", and a good attitude towards the "other" is the necessary basis for the occurrence of ecological aesthetics. Pu Songling's attitude and value orientation towards life and the production of *Liaozhai Zhi Zhi* inadvertently prove the relationship between ecological ethics and ecological aesthetics, and reveal the value of an ethical dynamic that transcends self-centered compassion for others.

### 3.2.2 Contribute New Ecological Aesthetic Practice

Almost at the same time as the ecological movement, the creation of ecological literature and the trend of ecocriticism have been surging, and the idea of ecological aesthetics has gradually formed in these activities. In

the process of the western reflection on the industrial Revolution in the middle of the 20th century, people paid more and more attention to a group of "focusing on the rural environment" works represented by Thoreau's *Walden Pond*, and carried out ecocritical research on them as the practice of ecological aesthetics. In fact, there are many ancient books describing the harmonious coexistence between man and nature in ancient China. For example, the ancient Chinese books "Music", "The Book of Songs" and "Huainan Zi" all contain a kind of thought connotation of coexistence between man and nature, emphasizing the harmony between man and nature. As the earliest collection of poems in China, the *Book of Songs* puts forward the "six meanings" of poetry: wind, elegance, praise and Fu, comparison and prosperity. *Fengya Ode* is a different genre of poetry, while *Fu Bixing* is a different rhetorical device of poetry. This "six meanings" almost summarizes all aspects of poetry and even literature creation, and is the summary of art by the ancestors. Some scholars have traced the source of these "six meanings", and finally found that the "six meanings" of the book of songs are closely related to the performance of nature. Such as "wind" as a folk song, itself is associated with natural life, "the teacher, the people's cold and summer also." Teaching from time to time hurts the world; Things, the wind and rain of the people. Nothing works if it is not done properly" (Tripitaka, 1994). The ancient people associated music with weather (cold and heat storms), reflecting the relationship between human life activities and nature and art. Specifically in literary and artistic works, Chinese calligraphy and painting pursue the "likeness of spirit", pay attention to the "lively charm", and actively express the rhythm of life and the endless business of the universe in a few strokes. Chinese flower and bird landscape and figure paintings do not take realism as the victory, but instead use freehand brushwork to reflect the true spirit of drumming; Although calligraphy does not directly present the form of things that can be felt like painting, it can "carve" the inner charm of things in the middle of the shop, and present the ups and downs and turbulence caused by the rolling life with the use of lines. The same is true of ancient Chinese architecture, especially in the Ming and Qing dynasties, people have consciously combined the simple mountains and forests with artificial carving, natural landscape and cultural landscape in garden architecture. Zheng Banqiao introduced natural scenery into his apartment when he built his own room, such as "three apartments, ten miles of spring breeze, quiet orchis in the window and bamboo cultivation outside the window" (Leopold, 2016b), which is quite interesting. Not to mention the ancient poetry, which reached its peak of development from the Tang Dynasty,

"The water of the Yellow River comes from the sky and flows to the sea never to return" is one of the praises of the Chinese literati for the business and grandeur of heaven and earth. "Sheng Sheng aesthetics" is vividly displayed in ancient Chinese poetry, architecture, opera, calligraphy, painting and other artistic forms, but before the 17th century, there was no novel such as *Liaozhai Tales* directly expressed the praise of "Sheng". Therefore, the publication of *Liaozhai Tales* just makes up for a vacancy of Sheng Sheng aesthetics in Chinese classical literature and art. *Liaozhai Tales* inherits the cultural tradition of the coexistence of art and nature, thinking about nature and real life problems from the perspective of non-human world. Different from the previous strange novels and even all Chinese classical literature, *Liaozhai Tales* takes a writing stance of "beasts are more beautiful than people". With rich imagination and colorful vocabulary, the author constructs a kind and chivalric image, highlights the good quality of animal spirits with the meanness of human beings, and even praises the beauty of the biological world directly in many animal stories. This is the author's adaptation of the fairy legend of the local world and the external expression of nature. What is particularly special is that although *Liaozhai Zhiyi* uses magic pen to write ghost fox spirits, it can always properly combine the characteristics of natural creatures themselves, and the above analysis of A Xian, Gejin and Huang Ying are all the same. In the text, Pu Songling combines material nature, human nature and human feeling, and unifies self with nature and society. It not only successfully rewrites the grim ghost in the history of literature into a "friendly" and lively image, but also creates a world full of warmth. The writing position and writing method of *Liaozhai Tales* were almost unprecedented before the 17th century. Starting from "nature is more beautiful than man", it vividly showed the mysterious charm of nature in a way of illusion, wrote the ancient people's understanding of the relationship between heaven and man, and conveyed the author's expectation and desire for a better living state. This is a unique ecological aesthetic practice in Chinese fantasy novels.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

At the beginning of the 21st century, the research on the ecological aesthetic implication of *Liaozhai Zhiyi* has gradually risen with the development of domestic ecological thoughts, and representative research results have emerged in recent years. However, most of the literature only

focuses on the single research perspective of the harmonious relationship between man and nature. In contrast, this study proposes to stand on the broad perspective of ecological aesthetics, from the human and nature, human and society, and human and themselves multiple levels to analyze the ecological aesthetic implications in the text, dialectically treat the ecological beauty and non-ecological beauty phenomenon in the text, and point out the ideal ecological world expressed in the text. "Strange Stories of Liaozhai" takes the fox demon as the protagonist, not only vividly shows the temperament and mysterious charm of different objects, but also writes all the life. In the lonely and lonely career of sitting in the museum, Pu Songling quietly observed all things in nature, and depicted a full of warmth in the "Liaozhai Zhiyi", which not only constructed a world of people and all things, but also drew an ideal social ecological blueprint of individual survival value being respected, mutual appreciation and harmonious coexistence with the help of imagination. If Journey to the West is to seek the mystery of heaven and earth by arranging natural objects into a civilized society, then Liaozhai Tales is to find a long-lost spiritual path in a civilized society by way of retrospecting. Tales of Liaozhai not only shows the place of nature in the traditional cultural world in the Ming and Qing dynasties, but also Pu Songling's way to heal his inner troubles. No matter for Pu Songling personally or for the contemporary relationship between heaven and man and the study of ecological aesthetics, Liaozhai Tales has irreplaceable uniqueness. It is a work that cannot be ignored in the construction of Chinese ecological aesthetics discourse. As Liu Gangji concludes, Chinese aesthetics "is equally relevant and often more important in many places where the word 'beauty' does not appear." Similarly, we should not ignore the aesthetic spirit of harmony and unity between man and nature, the emphasis on nature and individual value, and the spiritual call of man to transcend himself, because there is no word "ecology" in Liaozhai Tales.

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