

Analysis of Sanmao's Creative Style and Attitude

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Abstract: The value of life is not only embodied in the length and width of life, but also in possessing dreams and doing what one considers meaningful in the pursuit of dreams. Taiwan writer Sanmao is such a legendary woman. This article mainly analyses Sanmao's values from her creative style and attitude towards life, and explores the important factors that constitute her transcendent and unrestrained personality and charming soul.

Keywords: Sanmao; Creative Style; Personality; Lyrics; Wandering Literature; Drama

1. Sanmao's Life Experience and Main Publications

Born in Chongqing and raised in Taiwan, San Mao's life has been rich and fulfilling, as well as rough and tumble. What is fascinating is that her plain words reveal a sense of transcendence and freedom. She was unruly and uninhibited, like an enigma who cannot find the answer to a riddle. Though elusive from time to time, every reader can more or less find in between the lines a message that is still applicable to contemporary society, whether it is to treat others or to look into one's heart.

2. Sanmao's Creative Style in Different Periods

2.1 The Early Period - Literary and Poignant

In "My Happy Paradise", Sanmao recounted that at the age of sixteen or seventeen, she met her mentor Gu Fusheng for the first time and fell in love with him at first sight, in a sense, she was the "guide" to the field of literature. In a certain sense, Gu Fusheng was Sanmao's 'guide' to the field of literature, and literary creation also made Sanmao open her inner closed shackles a little.

From this perspective, the prose and essays included in the representative work of this period, "The Rainy Season Never Comes Again", are delicate in their psychological portrayal, making the image of a young girl with her first love sinus and literary youthfulness appear on the paper. At the same time, the works are generally psychedelic and poignant, accompanied by sorrow and longing that move back and forth. Among them, his debut novel "Confusion" depicts the confusion and torment brought by "Portrait of Jenny". The narrative angle is sensual and clear, mapping out the depth of the spiritual damage Sanmao suffered during her secondary school years, and reflecting the sensitivity and thoughtfulness of Sanmao's character.

Sanmao herself once made the following comment on her initial work, The Rainy Season Never Comes Again: "The Rainy Season Never Comes Again is also a narcissistic Narcissus me. Everything in my past is narcissistic. If one is narcissistic forever that's the end of it. Many people can see what a sick girl I used to be." At the same time, Mitsuru adds, "The Rainy Season Never Comes Again is a stage in my life, a past that I can't deny or hide."

2.2 Middle Period - Bright and Witty

After marrying José, Sanmao settled in the Sahara Desert. Thus, most of her writing materials come from her daily life and loving interactions with José, as well as the stories of the desert. Her representative works, such as Tales of the Sahara and Tender is the Night, reveal her satisfaction with the present life and her infinite hope for the future. This is the turning point of Sanmao's creative work. At this stage, her writing style is not only humorous and witty, for an example, she writes in Hotel in the Desert, "Anyway, couples' lives are always about eating, and the rest of the time is about earning money for eating, which is really not very interesting." Also bright and optimistic, as in The Vegetarian Fisherman: "A long life in the desert teaches one only one good thing, that any little real-life enjoyment incidentally leads to infinite satisfaction and elevation of the mind." What's more, it is rich in the sense of wild spontaneity and broad uninhibitedness: "Here, the

endless waves of undulating grains of sand are the real masters of the earth, and man, surviving here, is only a small stone mixed inside the sand.” “Diffuse yellow sand, under the boundless and huge sky, only our two small figures walking, surrounded by silence. The desert, at this time of year, is truly beautiful.” “The wind brought over the sounds of laughter from little girls at play.” “Where there are people, there is an indescribable vitality.” The middle period is the heyday of Sanmao’s creativity, making her writing vivid and legendary.

2.3 Late Period - Quiet and Lonely

After Sanmao lost her husband, she could not get out of her grief for a while, and her creative storytelling style returned to silence. In “Walking over Ten Thousand Mountains”, she wrote: “Half travelling and drifting, for the new environment has learned to quietly adapt and observe, and is not eager to be fresh and splendid, not to mention deliberately looking for materials for writing.” As a result, unlike in the early stage, there is more maturity, introspection and calmness in his writing, as if he had seen through the red dust, as well as a sense of sadness and silence about the bleakness of the world.

In “Knowing How Much Flowers Fall in Dreams”, she more than once puts together sighs in a sentence, showing her deep thoughts and deflorations for her late husband: “Even if you have become white bones, you are still the loved one who loves you in the dream of the spring boudoir!” and her disheartened heart: “Even if you have become white bones, you are still the loved one who loves you in the dream of the spring boudoir.” As well as disheartened: “It is you who are buried, and it is me, and it is us who are gone.”

The most characteristic feature of the creative style of this period also comes from the ambivalence of the textual narrative, which carries the state of mind of taking things as they come, but also possesses the desire to escape from reality. As Professor Hu Pinqing of the Cultural Institute commented in one of the Three Rules of the Broken Film, Sanmao “likes to pursue phantoms and create tragic beauty, and when the phantoms become real, she begins to escape.”

On the whole, Sanmao’s works are, as she said, something that flows slowly like a river, rowing past and not coming ashore, and any one of them is indispensable. The same is true of her creative style, which cannot be ignored at any stage, thus constituting the complex and diverse timelessness of her.

3. Sanmao’s Personality

3.1 The Personality Embodied in the Lyrics - Sanmao’s “Wandering Sentiment” from “The Olive Tree”

“Don’t ask me where I come from, my hometown is far away, why do I wander, for the olive tree in my dreams”. On the one hand, Sanmao used “olive tree” as the title, because José’s hometown, the south of Spain, produces olives, and the beauty of olive tree makes Sanmao intoxicated; on the other hand, “olive tree” is an On the other hand, “Olive Tree” is a reference to Sanmao’s “wanderlust”. When commenting on The Olive Tree, Sanmao declared, “There seems to be a line that reads ‘Wandering is for the flight of the sky and the prairie or something. Because the Olive Tree is different from what I wrote at the beginning, if wandering is only for the flying birds in the sky and the prairie, then there’s no need to go wandering.” SAN MAO’s “wanderlust” is unique, and her interpretation of “wanderlust” is ultimately the process of pursuing the deepest dreams of the heart, in order to find a resting place for the heart rather than a figurative one, rather than being in the clouds and becoming mediocre in the midst of the chaos and noise. It can be ordinary, but not mediocre.

Therefore, her “wandering” is a utopian realm of inner customization, her own respect for the inner world and individuality. At the same time, she is an innocent and straightforward person who has experienced both the glamour of urban life and the psychedelic grandeur of exotic landscapes, but has never settled down and stayed put. Where is the utopia she seeks and where is the olive tree of her dreams? Perhaps her spontaneity and nature gave her the answer in the process of trekking. As she says, “Reading and travelling are my lifelong passions, and they are also the two planets in my life.” Her “wandering” is not afraid of material scarcity, but focuses on spiritual enrichment.

3.2 The Personality of Wandering Literary Writings - Thoughts on the Relationship between Individuals and External Objects, and between Self and Others

If Sanmao's "wanderlust" reveals the human attitude of spontaneity and listening to the voice of the self, then her wanderlust literature writings express her frank and spontaneous source - the contemplation on the relationship between the individual and the external objects, and between the self and the others in a more concrete way.

Tales of the Sahara, as a mid-career work of San Mao, is written in a positive and bright style, full of vitality and happiness - although the Sahara Desert, far away from modern civilization, is in a difficult condition and lack of material life, the vast exotic scenery, the simple inhabitants, and Jose's daily chores, and the joy of bitterness, have all made San Mao's heart rich. She also realized that the endless waves of undulating sand in the Sahara Desert is the real master of the earth, and people, living here, is just a small stone mixed in the sand. The spectacular scenery is something outside the body, and people in the desert have the feeling that they are "just a drop in the ocean". The same description, in the later works of "thousands of mountains and waters walk all over the" is still embodied: "just choose their own path and prospects, whether they can succeed, manipulated in their own hands of the determination, in fact, only half of the promise and hope, after all, nature also has its laws in the sway of human destiny;". Life fades, but gold lasts forever. It is a blessing to be able to have the honor of appreciating these things outside of one's body." Sanmao has her own rhythm and will to live, but she remains sober and open in the face of nature and things outside her body.

Furthermore, the delicate portrayal of minor characters in wandering literature better explains Sanmao's attitude towards life and triggers thoughts about her own relationship with others: Guka, the doll bride in Tales of the Sahara; Sharon, the owner of the desert grocery shop; the neighbors who take Sanmao's help for granted; and the "proud" and "hurt" woman who is "proud" of being "hurt" by Sanmao. "Hurt" by Rab's mother, the poor mute slave, the beautiful and transparent Shaida in "The Weeping Camel", the Indian Jill who lets Sanmao stay in her house in "Walking on Thousands of Hills", the Peruvian artist who plays the "Gino", and the lonely and handsome Argentinian Gaucho in "The Story of the Sahara". Their figures are vivid and full of life. They are ordinary people, even lacking in material things. However, their lifestyles and spiritual state of mind are so extraordinary to Sanmao and the readers that they leave a deep impression. This is also in line with her view of life as ordinary but not mediocre.

3.3 The Personality Mapped in the Play--The View of Love in Rolling Red Dust

As the only play and posthumous work, Rolling Red Dust has become the last song of Sanmao's magnificent and turbulent life. The script tells of the tragic love entanglements between writer Shen Shaohua and Zhang Nengcai, and the life and death of Yuefeng and Xiaoyong. Sanmao's characterization of Shen Shaohua and Yuefeng maps out her own view of love, giving the play a hint of autobiography.

Shen Shaohua experiences several relationships, of which Xiao Jian is the first love. Their love is full of youthfulness and passion. Xiao Jian was deeply in love with the talented Shen Shaohua, and Shen Shaohua was also in love with Xiao Jian. But their ideal of marriage is opposed by Shaohua's father. Shaohua is imprisoned in the attic, causing Shaohua to beg and bang on the door so many times that she commits suicide. Xiao Jian tries to save the day, but ultimately abandons Shaohua out of cowardice. Sansao's own emotional experience is somewhat similar, during her studies at the Cultural Institute, she admired Liang Guangming, a talented man with the pen name of Shufan, and took the initiative to give her contact information, and the two of them went out, but then Sansao went through the formalities of studying abroad in Spain, which resulted in the breakup of the two of them, and Sansao slit her wrists in an attempt to commit suicide. From this point of view, Sanmao's attitude towards love is brave and passionate, but too intoxicated and crazy.

Zhang Nengcai, a young man of literature and art, is Shen Shaohua's second love object. From Shaohua's love journey with Zhang Nengcai, it can be seen that she does not attach much importance to Nengcai's identity. On the other hand, Sanmao has her own talent and popularity, and has had romantic encounters with a doctor in the United States and an army officer in Germany. They are in high positions, but ultimately have no luck with San Mao.

Boss Yu's love for Shaohua is "unrequited", and he is willing to go through fire and water for Shaohua in a time of great suffering. This also implies Sanmao's supreme view of love and her high regard for personal experience.

Another female character, Yuefeng, has the same high pursuit of love as Shaohua, but compared to Shaohua, she has a more smoldering flavor, melting herself into the red dust. This is also the extroverted self that Sanmao pursues, and her love for José is a kind of extroverted

love - the commonality between Sanmao and José is that they are persistent and courageous in their approach to love.

Mitsuru holds that life is not about length, but about whether or not it has been lived painfully. Love, in Sanmao's view, is one of the sources of "joy". She lived in the mid-to-late twentieth century, but she had a free and independent value of love that is still worth pondering today. Her values were legendary and deep in her short life of 48 years. It is an indispensable and colorful part of her chic soul.

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