Abstract

The book *The Dream of the Red Chamber (Hong Lou Meng)* has been a favourite subject of research for many scholars spanning the decades since its first appearance. The many scholars have since separated into two large camps, one reading the text as an autobiography of the author, thus dedicating their time to background research of the author, and the other, focusing on the intrigues of the text and examining its aesthetic worth.

The American scholar Martin W. Huang, in his book *Literati and Self-representation: Autobiographical Sensibility in the Eighteenth-century Chinese Novel* presents a novel view of the "auto" dimension in *The Dream*, an "autobiographical" work, and thus speaks of Jia Baoyu and his "reluctance to grow up" with reference to the author's intention. Building upon his work, this paper aims to examine the various narrative methods used by the author in the creation and narration of the *Grand-view Garden (Da Guan Yuan)*, to provide Baoyu with a youthful and ever-flourishing utopia.

The paper will first discuss the narrative structure of the garden based on indefinite and cyclical time, which is an attempt by the author to deconstruct linear time and thus let Baoyu enjoy his days in the garden. This narrative technique is furthermore boosted by a focus on the spatiality of the garden, which will be examined in the third part of this paper.

This regrettably leads to the fourth section, which will then discuss the author's abandonment of the previous two narrative techniques, returning instead to linear time and the narration of the collapse of the garden.

The in-depth analysis of the various narrative techniques employed by the author will hopefully reflect the complexity and heavy sense of irony in the text.