

Chen sanmai

Literature



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Chen Sanmai in by Su Tong's *Escape* Tong Zhonggui has been writing his novels and stories under the pen name of Su Tong, since last several decades. Born in Suzhou in 1963, the writer is now living with his family in Nanjing. Su Tong is famous for writing against the traditional practices and social obligations, as he has depicted the human conflict with such beliefs and practices, in his different literary presentations. Accordingly, the writer has used various metaphors, symbols and his own imagination to probe into the inner life of people with the aim of finding their reaction to social customs and obligations. Readers can expect Su Tong's stories revolving around the theme of human escape from life that has roots in destiny and rebellion of humans against established traditions.

Describing the tragedy of a poor man, Chan Sanmai, the writer explains that Chen always tries, without any success to escape from almost every thing, including his family. He yearns for escaping from social obligations, hoping to secure his ultimate release, which he is not able to achieve until his death.

(Penn)

Analysis

Man is a social animal. Since ages humans have lived in social groups that helped them relate to each other's problems in a positive manner. Even tribal communities formed groups to stay in an organized social commune. Accordingly, this requires that the persons belonging to these social groups abide by certain guidelines, which are called the social obligations. As 'good' and 'bad' are relative terms, these guidelines prescribe the requirements for all members of the society to behave within the limits of moral and ethical values that relate to the culture and social environment of the specific group. Hence, social and cultural obligations are essential.

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However, when these obligations become burden on the members of society, many people start awareness against such evils and a movement called social reforms takes place. By nature, human beings are selfish creatures and would like to pursue own agenda for living life. Hence, the pursuit of escape from social and cultural obligations gets expression in characters like Chen Sanmai. Nevertheless, social institutions such as marriage have stood the test of time, irrespective of the ‘ live-in partnership’ culture invading such institutions. The obligations of family cannot be neglected, even if one wishes to do so.

Work-cited

Penn. J, “ Transcript of Escape”, Prezi. com, 2014, web, 11May 2015: