

# View on to escape

Literature



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Su Tong is a pen name of Tong Zhonggui. He was born in 1963 in Suzhou and now living in Nanjing with his family. Su Tong is not only a greater writer which 20th century last stages appears, but also he is the representative writer of the vanguard literature and is one of the founders of "neo-historicism" novel (Jing). Vanguard literature is a kind of literature, which is against the traditional culture and deliberate violation of the principles of conventional creation and appreciation of the literary habits, and one-sided pursuit of artistic form and style of the novel.

As usually, the vanguard literature writers through different kind of suggests, metaphor, symbol, association and imagery to explore people's inner life. Otherwise, the narrative structure method of vanguard literature is also different from with the traditional literature. Compared with traditional literature, many of the vanguard literature are not focusing on talking about a complete story. It pays more attention on how the story out (Tang). Su Tong as a pioneer of the vanguard literature, his works is followed by the style of the vanguard literature.

In the Su Tong's novel, the main theme are made up of the desire words in human nature, rebelling against and escaping with the life of destiny and constructing the solving of the history and culture hard (Jing). "To Escape" is one of his outstanding works. The main story of "To Escape" talks about Chen Sanmai's life and three times he escapes. Chen Sanmai spends his whole life for escaping from something him afraid until he died. This paper will begin with a discussion of the story's spatial structure and an exploration into the symbolic meaning of the kites in relation to the Chen Sanmai's life.

Spatial Structure of “ To Escape” Firstly I will deconstruct the spatial structure of “ To Escape”. Spatial structure, as one element of narrative structure, is a kind of the framework of a story, which shows how a story is told by the writer. However, a spatial structure should not be interpreted only in a geometric or morphologic sense. A spatial structure is completely described following by the arrangement of objects or events, which is different from temporal structure (Elissalde). As we know, temporal structure also is one element of narrative structure, which means that the story is told followed by the time development.

Compared with the temporal structure, the spatial structure is focus on the objects or events of the story, which means that the story is told by plan of each objects or events in stand of following for the time development. In the “ To Escape” the main object or event of whole story is Chen Sanmai’s escape. He keeps escaping from beginning of the story to the end of story. According to this object, which is escape, the whole story can be divided into three parallel sections. The first section is about Chen Sanmai’s first escape. The whole story is beginning with Chen Sanmai’s first escape.

His wife doubts that he has some venereal diseases and blames him, so Chen Sanmai decides to escape from his wife, his family and his hometown to other place and then joins the army. In this part, the writer just focuses on the event of the escape and doesn’t explain lots of background and the situation. Similar with the first section, the second section starts with Chen Sanmai returns back to maple village. In the first instance Chen Sanmai is regarded as a hero, who comes back from the war, but with the development of the story, we can know that Chen Sanmai is not a real hero.

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He is an army deserter from the war, which is his second time of escape. The last section shows that as an army deserter, Chen Sanmai always believes and fears that somebody will come to catch and sent him back to army, which leads him escapes from his wife, family and hometown again. He runs to other place and tries to avoid something, but finally he dies in a place far from home. These three parts are not followed by the normal story development, but each section is linked by the same object and same event, which is escape.

In other words, in the normal novel, story is written arranged from cause, development, and climax to result. Each part is one by one, but in spatial structure, each section is parallel, which means that they are all in the same level and only scheduled by the point order. Otherwise, the story of "To Escape" also can be analysis two spaces, which are external and internal space. The external space is that story is told by first-person narrators "I" and "I" talk about the story about my uncle and his wife. The internal space is story told by Chen Sanmai's and his wife, which are included their person experience and emotion.

Symbolic Meaning of the Kites Escape is the basic tone in "To Escape". The novel shows that escape is a state of survival of human beings. In this story, the author Su Tong through Chen Sanmai's three times escapes to show human being's contradictions and lost about escape and return. In the novel, Chen Sanmai's first escape is escape from his wife, family and hometown to other place. At this time, he wants to escape from his old life. When his wife doubts that he have some venereal disease, he feels misunderstanding and loneliness in his heart.

He tries to resistance and escape from this kind of misunderstanding and loneliness, but he fails. Nobody wants try to understand him and share his feeling, ever his wife. When the individual is suppressed, marginalized, in and resistance in the failure of a particular environment, the first reaction is to escapes. Chen Sanmai also chooses this way to relax himself from the loneliness and misunderstanding of his past life. In short, escape is a way out of the siege alone and looks forward to a kind of new life. The second time escape for Chen Sanmai is that he escapes from the army and returns back home.

Returning is always accompanied with escape and it is a very important part in Su Tong' novel. Returning back home is a kind of action to look for emotional satisfaction and beyond. In my opinion, nostalgia is very important reason for Chen Sanmai escapes form army and returns back home. The loneliness in Chen Sanmai's mind makes him to escape, and finally no way out, but he still can't escape from loneliness, ever this kind of emotion is heavier than before. Because of loneliness, people try to escape. Because of escape, people feel loneliness and finally because of loneliness, people decide return back.

When Chen Sanmai returns back to maple village, he still keeps some hopes for looking for a kind of new life, which is different from before. There is a big event introduced after Chen Sanmai's second time escape, which is that he begins to make different kinds of kites. These kites accompany him until last minute of his life. The last escape for Chen Sanmai is that he believes that somebody comes to maple village and will catch him back to army, he

escapes again from his own fear, and this time it more seems like he is driven by the desire of escape.

Escape becomes a part of his life, in other words, he thought the escaping way to show his resistance and discontent of the fate. For the Chen Sanmai, escape is not only his decision, but also it is his fate. The process of escape also is the process of he looks for the spiritual homeland (Xia). The kite is a very important sign during the whole story. It is not only symbolic of Chen Sanmai himself, but it is also symbolic his desire to escape. Chen Sanmai considers himself as the kite, and he wants to escape loneliness, fear and misunderstanding to get freedom for his own mind.

He is keeping look for a new kind of life he wants, so he escape again and again, but finally he still fails. Similar like the kite flies in the sky, after Chen Sanmai escapes for three times, he losses the way he looks for. He just likes the kits, he does not know where the true happiness shore is and which direction is right way go there. He begins to confuse and at the same time he can't escape from this kind of confuse. So from his angle, the kite is a kind of desire of escape. Moreover, from the Chen Sanmai's wife's angle, the kite is in stand of her husband Chen Sanmai.

When we fly a kite, wherever the kite goes, we still can control and find the kites through the kite line. His wife just likes the kite line, wherever Chen Sanmai goes, she still can find and grab him in a specific time. Otherwise, throughout the novel, the whole process of " escape" and " find" turns alternately, also shows that the special relationship with love between Chen Sanmai and his wife, which is not easy to cut off. Conclusion In conclusion,

Su Tong's novel presents the characteristics of diversity and experience, and also shows individual's spirit resistance of life.

This kind of life resistance shrouds under the nihility consciousness of Su Tong's, it is determined that the final result always pointing to fails and subsides. The story of "To Escape" is end by Chen Sanmai's death, his death seems like his other time of escape. After escape for three times, he finally escapes completely from his own loneliness, fear and misunderstanding. In my view, I think that although Chen Sanmai dies in the end of the story, but in the other hand, it seems the best way for him. Because he just like a kite flies very high, but still has kite line which is control him.

His death like a knife cuts the line. Finally, he flies away, finds the new life and feels belonging. Also, for his wife, it is a new beginning of her life. At this time she can cut off the kite line to give herself and Chen Sanmai freedom. In this story, the author Su Tong shows that for the fugitive back to the original or non-natural death is a kind of fate. Moreover, Su Tong through Chen Sanmai's cycle escape and unexpected death of escape ending to discover the real reason for human being to the escape (Jing).