

Multi Theme Analysis of Mo Yan's Novel Transparent Carrot

Xiaoli Zhu

School of Humanities and new media, Yangtze University, Jingzhou, Hubei 434023, China

Abstract

Mo Yan's novel transparent carrot has different opinions on its theme. Through the analysis of the image of "transparent carrot" and the discussion of hunger, love and spirit, we can explore the diversity of its theme. Several themes in the novel complement each other, enriching the meaning of the work and leaving readers a lot of room for thinking and imagination. The synthesis of multiple themes also deepens the ideological connotation of the work.

Keywords

Subject; Hunger; Love; Silent.

1. Introduction

Mo Yan became famous in 1985 when he published the transparent carrot in the second issue of Chinese writers. The creation background of the story is Mo Yan's painful experience of being criticized and beaten for stealing carrots in his childhood. Because this novel turns out a hazy feeling between virtual and real, and its important image - "transparent carrot" is uncertain, the work should contain more rich and complex ideological connotation. Therefore, the author will analyze the diversity of its theme from the themes of hunger, love and spirit.

2. Analysis of Hunger Theme in Novels

2.1. Mo Yan's "Carrot Story"

Mo Yan, a writer born in 1955, grew up in a barren and desolate village in Gaomi, northeast township. For him, his childhood memory is full of endless hunger and pain. The three-year natural disasters around 1960 are unforgettable in the memory of many people, and Mo Yan is no exception. For Mo Yan, finding food and drink became the most important thing he did at that time, He once said sadly: "As soon as I see the food, I forget everything. I have no morality, no conscience and no shame. There are people selling cooked pork on the street. I reach out to grab it, and the meat seller almost cut off my finger. The village cadre held a cantaloupe, I went up and touched it, was kicked down by the dry department, and hit the melon on my head, making it full of melon juice. I went to the peanut field of the production team to steal the newly planted peanuts and ate them. I was poisoned by medicine and almost died I lost my life. When he gave a speech at Stanford University in the United States, he was entitled "hunger and loneliness are the wealth of my creation". He said, "what we think of every day is food and how to get food... The most primitive driving force of my creation is the desire for delicious food". For Mo Yan, the pain of life - hunger, loneliness, violence, depression and other experiences, memories and illusory dreams have long penetrated into his life and his bone marrow, providing him with full possibility to build his literary world in Gaomi township. Mo Yan said that before writing "transparent carrot", he was thinking about the plot and making up stories every day. When writing "transparent carrot", he felt that there were always many memories emerging, and those floating pictures seemed to urge him behind. In fact, the plot of black children working on the flood gate and stealing turnips in transparent carrots comes from Mo Yan's childhood experience. This story is written by Mo Yan in different versions. Mo Yan had

not graduated from primary school and was expelled from the school because of improper speech. When he was 11 or 12 years old, the commune organized the construction of the flood gate. Mo Yan was regarded as a "semi laborer" to go to the blacksmith and furnace helper next to the flood gate construction site. One night, because he was too hungry, he ran to the radish field and stole a radish to eat. Unfortunately, he was caught. Mo Yan was punished by the production team. The person in charge of the bridge organized all the migrant workers and asked him to stand in front of Chairman Mao's statue to plead guilty. His father knew that Mo Yan had lost the face of the whole family, so he found a rope dipped in salt water soaked in pickles and beat him severely. These experiences were absorbed and reproduced by novels such as transparent carrot and dry river. Through Mo Yan's "carrot" story, it is not difficult to see the impact of hunger and extreme hunger on Mo Yan. At that time, hunger became the main source of pain in people's life, and novels also became a window for writers who had a real memory and painful experience of hunger to express their feelings. Therefore, in the transparent carrot, the carrot, which symbolizes hunger relief, can lead the hunger theme of the article.

2.2. A Glimpse into the Unsolved Mystery

There are many unsolved mysteries in transparent carrot. Solving these mysteries can reveal its hunger theme. Puzzle 1: Why did the black child who has special feelings for Kiko bite Kiko who cares about him? When the black boy first entered the bridge to pull the bellows, he would not and no one taught him. The arrogant little blacksmith sneered at him. When the black boy was most helpless, Miss Juzi's behavior belonged to his rescue, but he bit miss Juzi at this time. Why? It was a special era. Hunger and poverty filled people's lives. Filling their stomachs was the most important thing. For the lower class people, labor is the most basic skill. A person who has mastered skilled labor skills may have the right to eat. In this cruel living environment, young black children have already learned this. The following is a description of forging iron: The old blacksmith's hammer is as quick as a chicken pecking rice. The little blacksmith's hammer won't let it go. Hot wind is blowing in the bridge hole. In the soul stirring sound of forging, sparks from the steel drill splashed everywhere. Sparks splashed on the oilcloth around the waist and feet of the old blacksmith and the little blacksmith, emitting white smoke. Mars also flew to the black child's bare skin. He grinned and showed two rows of snow-white wolf teeth. The steel fire made several big blisters on his belly. He didn't have a painful expression at all, and his eyes were beating with ecstatic flames... This description of forging iron vividly shows a kind of labor beauty. In the slow down time, skilled and beautiful labor becomes pleasing to the eye. The author's narrative words are full of relaxation and joy. The flame in the little black child's eyes makes us feel his happiness. Therefore, the reason why the little black child bites chrysanthemum girl stems from his desire for life. He knows that he must work in order to survive. If he wants to live and get people's recognition, he must master a labor skill. He has endured hardships, endured pain and has a stubborn and unyielding character, but the act of Miss Juzi pulling him away from the blacksmith stove actually deprived him of the possibility of trying hard, so he resisted by biting Miss Juzi. When the little Mason and the little blacksmith fight for Kiko, the black boy's unexpected help can also reflect this point to the little blacksmith who satirizes and scolds him on weekdays. The little blacksmith once told the black boy to be his own dry son, dry son and apprentice. He wandered the Jianghu with himself to ensure that he was popular and spicy. Even if this is a joke made by the little blacksmith out of jealousy, the impact on the black boy may be subversive. In the black boy's view, if the little blacksmith can give himself a life guarantee, he can endure even if he is rude to himself. In fact, the little blacksmith's accidental help to the little blacksmith is a "act of protecting the Lord". Compared with the insignificant initial feelings, it is the most important to survive on a full stomach.

Puzzle 2: why didn't the old blacksmith tell the little blacksmith the secret of forging iron? In the transparent carrot, the relationship between the master and apprentice of the little blacksmith and the old blacksmith is also full of mysteries, which is thought-provoking. The little blacksmith always wanted to learn the secret of the old blacksmith. He thought he had learned the old blacksmith's skill. When the old blacksmith was away, he wanted to show his skill. He didn't expect to drill a bit or break it or bend it. The little blacksmith knew that the old blacksmith still had a hand in him. The article gives a close-up of the scar on the old blacksmith's arm, which looks like a big eye. The secret of the scar was revealed when the little blacksmith secretly learned the blacksmithing technique and was scalded by the old blacksmith: Just as the old blacksmith was about to quench the drill in his hand, the little blacksmith jumped to the edge of the bucket and quickly put his right hand into the bucket. Without even thinking about it, the old blacksmith poked the steel drill into the young man's right forearm. A fishy smell of burnt skin and meat flew out of the bridge hole and went into the girl's nostrils. The little blacksmith gave a cry of "ow". He straightened up, smiled viciously at the old blacksmith, and shouted, "master, three years!" The old blacksmith said in the fog, "remember!" [4] Like his master, the blacksmith exchanged the same pain for the secret of forging iron. The blood hole in the blacksmith's arm was frightening, but what he first felt was great happiness rather than pain. There was a tense competitive relationship between the people at the bottom for their "one mouth". The old blacksmith disappeared after the little blacksmith discovered the secret of quenching, because in his opinion, he had nothing to compete with the little blacksmith, and the cruel law of rural survival was suffocating. Therefore, it can also be explained here why the blacksmith helped the blacksmith beat the blacksmith. Compared with a handkerchief and a little food of Miss Kiko, the blacksmith gave the blackboy not only a relationship between teachers and apprentices, but also the capital for the blackboy to live.

3. Analysis of Love Theme in the Novel

3.1. Lack and Expectation of Love

3.1.1. Lack of Love

Black children live in an era when materials are extremely scarce and people become cold-blooded, numb and lax in order to survive. The misfortune of life made him silent. His mother died early, his father didn't return from Kanto, and his stepmother drank and scolded. The article said that when he came home to get a hammer, he "walked into the door with his feet raised" and then "slipped out quietly", so that he slept in the bridge hole every day. The black children in the social group still can't feel the warmth. The arrogant deputy director Liu said, "this is also a person?" He shook the black child's neck a few times, and the black child's heel was almost off the ground. The little blacksmith asked him to steal food for himself several times, and scolded him ruthlessly for "putting a plate on a smelly Qi to collect samples". If there is still a trace of warmth in the adult world, it is the care from the little Mason and miss chrysanthemum. The little Mason took the black child to the construction site to smash stones and took the initiative to intercede for him, but he didn't know the pain of his thick joints knocking on the black child's head. Miss Juzi's love for the black child is like a mother, but it is a shallow care. He doesn't understand the reason why the black child insists on staying in the blacksmith's stove despite his pain and suffering. It is written in the article that in the deep autumn night, the black boy gently pulls the bellows, the fire is bright, and sweet potato is fragrant. At this time, the old blacksmith is affectionate and full of enthusiasm, singing dramas loudly, and young men and women sit quietly and immerse themselves in the melody. Here, the brief harmonious atmosphere in which the elderly, young men and women and children get along together can actually be regarded as a simulation of the family atmosphere. In this situation, the black child's desire for family affection is satisfied. As Wang Yusong said, "the

carrot in front of him is a symbol of love and warmth, a symbol of home, and a symbol of a baby sleeping safely in the arms of a loving mother." But how could an outcast like him find that home? At the end of the novel, the black child gets into the jute field and swims into the sea like a fish. The helpless black child has no place to tell about his pain. Only the generous and tolerant mother earth can accept him as an abandoned child. Finally, the naked black child "got into the jute field" symbolizes that he returned to his mother. Therefore, it is not difficult to see that the longing and pursuit for family affection is also one of the themes to be expressed in the article.

3.1.2. Expectation of Love

The image of the old blacksmith in the novel is easy to be ignored in many research comments. Most of the discussion about him stays in the relationship between him and the little blacksmith, but this image may have more profound significance, that is, he is regarded as the father image in the eyes of black children. There are many reasons why black boy doesn't leave the blacksmith's stove. The most obvious one is his expectation for the father's love of the old blacksmith, which is reflected in three aspects. First, the black boy obeyed the words of the old blacksmith. Perhaps the old blacksmith left him behind, or perhaps the old blacksmith's quiet, stern and deep temperament is similar to his father. His "shaking ears" represent his recognition of the coke colored blacksmith in front of him. The black boy beside the blacksmith's stove pulled the fire in a hurry and stubbornly insisted on biting his lower lip. The old blacksmith carefully taught him to lengthen it, one by one, add less coal and sprinkle it evenly. In fact, this is a beautiful picture. For the black boy, compared with the sarcasm of outsiders, his heart by the blacksmith's stove is quiet and warm. Secondly, the black boy imitated the behavior of the old blacksmith. The old blacksmith tied a red rubber wire around his waist, so it was written below that "the piece of cloth he used to tie his waist was thrown away or hidden, and now he has a section of red rubber wire tied around his waist" this seemingly childish imitation behavior actually belongs to psychological identity. The black boy wants to seek a kind of attention and a kind of belonging, which is the expectation of the lonely boy for his father's love. Finally, the black boy's dependence on the old blacksmith. When the little blacksmith learned the quenching technique and the old blacksmith had to leave, the black boy was very disappointed. The novel reproduces the scene at that time from the perspective of two ducks: "the old man left and a black boy with bare feet and back came.". At that time, his eyes were covered with a light cloud and his mood was very low. The black boy went to catch up with the old blacksmith, but it was no doubt in vain. His dependence on the old blacksmith collapsed at this time, so he jumped to the river to release his pain and prayed for relief through another world.

3.2. Initial Development of "Calf Love"

In the transparent carrot, the description of "sex" is reflected through many symbolic things. We can start from this to explore the initial love between little black children and calves. There is a scene in the article with strong sexual enlightenment. The light of the fire in the furnace was shining brightly, and the old blacksmith sang a sad and desolate joke. All the people present were in a situation of self intoxication. At this time, the little blacksmith unconsciously stroked the breasts of Miss Juzi who was leaning against his chest. The jealous little blacksmith was on pins and needles. As an outsider, the little black boy could only hide in a dark corner and fell into his own fantasy with great disappointment, In his fantasy, he saw the neglected carrot - it radiated golden light, shaped like a big Yang pear, and dragged a long tail. The roots on the tail were like golden wool, and its crystal clear shell was pregnant with silver liquid. In this love competition, the little black boy has no advantage. The love status of the little Mason can't be shaken. Although the little blacksmith doesn't have any advantage in love, his irritability and ferocity also make the little black boy at a disadvantage, which makes the little black boy extremely disappointed. Therefore, when Miss chrysanthemum came to find the little black

child, he deliberately avoided it. He hoped to find the transparent carrot. In fact, it also means that he wants to find the right to love miss chrysanthemum as equally as they do. The water in the text has a certain symbolic meaning. When the black child was beaten and scolded by his stepmother and went to fetch water, he found a kind of comfort and comfort in the water. He kept facing the staggering water that would push him, to feel that there were some gentle fish mouths kissing him between his thighs; With the love of Miss Juzi, she went to capture "the shining gas on the river"; When he saw the old blacksmith's departure and felt sad, he "explored, groped and searched" in the water. These sexually conscious descriptions of water show that the river has given endless comfort to the black child in pain, and the black child has been treated in the release of "sexual desire". The fire in the text also has a certain symbolic meaning. Freud's psychoanalytic theory shows that making a fire, burning a fire, or something related to it is considered to be a symbol of sex. "Fire" symbolizes passion and desire in our daily life, which is still implied in this novel. The black boy stared at the neckline of the little Mason's "red sweatshirt" like "staring at a fire"; "Staring at the red flowers on the handkerchief" is the performance of hazy desire burning quietly; "Several strong dark red flames" in the coal stove were about to burn. Seeing the burning flames, the black child "excited" Ou ", which meant that the black child's inner desire was also burning. The article describes that when the sparks splashed on his bare skin when striking the iron, he didn't feel pain, but "beating the ecstatic flame" in his eyes. When the black boy's feelings for Kiko girl were frustrated, the fire in the stove was weak, which was just the embodiment of his inner desire. However, he could not express his jealousy and desire plainly like a blacksmith. Therefore, he turned this desire into the driving force of "lust", and his desire for "sex" reached a climax, In his fantasy world, he saw the glittering and transparent "carrot" with golden light all over. Isn't that the illusion of "lust" in his heart?

4. Analysis of the Spiritual Theme of the Novel

4.1. The Spiritual World of Black Children

When he first met the little black boy, he was "barefoot, bare spine, wearing a fat and long white trouser head with green stripes, with stains on the trouser head... His legs were covered with shiny small scars". The two big scars on his spine were illuminated by the sun, whirring and lightning. When he hit a stone, his nails were smashed into pieces by a hammer, and blood overflowed from the gap. His belly scraped a skin on the bridge post, exuding a layer of blood beads. There was yellow smoke in his hand holding the burning blue and white iron diamond... The adult world was like a big net for the speech, behavior and spiritual violence of black children, which made him unable to escape and resist, But the black boy seems to be very indifferent to all this. What kind of spiritual world can he have to fight these pains? Black children have an extraordinary sensitivity to nature. When deputy director Liu spoke in an official voice, when people listened to the boring truth of farmers learning from Dazhai, and when women talked about vulgar and obscene relations, he didn't listen to a word. He only heard the sound of jute gathering in the branches, the singing of autumn insects, and the whispering of all elves in nature."The dog egg grass looked at him curiously, and the water thicken with purple flowers and the cyperus with brown head greedily smelled the smell of soot all over him", these plants with anthropomorphic color, their rich forms reflected the true and interesting heart of the black child. The article also wrote that the black boy's eyes were originally focused on the stone, but he heard a strange sound from the river, much like a school of fish chattering. The sound was very subtle, far and near, and he caught it hard. With his eyes and ears, he saw a bright gas rising and falling on the river, and the sound was hidden in the gas. Hu Mingxiao commented: "here, everything is flexible without clumsiness. Imagination carries the soul of the black child. In the pain of reality, the soul can still fly freely and happily. This is

the tenacity, forbearance, courage and innocence of the black child". The appearance of "transparent carrot" has pushed the self fantasy world of the black child in the novel to a climax: there is a golden carrot... The carrot is crystal clear, and the transparent and golden shell is pregnant with silver liquid with living waves. In the eyes of the black boy, the carrot is a divine thing with golden light. At the end of the article, he knelt in the jute field like a demon, pulled up all the carrots and looked for his "transparent carrot", but what he got back was a severe beating. In fact, the brighter, redder and more beautiful the carrot is, the more luxurious the black child's inner vision is and the crueler the real world is. Mo Yan has deep love and sympathy for the black child, so he gives the black child extraordinary senses and imagination. It is precisely because of these wonderful fantasies that he has a wonderful world that no one can set foot in. He chose to forget the pain of his body, and he could survive tenaciously even in the dark and harsh conditions. This stubborn and unyielding toughness is not only the black child's, but also that of millions of farmers in China. It reflects the state of our whole famous family in that era. Therefore, the image of black child is recognized by us.

4.2. Mo Yan - Silence

The black boy in the transparent carrot is silent and never says a word. In fact, the author Mo Yan also plays down the story background in a "silent" way, calmly and fairly unfolds the story to the readers a little bit, and gives the readers their own voice in a calm and restrained language. The writing background of the novel is the turbulent era of the "Cultural Revolution". Mo Yan consciously maintains a silent attitude towards the background of the times. He plays down the blood and tears description of the background of the times in the novel, but completes his memory of the special history of the Cultural Revolution through a silent writing method of "recalling bitterness and thinking sweetness". Compared with root seeking literature, Mo Yan, starting from his personal life experience, turned the novel to self experience, sensory experience, language expression and other aspects, and completed a transcendence. As Mo Yan himself said when discussing the novel: "as far as I know, even in the rural areas during the cultural revolution, despite the poverty and backwardness of life, there is still joy in life, and there is no joy at all, which is not in line with life itself; even when there is no guarantee of food and clothing, there are still ideals in life." In the transparent carrot, Mo Yan's emotional expression and narrative language are very rigorous and restrained. From an omniscient narrative perspective, a silent but powerful way to speculate about the world is far more realistic than an angry and reckless attack. In this omniscient narration, the silent but strong black boy, the kind and warm girl Juzi, the malicious little blacksmith, the mysterious and sad old blacksmith, and all the characters with distinctive personalities came on stage one after another. While attacking the ugliness and darkness, they achieved their desire for beauty and kindness. The development of the story follows the rigorous narrative logic of "beginning development climax ending". We can feel that Mo Yan is controlling his feelings and trying to be fair and calm, As he said: "thirteen years later, when I reread the old works, I more deeply realized the positive significance of criticism around my creation. I consciously narrowed the vent gate and consciously lowered the singing tone. This seemingly simple thing is not easy for me, but I closed it in, although I am as painful as it is." Mo Yan's "silent" expression is a kind of redemption for the darkness and suffering of reality. It is important to look back on the pain and grief, but more importantly, it is to convey the hope of birth to the living people. It is more suitable to speculate on the temperature of the world than words. Just as the black child is speechless, his name is Mo Yan.

5. Integration of Multiple Themes

The idea of transparent carrot is novel and unique. The theme of this novel cannot be summarized in one or two sentences. It is not one of the three themes, nor is it a simple addition

of them. The original fuzziness and implication of life determines the hazy beauty of literary works, and its diversity makes it have the hazy feeling of literature. In fact, because the image of "transparent carrot" is uncertain, there are different opinions on the theme of the novel. Through the previous analysis, we know that the hunger theme, love theme and spiritual theme of the novel can be explained by the meaning of the image of "transparent carrot". First of all, the large jute fields have a great attraction to the black child. He has a kind of respect for the vegetable garden next to the jute fields, which stems from his desire for the food bred by the land. When the image of "transparent carrot" represents the food that hungry people are looking for like magic, it is not difficult to see the theme of hunger. Secondly, the lack of family affection alienated the black child from love and warmth, but at the same time, he was eager for it. The warm love of the beautiful chrysanthemum girl for him made his heart ripple. This may be a response to maternal love or the beginning of juvenile sexual enlightenment. However, when he found that the emergence of the little Mason occupied his warmth, he was jealous, so, When he lies on the turnip ground looking for the "transparent carrot", it actually represents his pursuit of the lost love. Thirdly, this "transparent carrot", whose transparent shell is wrapped with a red core, is transparent, pure and full of vitality. It is like a little black child. It is young and cowardly in appearance, but pure and free in heart. His stubborn character and tenacious vitality are also a portrayal of millions of farmers in China. Therefore, "transparent carrot" also represents a strong and unyielding spirit, which is also an important theme that the author wants to convey. Mo Yan never expressed the true meaning of the "transparent carrot", but the themes conveyed in the novel make the "transparent carrot" shine in the reader's mind. This synthesis of multiple themes is not cumbersome, nor does it make the novel unclear. On the contrary, several themes complement each other, making the novel rich in meaning and leaving readers a lot of room for thinking and imagination. Therefore, this novel has given great strength to readers from generation to generation.

References

- [1] Mo Yan Three articles on food, a new edition of Mo Yan's prose [M] Beijing: culture and Art Press, 2009:66-67.
- [2] Mo Yan Childhood memory - dialogue with reporters of Asian News figures in July 2006, < new record of Mo Yan's dialogue > [M], Beijing: culture and Art Press, 2009:460.
- [3] Mo Yan Transparent carrot [M] Beijing: Peking University Press, 2016: 149-159.
- [4] Wang Yusong Childhood Narration: a meaningful interpretation space -- Rereading Mo Yan's novella transparent carrot [J] Hubei Social Sciences, 2008 (10): 125-128.
- [5] Hu Mingxiao Rereading Mo Yan's transparent carrot [J] Journal of Hainan Normal University (SOCIAL SCIENCE EDITION), 2013 (12): 44-47.
- [6] Mo Yan Pursuit is characteristic -- a dialogue on transparent carrot [J] Chinese writer, 1985 (2).
- [7] Mo Yan Towards Nobel Prize: Mo Yanjuan [M] Beijing: culture and Art Press, 2001:1.