

VOICE ASSISTANTS AND SMART SPEAKERS: A NEW DIMENSION OF COMMUNICATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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The authors analyze the nature of the influence of voice assistants and smart speakers on a person and his lifestyle; identify the causes and essence of communication failures that occur when using voice assistants and smart speakers, and also consider the main problem that arises when using them – maintaining the security and confidentiality of users' personal data.

Keywords: digital age, voice assistants, smart speakers, communication, cybersecurity, communication failures, privacy.

ИСТОРИЧЕСКИЕ НАУКИ

THE CONCEPT OF GHOSTS AND GODS IN MING DYNASTY OPERAS

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In ancient Chinese society. People have a strong sense of ghosts and gods. The opera writers of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 CE) added many images of gods and ghosts to their operas, and gave them special powers and unique charms. Through the two opera plots of ghosts and gods helping good people and punishing bad people, they educated the people and punished evil. The purpose of promoting good deeds also has a certain spiritual soothing and paralyzing effect on the people.

Keywords: China, Ming Dynasty, opera, ghosts and gods, education.

The concept of ghosts and gods has a long history in traditional Chinese social thought and has long been one of the ideological elements in the spiritual life of the Chinese people. In ancient Chinese society, due to people's relatively low level of cognition and incomplete understanding of nature, they often made multiple guesses about unknown nature and some unexplainable natural phenomena. They believed that things in nature such as the sun, moon, Stars, mountains, rivers, seas, etc. all have gods. It is also believed that people's souls will be immortal after death and will turn into ghosts and gods. Therefore, various sacrificial

activities have been produced in the hope of eliminating disasters and receiving blessings from ghosts and gods. Influenced by the social thoughts of the time, the opera artists of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 CE) added many images of gods and ghosts to their operas, and gave them special powers and unique charms. They used the art form of opera to educate the people and punish evil. The purpose of promoting good deeds has certain social significance, and it also has a certain spiritual soothing and paralyzing effect on the people. Ghost operas of the Ming Dynasty usually show two plots: Help from ghosts and gods or Punish from ghosts and gods.

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 CE) operas created a large number of images of ghosts and gods. In the operas, these ghosts and gods penetrate deeply into the social life of the people and are closely related to all aspects of ordinary people's lives. Some of them even have human emotions. In some operas, when the characters in the play encounter difficulties, ghosts and gods will appear to help them overcome the difficulties.

In «Pipa Ji (琵琶记)»¹, because her husband went to Beijing to take the exam, Zhao Wuniang (赵五娘) took care of her parents-in-law alone. It happened to be a famine, and her parents-in-law died one after another. Since the family had no money, Zhao Wuniang (赵五娘) could only wrap soil in her skirt and build a grave for her parents-in-law. Her filial act moved God, so God sent earth god² to help Zhao Wuniang (赵五娘) complete the tomb building. These plays tell people if there are unsolved problems or difficulties encountered in reality, gods will come out to help solve the problems:

«吾奉玉帝勅旨，为见这赵五娘独自在山筑坟。特差汝等率领阴兵，与他协力。汝等可变作人形，与他运化土石，务要顷刻完成，不得惊动孝妇» [1, p. 106].

In Ming Dynasty operas, good people will be helped by gods, while bad people will be punished by God to demonstrate justice in the world.

In «Jing Zhong Ji (精忠记)»³, Qin Hui (秦桧)⁴ framed Yue Fei (岳飞)⁵ and his son when he was an official in the court. After his death, he entered the underworld, where he was judged by Yue Fei (岳飞) and was eventually sentenced to «not allowed to reincarnate». Qin

Hui's (秦桧) evil deeds were not punished when he was alive, and he was tried again by the underworld after his death.

«秦丞相欺君卖国，今受此酆都地狱。奉劝世人行善，休学小人酷毒» [2, p. 89].

In «Fenxiang Ji (焚香记)»⁶, the heroine Jiao Guiying (敫桂英) mistakenly believed that her husband Wang Kui (王魁) had remarried a new wife. In desperation, she died to prove her ambition. After death, the soul complained to King of the Sea, hoping that king could help her.

After hearing her story, King sent soldiers to capture her husband's soul and confront her. When he learned the whole story, he learned that it was the bully Jin Lei (金垒) who caused the separation of the couple. King resurrected Wang Kui (王魁) and Gui Ying (敫桂英), and punished Jin Lei (金垒) deduct 2 years from life span and cut off any heirs:

«那金垒为富不仁，伤人性命，将他阳寿减除二纪。阳司处决报应，仍把他婚姻录内注定，二世鰥居绝嗣» [3, p. 90].

The reason why playwrights devise plots about rewards and punishments from ghosts and gods is simply that when people encounter difficulties and disasters in real life, they cannot solve them, and they hope for the help of gods, which makes people full of hope in life. At the same time, it also serves as a warning to those who do evil, warning people that even if the actual law cannot punish them, gods will eventually come out to punish them and educate people to do good and avoid evil in life, and have good thoughts in their hearts.

¹Pipa Ji : Script of Southern Opera, written by Gao Ming.

²earth gods : The name of a Taoist god. It is a minor god with a very low status in the Taoist pantheon, but folk belief is extremely common. People believe that wherever there are people living together, there is an earth god.

⁴Jing Zhong Ji:Chuanqi script. Written by Anonymous Ming Dynasty.

⁵Qin Hui (1090—1155 CE) :Prime Minister of the Southern Song Dynasty(南宋 1127-1279 CE) . A minister who surrendered in the Southern Song Dynasty. Killed the loyal minister Yue Fei and his son. He advocated giving up the struggle and paying tribute to the Jin Kingdom, which was reviled by the people.

Yue Fei(1103-1142) : Famous Generals of the Southern Song Dynasty.

⁶Fenxiang Ji:Chuanqi script.Written by Wang Yufeng in the Ming Dynasty.

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КОНЦЕПЦИЯ ПРИЗРАКОВ И БОГОВ В ОПЕРАХ ДИНАСТИИ МИН

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В древнем китайском обществе у людей было сильно развито чувство призраков и богов. Авторы опер династии Мин (1368-1644 гг. н. э.) добавили в свои оперы множество образов богов и призраков, наделили их особой силой и уникальными чарами. Благодаря двум оперным сюжетам, в которых призраки и боги помогают хорошим людям и наказывают плохих, они воспитывали людей и наказывали зло. Цель поощрения добрых дел также оказывает определенное духовное успокаивающее и парализующее воздействие на людей.

Ключевые слова: Китай, династия Мин, опера, призраки и боги, воспитание.