

# Sanmao's Literary Creation Style

Guo Zhen

**Abstract**—Sanmao was formerly known as Chen Ping, a contemporary Taiwanese female writer and traveler. Sanmao is one of the few contemporary prose writers. Although many scholars believe that her works have some novel elements, a kind of work is accepted by readers with what kind of style, it has a substantial impact on what kind of style, so Sanmao is placed into the ranks of prose writers. For Sanmao, writing constitutes her unique life form. Sanmao's literary creation style has a very high literary research value, which is closely related to her innate personality, as well as her understanding of life itself and her unique literary interpretation skills. To be precise, Sanmao does not have the serious creative mission of a pure literary writer, nor will it deliberately pursue the social effectiveness of her works. For her, innovation is neither the great cause of the country, nor the masterpiece of the past dynasties. This article explores Sanmao's literary creation style through the three writing characteristics of writing freely, “depending on benevolence, swim in art” and integration of “I-novel” creation skills.

**Index Terms**—Sanmao, creative style, freely writing, depending on benevolence, swim in art, I-novel.

## I. INTRODUCTION

According to her family tree *Chen's Yongchun Tang Genealogy*, Chen Ping's ancestors moved from Henan Province to Zhejiang Province. After the victory of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, she moved to Nanjing with her parents. In 1948, she and her family moved to Taipei with the Kuomintang during the second Kuomintang and the Communist Civil War. Sanmao studied at Zhongzheng National Primary School in Zhongshan District of Taipei, and was admitted to Taipei No.1 Girls' Middle School in 1954. In 1967, Sanmao went to Spain to study, and then went to Germany, the United States and other countries. In 1973, she settled in the Western Sahara Desert and married Jose. In 1981, she returned to Taiwan to teach at the Chinese Culture University, and resigned from her teaching position in 1984, thus focusing on writing and speaking. Sanmao died in the hospital on January 4, 1991, at the age of 48. Sanmao's main works are: *The Crying Camel*, *Attract a City*, *Rainy Season Won't Come Again*, *Story of the Sahara*, *Gentle Night* and so on.

In the 1970s, Chen Ping began working under the pseudonym of Sanmao and began using it in her prose works based on the daily life of the Western Sahara Desert. Chen Ping's pen name was called Sanmao because she jokingly thought that what she wrote was mediocre, only worth 30 cents. Another reason can be found in her preface to *Trouble at School*. She believes that the word “Sanmao” contains a

hexagrams in *the Book of Changes*, but what mystery is unknown. Shortly after Sanmao became Chen Ping's pen name, she discovered in Zhang Leping's *The Wonderings of Sanmao* that her pseudonym “Sanmao” was the same as the protagonist “Sanmao” in the book, which made her very surprised and happy. Since the 1970s, Sanmao's literary works have attracted wide attention, love and hot discussion in the Chinese community in Taiwan and other places, so she began to become widely known.

Sanmao's footprints all over the world, her works across several eras, each good work to show the characteristics of that time, is a rare case in the academic circle. Sanmao's life works and translations are very rich, a total of 24. Writer Pai Hsien-yung once said, “Sanmao created a legendary romantic world; there are love stories of ups and downs, fascinating and incredible exotic, African desert, the exploration of Latin American virgin forest, these ordinary people can not reach the life experience has created the youth idols on both sides of the Taiwan Straits.”

The style of San Mao's works is divided into three stages: the early works show the melancholy and touching girlish feelings, and the representative work is *Rainy Season Won't Come Again*; the middle works are mainly open-minded and unruly wandering, and the representative work is *Stories of the Sahara*; the later works are mainly gloomy and dignified ideas, and the representative work is *How Many Flowers Fall in the Dream*. Sanmao's mid-term works are the pinnacle of her entire creative career. Most of Sanmao's works are between autobiographical prose and novels, describing what she sees, hears and feels around the world, as well as her life in different regions, combining legendary romance and a different attitude towards the world, full of strong national exotic. Sanmao's literary works are mostly won by fresh writing style and witty and vivid language, and integrate them in the way of telling stories, so as to achieve the common appreciation of refined and vulgar. However, Sanmao is only satisfied with the general requirement that “my writing is only a record of my life”, rather than pursuing the perfection and improvement of artistic attainments, which will have some impact on the breadth and depth of life. Sanmao's literary values are closely related to her personality, her literary path and her understanding of life itself. Review Sanmao's writing road, taste the infinite charm of her works, people focus more on her literary pursuits. To be precise, Sanmao does not have the serious creative mission of a pure literary writer, nor does it deliberately pursue the social effect of her works. Innovation is neither the great cause of the country, an article through the ages, nor a shortcut to the literary palace. In her own words, “The greatness of creating excellent articles that are passed down from generation to generation is not something that a small person like me can do. Ordinary and elegant doesn't matter, the real meaning of writing is to entertain the public, and it's just a record of my

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Guo Zhen is with Graduate School of Business, SEGi University, Malaysia (e-mail: wwow-wo@qq.com).

personal life.” Sanmao takes her own life as the background, travels through thousands of mountains and rivers, and writes some works that attract readers with super magnetic poles. Her works are simple, straightforward, fresh, natural, dare to boldly analyze herself, and reveal her true feelings at the same time, but also slightly indecisive, sentimental, compassionate, close to the readers, easy to resonate.

## II. LITERARY WRITING STYLE

Writing style is the writing characteristics and creative personality shown by writers in their creation [1], [2]. Different writers show different artistic characteristics and creative personality in their creation. Writers with a unique “style” are instantly recognizable to readers familiar with their work, even if their work is not named. The reason is because the author's authenticity, values, character, thinking mode, lifestyle and other characteristics are integrated into their works [3].

The creative style of literature is gradually formed in the creative practice of writers, and reflects the unique artistic personality in his overall creation. These artistic personalities are the group characteristics of the times style, national style, and genre style expressed under a certain conditions. Because style is the aesthetic characteristics reflected in the unity of the factors and forms of the works, some art form factors, such as genre, language, writing methods, writing skills and so on, will also play an important role in the formation of style, thus forming different language styles, stylistic styles, etc. Writing style includes refined style, implicit style, plain style, fresh style, lively style, etc [4]. Sanmao's literary creation style integrates the above many advantages. Writing freely, “depending on benevolence, swim in art”, the integration of “I-novel” creation skills, three aspects of writing characteristics together constitute Sanmao's style of writing.

## III. WRITING FREELY

Sanmao's works read comfortable, changeable, affinity, reading her works seem to travel through time and space and immersive. Looking back on Sanmao's creative path, it is not difficult to find that she is more interested in comprehending the essence of life, the level of human nature, the value of emotions, the multicultural landscape, and a certain philosophical depth and cultural taste from the free world, so that she can induce readers to think, and even arouse the tremors of their hearts.

### A. Writing Freely Comes from Sanmao's True Temperament

Sanmao's personality is free and unrestrained, and so is her writing. Her works are sincere in emotion, without too much whitewashing, and can also show the true original appearance, broad wisdom and infinite fun in life. Her works are always full of sad beauty between the lines, while also expressing her love for life and her pursuit of beauty.

Sanmao is a very simple person. Her writing is natural and light-hearted, and she can inadvertently express the people and things she cares about most. Occasionally, she is mixed with a little humor, but there is no lack of thought-provoking.

Her work, like her own, always has a sense of calm in simplicity.

In Sanmao's works, there are a lot of simple and straightforward style of writing on the characters and scenes. She always writes the natural nature of the original ecology, without any artificial carving. Writing is tantamount to an inseparable way of existence in Sanmao's life. Sanmao starts from the reality of life when creating literary works, and can show their multi-faceted contradictory and unified characters when portraying characters. deep impression. When appreciating Sanmao's works, people will feel sad and regretful, but they will not feel very depressed. Her works will inform and alert readers that what people need in real life is sunshine, not haze. Even though Sanmao's article has a tragic ending, she can feel the beauty of human nature and hope for life in the development of the story [5].

When examining Sanmao's writing style and savoring the infinite charm of her works, one cannot fail to notice her literary pursuit. Sanmao's literary values are closely related to her personality, her understanding of life itself, and her chosen literary path. To be precise, Sanmao does not have the seriousness of a pure literary writer, but she is closer to reality. In real life, Sanmao lives according to her own heart, maintains an innocent heart, and dares to pursue the life she really wants. In Sanmao's world, she feels that her life is wandering, so she often wanders on the road. Sanmao will constantly make her soul fit in with the world. In her short life, Sanmao is constantly looking for the cleanliness that only belongs to her innermost heart. She once said, “Life is too short, and I don't like to be plain.” Looking at Sanmao's literary works, you will find that each of Sanmao's articles is very life-like, simple and authentic, without too many ornate words. Sanmao's works are basically derived from her real life portrayal. Some of her articles are as simple as handmade coarse cloth, and some are as comfortable as silk. Through the compositional relationship of Sanmao's works, we can see that the relationship between people, the relationship between people and things, and the relationship between people and nature interact in harmony and unity. It seems that all characters, events, objects, and even landscapes are made for Sanmao, the wonder girl of the east. From the rebelliousness of *Trouble at School*, the sentimental Girls' Generation of the works of *Rainy Season Won't Come Again*, to the mature love of *Story of the Sahara* and *The Crying Camel*, to *How Many Flowers Fall in the Dream* life summary, Sanmao's pen farming opens up to readers about her personality, thoughts, hobbies, beliefs, growth process and even her secret emotional life.

Sanmao's true temperament allows her to create literary works freely and unreservedly, and to present herself through the works without reservation. In *Marriage Records*, she described in detail the life of her and Jose when they were in love before marriage, especially how they sat shivering on a bench in a Spanish park in the cold wind, thinking about how to solve the problem of food and clothing, the narrative was very vivid. Sanmao's life has gone through a dark teenage period and a troubled youth and middle-aged period, sadness is the main tone of her creations. This sensitivity to pain has always been maintained in Sanmao's character, very sensitive to her, and had a huge influence on her writing. Sanmao pays attention to herself and the world around her with kind, sad

and compassionate eyes. Therefore, her works are always overflowing with tragic beauty. For example, in *Dumb Slave*, Sanmao successfully portrayed a black slave who lived in deep suffering and had no personal freedom, but was full of love and wisdom.

Sanmao's works show the original appearance of life, the wisdom in life and the fun in life. Her works are also full of tragic beauty. In terms of content, Sanmao's creation has a wide variety of themes and a free and flexible structure. In addition to expressing real feelings, they are also a documentary of life. In addition, Sanmao's article has a sense of exploration in it, exploring all the curious things in the world, all of which come from her unfettered real life, free and true creation. Sanmao's works are very special. They are much like travel notes rather than travel notes, a narrative rather than a novel, a lyrical rather than a poetic style, and a sensibility rather than a diary style. This style of writing was later called the Sanmao style.

#### *B. Writing Freely Comes from Sanmao's Free Way of Life*

Sanmao's free style of literary creation stems from her free-spirited way of life. Sanmao is born with a distinct personality and is intelligent and free-spirited, so her writing is also the same. In childhood, Sanmao showed a hobby for books. At the age of five, she could read through *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, and read many world classics in junior high school. In the second year of junior high school, Sanmao dropped out of school for personal reasons, and her parents carefully taught poetry, ancient Chinese and English at home. Later, the family specially hired Huang Junbi, Han Xiangning, Shao Youxuan, Gu Fusheng. Four gentlemen taught her calligraphy and painting. Through the guidance of these four teachers, Sanmao's painting has become increasingly sophisticated, and it has also laid a good foundation for her unique literary creation aesthetics in the future. Sanmao first followed Huang Junbi to learn landscape painting, but it didn't take long, because Huang Junbi's mechanical copying teaching could not calm Sanmao's restless heart. She also studied Western painting from Han Xiangning and Gu Fusheng, and Shao Youxuan was her flower and bird painting teacher. Regarding these teachers, Sanmao wrote a special essay, recalling the process of learning painting with them. Sanmao is especially fond of Shao Youxuan, and has repeatedly mentioned her deep relationship with her teacher Shao Youxuan in her works. Shao Youxuan loves Sanmao very much, and follows Sanmao's temperament when teaching. But Gu Fusheng, who changed Sanmao the most, because he completely changed Sanmao's cognition and led Sanmao to the path of writing. After Sanmao studied with Shao Youxuan, she found that she prefers Western painting, especially Picasso, to Chinese painting. So she found out that her sister's friend was Gu Fusheng's disciple. After many setbacks, she found Gu Fusheng. Since then, Gu Fusheng has become Sanmao's last painting teacher. At first, Gu Fusheng taught Sanmao basic sketching skills for three months. Later, he discovered that although Sanmao loves painting very much, she has nothing to do with painting after all. Finally, Gu Fusheng recommended some literary works to Sanmao. Sanmao seemed to feel Gu Fusheng's good intentions, and Sanmao's soul slowly recovered under the care and love of the teacher.

Under the guidance of Gu Fusheng, Sanmao began to try to create. Pai Hsien-yung, the editor-in-chief of *Modern Literature*, is a friend of Gu Fusheng. Gu Fusheng showed Sanmao's works to Pai Hsien-yung, which was highly appreciated by Pai Hsien-yung and agreed to publish Sanmao's works. In December 1962, *Modern Literature* published Sanmao's maiden work *Confuse*. When Gu Fusheng told Sanmao the good news, Sanmao was very happy. It was also from that time that Sanmao thought that she was finally accepted by the world kindly, and finally Sanmao got out of the small world that tortured and imprisoned her.

In 1964, when she was a teenager, Sanmao got a charter from Mr. Zhang Qijun, the founder of Chinese Cultural University, to be an audit student in the philosophy department of the school. During the audition, her academic performance was very good. In 1967, Sanmao dropped out of school again and went to Spain alone. In three years, she studied at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid in Spain, the Goethe-Institut in Germany, and worked in the library of University of Illinois in the United States. These legendary experiences will be of great help to her future literary creation. In 1973, Sanmao married Jose at the local court in the Spanish Sahara Desert. Life in the desert inspired her latent writing talent, and encouraged by the editor-in-chief of the *United Daily News* at that time, she continued to create novels and poems. And began to publish books, Sanmao's first novel, poetry and literature work *Story of the Sahara* was published in May 1976. In 1970, Sanmao returned to Taiwan and was invited by Mr. Zhang Qijun to teach in the German and Philosophy Departments of Chinese Culture University. Later, she left again after the sudden death of her fiancé. Sanmao has been to many different places and visited many countries, and finally came to Spain to reunite with Jose, who has been in love with her for 6 years and is 6 years younger than her. In 1973, Sanmao married Jose notarized at the local court in the west is the Sahara Desert, and she and Jose lived happily ever after. Sanmao's life in the desert period inspired her latent writing talent, among which she records her life with Jose in detail in the book *Story of the Sahara*. One house, two people, three meals, four seasons, happiness and simple, that is the life of she really. But after Jose drowned, Sanmao's world seemed to collapse, and she finally chose to hang herself in the hospital. Sanmao started from *Story of the Sahara*, and her articles became naive and brilliant, free and easy, and did not like to be bound, but there was also a little life depression mixed in it. Sanmao inner world yearn for a kind of unfettered, hungry to eat, sleepy to sleep, want to write to write, want to cry immediately can shed tears, no use cheat the ideal life. Many readers like Sanmao, also starting with her book *Story of the Sahara*. The beautiful and infatuated love between Sanmao and Jose is touching and sad. As Sanmao said "Love, if you don't put it into the real life of dressing, eating, counting money, sleeping, is not easy to last forever" [6]. However, the ideal is plump, but the reality is skinny. She has only been in love with one man all her life, but after all, she has not been able to get out of the fence designed for herself. The love story between Sanmao and Jose in *The Wandering of Sanmao* is so beautiful and so pure. Jose, who was Spanish and worked as a diver, accidentally drowned during a job. Sanmao recorded in the book that Jose

daily work task is very heavy, many times he can only sleep less than four hours a day. On September 30, 1979, her husband Jose died in a diving accident. Sanmao was extremely sad and returned to Taiwan alone. In 1981, Sanmao decided to end her 14 years of wandering in a foreign country and settle down in China. In January of the same year, *United Daily News* specially sponsored her to travel to Central and South America for half a year. The fantastic trip made Sanmao's book *Wandering Through Thousands of Waters and Thousands of Mountains*, and gave a speech around the Taiwan island. After that, Sanmao taught in the literature and art group of the Chinese Cultural University, teaching novel writing and prose writing two courses, which were deeply loved by students. In 1984, Sanmao resigned from teaching due to health concerns, and focused her life on writing and speaking. In April 1989, Sanmao returned to her hometown in mainland China for the first time. She found that her novels, poems and literary works also had many readers in mainland China. She was very happy and made a special trip to visit Mr. Zhang Leping, who is famous for his comic book *The Adventures of Sanmao the Waif*, and fulfilled one of her long-cherished wishes. In 1990, Sanmao began to work on script writing, and completed her first Chinese script in her life, which was also her last literary work *Red Dust*. Sanmao passed away on the morning of January 4, 1991, at the age of 48. Sometimes, ending may be the best beginning for Sanmao, at least when Sanmao decides to end her life, her grief comes to an abrupt end. Sanmao's works are full of life and exotic flavors. The words in the works are fresh and smooth, and they are beautiful and meaningful. Each chapter is like a comic strip, warm and beautiful. Although Sanmao's works are some real life records, they are full of interest. The boring Saharan life is full of fun in her writing. In her articles, even the neighbor goat falls from the roof of her house, it makes people laugh so hard.

Sanmao lived a free and easy life, wrote freely. As she said in *Trouble at School*, "Reading in the ivory tower is really urgent. Once the opportunity and skill reach a certain level, this tower that surrounds people will naturally disappear. 'Truth' is so clear and simple that it appears to people. When people live, they must sing and laugh."

The works written by Sanmao's free and unrestrained creative style bring readers a sense of "reading the text, seeing the person, and knowing the heart" [7]. This feeling is like an old friend who has known for many years. He sat across from you with a smile, poured you a cup of green tea and looked at you with a full smile, and advised you that no matter what happens in this free kingdom, you must be your truest self, and live freely.

### C. Writing Freely Comes from Sanmao's Romantic Feelings

Romanticism is a subversion of the aristocratic and autocratic political culture since the Age of Enlightenment [8]. It is about art and literature to resist the human rationalization of nature. In reflecting the objective reality, romanticism focuses on expressing the warm pursuit of the ideal world from the subjective inner world. Romantic feelings itself does not represent fantasy, it is romanticism on the basis of reality to people's plain life with more color, and sent some hope and good vision. Romantic feelings are a kind

of adjustment of the real life, a kind of feelings and motivation for the continuous pursuit and realization of the ideal life.

What most readers like is not the literary charm of Sanmao's works, or the artistic value of these works, but the romantic feelings that they dream of. Sanmao's romantic feelings make her articles not only vivid, but also full of personality, witty, humorous, natural, fresh, simple, with the beauty of exquisite carving. In her works can be seen everywhere her casual, her romance, from her between the lines can feel a wonderful sense of surrealism, and this wonderful work comes from her romantic feelings.

Sanmao's romantic feelings make her works have a strong lyrical color, whether it is a novel or prose, her carefully crafted words can always reveal the feminine beauty and delicacy. For example, *Hotel in the Desert*, it describes the fun of her and her foreign husband Jose eating Chinese food. The differences between Chinese and western food culture have not become an obstacle to their harmonious life, but instead became the daily necessities and the source of happiness for the couple. *Marriage Records* records the dramatic process of her hasty marriage with Jose in the desert, a variety of funny and solemn marriage ceremony intertwined, both works reflect Sanmao's romantic feelings. Sanmao's life is bizarre and amazing, she is a free and easy woman, straightforward and firm, with romantic feelings. Sanmao's literary attainments are very high, and her works show that she is an extraordinary woman who does not admire the world's customs, does not compete for the commonplace, and is not afraid of the joys and sorrows of life. Sanmao once said, "A person's life is not about the length, but whether you live happily." The reason why she handed over her precious life and all affection to the years was not because she bowed her head to fate, nor was she cowardly. She wanted to exchange her innocence for a lifetime, but Sanmao had seen all the scenery in the world and tasted the five flavors of the world.

She didn't want to set foot in the waters of that time. For her, the love-hate relationship was over, there was nothing to regret and nothing to give up. She is willing to be the wind that come and go freely, not to disturb a tree and grass, a sand and a stone. Sanmao's works are strong in idealistic style, full of romantic sentiment, she has completely integrated her pursuit of life into her own works, so her works are sometimes beautiful to the extreme, sometimes like a dream. When readers read her literary works, they can not only feel pleasure, but also resonate with them. Perhaps, it is because Sanmao has injected romantic feelings into her writing that her literary works are enduring and spread throughout the world.

### IV. "DEPENDING ON BENEVOLENCE, SWIM IN ART" IS SANMAO'S LITERARY CREATION CONCEPT

"Aspiration is far-reaching, based on virtue, depending on benevolence, swim in art." and can be proficient in etiquette, music and dance, archery, driving, calligraphy and arithmetic six skills" [9].

"Aspiration is far-reaching, based on virtue, depending on benevolence, swim in art." That is, Confucius trained students with aspiration as the direction, virtue as the

foothold, benevolence as the fundamental, and the six arts as the self-cultivation, so that students can get an all-round development. Although this sentence has only four short sentences, it contains a very rich meaning, which is not only the general outline of the whole Confucianism, but also the general outline of the whole Chinese traditional sage culture [10].

In “depending on benevolence, swim in art”, the “benevolence” in “depending on benevolence” reflects a person's inner cultivation, is a kind of attitude to treat people, specifically for whether there is love for people and things. “Benevolence” is love, “benevolence” is the core of everything, the development of everything is from the “benevolence” germination. “Benevolence” is expressed in the outside is love and love others, love things, love groups, love society, expand and full to love the whole world, that is to say, how to play the morality. Benevolence is the core of everything, which is changed from the heart to the outside, and determines the essence of things. Take benevolence as the fundamental and then can “swim in art”. “Swim” means swimming with ease, like diving deep in the water, like swimming. “Swim” specifically refers to people's mastery of skills, which can be used to help themselves and others realize benevolence and virtue. This is also the essence of the Confucian sage program summarized by Confucius for us. “Art” refers to the “six skills”, the so-called six skills, is the Confucian scholars must skillfully master the etiquette, music and dance, archery, driving, calligraphy and arithmetic. Etiquette is used for governing the body, music and dance to nourish the heart, archery is shooting, driving refers to driving the carriage, calligraphy is about writing, and arithmetic is about our mathematics, counting, these basic skills are the necessary talent for a scholar. “Swim in art” means to master the music, chess, painting, calendar, agriculture, water conservancy, medicine, and can indulge in it, like fish freely swimming in the water [11]. In other words, it is to gain freedom and pleasure through mastering skills, so that their personality charm can be constantly grown and improved. Sanmao once said in *Give You A Horse*: “Life is just a twenty-four hours after another, in such a precious time, I must understand my choice.” Looking at her works, whether the little people in her pen or herself, mostly reflect the Confucian ideal personality, often accompanied by “depending on benevolence” and “swim in art”. Sanmao's “benevolence” comes from her understanding of lifestyle, and “art” comes from her talents and skills accumulated over the years. These talents and skills mainly include her self-understanding of the value of literature, writing motivation and mentality. Under Sanmao's writing style, these characters who can “depending on benevolence, swim in art” also have a common feature, which is the pure heart and charity.

In fact, writing for Sanmao is not only “depending on benevolence, swim in art”, but also her lifelong persistence. Sanmao's life traveled all over the world, natural and unrestrained horizon at the same time, but also tasted the world. Sanmao has an open-minded, optimistic and free outlook on life and writing, she has turned this life experience and writing hardships into a precious way of life and life experience, is considered “bitter”, has become her own “joy”. In this sense, Sanmao likes “depending on benevolence, swim in art”, so that she can enjoy the joy of life, enjoy all

kinds of taste of life, when the wonderful “self drama” in life, it can be regarded as a kind of wisdom and philosophical.

Sanmao is a writer who advocates “depending on benevolence”. Her works do not describe the public life and expose social problems as their own duty. Therefore, it is easy for the expression of self-life to become the central idea of Sanmao's creation. Sanmao's parents once said that once her daughter entered the state of creation, “all relatives do not recognize”, “life and death are unknown”, which is also Sanmao's “entertainment” for literature. Behind Sanmao's creation is paid day and night, like a natural story, but exhausted her narrative pains, which also reflects her obsession and awe for “benevolence” and “art”.

Collect in *Rainy Season Won't Come Again*, represented as *Confuse, Exotic Sweet Love*. This period is the embryonic period of her “depending on benevolence” literary creation, and also the embryonic period of “depending on benevolence” for her personal growth. As she herself said, “*Rainy Season Won't Come Again* represents the process and feelings of a young girl growing up. It may not be mature in skills, in the thought of confusion and sad, but it is indeed a past I, a with today's healthy and enterprising Sanmao is very different”.

*Confuse*, published in *Modern Literature* in 1962, description of Sanmao lost in the “Jenny painting”, casually expressed her in the loss of school, helpless pain and the pursuit of life, the full text is full of melancholy and sadness, without euphemistic implicit. The full text is full of melancholy and sadness, without euphemistic implication. In the *Exotic Sweet Love* in Sanmao put a pair of overseas wanderers in the unbearable loneliness accidentally encounter, love, and have to hurriedly leave the complex psychology and lingering feelings written vivid and real. In *Rainy Season Won't Come Again*, Sanmao describes the story of a female college student's emotional changes after a fight with her boyfriend. Between the lines, Sanmao expresses the deep affection, the nostalgia, and the hope that can only be experienced in the bottom of her heart, which is delicate and touching. Sanmao's early works like to pursue phantoms and create tragic beauty, all of which come from her primary understanding of “depending on benevolence, swim in art”.

Sanmao created works are after her left Taiwan, her writing style changed suddenly, was known as healthy, open-minded, free and easy, refreshing. This period is the mature period of her creation of “benevolence and art”, and also the maturity period of “benevolence and art” in her life. From the content of Sanmao's works, there is a reflection of the life of western capitalist countries, especially the true reflection of school life, such as *West Wind Unknown*. There are also the compatriots in foreign countries uncivilized, impolite words and deeds of the sad narrative, and sprinkled full of Sanmao patriotic feelings of the *Kissing Hometown People*. It is a remarkable feature of Sanmao's creation to be good at presenting the strange and exotic wandering life and speaking to the readers in the way of empathy. Sanmao's writing technique with “my handwriting my mouth, using my mouth to express my heart”, dissolved “I” in the works, makes people feel particularly kind and natural, and plays a role in both refined and popular. In the conception of the story framework of the work, Sanmao will not pursue the “drama” of the plot, but to describe the “essence” of life, not artificial, not mysterious, just the real image in front of readers, in order

to satisfy the curiosity of readers. Sanmao pay the most dedicated work is in the Sahara desert and several Atlantic islands in the unique scenery, unique people and things, and Jose died after the words written in blood and tears. Some scholars believe that Sanmao's works during this period, namely the Sahara period, attracted the general readers mainly because of her success in content, and they are only a true record of her "special life experience". This kind of writing on the truly experienced subject matter is mature in the prerequisite, and even the strength of the expression skills can no longer increase people's high interest in reading her works. Sanmao's way of writing, from the importance of content, is right. In fact, Sanmao's works are not only novel in content, but also have their own unique artistic style. Among them, the swaying posture of the characters is another feature of Sanmao's medium-term works. In her figure gallery, there are many statues with different shapes and spirits. Not only that, she is also particularly good at the little people or suffering people for in-depth description, pour all love to spread, and deep feeling between them the beauty of human heart and human nature beauty, which is also her "depending on benevolence, swim in art" understanding and the best presentation. Sanmao, emphasize again, "my article is all about my life." "what I write is just a woman's autobiography", "so far my works are based on facts", "as far as I am concerned, I like to write real things, if I want to write imaginary things, I will feel very fake, very artificial." So she began to love her people, taste to enjoy life, there is a real game of life. She seriously entered the world, to "play" a variety of life roles but also learned to find the beautiful and interesting things from the most ordinary life, so there are *Hotel in the Desert*, *Marriage Records*, *Hanging the teapot to Save the World* and a series of interesting stories. Sanmao said, "My writing, is completely entertainment. Is to play, write finished, my business is over. I never thought there would be so many readers, also rarely think of payment, but, the article published, see typesetting type, is a kind of happiness." Just as Sanmao's writing is closely related to life, the meaning here is not to play with life in a narrow sense, but to emphasize that everything that meets you becomes an article. All spontaneous and for, not deliberately pursuit, Sanmao once said that her life is a game of life, her outlook on life is anything is to play, but to play clever. For example, painting is a kind of, growing vegetables is a kind of, growing flowers is a kind of, being a husband is a kind of, being a wife is also a kind of, being parents are a kind of, life is a game, only take it seriously to play, will be very interesting.

Sanmao's outlook on life and writing is completely based on Sanmao's real life experience. Sanmao once fell in the lonely autistic, the paranoid, serious and sensitive, so that she struggled in the heart and the outside struggle, often heart injury and dream shattered, will let her think of the liberation of death. When Sanmao was young, she did not know how to play in the world and how to achieve herself. Life was a narrow dark corner for her. Later, after the adventure wandering Sanmao truly witnessed the color of the world. Since then, Sanmao has experienced the emotional joys and sorrows, so that she gradually realized the pessimistic world, appreciate the limitations of personal life and time, and finally know how to cherish life and enjoy life. From the paranoid life to the game life, Sanmao has a big reversal of

the previous self-personality and life. As a result, free and easy Sanmao emerged from the thousands of mountains and rivers. Sanmao once said, "In the process of life, whether it's snow-white ramen noodles or vegetable tofu, I have to taste whatever it is, and it won't waste my life!" She enjoys life, and can have a real game of life. Sanmao in the world seriously, to "play" various roles in life, but also learned to find the most beautiful, the most interesting things from the most ordinary life. What Sanmao presents is the mind and strength of a mature woman who fully understands life, she dares to claim that "depending on benevolence, swim in art", in the realm of freedom in the landscape, look to life, gallop brush and ink, sprinkle emotion, with the height of their own reach, to expand the time and space of life.

Sanmao's unfettered pursuit of life affects her artistic creation style, thus constituting the anti-simple artistic sentiment. And "aspiration is far-reaching, based on virtue, depending to benevolence, swim in art." It is fully integrated into Sanmao's life and literature. Sanmao takes aspiration as her ideal, pursues her own life, and at the same time to restrain her daily behavior with morality. She has a heart of kindness, love, compassion, able to think about others and be versatile. Sanmao's article language humorous, interesting, whether it is the description of the story, or the fine characterization of the characters, always can not help but laugh, endless aftertaste. Sanmao's character sketch, a few strokes, but lifelike, can conquer readers in silence. Sanmao has revealed her own ideas in many works, she believed that nature, society and man are harmonious and unified, heaven and man are one, people are not only a part of society, but also a part of nature. Later, it was found that Sanmao's completely released attitude towards life is also a reflection of the spiritual flow of modern people.

## V. THE INTEGRATION OF THE "I-NOVEL" CREATION SKILLS

I-novel is a unique genre of Japanese literature in the twentieth century, which is different from the detective fiction [12]. I-novel is not a specific school in a certain period of modern Japanese literature, but a unique novel style in the history of modern Japanese literature. Its authors include many novelists from different periods and different genres. In the history of modern Japanese literature, almost all Japanese writers have written I-novels. I-novels were once popular in Japan and were once considered the mainstream of modern Japanese literature. However, because the style is too closed, it is difficult to achieve breakthrough development, and it has declined in recent years. As the most distinctive and influential literary form in Japan, I-novels occupy an extremely important position in the history of Japanese literature.

### A. The Origin of I-Novel

The characteristics of I-novel are based on the author's personal experience, and using self-exposure narrative method. I-novels cannot be separated from the "self", and the self is the core of creating I-novels [13]. As Masao Kume, a representative of the Japanese new ideological trend, said, the I-novel is a "mood novel". In the Japanese literary world, I-novels have two broad and narrow interpretations. Broad explanation, the author narrates the story in the first person is

called an I-novel. In the narrow sense, the explanation is that all the author describes personal trifles and psychological activities in isolation from the time background and social life is called I-novels. Until now, most writers prefer the narrow interpretation of I-novels, and benefit from the narrow creation technique of I-novels.

*Futon* is the first Japanese I-novel, is also an autobiographical novel, the story of the Takenaka Tokio, when his experience is actually the true portrayal of the author Katai Tayama. The author of *Futon*, born in 1871, died in 1930, formerly known as Rokuya Tayama, a representative writer of naturalism during the Meiji period, a famous Japanese novelist, is also a pioneer of Japanese I-novels. Katai Tayama was an apprentice in a bookstore when he was young. He worked very hard and gained writing skills through self-study. He himself was deeply influenced by novels that express personal mood and emotions since childhood, and was good at writing personal mood and emotional articles when he grew up. *Futon* is one of the famous masterpieces of Katai Tayama, it is a very full of emotional work. Although the work is simple and plain in language, it is striking for its explicit sentimental description. The thinker Kojin Karatani called Katai Tayama the first writer to describe “sex” in modern Japanese literature. Katai Tayama borrowed a lot of western naturalistic writing skills, and his works are good at using the first person to tell the story, creating a unique form of Japanese “I-novel”. The birth of the *Futon* is considered to have completed the transition from the early Japanese naturalistic literature, which simply liked to imitate, to the late formation of the characteristics of Japanese naturalistic literature, and established the development direction of Japanese naturalistic literature, which is of great significance in the history of modern Japanese literature. Katai Tayama himself is also positioned as a pioneer of Japanese naturalistic literature because of this work.

In 1913, the second year of Taishō in Japan, writer and translator Sota Kimura, published *Traction*, and *Suspicion* by novelist and critic Shuko Chikamatsu established the status of I-novels. The term “I-novel” began to appear in contemporary Japanese newspapers in 1920. Between 1924 and 1925, the novelist and playwright Masao Kume published *I-novels and mood novels*, writer Koji Uno published *My personal view of the I-novel* is that I-novel is Japanese pure literature, is the essence of prose literature, the two tried to praise it, which aroused hot discussion in the literary world, and then the word “I-novel” was widely used in the literary circle. In 1945, Sei Ito and Ken Hirano proposed new insights. They believed that I-novels are mood novels, characterized by saving people from the uneasiness of life and survival crisis, and according to the content and ideological tendency of I-novels, broad I-novels are divided into shattered and harmonious. Among them, give up the ideological attitude of the present world, express the sense of survival crisis is shattered. On the contrary, to reconcile the self as the goal of efforts, after a deep reflection on life, full of positive hope for the future, and try to overcome the crisis and uneasiness of survival, advocate grasping the attitude of the world is harmonious. In Japan, most I-novels are shattered. Since the emergence of I-novels, almost all the writers of the naturalistic and realist schools have written

such novels. Since the end of Taishō, I-novels have occupied a dominant position in the literary world and become the core of the pure Japanese literature, which has a great influence on the development of modern Japanese literature.

I-novels were introduced in the May Fourth Movement into China, adding the icing on the cake for the development of Chinese literature. Sanmao is not only the representative figure of I-novels, but also the female writer who is the most associated with I-novels. One third of her life traveled and created around the world, Sanmao with her beautiful sentences and strange and colorful life let the world remember her forever. Sanmao created a series of literary works, these works truly reflect her mysterious strange living space in the individual life. Sanmao's works have profound connotations and distinctive features, and bring out the creative techniques of I-novels to the extreme. She and her works in the Chinese literary circles together constitute a charming rosy glow.

### *B. The Influence of I-Novel on Modern Chinese Literature*

I-novel is a unique literary phenomenon in the history of modern Japanese literature. Japanese writer Kenzaburō Ōe, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature, once said that I-novels are thoughts and cultures handed down from generation to generation from Japanese literature, and are accepted and inherited by various genres. I-novels have long become a special objective entity in the history of modern Japanese literature, which has been integrated into the blood of Japanese culture and become an inseparable part. Nowadays, the study of I-novels can no longer be limited to the Japanese national boundary, but has become a new field of the world literary world.

The influence of Japanese I-novels on Chinese literature is mainly reflected in the introduction, improvement and promotion of the Creation Society writers during the May Fourth Movement, its representatives are Guo Moruo, Cheng Fangwu, Yu Dafu, Zhang Ziping, Tian Han, Zheng Boqi, etc. These excellent literary writers have all studied in Japan, they are also the main master of China's New Culture Movement. The shadow of Yu Dafu's personal life can be found in *Sinking*, *Shepherd's Lament*, *Cypress Vine Set* and Guo Moruo's *Drafting Trilogy*, all of which have the basic characteristics of I-novels. There are two reasons why Creation Society writers write similar I-novels. First of all, from the author's own point of view, they received new education and new ideas under the social background at that time, which made them better at directly expressing their most true thoughts in the form of words, and dare to break free from the old conservative education and implicit and introverted thoughts [14]. Secondly, from an external perspective, these writers had studied in Japan earlier and had their geographical advantages. In 1921, the Creation Society was founded in Japan. It was the rapid development of I-novels in Japan that directly promoted the writers of these Creation Society to explore and learn the orthodox I-novels.

In the context of China at that time, the May Fourth Movement was a patriotic idea movement for students in form, but from the perspective of the whole social background and social development, its role and influence went far beyond that [15]. The May Fourth Movement affected China's ideological and cultural choice, political

development direction, social and economic trend, ethics and moral education and other fields, and played a very prominent role in its continuous step by development. After the May Fourth Movement, the Chinese people's awareness of self-awareness reached an unprecedented high, and the Chinese "I-novels" were born and developed in China through the help of the Creation Society. Later, as the wheel of history continues to advance, the Chinese-style "I-novels" have become more and more mature in the continuous development and improvement, among which the more successful writer is Sanmao. Sanmao's literary works are regarded as a model of successful I-novel style, her works describe the characters' psychology with precision and subtlety. Literary creation based on the background of the times at that time truly restored the original appearance of people's lives in that era, and opened up a new trend of "I-novels" in the Chinese world. Sanmao's creative attitude determines her peculiar choice of writing style, and has made great contributions to the definition and popularization of "I-novels" in later generations.

Although Chinese I-novels are the same as Japanese ones, they are still different and cannot be confused. First of all, Chinese I-novels are the self-open and self-exposed literary creation of the society and the times, which is in line with the background of the times and has obvious social nature and the times. Japanese I-novels are self-closed literary creation that separates society and transcend the times. Usually, the author will extract the artistic interest and value through the past experience. Secondly, Chinese I-novels are more about reflecting on the society by thinking about themselves and then, and will find the reason for the fault outside of themselves, which will make people alert and think deeply. Japanese I-novels desire spiritual salvation through the way of self-repentance. Finally, Chinese I-novels focuses more on the current society. Japanese I-novels are self-reflection, and directly blame all the mistakes on the narrow or open-minded self. In short, Japanese I-novels respect the self-isolation from times and society, and are the record of deep self-confession inward. And Chinese-style I-novels are more to keep up with the pace of the times, blend with the society, open themselves in the big pattern, with external radiation. This characteristic of Chinese I-novels is fundamentally, because Chinese writers accept not entirely I-novels of the Japanese naturalistic genre. In other words, the writing of Chinese writers in I-novels is not to cater to a certain creative trend of thought. They are better at using the form of Japanese I-novels to intuitively express their own thoughts. In essence, Chinese writers do not completely learn from the writing skills of Japanese I-novels, but imitate the style of the Japanese I-novels. In terms of literary creation, the writers of the Creation Society are not only influenced by the Japanese I-novels, but also by the comprehensive influence from European literature, so the Chinese-style I-novels are also integrated into the cultures of other countries. In addition, the reasons for the difference in the I-novels between the two countries were also influenced by the social and political situation at that time. Japanese I-novels were popular in the period of Japanese militarism. At that time, Japan was relatively closed, and people had no freedom of expression under oppression. Writers dared not touch politics in the process of literary creation, but could only close themselves

in a narrow world and only make their own literary creation in a limited space. However, Chinese I-novels were popular during the May Fourth Movement. At that time, the writers called "saving the country through literature" and wanted to awaken the society with literature [14]. Therefore, Chinese I-novels had a strong political revolution. The difference between social history and aesthetic culture is also another important reason for the difference between Chinese and Japanese I-novels. Since ancient times, China has been influenced by Confucian culture and pursues a "political culture", advocating that everyone is related to the social country, and that "every man is responsible for the rise and fall of the world." In the social history, Japan has been even more "divorced from the political culture", and people are mostly indifferent to the development of the society. Generally speaking, Japanese I-novels play an extremely important position in the history of Japanese literature, and Chinese I-novels influenced by Japanese I-novels also play a great role in promoting the development of Chinese literature.

Sanmao combines many advantages of Japanese "I-novels" and Chinese "I-novels" in her literary creation. First of all, Sanmao's literary works have not only obvious characteristics of the times and social attributes, and can extract artistic interest through their own past experience, and are good at intuitively expressing self-thoughts, which has internal and external radiation. Secondly, Sanmao's literary works can not only think deeply about themselves and then reflect on the society, but also peep into their own inner real world, thought-provoking. Finally, the literary connotation of Sanmao either attributed the cause of pain to the current society, or on the narrow or open-minded self, writing the reality of life with real life. Sanmao with beautiful sentences and colorful life let the world always remember her, her "I-novel" style can not only carefully show her life experience and different big world, but also can tell her life bumpy and the world's love and hate.

### *C. Sanmao's "I-novel" Creation Skills*

I-novel as a style, its proposal originally originated in Japan. Japanese novelist and playwright Masao Kume believes that I-novels are the literature directly exposed by writers, and they are a true portrayal of the exploration of their own life destiny. Among them, objective reality and non-fiction are the important stylistic characteristics of I-novels. In the history of world literature, I-novels often have indissoluble ties with women and are loved by most female writers. The reason for this is related to the mentality formed by women's unique understanding and experience of life and destiny in a specific living space under different times. The vast majority of female writers love caring for their families and having rich emotional experiences. They taste ordinary life more than gallop the philosophical world, and love concrete life more than thinking about the macro construction of abstract history and society. Therefore, female writers can create real female images in the creation of literary works, and can also create a "I-novel" expression style more suitable for female characteristics.

Sanmao's literary works not only have the creative characteristics of outstanding female writers, but also are more consistent with I-novels in the choice of style, which is crucial for the popular Sanmao in the record of female



legendary experience. In Sanmao's works, there are her own mood records, and also the realistic experiences of her neighbors and friends. However, in terms of the main style of her works, they are all telling the writer's own true stories, which is more in line with the writing technique of I-novels.

In terms of style, except for a few articles such as *Wandering Through Thousands of Waters and Thousands of Mountains* obviously with the color of travel notes, although more space involves the theme of travel, but the overall style of the work is far from covered by travel notes. Sanmao has always been not interested in simply describing the landscape. What she is concerned about is the nature integrated with life and the life landscape engraved in the cultural imprint. Therefore, the reductive writing of people in a specific region immersed in a specific cultural atmosphere is the most interesting. As Sanmao herself said, she does not love the rigid creation of landscape literature, only love to elaborate the character writing. Sanmao's works are more literary spiritual from the artistic essence of prose and I-novels. Sanmao's works are different from those with legendary literary fiction novels, but also different from those characters and legends works that throw away from the characteristics of the novel. Speaking about the capacity and means of expression of Sanmao's works, the style of prose seems difficult to be extremely rich. Therefore, Sanmao's literary works are a kind of prose style mixed with the form of more I-novels, and she integrates the two into one.

In terms of her life and personality color, Sanmao's works are real and not artificial, which are different from those legendary literary fictional novels. In her works, the characters are very vivid, they love and hate clearly, distinct personalities, very down-to-earth, different from those extremely stereotypical and uniform character legends. In the color of self-narrative, they can be clearly distinguished from fictional novels, and in this point of novels, they are different from ordinary biographies.

Carefully taste, Sanmao is the real self live into the works, with a pure personal emotional expression to show her personal experience of the real life. In her works, readers can see the cultural landscape, personal feelings and even personal privacy life. Sanmao's works often focus on the self-centered, and are based on the realistic skills of real people, real things, true feelings and real scenes. Sanmao features herself in *Story of the Sahara* and *How Many Flowers Fall in the Dream*, revealing her own personal life and emotional experience to the readers without disguise. Sanmao mainly takes the author's personal life and emotional heart road as clues, extracts material from personal experience, and truly reproduces the prototype of life through the creation means of novels, so it seems more reasonable to call Sanmao this style of I-novel. Sanmao's I-novels, which truly describe the self, are far richer in content and means of expression than travel notes and prose. In the realistic sense, the literary creation technique of I-novels makes the real life portrayal of writers' experience often better than the fiction literature of other writers. In terms of genre, I-novels are often better than biography. Sanmao's literary creation is a kind of long-lens realistic model of her life experience. She is good at expressing real emotions and exploring one ripple after another in her life. Sanmao's creation themes are diverse and wide, flexible and free structure.

The reason why Sanmao's works are more special is that she has borrowed and integrated many writing methods, among which I-novels are a very important point. Sanmao's works are a kind of prose style mixed with the form of more I-novels. She connects I-novel and prose seamlessly and skillfully combine, and the two are just right. In Sanmao's works, she is both the author and a character in the works. Sanmao once said that she was a persistent to write about their own life experience and the people who communicate with themselves, want her to write about others rather than write about themselves, she is unacceptable, but also completely impossible to do. None of Sanmao's works is narrated in the third person. Once Sanmao tried to write a third-person article, she struggled for a long time, and it was difficult to write. Sanmao thinks that she is not that person and can't figure out this person's psychology. When she doesn't know the other person's true thoughts and feelings at all, she doesn't know how to start. It is precisely because of Sanmao's dedication to describing herself and daring to analyze herself deeply in this spirit, so that she has become an immortal legend in the literary world. Sanmao walks all over the world, shaping the magical life in her own beautiful world, records and tells the ordinary self and everything around her with her life, and wins the pursuit and love of countless readers.

In *Story of the Sahara* and *How Many Flowers Fall in the Dream*, all the stories start from Sanmao and happen around Sanmao, and everything is Sanmao's personal experience. From desert life to Jose love, from the integration with local culture to living with the neighbors in the desert, everything shows Sanmao's lively personality and love for life.

Sanmao's description of the content of the story in other works is also consistent with the I-novel. In these works, Sanmao will participate as a bystander. In her work, she is both participant and recorder. In *Giant, A Man Willing To Die For His Confidant, The Crying Camel, The Woman Selling Flowers, Forever Maria* and other works with the real characters share the joys and sorrows, but she still captures and records these wonderful experiences completely through the way of writing.

In *The Crying Camel*, Sanmao recorded under the background of the western Sahara political riots she and Basili, Shayda, Ophelua, Agibi, Guka and others encounter, communication and disputes, she shows readers her collisions with the everyday life around them, and the people interlinked peculiar experience. In *A Man Willing To Die For His Confidant*, Sanmao truthfully described the despair and helplessness shown by the disadvantaged groups Miguel and Betty who were unable to face the local secular marriage, reflecting the inequality of local women's rights. In *Sergeant Sabah Sanchez Dore*, Sanmao describes the current situation of the people under the dark political background. This powerless situation makes the people suffer psychologically and physically. The work indirectly reflects Sanmao's humanitarian care and sympathy for the local people in deep water. In *The Woman Selling Flowers*, Sanmao describes a glib, crafty African flower-selling woman. This flower-selling woman deliberately make a living with false words and deeds, for this reason, Sanmao was always soft-hearted and deceived, and again and again in the name of goodwill to pay, finally Sanmao is really can not stand, can only escape,

staged a real version of the “farmer and snake” story. In *Forever Maria*, Sanmao tells the story of a cleaning maid who has no professional ethics and the same name as the Virgin Mary. The cleaning maid Mary is very greedy, indifferent, lazy, and a headache. She didn't do her job well, and forcibly took away things that didn't belong to her. In the end, Sanmao gave in and compromised, ending this unpleasant relationship.

In *The Woman Selling Flowers* and *Forever Maria*, Sanmao reveals the selfish and shameless behavior of these protagonists, which contrasts sharply with the kindness and honesty of the Sanmao couple. All the above works of Sanmao integrate the creation skills of I-novels.

In the scene of these works, Sanmao basically retreated to the secondary position, and makes the corresponding value judgment and emotional response to everything. In these works, the fate of the protagonists often becomes the catalyst to trigger the change of Sanmao's thought, which is actually Sanmao's knowledge and personal experience to complete the real and vivid image of each character from a special perspective. All of these styles are completely in line with the writing characteristics of I-novels, that is, the works take the author's own experience as the starting point, take practical experience as the theme, show personal emotions and moods, and adopt the direct statement method of self-exposure. At the same time, when Sanmao created these works, also closely related to the constraints of the social background of that time and the influence of foreign ideas, and more objectively reflected the characteristics of the times.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

Sanmao's works reflect the objective real life, which is mainly because she advocates writing freely, adhering to the spirit of “depending on benevolence, swim in art” and integrates the creation skills of “I-novels”. These three aspects also form Sanmao's unique literary creation style. Although Sanmao's works are all tragic endings, they will still make readers feel the goodness and beauty of human nature in the process of reading. Literary creation is the belief of Sanmao. Reading Sanmao's works will not make people feel very depressed, instead, they will bring readers more enlightenment to the love of life. These revelations are like

the red glow that shines through the window before the sunset, making people feel warm.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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