

行政院國家科學委員會專題研究計畫 成果報告

個人主義的政治性：張愛玲與瑪麗雪萊憂鬱書寫之對照 (II-I) 研究成果報告(精簡版)

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中文摘要：西方世界對憂鬱之討論者眾，但無論是佛洛伊德（Sigmund Freud）之〈哀悼與憂鬱〉（'Mourning and Melancholia'），抑或近年來深具影響之羅芙（Heather Love），在其理論系統中，其實皆預設了一套個人主義式的邏輯：感情乃是確立主體個體性最重要之指標，而所謂主體，究其定義必為具有明確意識與情感感受能力之獨立個體。因為此一個體性乃主體形構最關鍵之核心質素，憂鬱者的避世獨立，往往在當代西方理論界，被有意無意地解讀為時間上的退化或逆反。許多文學作者（如詹姆斯[Henry James]）甚至理論家（如討論詹姆斯之莎菊克[Eve Sedgwick]）作品中對個人心理之探討，之所以每每令讀者產生「封閉」感，原因即在於此一逆反之動作，本身已預設主體 vs 社會之二元對立，而主體於個人生命與心理發展之時間順序上則早於社會出現（佛洛伊德之超我說雖挑戰此說法，卻仍將自我心理視為具有明確藩籬界線之封閉性單位），故回歸心理面總意味將自我放「回」區隔主體與客體的界線之內。但個人主義不僅為倫理意義上區分自我與他者、主體與客體間的定義原則，同時也是一種西方潛在的思維型態。所謂「我思故我在」之主體架構，意味的是主體之成其為主體，關鍵在其否能在意識層次上明確區隔出思考或感受此一動作兩端之主受體，唯透過此一明確角色二分，主體方可將自身客體化，將本人的意識也化為思考省視之對象。這種類似鏡像之迴身模式，遂可視為西方個人主體證成自身的正統。但此套個人主義式之感知邏輯，卻不適用於華人社會，蓋在華人以社群為中心之體系中，個人主義式之主體其實並不存在，因此，也就沒有定義個體之個人式情感可言。感情，多半不被明確感知與抒陳，而以渾渾噩噩之狀態或朦朧之印象出現。人能夠成為個體，往往需要經過激烈之抗爭或強烈之創傷經驗，使人自懵懂狀態覺醒、甚至驚醒，最後始能冷靜觀照人情乃至自身感知狀態；因個體之出現晚於社會，故上述出現於西方脈絡之感情返祖想像，在本地脈絡並不存在。相反地，因個人的形成往往必須依賴人自覺性切斷社群主義加諸於身之伊底帕斯式感情聯繫，故本質上必定具有西方個人未有之抗爭性與抗議性。此兩年期計畫擬分別針對張愛玲與瑪麗·雪萊（Mary Shelley）進行中西兩種感情主體之比較研究。在第一年計畫中，本人透過對張愛玲〈紅玫瑰與白玫瑰〉的解讀，指出所謂白玫瑰的「白」，不僅僅意味的是性別意義上的純潔，同時亦指涉上述知性與感情狀態之渾渾噩噩。因此，張愛玲的這個短篇，如同她其它重要著作，皆可被視為國族寓言（national allegory），批判中國人的反個體社群主義，如何將知識與情感盲此等認識障

礙，轉化為道德意義上的純潔與好。在第二年計畫中，我將談論個人主義在西方脈絡之發展與社群意識之矛盾糾結。作為西方現代個人主義濫觴—浪漫主義—既中心卻又邊緣之人物，瑪麗·雪萊於《科學怪人》(Frankenstein)對浪漫主義主要作者奉為圭臬之個人主義，提出了來自邊緣觀點的針砭與批判。然而，在此同時，雪萊其實仍無法（亦不想）與她所批判之個人主義割袍斷義，在書寫形式上，她延續的仍是浪漫主義的個人主義式自白，在哲學意念上，她和十八世紀亞當斯密（Adam Smith）以降之道德感情哲學則有著曖昧的反叛暨傳承關係。雪萊與個人主義間的幽微依存關係，遂使《科學怪人》陷入本體論上之兩難情境：小說雖企圖透過個人自白之眾聲喧嘩創造「民主多元」式之語境，並不斷企圖進入社會關係，卻始終陷溺在個人各說各話之偏執恐懼。雪萊之書寫，仍未跳脫前述西方將情感個人化之邏輯，因此雖然對個人主義提出最強烈之質疑，卻亦同時受其制約，其作品之「封閉感」，可謂充分體現西方世界對情感、憂鬱之去政治化、去社會化之聯想。

中文關鍵詞：情感、憂鬱、張愛玲、心理分析、不完全主體性、肛門性

英文摘要：There has been a considerable amount of critical attention in the West devoted to the affect call melancholia. From Sigmund Freud to Heather Love, discourses on melancholia have always presupposed a logic of individualism: affect is the very defining essence of subjectivity, and the so-called subject is first and foremost an individual. Individualism, however, not only serves as the governing principle that distinguishes between self and other; it is, most of all, what lies at the core of one's consciousness. The epistemological model of 'I think, therefore I am' proves non-existent in the Chinese community. Considering that persons do not live in this communitarian culture as individuals, their thoughts and feelings exist in the mode of inchoate sense-impressions, rather than something that can be readily accessed through self-reflexive consciousness and clearly expressed as a particular form of affect that reveals one's distinct individuality and personhood. Individuality is by default a progressive move away from the Oedipal formlessness of thinking and feeling encouraged in our culture, rather than an atavistic return to a

fantasmatic space of asociality as we often see in Western conceptions of affect. In this two-year project, I will then use Eileen Chang and Mary Shelley as my textual exemplars to demonstrate the above difference between East and West. In the first year, I will undertake a reading of Chang's short story 'Red Rose and White Rose.' It is my contention that the 'whiteness' of the 'White Rose' should be read in the context of the epistemic and affective formlessness delineated above. I therefore propose to read it as a national allegory that criticizes the Chinese mode of communitarianism by uncovering how it transforms affective uncertainty into an absolutist moral norm about what it means to be 'good.' In the second year, I will take up individualism's vexed relation with sociality in the British context. One can see a full-blown critique in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* of the devastating consequences produced by an unconditional valorization of the individual will. Shelley's critique of individualism, however, does not transcend the temporalized logic of individualism in its unwitting reterritorialization of affect within the de-socialized sphere of the personal and the psychological, which gives rise to a textual solipsism in which characters simply talk past one another.

英文關鍵詞： affect, melancholia, Eileen Chang, psychoanalysis, liminal subjectivity, anality

行政院國家科學委員會補助專題研究計畫

成果報告
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個人主義的政治性：張愛玲與瑪麗雪萊憂鬱書寫之對照

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目錄

一、中文摘要及關鍵詞	II
二、英文摘要及關鍵詞	IV
三、報告內容	
1. 前言	1
2. 研究目的、文獻探討與研究方法	1
3. 結果與討論	6
4. 論文正文	7
四、計畫成果自評	47

一、中文摘要及關鍵詞

西方世界對憂鬱之討論者眾，但無論是佛洛伊德（Sigmund Freud）之〈哀悼與憂鬱〉（"Mourning and Melancholia"），抑或近年來深具影響之羅芙（Heather Love），在其理論系統中，其實皆預設了一套個人主義式的邏輯：感情乃是確立主體個體性最重要之指標，而所謂主體，究其定義必為具有明確意識與情感感受能力之獨立個體。因為此一個體性乃主體形構最關鍵之核心質素，憂鬱者的避世獨立，往往在當代西方理論界，被有意無意地解讀為時間上的退化或逆反。許多文學作者（如詹姆斯[Henry James]）甚至理論家（如討論詹姆斯之莎菊克[Eve Sedgwick]）作品中對個人心理之探討，之所以每每令讀者產生「封閉」感，原因即在於此一逆反之動作，本身已預設主體 vs 社會之二元對立，而主體於個人生命與心理發展之時間順序上則早於社會出現（佛洛伊德之超我說雖挑戰此說法，卻仍將自我心理視為具有明確藩籬界線之封閉性單位），故回歸心理面總意味將自我放「回」區隔主體與客體的界線之內。但個人主義不僅為倫理意義上區分自我與他者、主體與客體間的定義原則，同時也是一種西方潛在的思維型態。所謂「我思故我在」之主體架構，意味的是主體之成其為主體，關鍵在其否能在意識層次上明確區隔出思考或感受此一動作兩端之主受體，唯透過此一明確角色二分，主體方可將自身客體化，將本人的意識也化為思考省視之對象。這種類似鏡像之迴身模式，遂可視為西方個人主義證成自身的正統。但此套個人主義式之感知邏輯，卻不適用於華人社會，蓋在華人以社群為中心之體系中，個人主義式之主體其實並不存在，因此，也就沒有定義個體之個人式情感可言。感情，多半不被明確感知與抒陳，而以渾渾噩噩之狀態或朦朧之印象出現。人能夠成為個體，往往需要經過激烈之抗爭或強烈之創傷經驗，使人自懵懂狀態覺醒、甚至驚醒，最後始能冷靜觀照人情乃至自身感知狀態；因個體之出現晚於社會，故上述出現於西方脈絡之感情返祖想像，在本地脈絡並不存在。相反地，因個人的形成往往必須依賴人自覺性切斷社群主義加諸於身之伊底帕斯式感情聯繫，故本質上必定具有西方個人未有之抗爭性與抗議性。此兩年期計畫擬分別針對張愛玲與瑪麗·雪萊（Mary Shelley）進行中西兩種感情主體之比較研究。在第一年計畫中，本人透過對張愛玲〈紅玫瑰與白玫瑰〉的解讀，指出所謂白玫瑰的「白」，不僅僅意味的是性別意義上的純潔，同時亦指涉上述知性與感情狀態之渾渾噩噩。因此，張愛玲的這個短篇，如同她其它重要著作，皆可被視為國族寓言（national allegory），批判中國人的反個體社群主義，如何將知識與情感盲此等認識障礙，轉化為道德意義上的純潔與好。在第二年計畫中，我將談論個人主義在西方脈絡之發展與社群意識之矛盾糾結。作為西方現代個人主義濫觴—浪漫主義—既中心卻又邊緣之人物，瑪麗·雪萊於《科學怪人》（*Frankenstein*）對浪漫主義主要作者奉為主臬之個人主義，提出了來自邊緣觀點的針砭與批判。然而，在此同時，雪萊其實仍無法（亦不想）與她所批判之個人主義割袍斷義，在書寫形式上，她延續的仍是浪漫主義的個人主義式自白，在哲學意念上，她和十八世紀亞當斯密（Adam Smith）以降之道德感情哲學則有著曖昧的反叛暨傳承關係。雪萊與

個人主義間的幽微依存關係，遂使《科學怪人》陷入本體論上之兩難情境：小說雖企圖透過個人自白之眾聲喧嘩創造「民主多元」式之語境，並不斷企圖進入社會關係，卻始終陷溺在個人各說各話之偏執恐懼。雪萊之書寫，仍未跳脫前述西方將情感個人化之邏輯，因此雖然對個人主義提出最強烈之質疑，卻亦同時受其制約，其作品之「封閉感」，可謂充分體現西方世界對情感、憂鬱之去政治化、去社會化之聯想。

中文關鍵詞：情感、憂鬱、張愛玲、心理分析、不完全主體性、肛門性

二、英文摘要及關鍵詞

There has been a considerable amount of critical attention in the West devoted to the affect call melancholia. Whether in Sigmund Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia," or in literary critic Heather Love's recent call to the negativity of melancholic withdrawal, discourses on melancholia, in effect, have always presupposed a logic of individualism: affect is the very defining essence of subjectivity, and the so-called subject is first and foremost an individual. Affect is, in short, something privatized and individuated, something circumscribed by the physical and psychological bounds of a sentient being. It comes as no surprise that in contemporary theory, the melancholic's reclusive claim to individuality would be frequently construed as regressive or atavistic. Insofar as the subject is, by default, taken as that which comes before the social, the increasing lingering gazes upon psychology or the interiority of the self as we've seen in many writers (such as Henry James) or critics (such as Eve Sedgwick) would more often than not be viewed suspiciously as a flight or retrogressive return to a perfectly bounded enclosure where the social does not exist. The unavoidable impression that one has about Western psychology's antagonism to politics testifies precisely to the binary opposition of subject versus object, or the individual versus the socio-cultural. Individualism, however, not only serves as the governing principle that distinguishes between self and other; it is, most of all, what lies at the core of one's consciousness. The epistemological model of "I think, therefore I am" rests on the subject's ability to objectify its own thinking/feeling process in exactly the same way as it objectifies the world. Only through this kind of reflexive or specular objectification will the subject ensure its absolute authority and identity as a thinking/feeling being. The above individuated model of self-reflexivity, however, proves non-existent in the Chinese community. Considering that persons do not live in this communitarian culture as individuals, the individuated subject, which has been so taken for granted in Western philosophy, does not really have an equivalent in the Chinese context, where thoughts and feelings exist in the mode of inchoate sense-impressions, rather than something that can be readily accessed through self-reflexive

consciousness and clearly expressed as a particular form of affect that reveals one's distinct individuality and personhood. In our culture, one does not automatically become an individual, but is rather shocked into this particular mode of being after fierce struggles or certain traumatic events. Given its belated and accidental arrival, individuality is by default a *progressive* move away from the Oedipal formlessness of thinking and feeling encouraged in our culture, rather than an atavistic return to a fantasmatic space of asociality as we often see in Western conceptions of affect. In this two-year project, I will then use Eileen Chang and Mary Shelley as my textual exemplars to demonstrate the above difference between East and West. In the first year, I will undertake a reading of Chang's short story "Red Rose and White Rose." It is my contention that the "whiteness" of the "White Rose" does not only stand for sexual innocence; it should be read, rather, in the context of the epistemic and affective formlessness delineated above. I therefore propose an interpretation of the story as a national allegory that criticizes the Chinese mode of communitarianism by uncovering how it transforms affective uncertainty and intellectual drabness into an absolutist moral norm about what it means to be "good." In the second year, I will take up individualism's vexed relation with sociality in the British context. Though married to Percy Bysshe Shelley, one of the most important Romantic poets, Mary Shelley nevertheless frequently reveals doubts and uncertainty about the individualist values wholeheartedly espoused by her husband. One can see a full-blown critique in *Frankenstein* of the devastating consequences produced by an unconditional valorization of the individual will. In the meanwhile, however, Shelley cannot do without the individualism that she takes to task in this novel. Whereas the form of the novel still relies upon a romantic convention that would privilege the first-person account as a propeller of narrative, philosophically her stress throughout the novel upon the importance of sympathy also indicates her indebtedness to eighteenth-century moral philosophy, which has never called into question the supreme value of the individuated subject as the basic unit of moral feelings. As it turns out, though the novel seeks strenuously to create a "democratic" framework of discourses in which every major character gets to present his/her own view, the novel, nevertheless, has never managed to enter an ideal state of social communicativeness, for it ends up in a permanent fixation on paranoid solipsism in which characters simply talk past each other. Shelley's critique of individualism thus does not transcend the temporalized logic of individualism in its unwitting reterritorialization of affect within the de-socialized sphere of the personal and the psychological.

英文關鍵詞：affect, melancholia, Eileen Chang, psychoanalysis, liminal subjectivity, anality

三、報告內容

1. 前言

本研究延續本人自博士論文以來對於憂鬱此一情感之關注，在我的博士論文《Sentimentality under Erasure》，我試圖連結現代性與憂鬱此一情感之歷史與社會關連，透過對於維多利亞時期以降幾位重要作者的分析，我強調憂鬱之疏冷與西方小說美學形式或敘事手法之演進有著密不可分之關係。回國於政治大學任教後之第一個國科會計畫「酷兒理論的感情轉向」，本人則將研究焦點轉至當代理論，試圖理解莎菊克（Eve Sedgwick）的情感理論中被壓抑之反社會或疏冷傾向。此一研究也使本人進一步開始思索，西方理論中所預設之迪卡爾式個人主義主體，往往預設個人必定先行於社會，因此憂鬱之個人主義式姿態每每被視為倒退、缺乏進步思維之負面反社會性之表現；但並非所有國家或文化底下所孕育之主體皆符合西方理論所存想或分析之主體。在本年度之國科會計畫中，我因此決定將研究重心再次轉向，透過比較情感或比較理論分析之方法，去回答以上提出之問題。在理論或研究路徑上，我將張愛玲之短篇小說〈紅玫瑰與白玫瑰〉與佛洛伊德析論肛門性之幾個重要文本交互參照，以張愛玲之文學再現反思佛洛伊德所預設之西方普同主體之問題性，並大膽提出華人之主體乃是充滿肛門性與群體主義色彩之不完全主體之說法。透過此一參照比較，我認為未來治情感研究者，將能突破目前過度依賴西方理論雛形之問題，甚至可以進一步釐清，華人之憂鬱，雖在乍看之下，具有雷同西方之個人主義疏冷色彩，然本質上卻往往已與儒家壓抑個人感受表達與自我觀照分析之社群主義式情感結構大相逕庭。一旦此一基本立論成立，未來對個人、甚至華文與英美學界中西情感研究之開展，應能形成極大之助力。

2. 研究目的、文獻探討、與研究方法

酷兒理論（Queer Theory）近年來對感情（affect）相關議題益加關注，對各類感情之討論中，憂鬱（melancholia）可謂其中最受矚目之一支。這種感情之所以對酷兒理論如此重要，除和同志成長階段之污名與受壓迫經驗息息相關，也可說自始即深受該領域兩大重要支柱—莎菊克（Eve Sedgwick）和芭特勒（Judith Butler）—之影響。後者早在1990年出版，酷兒理論的奠基著作《性別麻煩》中，便融合傅柯式論述分析，顛覆解構佛洛伊德（Sigmund Freud）對於異性戀正統主體性別認同之說法。芭特勒的「以子之矛攻子之盾」的解構手法，正是以佛洛伊德在〈哀悼與憂鬱〉（"Mourning and Melancholia"）一文裡的說法為起點，指出既然憂鬱是一種透過「吸納融入」（incorporation）的方式建立起同性認同以哀悼逝去的父親的方式，同性的情慾其實已經隱含於同性的認同之中，而父親之所以在主體形構過程裡，如同母親一般必須失去，顯然除了亂倫禁制（incest taboo）之外，還有另一層外在的社會文化條件存在—即異性戀父權文化對同性關係的禁制。芭特勒對於憂鬱的說法深具見地，且影響及於心理學、社會學等其他領域，但芭特

勒將憂鬱「去感情化」的政治手法，往往也將此一特定情感去特殊化與空泛化。在酷兒理論發展之早期，莎菊克便對此一作法不以為然，但莎菊克本人處理憂鬱此一課題時，不論在理論或自傳性的書寫，又將憂鬱過度私人化，尤其克萊恩（Melanie Klein）之理論之於晚近莎菊克之影響，往往將主體之心理世界全然去社會化與去脈絡化，將精神分裂式主體與被愛戀客體之間之依存關係視為正向之倫理關係。莎菊克的去政治化理路，因此又有矯枉過正之虞。近兩年，羅芙（Heather Love）企圖在感情與政治之間尋求平衡，並指出消極與矛盾（ambivalence）乃為情感研究中不該被忽略之重要元素，羅芙之出發點與莎菊克類似，但在研究方法上則更加積極地展現了與當代政治論述對話之企圖（儘管其處理之主題乃是「消極」）。

以上種種對於憂鬱的討論，明顯將感情視為和社會政治相互衝突對立之概念。因感情屬於個人，屬於主體，而憂鬱本質上的疏冷與反社會傾向，似乎在在明確昭告兩者之間不可消弭的藩籬。簡言之，西方理論的框架裡，跨越了不同理論家的流派差異，相同點在於他們皆將憂鬱主體預設為個人主義式的主體。佛洛伊德的理論除了預設芭特勒提及之亂倫禁忌與同性關係禁制外，更加先決之條件，其實乃是主體必須確立疆界，成為個人，因此非得放棄父母，斬斷心理上的臍帶聯繫。個人主義，實即西方先行於一切倫理關係之基礎。克萊恩的憂鬱說，雖然與佛洛伊德路數大相逕庭，本質上預設的仍是個人主義式的倫理關係，強調主體與客體之間，必須以正向之感情想像作為聯繫方式。個人主義在時序上之先驗性凌駕其他所有一切條件，成為任何主體論述或主體感情論述之基礎，因其根深蒂固之地位，因此在所有理論的處理中，反而被想當然爾的略去不談。憂鬱主體背離社會反求諸己的作法，因此不僅僅是空間上之遠離社交與社群關係，遠離社會文化權力結構等等物質性條件，也同時意味著時間上的退化或返祖（atavism）：政治體或基進政治或社會運動關懷的目的為個人，基於此個人先行於社會之前提，遂有社會或社交關係之產生，而此一群體關係，背後之心理結構乃為應明確主客體關係而生之互為主體關係（intersubjectivity）。而憂鬱主體在西方之脈絡，經常被詮釋為曖昧反動，正是因為其離群的自我姿態，似是要從那互為主體的理想倫理關係中，返回如波特萊爾（Baudelaire）筆下漫遊者（flaneur）的絕對個人之主體位置。

近年來，台灣之文學與文化研究，因應英美感情研究之走向，亦開始對於憂鬱等情感產生濃厚興趣，其中最具代表性之著作，甫於今年問世。這本由清華大學亞太／文化研究室出版，劉人鵬、鄭聖勳、宋玉雯主編的《憂鬱的文化政治》，選譯芭特勒、莎菊克、羅芙等人的代表著作。今年十二月，清大亞太／文化研究室、文化研究學會、中央大學性／別研究室更聯合邀請羅芙來台訪問，並展開一連串學術演講活動。台灣學術圈方興未艾之憂鬱研究，如編者劉人鵬所言，「目的並不在於完整引介一個學院新興研究」（ii），而是希望能夠藉由西方對於憂鬱的相關論述，反思國內文化政治與憂鬱主體關連等等重要課題。本書另一編者鄭聖勳則指出：「憂鬱（症）或憂鬱書寫，在表面的漠然／懶怠（acedia），或是個人主義、內心世界的探索等等的詮釋之外，其實是政治的——「情感」不單單如傳統以為的，只是精神分析論述處理的內容，而是一種社會、政治、法律、美學關係的建構，同時也漸漸形成一種情感政治」（x）。鄭聖勳的原意，是希望透過一種唯物式（materialistic）的批判分析框架，理解憂鬱的個人性，之於政治的曖昧與矛盾。

但在他提出個人性的政治意義時，卻不經意點到憂鬱的個人性，在在地文化中所享有的一種迥然不同於西方脈絡之特殊性。易言之，憂鬱對於華人文化政治之所以重要，之所以「政治」，正是因為它的個人主義。在她們所譯介的文獻所從出之社會文化脈絡中，憂鬱必須被平反，被再政治化，乃因個人主義具有上述返祖或退化之聯想；但在本地文化裡，憂鬱的反社會傾向，在先驗的意義上，早就具有相當程度之抗議性。華人的憂鬱，不是一種退化，因在華人世界裡，個人不存在，主體亦不存在，何來據以退化反祖之原初狀態？蓋華人的倫理關係以社群為尊，此一社群主義，不以個體之獨立成熟為終極目的，反鼓勵服從、隨俗等等「鄉愿」之特質，在親密關係模式再普遍不過的如膠似漆之去疆界化狀態，亦被視為感情與道德體系中之正統規範。任何在思想或行為上之「個人主義」式的宣示或表述，透過此一社群主義強烈的道德規範裁示，往往被冠上「特立獨行」、「標新立異」等等具有負面道德批判意涵之標籤。因此，在一人我不分的世界表達「我」之存在，無論宣示者是否明確意識其語言行為之激進性，本質上其實皆具有一定程度之政治反抗性甚或顛覆性。個人主義，既是憂鬱此一感情結構之根本先決條件，在考量中西文化差異同時，其背後之根本文化與倫理關係較諸本地之差異實不可不談。

但作為一種無遠弗屆之影響，個人主義，不該僅僅被看做倫理意義上區分自我與他者之主體主張，在認識論之意義上，個人主義在西方的發展，也往往造就出一種迥異於華人的思維模式或「意識型態」(state of consciousness)。在西方學界過去種種對於佛洛伊德的分析裡，常有評論家指出，佛洛伊德精神分析體系的參照標準乃笛卡爾式之思考主體 (the Cartesian subject)。「我思故我在」的主體架構，意味的是主體之所以成其為主體，關鍵因素在於其是否能在根本意識層次上明確區分思考／分析之主體、與被思考／分析之客體，唯有透過此一明確之角色二分，主體方可將自身客體化，將本人之思考過程作為思考之對象。佛洛伊德理論中隱而不宣的「個人必須脫離父母獨立」之倫理律令，其實和心理分析理論架構中處理主體意識乃至身份認同形構的說法可相互連貫：身體疆界的確立與認同疆界的確立，與主體是否能有明確自我意識具有直接因果關係，經由人我關係確立，自我意識亦同時確立之際，自我方能以同樣之區分模式將自我本身異化或疏離化，以鏡像之迴向模式反身思考分析自身之思緒。所有西方之哲學，包含心理分析本身，皆可謂衍生於這一套自身證成之鏡像分析模式。感情在此一主客確立之架構中，乃是定義人格 (personhood) 與個人性的關鍵，佛洛伊德關於情感或原欲 (libido) 投注的種種說法，也往往預設主體具有明確之情緒感受能力，而憂鬱者之淡漠無感，原因在於其「失落」，而非先天不具備此一感受能力。

反之，在華人世界之脈絡中，並無涇渭分明之主客體之區別，職是，也就沒有定義個體之個人式情感可言。感情，往往以一種渾渾噩噩的狀態出現，不完全成其為個人之人，無法明確掌握、關照、察知本身之情感狀態，而多半依賴本能行事，但此一本能，卻並非西方浪漫主義思維中所謂不受文明約制之天性，亦非全然等同於佛洛伊德論述中所謂動物之本能，反倒可說是因過度受到「禮教」制約後所形成之凡事不假思索之習慣。佛洛伊德的憂鬱說所以重要，在於其指出道德意識之本體，在於內化道德律令之自我意識，故此一自我麻雀雖小五臟俱全，其實本身已具備所有社會與社群意識之基本要素。而華人世界中的律法重視的，卻並非發自於個人內心之心悅誠服，而是純粹形式主義式

的服從（遂有由此衍生之無數陽奉陰違之偽善個例）。人出於本能的人云亦云，出於本能的雞鳴狗盜，其間多的是教條式的吶喊，多的是對外在利害關係的計較，而付之闕如的，則是透徹審視社會與審視自我的個人主義式思維與情感。或有論者以為，此一中西對立模式或許不適用於草莽族以降凡事似皆以「我」為尊之新世代，本人卻認為，自我在新世代中同樣不存在，在以社群為本為尊的儒家社會中，被教導不假思索服從者，在過去以陽奉陰違之方式反抗，如今不過將反抗方式調整，卻依然是以一種非個人式不假思索的方式行其公然之「忤逆」。易言之，極度社群中心之儒家社會好以「個人主義」與「自我中心」為標籤，為該社會中之畸零份子羅織污名與罪名，但此一作法，往往模糊或轉移焦點，使人忽略：無論奉公守法的孝子善人，抑或桀傲不馴者，本質上其實信服的依然是相同的非個人式邏輯，前者之服從以社群標準作為參照標準，後者之叛離服膺的實乃同一套標準。（筆者過往的教學經驗，也往往印證了以上說法，許多學生看似「自我」，然對於自身情感與意念之清晰思辯能力，乃至對自身「離經叛道」之作為，皆無法提出自圓其說之主張。盲目之順從，與盲目之反抗，背後運作之機轉同為「盲目」，皆不蘊含真正「自我」意識覺醒之能動性）。¹

對於華人普遍之情感結構有此一認識後，再回頭審視「憂鬱」之個人性，將有助於我們進一步理論化「憂鬱」之個人性，在本地之脈絡具有何種潛在之政治意涵。而張愛玲的作品，正是相關研究之最佳切入點。攤開張愛玲主要之長短篇小說作品，其中充斥著無數渾渾噩噩不知所以之小人物。反諷的是，這種渾渾噩噩沒有自我主張與明確感情意識之（非）主體，反倒為張愛玲小說世界中代表「善」與「好」之道德規範之正常人。〈色·戒〉中的王佳芝，即便身為美人計中色誘易先生之主力人物，都還散發出某種半推半就、漫無目的任由情勢擺佈的氣息。直到在珠寶店戴起易先生贈與之鑽戒，才從那一逕懵懵懂懂的感情狀態中醒悟過來，瞭解人生與愛情之真正目的，卻已為時已晚。《半生緣》中的男女主角，都是再正常不過的「好人」，小說前半段描寫那感情的懵懵懂懂，如同小說人物一般蒼白而無力，小說之敘事彷彿感染了人物之特質，也懸滯於人物日常生活相處之細節，懸置於小說中欲掙脫親族束縛卻始終擺脫不得的半個人主（非）主體。僅有一種茫然。然小說後半段急轉直下，女主角因遭受社群主義迫害（更具體說，乃其家庭以「非個人」方式對待，默許其姊夫祝鴻才對她施暴、監禁），從不具自覺之非個體覺醒成為具有個人意識之主體，從此無法和其所從出之社群產生任何傳統儒家定義之倫理關係上之連結。小說最深沈之悲愴，不在於曼禎遭受之迫害歷程，而係曼禎自最初之茫然，經創傷經歷震懾成為對一切漠然之憂鬱主體，後與始終停留在原初無明狀態之戀人世鈞重逢，也僅能無奈向過往戀人斬釘截鐵表示：「我們回不去了。」曼禎在這裡表露的，不僅僅是是對時間無法逆反之無奈，其中其實亦包含了對於本體根本差異之思

¹ 此一現象，廣義說來，可謂「人文素養」之匱缺，所謂「人文素養」，即本諸上述反身個人主義發展形構而成之分析與思辯能力。而此類人文素養，其實從來便不是漢人文化中之強項，後現代文化（尤其網路與電玩文化）之興起，更加速此一素養在台灣之崩解，因在資訊爆炸之年代，學生成為被動之資訊接受器，對於知識之主動選擇、鑽研、汲取、消化等能力，反倒每下愈況。後現代之逸樂傾向，表面上雖與官方之填鴨教育相互抵觸，對於人文素養之維繫實則具有相互呼應之負面效果。因此，支援填鴨教育的儒家士大夫式形式主義及其背後根深蒂固的社群主義，非但並未隨後現代文化之興盛而衰頹，反隨學生經濟與思考獨立能力之匱缺而借屍還魂。此外，學生逸樂與消費傾向之加倍，對於社會結構的先天認識與後天分析能力皆益發不足。社群主義於其間，可謂最大之獲益者。

考，曼禎稱自己是「寂寞慣了的人」，儼然已將自己和戀人的傳統生命歷程（結婚、成家立業等等）做出切割。切割的舉動，一如張愛玲的筆觸一般殘忍，也僅有經歷嚴重創傷之憂鬱主體方能在關鍵一刻，透過冷靜清晰之觀照世事之能力，於主客之間劃下標示本體根本差異之楚河漢界。

本計畫第一年處理之文本，係張愛玲之短篇故事〈紅玫瑰與白玫瑰〉。小說中男主角佟振保與白玫瑰，皆符合傳統社會定義下之「好人」，也因此都體現了上述對自身感情與意識缺乏反身觀照能力等等典型中國（非）主體之特質。然本小說不同其他文本之處，亦即本人選擇以此作品切入之主因，端在於以下兩點：（一）冷漠或陰森恐怖之意象，雖是張愛玲賴以揚名之一貫書寫技巧，然張在此篇作品中，又以最不堪，最動物化之反諷手法描寫傳統定義下之模範「人格」，其間反差，最能清楚展現張愛玲對於儒家社會中「非」個人／「非」主體之強烈批判姿態；（二）本篇小說不僅僅以「好人」為主角，並且更加深入剖析與解構好人之「好」，其倫理或道德意義上之正面價值，實乃轉自認識論意義上之「白」，因白玫瑰之「白」，不僅僅為治性別研究者常論之性意義上之純潔，同時亦指涉知識上之不求甚解與感情上之不知所以。基於以上兩點，本人擬將張之短篇，與佛洛伊德在《文明極其不滿》（*Civilization and Its Discontents*）中對於動物性與人格（personhood）區隔之說法，做一並置對比。受達爾文學說影響，佛洛伊德大膽假設，主體成其為主體，可類比為人從動物型態演化為可以靠雙足站立之個體，而在站立過程中，主體必須學會揚棄動物階段所依賴的嗅覺刺激及與其緊密扣連之肛門情慾。在佛洛伊德之意義體系中，肛門情慾、動物性、以及人的各種非站立之體態，便形成可相互轉注假借之意義鏈。佛洛伊德對於狼人（the Wolfman）肛門情慾之解讀，便是依狼人對站立及蹲踞姿態的種種想像而生。如前所言，佛洛伊德理論，預設的乃是笛卡爾式得以隨時反身省思自身意識與處境、具有明確自我意識與感情之主體。根據佛洛伊德之邏輯，此一狀態顯然與主體於演化過程中能否成功摒棄種種動物性本能相關。無法摒棄動物性，人就不成其為人，而將退化（regress）成為某種介於人與動物之間之性異態。佛洛伊德拒絕去思考的半動物半人之可能性，其實便是〈紅玫瑰與白玫瑰〉之出發點。該短篇小說中女主角烟鸞因罹患便秘，竟貪戀起獨坐浴室馬桶上的靜謐與禁閉感。張愛玲在小說中幾次描寫廁所場景，皆以動物性之意象為其去人格化（de-personalized）：除指出她閉廁所不出之主因，在於那時可以「名正言順的不做事，不說話，不思想」，且將此一屬性與「白」和動物性明確關連。小說中饒富象徵旨趣之其中一幕，男主角振保透過半掩的門瞥見妻子烟鸞甫在廁所裡起身，敘事者極盡刻薄之能事的以各種怪誕非人意象強調此一不上不下姿態的尷尬動物性，並將女主角之身軀比喻為「白蠶」，藉此動物化之「白」呼應小說先前描寫女主角求學時「黑板上有字必抄，然而中間總像隔了一層白的膜」之知識障。故本人將自幾個重要廁所場景開展對張愛玲作品之細讀，但有別於一般性別閱讀之觀點，我以為張愛玲的動物意象目的並不僅止於反轉顛覆小說開頭建立之紅玫瑰（熱烈的情婦）v.s.白玫瑰（內向無性的妻子）之女性刻板形象，而是要更進一步，透過陰性化、動物化之語言，建構出一個華人（非）主體之寓言（allegory）：無論是白玫瑰的「白」，抑或佟振保汲汲營營力圖振作成為的「好人」，在張愛玲之體系中，都是華人之社群主義力圖化消個體差異，鼓吹知識障與感情盲之意識型態產物。「白」

或「好」之象徵性道德價值，歸根究底來自於意識與思想之無明。烟鷗之動物化，象徵的乃華人社會之集體退化傾向：即企圖抑制主體之個人化生長，使所有個人集體化，反伊底帕斯化，與其所從出之母體社會，在思想與感情上永遠糾葛，無法徹底斬斷臍帶關係。

雖然筆者與張愛玲相同，對西方個人主義抱持高度肯定態度。然前述研究立論，總難免令讀者誤解本人立場，以為本人乃是以西方中心論或東方主義式之觀點，將西方之個人主義無限上綱。故在第二年計畫當中，本人原計畫透過對於瑪麗雪萊作品之解讀，深入剖析西方個人主義之正面與負面意涵，而以個人主體為本之憂鬱情感，與社會性或社群關係產生之若即若離關係，和張愛玲小說一逕強調之茫然或渾渾噩噩之狀態，實有天壤之別。但因本計畫只獲得第一年期之補助，故在此僅就第一年期計畫張愛玲作品之部分提出說明與報告。

3. 結果與討論

本人於撰寫論文期間，因應計畫審查人以及出版社之匿名審查者之建議，針對論者以為本人之說法有流向中西二元對立之嫌，我於論文中提出更為詳盡之申辯。概言之，我以為中西文化固然隨時可以、且亦應時時解構，但二元對立之認識框架並非沒有其實際物質基礎。在論文中，我重新回顧近年來常受當代理論家與文化批評家基於理論政治正確貶抑的班乃迪克（Ruth Benedict）之，並同時檢視她的「罪文化」（guilt cultures）與「羞辱文化」（shame cultures）二分在近半世紀來引起的一些爭議。儘管她將東方等同於羞辱文化之作法乍看之下似乎流於簡陋，但即使許多當時批評班乃迪克作法之日本人類學者，其實也不曾否定她所勾勒之羞辱文化中所生產之社群主義式之「非」個人，其實恰恰精準對應現實中存在、依賴社群家庭而生的許多人。當代西方理論，基於某種後殖民政治正確，規避此一基本差異（莎菊克即是一例，她析論羞辱時對班乃迪克之創見存而不論），反倒使當前所有關於情感與主體之理論生產，全數預設了笛卡爾式之反身個人主體。但本人也無意基於此二元對立奉西方主體為規臬，在文章中，我也同時進一步釐清與強調，張愛玲所再現的這些極能象徵華人性之非個人，卡在人性與動物性間不上不下之位置，具有某種正面之情感或美學意義。張愛玲本身反人道主義，以物敘情之敘事手法可謂一例。但礙於篇幅，對於我稱之為 liminal (non)subjectivity 的這種中繼主體性之正面性，尚須以另文專門處理，方能更為明確闡釋本人立場，絕非如某些論者以為，僅是過度簡化、浪漫化西方主體形構或情感表達方式之偏激主義展現。

4. 論文正文

Chineseness as a Liminal Form of Being: Psychoanalysis and Eileen Chang's "Red Rose and White Rose"

(Forthcoming in November 2012 in The Reception and Rendition of Freud in China: China's Freudian Slip, edited by Tao Jiang and Philip J. Ivanhoe, published by Routledge)

In his important study of psychoanalysis, *The Freudian Body*, Leo Bersani observes incisively how the textual body of Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* is divided into two parts: an upper and a lower part (14-15). The upper part, the main text, "gives us the sort of large anthropological speculation which we also find in *Moses and Monotheism*, *The Future of an Illusion*, and *Totem and Taboo*," whereas the footnotes move "toward nearly inconceivable enunciations" (15). As Bersani points out, the footnotes, much like the lower part of the human body, contain numerous references to urine and feces, the instinctual functions that Freud argues will be subject to "organic repression" once human beings – both in the evolutionary process and in the course of subjectification – come to assume an erect posture. By relegating his discussion of these instinctual functions to the margins of his text, Freud therefore inadvertently repeats and perpetuates his famous claim by wavering between description and prescription, that civilization by default is founded upon its supersession of primal drives. Despite his strong sympathy for those drives and instincts, which he views as no less integral to one's sexual and emotional life, the whole hypothesis about human civilization that he puts forward here becomes a lose-lose situation, in that humanity or civilization is conceived as something intrinsically antithetical to animality or instinctuality, both therefore permanently and hopelessly locked in a dialectic struggle.

It has been confirmed as a theoretical commonplace since Lacan that Freud's analysis is

largely informed by Descartes's notion of the cogito.² The entire psychoanalytic interpretive enterprise can thus be understood as a description of how the Cartesian subject comes into being by sacrificing its numerous perverse instincts, such as anal eroticism or same-sex object cathexes. Yet the very idea of repudiating and forgoing certain pleasures in order to gain full agency of thinking, self-consciousness, and speech is manifestly a Western, or even puritan, ideal. As the famous Cartesian phrase "I think, therefore I am" ("*cogito ergo sum*") suggests, the reasoning or thinking consciousness of the Cartesian ego in fact presupposes a form of self-reflexivity that we might as well designate as a self-alienating or self-distancing specularity. The psychoanalytic account of subject-formation begins with an *ethical* premise that the subject, as an *individual*, needs by all means to separate physically and emotionally from its caretaker. The ontology and epistemology of one's subjectivity *qua* individual is deemed the very consequence of that separation. The ethical imperative to remain clearly separated from the other (irrespective of his/her beloved status) therefore has a strong logical bearing upon whether the subject can successfully form a lucid consciousness of its selfhood. The degree of lucidity of that consciousness can in turn be measured by how adept that individual is at separating distinctly from him or herself, i.e., contemplating oneself as if in a mirror so as to see oneself as an object of thinking or analysis in one's own right. The whole Freudian theoretical edifice of narcissism and melancholia in fact posits this model of separation. The dialectic struggle between the ego/superego and the id is merely one of the many guises assumed by the endless processes of self-alienation in Western civilization.

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² Lacan sees the psychoanalytic concept of the ego as synonymous with the cogito. By teasing out the philosophical implications of Freud's idea of the unconscious, he has famously challenged the Enlightenment belief in rationality or the sufficiency of self-consciousness posited in Descartes's maxim "I think, therefore I am." See, for example, *Écrits* 166.

And, beyond doubt, Freud's own meta-psychological attempt at objectifying/analyzing such self-formation also falls into the same Cartesian model of self-reflexivity, however anti-Cartesian some of his claims about the unconscious might at first appear.

However, the above model of an at once self-alienating and self-affirmative specularly proves nearly non-existent in the Chinese communities. Ours is a tradition that values impressions (and, in the worst situations, mindless, propagandistic babbles) and downplays in-depth analysis and self-contemplation.³ Back in the early twentieth century, when the Chinese suffered from war and political upheaval, one was encouraged to be docile before any authoritarian figure at the expense of the freedom of thinking and speech. This political impact remains strong to this day.⁴ In the case of Taiwan, which has been deeply influenced by Chiang Kai-shek's fascistic dictatorship for nearly a half century and which therefore generally disinclines its inhabitants to endorse self-contemplation and, concomitantly, self-expression, most Taiwanese are used to giving over-sweeping and impressionistic one-syllable answers upon being asked to articulate even their own feelings. What has generally been understood as the "shyness" or "discretion" of the Chinese, in other words,

³ Some of my readers may contend that Confucianism has long valued self-reflection as the most virtuous act. However, the so-called self-reflection in Confucianism is a far cry from the self-affirmative model of Enlightenment specularly that I formulated above, for it does not exist in the enclosure of a mirroring relation between a thinking self and a self to be reflected upon. Rather, the self in question is a de-ontologized entity surrounded by other social and moral beings; the self-reflection at issue, in turn, is a doxa that functions as a moral commandment that requests a social being to think about his/her previous deeds in relation to other social beings in terms of propriety. There is, in fact, absolutely no value attributable to the self that is doing the thinking. What is being put on the pedestal, instead, is the act of impersonal thinking in accordance with the doxa, whereby the one that is doing the thinking is always already de-subjectivated as a mechanical or animalistic being whose selfhood is confirmed only because it conforms to social rules and at the same time paradoxically negates its "self."

⁴ In a freshman writing class that I was teaching between 2009-2010, I asked my students to entertain the idea of abandoning uniforms altogether in high school. (Taiwan in fact passes down the tradition of a uniform code in high school from the time of Japanese rule.) The majority of my students fiercely objected to this motion on the ground that wearing casual clothes would destroy campus order and uniformity. Some of my students expressed high praise for fascistic dictatorship. Insofar as this essay is chiefly concerned with how Chinese culture, at a more insidious level, has created a people characterized by unthinkingness, I would for the moment bypass the role played by political factors in the constitution of the so-called "unthinking" Chinese character. Though both important and pertinent to the issue to be discussed, I would hold that these fascistic modes of discipline, which could be held as the very culprit for my students' lack of ability to think and write lucidly and analytically, also fall under the aegis of a larger Confucian culture of communitarianism that stigmatizes individuated thinking and expressions.

believes a mode of epistemology and ideology which is a far cry from the clear-headed cogito presupposed in most universalizing accounts of subjectivity.

Some of my readers might find the above view of the Chinese unabashedly racist or Orientalist. One might therefore hold that by putting forward a manifestly critical view of the Chinese I am perpetuating a stereotype that many Westerners have long held against the Chinese people. At the risk of being labeled as provocative or polemical, I would, however, insistently treat this specific mode of subjectivity as the very premise of this essay. In a sense, this is also to register my resistance to the current trend in literary and cultural theory. For decades, cultural critics (especially those closely associated with Asian American studies and post-colonial critique) have tended to bypass a specific mode of critique that targets the ideological pitfalls of “third world” people. Under the influence of academic multiculturalism (as well as an institutionalized white guilt underlying the apparent academic heteroglossia), they tend instead to view everything through the critical lens of racism and colonialism. This is by no means to suggest that what they have said is completely wrong or misguided. In fact, I do think many of these critiques have rightly and insightfully unraveled the core problematics of certain racial or colonial ideological formations. However, as they bring into high relief these racial or colonial problematics, they have also unavoidably created a closet or even censorship system that would downplay or taboo what many of us have secretly thought pertains to the subalterns’ own ideological weaknesses. The academic decorum, hence, can be formulated as follows: as a white academic in the States, one is more than welcome to criticize one’s own fellow citizens from whatever vantage point, whereas as a non-white academic, it would be even more understandable to criticize white Americans. Nevertheless, it would be far less so if one wants to criticize or question the ideological foundation of the subjectivity or non-subjectivity of one’s Asian

compatriots.⁵ As a consequence, an American scholar or Asian American scholar can freely lay bare the questionable status of the Cartesian subject as phallic or white, but they would have less to say in their publications about the probably no less questionable status of an Asian character or psychology. (The terms I'm using here are merely tentative, for no proper phraseology has been coined yet; one is simply not in the habit of thinking of Asians in terms of "psychology" or "subjectivity." The term "Asian" or "Chinese" has been so racialized, so subject to the interpretive lens of identity politics, that whenever it does get psychologized or psychoanalyzed, it is always counterpoised with colonialism or racism, as if one's own "Chineseness," so to speak, cannot be analyzed in its own right, as the sole source of one's anxiety or repression.)⁶

If the Chinese cannot be defined in terms of the specularity of the Cartesian subject, what kind of subjects or non-subjects can they be? To consider this daringly politically incorrect question, one might have to resort to anthropological scholarships that over the past decades have been either neglected or viewed with suspicion because of the aforementioned academic decorum. An important but controversial concept that I find relevant here is the typical or stereotypical characterization of East Asian countries as "shame cultures" and Western modern civilizations as "guilt cultures." This distinction has been made famous by Ruth Benedict's anthropological study of Japan commissioned by the American government in 1946. At a more general level, shame cultures refer to not merely Japan, but many other Asian countries whose disciplinary method resides chiefly in external, communitarian

⁵ Even the current fad of the critique of neo-liberalism in China does not really engage with the issues that I've raised here because such critiques, due to their macro-political outlooks, are more interested in the role of the complicity between capitalism and the neo-liberal state, rather than how the failure of individualism in the Asian context, as an ideological tradition, in fact, constitutes the limit of new political possibilities. See, for example, Aihwa Ong's *Neoliberalism as Exception* or Lisa Rofel's *Desiring China*.

⁶ See, for example, David Eng and Shinhee Han's "Dialogue on Racial Melancholia." The co-authors are Chinese and Korean Americans respectively. While they employ psychoanalytic theory to interpret the racialized subjects in the United States, they, as cultural critics most often do, collapse their own identities into the umbrella term "Asian American" and define racial melancholia as "failure to achieve the American Dream" (353). This definition of racial melancholia epitomizes not only the racialization of "Chinese" as "Asian American," but also a general tendency in their work to subsume that already reduced or generalized "Asian" into a broader American identity.

sanction rather than the internalization of that sanction as the individual's feeling of guilt (222-23). As I have pointed out earlier, psychoanalysis is founded upon the assumption that the subject or the ego is first and foremost an individual. Whether or not one can successfully be constituted as that individual, with its requisite psychological interiority, depends on whether one can internalize parental sanction as one's superego.⁷ Freud's theory of melancholia is derived solely from this ethical necessity of having to do away with an external object, as if it were dead or lost, so as to make way for one's individuation.⁸ As a full-blown individuated subject, one feels guilt not only when one is brought face to face with all kinds of taboos prohibited by the superego, a.k.a. the internalized social sanctions, but also at those moments when one recalls the necessity of individuation and the high price paid by breaking the close ties it once formed with those endeared external objects. The whole Freudian theoretical edifice of narcissism and consciousness builds upon the fundamental premise that the most individualistic self is also paradoxically one that is most internally divided because of the above ethical demand for subject-object separation.⁹

In great contradistinction to guilt cultures, what shame cultures do internalize is not the rules or social etiquettes per se, but an alert sense of an audience constantly watching over one's deeds. The distinction might sound tricky at first glance. But it does make every sense to maintain that in shame cultures it is *the pure form, rather than the content, of surveillance* that has been introjected. The exact reason for which one is monitored plays only a very minimal part in this picture -- such a question befits a guilty puritan, but normally not the Chinese. It comes as no surprise that in Benedict's book she contends that the Japanese people construe "self-respect" in a way completely contrary to the Westerners: "The strong identification of circumspection with self-respect includes, therefore, watchfulness of all the

⁷ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*.

⁸ Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia."

⁹ This is why Freud would hypothesize in *On Narcissism*, albeit in a rather uncertain tone, that he "cannot here determine whether the differentiation of the censoring agency from the rest of the ego is capable of forming the basis of the philosophic distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness" (98).

cues one observes in other people's acts, and a strong sense that other people are sitting in judgment. 'One cultivates self-respect (one mustjicho),' they say, 'because of society.' 'If there were no society one would not need to respect oneself (cultivatejicho)'" (222).¹⁰ The self-respect in the context of the Asian country is, seen in this light, an oxymoron of sorts. It is oxymoronic on two counts: first of all, the self in question gains respect by adhering to a code imposed by a self-cancelling society because that sense of self proves inextricable from the society from which it derives; secondly, since the self has never been fully severed from its material and emotional ties with its surroundings, there is no sense of grandeur or literal respect as the Westerners would typically attribute to the so-called "self-respect," which, I would say, is a legacy the West has inherited from the romantic cult of the individual.¹¹ In a selfless culture like Taiwan, self-respect becomes paradoxically a lack of regard/respect for one's own feeling and a rechanneling of that feeling or, couched in psychoanalytic terms, libido, into such aims as whether one can fully comply with an external demand or order. (The demand could be a trivial parental request in daily life or a grand mission such as procreation or making great fortunes [the legality or illegality of the means of procuring these fortunes sometimes not playing a very decisive role].) The culture of shame is therefore a far cry from publicly humiliating someone by all conceivable kinds of dramatic actions. Rather than heightening one's self-awareness through the ritual of degradation, shame cultures in fact divest their people in the first place of that emotional agency, of the ability to

¹⁰ Though Benedict, in this context, discusses the specific case of the Japanese people, the idea of self-respect exists in a very similar mode in the Chinese community. By aligning the Chinese with the Japanese, however, I have no wish to suggest that one cannot detect important differences between them. One can indeed list a considerable number of differences, and each variable can become a topic in its own right for further research and rumination, but that does not cancel out the quintessential structural similarities that put both cultures under the rubric of the so-called "shame" or communitarian cultures.

¹¹ In this paper my aim is to explicate the pitfalls of what I call the "liminal" form of being occasioned by the communitarian culture of the Chinese. This is, however, not to say that I intend to sidestep the pitfalls of Western individualism, which my account seems unavoidably to have idealized. As I will point out in the concluding section, what I seek to propose is to use Western individualism as an imperfect model for the Chinese, as a failed ideal, as it were, that one should aspire to, rather than fully attain or transcend. Since it is beyond the scope of this study, I will devote a full-length article to the internal contradictions of Western individualism in a paper on Mary Shelley's vexed relation with and dissociation from the Romantic individuals such as Lord Byron and her husband Percy Shelley.

feel any acute sense of shame in regard to one's self only. For most people, feelings in general – and shame in particular – exist in the mode of impressions or sense-perceptions, rather than rumination or cognition. When shame does get evoked, what is being challenged or called into question is not one's self-identity, but one's situatedness or membership in the community, or the reputation of someone else who has been generally considered closely associated with the “shamed” person, say, one's clan or parents.¹²

In contemporary theory, shame is more often than not regarded as a key affect responsible for the constitution of a self-identity.¹³ That view, again, presupposes a universal model of the

¹² My argument here echoes Eysun Hamaguchi's designation of the Japanese “self” as a “contextual”: a relational form of being whose “sense of identification with others . . . pre-exists and selfness is confirmed only through interpersonal relationships” (302). However, Hamaguchi's notion of the contextual seems to be at once a defensive reaction against and an ambivalent re-confirmation of Benedict's observation. Such indecisive wavering finds its way into Hamaguchi's ambiguous conception of the “autonomy” of the Japanese contextual. At certain moments he asserts, as in the above statement, that the Japanese self has always already posited a socialized frame or context and that complete psychological interiority does not exist because the boundary of the self remains porous in its share of communitarian links with others (302). Elsewhere, interestingly, he would contend that such a relational being still possesses agency or autonomy: “But the fact that spontaneous cooperation can develop among relational actors does not imply that a person in such a system is so embedded in an organization that he completely loses his autonomy.” One is left to wonder what exactly he means by autonomy and how complete or incomplete such autonomy manifests itself in the “contextual.” Whether or not we would characterize Hamaguchi's ambiguity as disavowal is probably open to debate, but critics generally agree that these Japanese scholars (e.g., Hamaguchi, Sakuta, and so on), in fact, do not question the truthfulness of the fundamental distinction between shame culture v.s. guilt culture. As Millie R Creighton puts it, “[M]any Japanese scholars have voiced agreement with the distinctions between shame and guilt . . . while rejecting Western standards of individualism” (287). What, in short, unnerves them is the Eurocentric mindset that treats the individualist subject as a universal given. While the Eurocentric mindst absolutely entails deconstructive relativization, in most of these critical reappraisals of Benedict, nevertheless, the accounts of shame cultures' specificities have been rendered so relativistic that it seems completely out of the question to understand such communitarian cultures in terms of their embedded ideologies in that they're simply “different.” This kind of selective circumvention of critical assessment is precisely that I would like to highlight and critique in this paper. See also Minear's and Sofue's papers for a more concise description of critics' general feedback to Benedict's study since its publication. Two recent articles, I should like to add, provide more fair-minded criticisms of Benedict which does not negate the validity of her argument but rather seeks to point out the limitation of its methodology. Christopher Shannon's “A World Made Safe for Differences” situates Benedict's cultural relativism within a historical framework of Cold War liberalist ideology which paves the way for today's American multiculturalism, whereas Richard Handler's “Boasian Anthropology and the Critique of American Culture” understands Benedict's anthropological approach as one that inherits Boasian cultural criticism's internal torsion: at once critical of and complicit with Western rationalism.

¹³ Silvan Tomkins's self-psychological account of shame remains an influential source for contemporary theoretical treatments of this affect. Queer theorist Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, in the past two decades, has worked strenuously to reintroduce his work. Tomkins situates shame in an identity-confirming circuit of gaze. One's self feels degraded or denied at the moment when the mutually affirmative eye contact becomes short-circuited. This moment of shame is considered by Thomkins as constitutive of or integral to a coherent sense of self-identity. As Sedgwick aptly paraphrases, “Shame floods into being as a moment, a disruptive moment, in a circuit of identity-constituting identificatory communication. Indeed, like a stigma, shame is

individual which only prevails in the West since the Enlightenment. In a country like China or Taiwan, for anyone who does feel shame as it is defined by contemporary critics, one needs first of all to become an individual. But to become an individual is, in effect, not just a matter of shame or pride. Since individualism has been so stigmatized in the Chinese community, to become an individual, as the romantics once did in the West, means that one must go through all the traumatizing processes of being vilified and censured. It is the trauma attendant upon this individuating, i.e., disengaging/de-socializing act, that sharpens one's identity as a feeling or conscious self. To put it more bluntly, one is traumatized or shocked into being by a mostly self-willed agency (unlike the West, where the agency is unanimously imposed since one's infancy). In a culture like ours, one has to fight hard enough in order to possess the full range of consciousnesses and feelings already taken as default in Western philosophy and psychology.

This is not an over-exaggeration, for in a culture of guilt that treats individualism simply as a given, the general turn to affect in current theory would immediately be construed by many critics as apolitical. There is, in fact, some truth to this view, for the discussion of subjectivity is by default stripped of any reference to politics and ideology, insofar as individuality always comes in the Western context before community. The war waged by the latter against, say, the state apparatuses or sexism, is always informed by a care for the wellbeing of the individual. It is this sense of care for the individual that initiates all the processes of community-making. Penetrated as it is by power, the personhood of the individual, as a matter of fact, always rests secure as the basic unit in any discussion of political struggles. The discursive gesture of returning to the individual or the psychology of the self is therefore generally considered a regressive move toward where sociality and community do not exist.

itself a form of communication. Blazons of shame, the 'fallen face' with eyes down and head averted – and, to a lesser extent, the blush – are semaphores of trouble and at the same time of a desire to reconstitute the interpersonal bridge. But in interrupting identification, shame, too, makes identity" (130).

Conversely, any gesture or claim of individualism in our culture of shame is always already by default an aggressive, if not progressive, act full of political implications, since this individuating attempt would directly run counter to the communitarian culture's demand on a self-respect without an intrinsic sense of self. This is why I consider Eileen Chang a very important Chinese writer who merits our fullest attention. Misanthropic through and through, she carried her individualist stance to the extreme by choosing to steer clear of the Chinese community for a good part of her life, until she was found stone dead, alone in her LA apartment in 1995.¹⁴ Many stories she has written engage with the sinister shaming practices constitutive of the unfeeling or inchoate non-subjectivity that I have delineated above. I call such inchoate feeling or sense of self liminal (non-)subjectivity because, as I will show in what follows, from the psychoanalytic perspective, that particular form of being could be described as something perversely regressive, to the extent that it is stuck in the middle of the spectrum between humanity and animality. Although this might sound inflammatory to some of my readers, it is also important to note that the very liminal status of the Chinese non-subjectivity – i.e., its proximity to anal eroticism, animality, perversity, or whatever you like to call it – does not always put the Chinese at a disadvantage. When it comes to sexual matters or certain affective formations, an anti-humanist national culture could in fact turn out to be the best practitioner of queerness, whose *modus operandi*, indubitably, is anything but humanitarian.

A word on methodology. The first half of the essay is a close reading of the underdeveloped footnotes in Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* and his famous case study of the "Wolfman." The reason for my protracted engagement with Freud is not to "apply" psychoanalytic theory to a text written by a Chinese writer and to make sure they would fit perfectly. On the contrary, I would loosely describe my reading of Freud as deconstructive,

¹⁴ This, of course, is a very crude summary of her eventful life. It would entail another full-length essay to discuss how she consciously performs her individuality – both through her work and through her personal gesture – as a mode of critique of Chinese communitarianism.

in the sense that the aim of my analysis is to test or to tease out at which point Freud's theory of the subject falters.¹⁵ As Bersani maintains, Freud stops short right before the humanist imperative of straightening into the upright gait, in the hope that one can simply universalize subjectivity as an upright bodily ego, whose animalistic bodiliness or corporeality is now secretly taken as antithetical to that universalized subjectivity, just as he bases his entire theory of subjectivity upon the unstated ethical imperative of individualism. Reading Freud against the grain of his own theory of subjectivity, I will then put forward a theory of liminal subjectivity from where he stops short. Situating the failure of his theory, or, more aptly put, his theory of the failure of subjectivity, on par with a famous Chinese short story written by

¹⁵ A different way to characterize my methodology is to say that I'm as much critical of Freud's universalizing assumption of humanism as I am of Chinese communitarianism. But I am not oblivious of their positive valences, either; such positive valences, however, will not be made apparent until they are seen through a queer lens that construes anality as at once inherently destructive and inherently enabling (which is the gist of the argument in Bersani's seminal essay). This also accounts for why I have chosen the Freudian understanding of subjectivity over other theoretical alternatives. To further bring home this point, I would like to turn for a moment to Wendy Larson's recent attempt to theorize Chinese subjectivity as something antithetical to the Freudian psychologized notion of subjectivity. Drawing instead on a historical and materialistic understanding of the Chinese people who are constantly subject to the material and ideological forces which surround and constitute them, Larson's contention reverberates perfectly with those of Benedict's detractors in her refusal to psychologize the Chinese "subject" into an enclosed, bounded entity. For her, this subject simply functions by a different mode of logic: "The revolutionary subject was consumed not by a deeply sexualized unconscious, but by a social vision that demanded a keen sense of one's position and one's relationship to power and a well-developed emotional and intellectual expression of this position" (112-13). Though I do share Larson's commitment to contextualizing subjectivity, I find the way her theorization attributes agency to such contextualized subjects inscrutably vague. Like the critics of Benedict whom I analyzed earlier, Larson's attempt to contextualize the Chinese subject becomes a rather defensive gesture which seeks to claim on behalf of the Chinese a "keen sense of one's position" and an "emotional intellectual expression of this position" without demonstrating in the first place what she means by these fuzzy and undertheorized terms. What is more, the above statement ironically builds upon a Western model of emotional agency and confessional expressivity which seems to automatically assume that one clearly knows what one's place is in the community and how one could self-reflexively articulate such situatedness without fail. The insidious presupposition of a self-reflexive and expressivist model of subjectivity in China not only runs counter to Larson's seemingly historicist framing of her argument, but is further contradicted in her uncritical account of how ideological forces could in fact expropriate the contextualized subjects for their own purposes, as can be witnessed in her description of Lei Feng,, an iconic figure that comes to stand for the revolutionary spirit in Mao Zedong's hand-written proclamation "Learn from Lei Feng": "Lei Feng is often pictured working, with the implication that he is saving others who are weaker, more tired, or less willing to exert themselves, who are often shown in the background or nearby." It is interesting to note that in the above formulation is written in the passive voice; whatever remains hidden in the background manipulating and mobilizing such an image, in her analysis, not only exempts itself from critical examination, but has actually turned into something the Chinese have to thank for their own subjection to the state. Larson's mode of criticism thus exemplifies the kind of cultural relativistic thinking that I have foregrounded earlier, which wittingly or unwittingly avoids in-depth critique or analysis of the ideological forces shaping those non-individuated beings in a given Asian community so as to make way for a more academically acceptable dismissal of Eurocentrism or Orientalism, which, in this case, comes to be associated with Freudianism.

Eileen Chang, “Red Rose and White Rose,” I will demonstrate through their intertextuality that her story is in fact a fictional rewriting of Freud’s theory that begins right where he refuses to go further. Her unsettling description of the Chinese people in regressively animalistic terms suggests that at the core of our much sanctified moral norm is a perversion, a developmental stasis symbolized by a constipated woman stuck in the bathroom and caught in the middle of rising from the toilet.

Civilization and Its Discontents

Early on in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud makes an assertion typical of his gesture for its anthropocentric view of man’s relation to animal: “We shall therefore content ourselves with saying once more that the word ‘civilization’ describes the whole sum of the achievements and the regulations which distinguish our lives *from* those of our *animal ancestors* and which serve two purposes – namely to protect men *against nature* and to adjust their mutual relations” (42; emphasis added). The juxtaposition of animal and nature is nothing new, for it remains a *cultural* myth well into our time. What strikes me as interesting are the numerous grammatical and rhetorical devices he employs in an earnest attempt to set up a clear-cut conceptual faultline between human and animal/nature (e.g., “*from . . . animal ancestors*” and “men *against nature*”). Thanks to Darwin, Freud has no problem referring to animals as our “ancestors”; his true anxiety, rather, revolves around the overcast prospect of human degeneration, of falling back to the nature of one’s origin, and of an atavistic return to the animalistic way of being. This anxiety is then carried over into the footnote that immediately follows the above quote:

Psycho-analytic material, incomplete as it is and not susceptible to clear interpretation, nevertheless admits of a conjecture – a fantastic-sounding one – about the origin of this human feat. It is as though

primal man had the habit, when he came in contact with fire, of satisfying an infantile desire connected with it, but putting it out with a stream of his urine. The legends that we possess leave no doubt about the originally phallic view taken of tongues of flame as they shoot upwards. Putting out fire by micturating – a theme to which modern giants, Gulliver in Lilliput and Rabelais' Gargantua, still hark back – was therefore a kind of sexual act with a male, an enjoyment of sexual potency in a homosexual competition. The first person to renounce this desire and spare the fire was able to carry it off with him and subdue it to his own use. By damping down the fire of his own sexual excitation, he had tamed the natural force of fire. This great cultural conquest was thus the reward for his renunciation of instinct. Further, it is as though woman had been appointed guardian of the fire which was held captive on the domestic hearth, because her anatomy made it impossible for her to yield to the temptation of this desire. It is remarkable, too, how regularly analytic experience testifies to the connection between ambition, urination and fire as early as in the "Dora" case history. (42-43)

By personifying fire as man's same-sex competitor, Freud is surreptitiously, if not unconsciously, invoking his own theory of male paranoia, which claims that one man's fear of persecution by another is bolstered by an unresolved homosexual cathexis.¹⁶ The implication of the rhetorical device of personification is that the aggression against fire *qua* same-sex rival and the fear of aggression by that rival are both driven by a perverse homosexual desire, thereby subject to repression as the (proto-)subject enters the stage of civilization. But in Freud's conception of fire, it is not just fire that has been figured as threatening. Its paranoid competitive relation with man in effect parallels what he says about primitive man's relation to animals in the main body of his text, constituting a paranoid chain of equivalences one individual term of which may substitute and account for another. The metonymic chain of equations runs something like this:

¹⁶ See Freud's famous study of the Schreber case, *Psycho-Analytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)*.

(main text) man against nature \leftrightarrow man against animal ancestor \leftrightarrow (footnote) man against fire \leftrightarrow man against homosexual competitor

These equivalences are further informed by a temporal logic of degeneration and an engendered logic of castration fear. That is, if one does not prevail over one's same-sex competitor such as fire and animals by entering into civilization, one will in turn be returned to a primitive state of being, which, in this signifying chain, is synonymous with failure to set up a masculine culture defined in terms of a distinctly demarcated sphere of domesticity. Fear of degeneration and fear of castration are thus linked up in close association with one another. Moreover, the imagery of pissing on fire is reminiscent of the cultural imaginary of playing with fire, whose connotation of "wildness" is founded upon the suggestive correlation between "wilderness" and barbarous animality. The proper, civilized way to handle such a fiery enemy is not to enter into penile, that is, explicitly homosexual, competition, but simply to transport it the way a tamed animal is brought home for domestication. The domestic sphere, in Freud's genealogy of civilization, is defined as a warehouse of trophies that holds up all the animals or animal-like competitors. Woman, the putatively appointed guardian of the hearth, however, continues to be the single exception. Since her anatomy has *a priori* foreclosed any possibility of her competition with man, she is deemed as a fixed entity resembling the domestic dwelling itself, always already there by default well before any competition begins.

If in the first footnote Freud is mainly concerned about the role played by the micturating penis in humankind's movement toward a civilization that requires penile sublimation to precipitate the public/private divide, then in the second footnote, Freud, by a 180-degree turn, switches his attention to the erotic orifices. To register the argumentative itinerary through which these erotic orifices appear or disappear, I quote the footnote at full length:

The organic periodicity of the sexual process has persisted, it is true, but its effect psychological sexual excitation has rather been reversed. This change seems most likely to be connected with the diminution of the olfactory stimuli by means of which the menstrual process produced an effect on the male psyche. Their role was taken over by visual excitations, which, in contrast to the intermittent olfactory stimuli, were able to maintain a permanent effect. The taboo on menstruation is derived from this "organic repression," as a defence against a phase of development that has been surmounted. All other motives are probably of a secondary nature. This process is repeated on another level when the gods of a superseded period of civilization turn into demons. The diminution of the olfactory stimuli seems itself to be a consequence of man's raising himself from the ground, of his assumption of an upright gait; this made his genitals, which were previously concealed, visible and in need of protection, and so provoked feelings of shame in him.

The fateful process of civilization would thus have set in with man's adoption of an erect posture. From that point the chain of events would have proceeded through the devaluation of olfactory stimuli and the isolation of the menstrual period to the time when visual stimuli were paramount and the genitals became visible, and thence to the continuity of human civilization. This is only a theoretical speculation, but it is important enough to deserve careful checking with reference to the conditions of life which obtain among animals closely related to man.

A social factor is also unmistakably present in the cultural trend towards cleanliness, which has received *ex post facto* justification in hygienic considerations but which manifested itself before their discovery. The incitement to cleanliness originates in an urge to get rid of the excreta, which have become disagreeable to the sense perceptions. We know that in the nursery things are different. The excreta arouse no disgust in children. They seem valuable to them as being a part of their own body which has come away from it. Here upbringing insists with special energy on hastening the course of development which lies ahead, and which should make the excreta worthless, disgusting, abhorrent and abominable. Such a reversal of values would scarcely be possible if the substances that are expelled

from the body were not doomed by their strong smells to share the fate which overtook olfactory stimuli after man adopted the erect posture. Anal erotism, therefore, succumbs in the first instance to the “organic repression” which paved the way to civilization. The existence of the social factor which is responsible for the further transformation of anal erotism is attested by the circumstance that in spite of all man’s developmental advances, he scarcely finds the smell of *his* own excreta repulsive, but only that of other people’s. Thus a person who is not clean – who does not hide his excreta – is offending other people; he is showing no consideration for them. And this is confirmed by our strongest and commonest terms of abuse. It would be incomprehensible, too, that man should use the name of his most faithful friend in the animal world – the dog – as a term of abuse if that creature had not incurred his contempt through two characteristics: that it is an animal whose dominant sense is that of smell and one which has no horror of excrement, and that it is not ashamed of its sexual functions. (54-55)

Ascending in the “upright gait” toward humanity, human beings have to go through organic repression and renounce the olfactory stimuli, first represented by menstruation, then by the anus. At first, the exposure of genitals in the human assumption of the upright posture is considered to be the very genealogy of shame. As Freud proceeds, however, the anus comes to take on an even more shameful role than the frontal genitals due to its overdetermined implications. Working by way of metonymy or physical contiguity, the anus supersedes the genitals as the arch emblem of shame. As Lee Edelman argues in “Piss Elegant,” Freud’s postulation of an opposition between “anal inferiority” and “urethral greatness” is constantly subject to collapse: “[T]his effort to historicize the anal as a phase (whether of the species or the individual) that disappears in the face of libidinal redistribution through investment in erection cannot exempt the organ of erection, the genital that would put the anal behind it, from its merely intermediate position. . . . As anal and genital resist absolute differentiation in the sexual, so the urinary and the fecal, the urethral and the sphinctral, between which the genital is located, confound any polar interpretation” (151). For all the efforts Freud has

made to “put the anal behind,” the very physical proximity between penis and anus has persistently threatened the former with the shameful shadow of emasculation, with its repressed erotic functions and its subdued implication of sexual passivity, which never ceases to send off the message that any male subject could potentially be penetrated like women and that they might even enjoy such penetration. In Freud’s understanding of sexual shame, the anus thus becomes a master trope that subsumes the penis’s sexual function as it comes to signify the shameful status of the lower body part *tout court*. Likewise, at the level of the olfactory function, the bad smell of excreta emitted by the bottom also substitutes for nearly all other kinds of bad smell. The confusion or synecdochization is illustrated by Freud’s slippage, say, from “a person who is not clean,” to “who does not hide his excreta,” or, as an interesting parallel, from “an animal whose dominant sense is that of smell,” to “which has no horror of excrement.” By way of metonymy, the anus first takes over the shameful function of frontal genitals of both sexes, then encapsulating all the repulsive olfactory stimuli through its production of shit. And, finally, as if to explain why he prefers to use the term “anal erotism,” he supplements the clause “that it is an animal whose dominant sense is that of smell and one which has no horror of excrement” with the following words: “and that it is not ashamed of its sexual functions.” What sexual functions is Freud referring to here? Freud’s ambiguity is suggestive, for by dog sex or animal sex he seems to mean more than some degraded kind of eroticism chiefly motivated by the olfactory stimuli. As we will see momentarily in the Wolfman case, Freud does willfully conflate animal sex and anal sex, treating one interchangeably with the other.

In summary, the anus enjoys a privileged or paradigmatic status in Freud’s conceptualization of shame. Conceived of as a *perverse trinity*, the anus is *shameful postures/movements (including, of course, but not limited to anal sex), shameful odor, and shameful body part all in one*. Substituting the part for the whole, it functions not least like a trope in his theory of sublimation as a result of its encompassment of a whole cluster of metonymic and

synecdochic associations with, say, the animal, menstruation, genitality, shit, bad smell, anal sex, stooping, crouching on all fours, and so on, and so forth. The list is inexhaustible.

The Wolfman

Since its publication, Freud's case study of Sergueï Pankejeff (better known as the Wolfman), *From the History of an Infantile Neurosis*, has made the patient he studies no less famous than the analyst himself, for many of the concepts being brought up therein are crucial to Freud's understanding of sexuality, above all that of anal eroticism. Leaving aside all the minute details he uses for the purpose of analysis, I'd like to begin by looking specifically at the horror the Wolfman experiences from his dream impression of witnessing a horde of wolves standing upright on their paws. The anthropomorphization of the wolves through their assumption of the upright gait exerts a castrating impact upon the then four-year-old Wolfman, for once the wolves transgress the boundary between human and animal by taking the upright, or if you will, erect, gait, they are immediately phallicized, rendered as a stand-in for the Wolfman's father, who had more than once threatened teasingly to "gobble [him] up" (*The "Wolfman" and Other Cases* 230). The cannibalistic fantasy of being devoured by his father exerts an emasculating influence by putting him in a masochistic/passive position. This sense of castration becomes subsequently the very source of his *jouissance*, but it is the very thought, or, better put, *shame*, of being brought down to the ground which ultimately promises him most gratification.

The Wolfman's excitement at seeing in his adult years women of a subordinate class origin frozen in the position of crouching on all fours is another permutation on the same fantasy of castration in which he does not necessarily appear to be the castrated party. It is, so to speak, an inverted version of his desire in shame. When the Wolfman, according to Freud's narrative, "saw the girl crouched down cleaning the floor, on her knees with her buttocks

projecting and her back horizontal, he recognized the position that his mother had assumed in the scene of coitus he had observed. In his mind she became his mother, he was overcome by excitement as that image was activated, and behaved in a manly fashion towards her like his father, whose actions he could then only have understood as urination” (*The “Wolfman”* 291). Apparently here Freud construes the Wolfman’s pleasure in more phallic terms than, say, in the primal scene *per se*, where his identification with his mother in the same subordinate position leads him to pass a stool right on the spot, the climactic status of which not only interrupts but also substitutes for his parents’ orgasm. Only by attributing a phallic agency to the act of urination which chronologically takes the place of the Wolfman’s defecation in the primal scene, could Freud, albeit insecurely, keep the Wolfman’s masculine identity intact, without sacrificing the passive agency of the *jouissance* inherent in the perverse sexual attraction of his unconscious identification – not exactly with the crouching peasant girl, but rather with *the very positioning of crouching*.

Both the primal scene and the Wolfman’s later encounter with other female inferiors revolve around a fantasmatic structure, into which, if we follow the arguments by Laplanche and Pontalis, the subject’s selfhood is dispersed rather than consolidated. “The subject is invariably present in these scenes,” they contend. “Even in the case of the “primal scene, from which it might appear that he was excluded, he does in fact have a part to play not only as an observer but also as a participant, when he interrupts the parents’ coitus” (318). Working like a script or a *mise-en-scène*, fantasy is, according to Laplanche and Pontalis, “not an object that the subject imagines and aims at, so to speak, but rather a *sequence* in which the subject has his own part to play and in which permutations of roles and attributions are possible” (318). Laplanche and Pontalis’s interpretation of the Wolfman’s fantasy of shame thus challenges Freud’s emphasis on the Wolfman’s re-territorializing agency in their privileging of the sequence of fantasmatic scenarios over the shoring up of individual subjective boundaries. Seen from a slightly different perspective, this is precisely the

juncture where shame enters the scene of a desiring fantasy, for, more often than not, in the fantasmatic series or sequencing of events, the shame of being degraded from one's conscious class or gender identity amounts to the shame of being degraded from the habitual form assumed by one's ego or selfhood. This degradation brings one closer to the animalistic kind of being that precedes the repression or sublimation of the subject's desire or instinctual functions. Hence, the more regressively inhuman the fantasized scenario, the more sexually titillating the stimulus will become, as the very act of fantasy will bring the subject back to an early stage when primal repression has not set in.¹⁷

Contra contemporary theorization of shame that emphasizes the face as the site where shame, as the window of one's selfhood or personhood, is established as a positive affect, Freud's underdeveloped theory of shame, as I have been at pains to demonstrate, casts the establishment of the face/humanity/civilization in a much more ambivalent light.¹⁸ The whole issue of sublimation that has been raised in this grim work on human aggression seems to be asking: "Is humanity or selfhood absolutely worthwhile?" In Freud's system, to be human or to be a coherent self is to stand up, that is, to rise from the ground and to renounce all the shameful odors and gestures associated with one's "animalistic" or effeminate stage of life. To the degree that the tropes or imageries on the chain of association all work in tandem with one another metonymically, one needs to pay close attention to how these tropes or imageries figure in relation to one another in the guise of, say, the human body, physical movements/postures, affects and desire, crystallized in excrement, animals or other grotesque acts or forms. As the shameful undercurrent of civilization, or humanity's other, animals,

¹⁷ Another case in point is "going down" on someone. One might, in perfect accord with Freud's theory of human "uprightness," find the act degrading, while it is equally undeniable that oral sex remains the mainstay of many cultures' sexual fantasies which, with varying degrees, view shame or degradation as something integral to erotic gratification.

¹⁸ For a trenchant critique of the current trend among shame theorists that values the face at the expense of the socio-cultural figuration of shame as epitomized in Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*, see Ruth Leys's *From Guilt to Shame*, Chap 4. I have tremendously benefited from her work and the seminar she taught on shame at Johns Hopkins University in 2003.

for one thing, abound in Freud's study of the Wolfman, so much so that in another exemplary lengthy note supplemented to the bottom of Chapter 5, Freud would go so far as to posit animals performing anal sex as the true cause that produces the child's dream of wolves at the age of 4, which then reminds the Wolfman, through deferred action, of his observation of his parents having sex in like fashion when he was only 18 months old (*The "Wolfman"* 256). Human actors, in the fantasized act of *coitus a tergo*, collapse into their animal doubles. Or is it the other way around? Or, perhaps, it does not really matter. One may well wonder why the sex being performed between the sheep dogs observed by the Wolfman as a four-year-old must be of an anal kind. Freud asks rhetorically at one point, "What else [than seeing the anus as the part of the woman's body receiving the penis] could he have thought when he watched this scene at the age of eighteen months?" (*The "Wolfman"* 277) The equation on Freud's part of the Wolfman imagining his parents having anal sex with the Wolfman perceiving the sheep dogs as having anal sex is borne out by Freud's insistence that it "leaves us no choice . . . but to conclude that it must have been 'coitus a tergo' [from behind], 'more ferarum' [in the manner of the beasts]" (*The "Wolfman"* 256). There is no further explanation as to why coming from behind is by any means bestial. The metonymic connection is taken simply as a given.

The evolutionary model underlying Freud's slippery equation between animal sex and anal sex is, in fact, symptomatic of a whole set of cultural imaginary of humanism, which in turn informs both lay people's conception of humanity and the whole Western philosophical thinking around the opposition between the human and the animal. For example, in *The Open: Man and Animal*, Giorgio Agamben draws on Heidegger to develop his thesis on the vexed relation between humanity and animality in terms of their capacity of feeling boredom. To both Agamben and Heidegger, boredom is precisely what at once baffles and reaffirms such a distinction. "[B]oredom brings to light the unexpected proximity of Dasein and the animal." Agamben argues, "*In becoming bored, Dasein is delivered over to something that*

refuses itself, exactly as the animal, in its captivation, is exposed in something unrevealed" (65; emphasis original). Boredom is a state in which one finds oneself limited, riveted to his or her current circumstance and in which one finds oneself having nothing to do whatsoever with the given environment. It is, so to speak, a situational enclosure that circumscribes the subject in a captivated condition that is reminiscent of animals, which have been construed by humans to know no interest other than organic functions such as eating and mating. Though both "*open to a closedness*" (emphasis original), human beings nonetheless manage, with limited success, to be aware of the existence of other "possibilities" (66). In Agamben's words, "Dasein is simply an animal that has learned to become bored; it has awakened *from* its own captivation *to* its own captivation. This awakening of the living being to its own being-captivated, this anxious and resolute opening to a not-open, is the human" (70; emphasis original). The closedness of the boring environment, while reducing Dasein to an animal-like state, also arouses the sense of boredom peculiar to humanity on account of its openness to "possibilities," perhaps in the form of an unconscious positing of a full range of human potentialities outside the inhibiting confines, something that connects Dasein to the world it inhabits.

Couched in psychoanalytic terms, the openness and the active mode of the human, as opposed to the closedness and the inactivity of its animal counterpart, is no less phallic than Freud's account of the upright gait assumed by the human species. Indeed, one may even go so far as to regard them as fully compatible with one another. To the extent that humanness can be defined, however precarious the definition, on the ground of aggressivity or activity, boredom thus comes to take on the very status of an antithesis that reversely proves humanity as more able, or simply as possessing more possibilities (particularly with regard to an unforeseen futurity) than animals, in very much the same way men were once defined as smarter, as more capable *qua* guarantor of a better time to come than their wives or mothers. The domesticity of these housewives has not only rendered them more susceptible than any

other group of people to the attack of boredom, but, alas, as is more often the case, their groundedness in or rivetedness to the enclosed domestic space has all too easily turned them into the *very embodiment of boredom itself*. Furthermore, if we regard Agamben's definition of boredom as a gloss on Freud's account of civilization and domesticity, we may well maintain that Freud's understanding of humanity or subjectivity is also informed by a gendered logic of cognitive sensitivity. Whereas the animal does not have the agency to feel, not to mention articulate, any sense of boredom, the human being, on the contrary, possesses the ability to be alert or awakened to its own captivation. The distinct sense of being bored by one's material confines, in other words, has been viewed as an unquestionable defining trait of one's very humanity. One may recall, what is more, that in Western philosophy, humanity is always inherently coded masculine, and that in Freud's allegory of the domestication of fire, women, albeit allotted the role as domestic guardian, are in fact ambiguously aligned with the domesticated fire or animal. It follows that the anthropocentric myth established in Freud's account of subjectivity, though universalized as the theory of *the* subject, has been marred by potential inconsistencies or internal aporias from the outset. That is, despite, or rather because of, the neurotic rigidity of its constitutive terms that would constantly require the subject to feel and speak distinctly, and to identify manifestly as a particular gender and sexuality, the Western subject constantly risks falling off the track and deviating into perversity whenever the internalized superego is off guard. The Wolfman's fantasy of being subjected to a feminized, animal-like state has showcased precisely this danger -- that even the most normative version of the Cartesian subject would still have difficulty keeping his erect posture and remaining in his masculine/humanist position.

In summary, the very notion of subjectivity, in Western psychoanalytic or philosophical tradition, has been defined against animality in terms of its full possession of a cognitive sensitivity. As a subject *in good standing*, not only does one need to undergo the psychic

process of individuation, as Freud has painstakingly described in “Mourning and Melancholia” as well as his numerous other works, but one must also retain a capacity to feel and subsequently to understand the meaning of that particular feeling. The subject matter of the underdeveloped theory of shame in *Civilization and Its Discontents* illustrates, as if in a Biblical manner, precisely the lesson that to be human is *to feel and to know* the shame attributed to the lower part of one’s body, especially all the instinctual and erotic functions associated with the anus. The distinct sense of boredom that Agamben holds only belongs to the human being when it finds itself confined testifies to the same assumption of the human subject as a thinking and sensible/sensitive being. Strictly defined, the so-called subjectivity would have difficulty to sustain when it comes to women or perverts, for both groups have proved to come dangerously close to their instinctuality. It goes without saying that in a foreign context such as the Chinese culture, in which shame is couched in terms of one’s regard for the community rather than one’s distinct perception or feeling regarding oneself, the whole theory built up by Freud seems beside the point. One must look askance at where the subject, or, if you will, the theory of the subject, fails to come into being, in order to gain a better understanding of what I call liminal non-subjectivity in the Chinese communities.

“Red Rose and White Rose”

Eileen Chang can serve as an ideal point of departure for an inquiry into this liminal mode of non-subjectivity. Widely considered the greatest psychological realist in the early twentieth century (and arguably, of the whole century), Chang is deft at incorporating Western narratorial techniques, such as free indirect discourse and, in her later stage, stream of consciousness, to probe her characters’ thinking processes. It is a critical consensus that she

has been deeply influenced by Freudian psychoanalysis.¹⁹ Most critics, however, seem to base their assertion upon the assumption that Freud's understanding of, say, fetishism or Oedipal fixation are universally true, and that his influence on Chang can thereby be testified in her direct application of those psychological insights into the Chinese context. None, to my knowledge, has clearly specified how Chang has revised or rewritten psychoanalysis in fictional terms rather than accepting *in toto* Freud's ideas without further reflecting on the applicability or universality of his knowledge.²⁰ For example, when they undertake an analysis of her short story "The Golden Cangue," they are usually content with the superficial observation that the female protagonist Chi-chiao harbors an incestuous attachment to her son.²¹ What they tend to neglect is how this incestuous attachment is inextricably bound up with her disregard for personal boundaries, and the fact that she must bide her time in a highly hierarchical extended family until she may accede to the most powerful position within the clan and gain full control over all the other family members, in order to do eventually whatever she likes with those to whom she is Oedipally bound. In any case, these latter dimensions are all very typical of the Chinese extended family in the early twentieth century, and, sadly, in this century they are still typical of many nuclear families in the Chinese community, which have raised their children to become mindless, zombie-like creatures, whose only expertise is to unreflexively memorize textbooks *ad verbatim* and to strictly follow their parents' orders. Few critics are willing to compare Oedipality in our context with its Western counterpart and risk polemics by concluding definitely that while

¹⁹ See, for example, Liu Yen and Shui Ching's works, both of which claim that Chang shared a profound interest in psychoanalysis with her contemporaneous May Fourth writers.

²⁰ Chang Hao has been more careful in her treatment of Eileen Chang's indebtedness to psychoanalysis. She claims that Eileen Chang has "transformed" psychoanalysis so "it can better fit our culture and tradition" (86; my translation). But how exactly such transformation has been carried out remains unclear. Throughout Chang Hao's book, it seems, whenever she comes close to this question, she always ends up explaining it away by attributing Eileen Chang's pathological treatment of her characters not to the pathology of the Chinese culture but to, say, her father's abuse of her in her childhood. The displacement of the author's pathologization of the Chinese to the pathologization of the author proper is quite suggestive, for this discursive evasion is apparently an act of psychic defense that Freud would readily designate as disavowal.

²¹ See, for instance, Chang Hao 71.

Freud's discussion of the Oedipus complex revolves around the premise that it is a developmental stage that one needs by all means to get past, or, in orthodox Freudian terms, "resolve," in Eileen Chang's universe few people have successfully transcended that stage and become fully individuated. They are simply stuck with one another – both affectively and ideationally.²² Accordingly, it would be wrong to characterize *only* Chi-chiao as pathologically fixated to a certain Freudian developmental stage. To do so would be an outright stigmatization. And it would be equally stigmatizing to pathologize those who could not and would not break away from her, in that they are all living in a culture that would censure any sign of individuation as a breach of filial piety. The real culprit responsible for all the discursive moves of scapegoating, it follows, is filial piety, a highly repressive disciplinary technique or ideology that has been so sanctified, so taken for granted in our culture that many – lay people and critics alike – have not quite managed to note that what appears as virtuous in our community would be immediately labeled as pathological in the Freudian system.²³ Insofar as it honors the Chinese non-subject's emotional/physical attachment to and mimetic identification with their parents, the ideology of filial piety insists on the irresolvability of the Oedipus Complex by normalizing such irresolvability as a moral

²² This lack of ideational boundaries also explains why the Chinese community has never developed a sincere respect for intellectual property, a Western notion deeply rooted in the romantic cult of the genius or gifted individual, and why, it cannot be overemphasized, many students and scholars are perfectly comfortable with plagiarizing others' works. In a culture that privileges mindless mimicry of whatever discourses passed down to them, what has been deemed an unforgivable outrage in the West is in truth a psychic norm deeply entrenched in the core of the Chinese character.

²³ In "A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis" Freud does bring up the notion of filial piety. But his use of term is strikingly different from how it is understood among the Chinese. Freud begins his short essay by giving an account of how he and his brother unexpectedly followed a friend's advice by traveling to Athens instead of Corfu, their original destination. He describes their initial reluctance to change route as "derealization" because it is a sensation "too good to be true" (246). Such a sense of "derealization," according to Freud, is derived from Oedipal guilt, for the trip to Athens symbolically represents his superiority over his father, who had been too poor and ill-educated to travel this far. When filial piety is mentioned in this particular context, it is evidently conceptualized in psychological, rather than behavioristic, terms. In other words, the so-called filial piety, in his case, is by default circumscribed by a sense of guilt, which, in its turn, is informed by an imperative to surpass one's father. One, as it were, paradoxically becomes a pious son if and only if he can successfully rebel against his father. Freud also puts forward a similar model of Oedipal rivalry and replacement in his more anthropological works such as *Totem and Taboo*. I'm tremendously indebted to my editor for calling my attention to his autobiographical essay.

absolute, which, in its turn, actively regulates and sanctions those proto-individuals who are found deviating from this norm.²⁴

I began this essay with an elaborate engagement with what Freud would dismiss as inhuman or regressive because only when we reconceptualize our norm as a developmental stasis, as the fantasmatic idealization of the state of being caught or stuck in the middle of the human and the primitive, will we be able to understand that this normalized pathology should be held responsible for a culture of mediocrity that valorizes obedience and mindless labor instead of an individualism founded upon self-reflexivity. Eileen Chang's rewriting of Freud is informed by her profound understanding of how Chinese culture has turned a Freudian regression into an unquestionable norm. This is why most of her tales invite an allegorical reading, and also why I intend to do one here. To put it slightly differently, if her stories strike her reader as deeply perverse or pathologizing, what exactly is being pathologized here is not the psychology of her "individual" characters, but the general Chinese character these figures come to allegorize. This general Chinese character is what I call liminal (non-)subjectivity or form of being. The short story "Red Rose and White Rose," in particular, demonstrates how its liminality manifests itself not only in the aforementioned inchoate form of Oedipality, but also more specifically in a regressed merging of animality and anality that Freud has precluded from the constitutive terms of humanity or subjectivity. Through an allegorical rendering of her characters' stories as *typical of the Chinese situation*, Chang first pathologizes these characters, as if in perfect accord with the Freudian account of perversion, then proceeding to show that it is perverse only to the extent that it deviates from the Western notion of subjectivity, whereas in her country, such perversion is in fact the very norm that the Chinese more often than not regard as "good" or "virtuous." By exposing the

²⁴ I am following Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen's view of mimetic identification as the (non-)subject's suggestibility or susceptibility to the other's emotions or thoughts. Completely devoid of a sense of self, this mode of identification should be distinguished from the normal mode of identification, in which the subject assumes the agency of incorporating the other's traits.

animality/anality on the underside of our norm, Chang thus puts forward a trenchant critique of Chinese communitarianism and the liminal forms of beings it ruthlessly produces and subsequently crashes. There will be two kinds of readings to be supplied in what follows. I will precede my allegorical reading of the story with a “literal” reading as a means to argue for the vital importance or indispensability of the former.

A brief summary of the story is in order. Set in the Republican era of China in the early twentieth century, the story vividly portrays the male protagonist Tong Zhenbao’s misogyny. Having finished his advanced study at Edinburgh, Tong returns to Shanghai as a promising textile engineer at a British company. During his temporary stay at his friend’s apartment while he is still hunting for his own place to live, he falls in love with his friend’s wife, Jiaorui. They soon start an affair while her husband is away on business. Seriously in love with Zhenbao, Jiaorui decides to divorce her husband so as to get remarried to Zhenbao, whereas the latter is so taken aback by Jiaorui’s revelation that he immediately breaks up with her. Marriage with Jiaorui has never been considered by Zhenbao as a feasible choice inasmuch as her (sexual) energy proves not only troubling but emasculating. Zhenbao then marries Meng Yanli, a woman who incarnates everything one could dream of about a good wife, that is, everything that runs counter to Jiaorui’s physical and personality traits. In appearance, Yanli is skinny, mute, frigid, and, last but not least, boring. The marriage goes sour over the span of a decade. Zhenbao carries his sexual abandon to the extreme after he finds out his constipated, sexless wife having an affair with her tailor behind his back, right under his roof. Toward the end of the story, faced with the familial, economic crisis immediately brought about by her husband’s negligence to pay for their living expenses, the speechless wife finds new pleasure in her sudden assumption of linguistic agency. She starts to complain around – more fluently than ever, “How am I supposed to go on living like this?” However, before she acquires the ability to do this, her sheer pleasure lies in her extravagant amount of time devoted to the exercise of her ass on the toilet:

Yanli became sick with constipation. Everyday she sat in the bathroom hour after hour – only during that particular period of time could she find herself fully justified in *doing nothing, saying nothing, thinking nothing*. She did not say or think anything in other circumstances either, and yet she felt somehow a bit anxious about it. Walking about was not reassuring for her; it was only when she locked herself in the bathroom that she felt completely at home, settled, rooted. Lowering her head, she looked at her own belly, a snow-white mass now bulged out, now caved in. The look of the navel also varied. Sometimes it was the sweet, clean and expressionless eye of a Greek statue; sometimes it was a protruding angry eye; sometimes it was the eye of a voodoo figurine with a smile wicked yet lovely, its crooked corner giving shape to some crow's feet.

Zhenbao took Yanli to a doctor and bought her some medication according to newspaper advertisements. Then he detected that she was not very eager to get well. It was as though she would rather keep the illness intact to accrue her importance. So he just let her be. (91; my translation and emphases)

What is more, the fecal imagery of Yanli's bathroom constipation extends from the bathroom to the whole domestic interior, as is attested in the following passage:

Looking into the bathroom through the door ajar, Zhenbao found . . . Yanli appearing in her own pale, yellow complexion. Indeed, paintings of pretty women throughout history had never resorted to such an embarrassing theme: she was caught in the act of being just about to rise, with her pants held in her hands, her back still bent over, her hair hanging straight over her face. She had changed into a white pajama patterned with small flowers, the top of which was raised very high, half of it being now tucked under her chin while the pants were heaped like a burdensome mass over her feet. In the middle was a long segment of her body reminiscent of a white silkworm. This would have made an excellent commercial for toilet paper had it been in the United States. Zhenbao's quick glance, however, made

him feel otherwise. It only occurred to him that underneath the homely and the ordinary there lay hidden a sense of pollution and foulness -- it was not unlike the bulk of someone's hair on rainy days, whose slight moisture should give off an all too strong human smell. (94; my translation)

In a brilliant analysis of Chang's stylistic depiction of Yanli's constipation, Rey Chow argues, "By ignoring the decorum of visual restraint and releasing the descriptive data around Yanli's bathroom rituals, Chang makes it impossible for the metaphor of 'White Rose' to stay in place as metaphor. Instead, the congruence of metaphoric reasoning itself is now metonymically derailed into something quite alien from its principle of speleological equivalence. The purity of 'White Rose' turns out to be no more – and no deeper – than a case of stopped-up interiority" (170). The bathroom ritual, in Chow's words, is a "sordid sight of a married woman *bored out of mind*, gazing at her navel while sitting on the toilet, or of her awkward position of having just finished her business and in the process of getting up, her pants still around her ankles" (169-70; emphasis added). Chow's reading of Yanli's constipation as disruption of a phallogocentric signifying system, which defines women in terms of the notorious binary opposition of virgin and whore, thus welcomes an interpretive gesture of viewing the story's final reversal of the opposition as an allegory of gender. That is, insofar as Zhenbao's phallic desire seeks to denounce the uncontrollable passion of "Red Rose" in his rejection of Jiaorui's proposed marriage, that uncontrollable passion, like the elusive Lacanian real, only comes back with a vengeance in the guise of his apparently sexless wife. The distinction he makes between the passionate Red Rose – Jiaorui – and the submissive White Rose – Yanli – falters toward the end of the novel, as the latter's ironic repressed anality fully distorts such arbitrarily defined symbolic distinction through her grotesque affair with the ugly tailor, her perverse attachment to her constipation, and her tragicomic assumption of linguistic agency in her housewifely style of complaint.

Though tentatively dubbed an allegory of gender, I would nevertheless describe the above

reading as literal, rather than allegorical. The reason that I propose this reading is mainly to get past the literality of its gendered allegory while not reducing its very significance as not least a gendered allegory. Simply put, what I'm trying to argue here is that the story is an allegory of gender, but that this allegory, in fact, belies a deeper meaning which is allegorical of something beyond gender. At a more literal level, the story does destabilize a symbolic phallogocentric system that sustains the mythical distinction between virgin and whore. But in deconstructing the phallogocentric logic that informs Zhenbao's fantasmatic distinction between "Red Rose" and "White Rose," this reading also risks holding him responsible for the whole cultural myth which in truth castrates and disempowers him as well.²⁵ One tends therefore to lose sight of other key factors that have given rise to Zhenbao's abandonment of his mistress. At the crucial moment that he decides to break up with Jiaorui, he comes to realize that he does not intend to destroy his friend's marriage and that he is much happier with the liaison than the prospect that Jiaorui should divorce her husband so as to get together with him. However, it is also at this very moment that it occurs to him, strangely, that he has to be a "good" guy. What he means by being a good guy is not being truthful to his betrayed friend, but rather "repaying the kindness of his mother" by "first, getting sufficiently upwardly-mobile along the class and occupational ladder," and then, by "doing something beneficial for society" (79; my translation). As these thoughts reign supreme, Jiaorui's importance is immediately overthrown; even "the air Jiaorui breathes, who is sleeping soundly next to him, becomes all of a sudden irrelevant" (79; my translation). He marries Yanli soon after – by his family's arrangement. Considering these circumstantial issues, it would be hard to read Zhenbao as the sole culprit for the havoc he has wreaked in the lives of his wife and mistress. As this story has made clear, the communitarianism of Chinese

²⁵ I'm borrowing for the present purpose the difference between the Freudian and the Lacanian understanding of castration. Castration in Freud is often couched in more biological terms, revolving around the presence or lack of the penis, which in turn defines one's gender identity. Lacan, however, argues that both male and female subjects are castrated by an overarching phallic system of language or signification as they become socialized into the symbolic order.

culture exerts a castrating power on both men and women alike in its deprivation of any individualist agency, which would ironically be deemed “irrelevant” from our community’s point of view.

This is why it is crucial to argue for an allegorical mode of reading that actually goes beyond the literal, gendered reading that I previously performed. Apparently, Yanli’s domestic fixity and her subsequent anal fixation on that which confines her invites a feminist critique of the politics of domesticity as it plays out in the Chinese context. But if we further allegorize this gendered reading, we may take her imprisoning environment, i.e., the bathroom, to suggest a developmental stasis not her own, but of Chinese non-subjects as a whole. In other words, I suggest that we take Yanli’s castrated tale of confinement as a symbolic inhibition that in effect regulates and conditions all the Chinese people. That Yanli is stuck in the middle of rising, neither fully upright nor stooping close to her excrement, thus allegorically represents the liminal status of the inchoate Chinese non-subjectivity. By joining fecal stench with human smell, the human with the insect (i.e. the silkworm), Eileen Chang brings the human further down to the level of the bestial. What makes the bathroom scene in particular iconic/allegorical is the affectless, thoughtless state associated with that animal-like form of being: only in the bathroom “could she find herself fully justified in doing nothing, saying nothing, thinking nothing.” In this condition, even a slight sense of boredom might have already become an impossible asset to own. If she is truly, as Chow has put it, “bored out of mind,” then all the fantastic images that she associates with her navel, albeit self-reflexive in appearance, would never find their way into her cognition or consciousness of self. Choosing to fall back to an animalistic state, this inchoate non-subject’s delight in non-feeling and non-thinking defeats the anthropomorphism underlying Agamben’s argument, for instead of imagining the human possibility of getting connected to anyone or any putatively “interesting” distraction, this non-individual simply contradicts the very rule of thumb of humanity with its refusal to *awaken from its own*

captivation to its own captivity.

It would be, however, fallacious to agree with Yanli's feeling that only in the bathroom could she enjoy a complete void of affect or speech. I take the bathroom to be allegorical precisely because the mindlessness or blandness of feeling in question has always been encouraged as a virtue in this culture – both in and out of the bathroom. The perverse bathroom scene is a mere dramatization of what has been consistently defined as a norm in our culture, as can be attested by the abundance of mindless and emotionally insipid characters in Chang's stories or novels. Suffice it to say that in "Red Rose and White Rose" as well, the narrator, as a matter of fact, depicts both Zhenbao and Yanli in the light of this affective or ideational opacity – even at moments when they're not around the bathroom. When Yanli first appears in the story, the narrator has made every effort to stress her "whiteness":

A good student in a bad school, she studied hard and did not associate much with her classmates. Her whiteness, like the white screen in a hospital, screened her off from the bad influences around her. However, sadly, it also screened her off from the books she studied. She had been in school for more than ten years. No matter how diligently she looked up new words, memorized charts and figures, copied whatever was written on the board, there had always been, as it were, a white membrane stuck between her brain and that which she studied. (83; my translation)

As is shown in the above passage, Yanli's whiteness comes to stand for purity only at the most literal level. To the literal layer of meaning the narrator, not without a tinge of irony, further attaches a symbolic layer of connotation that equates Yanli's whiteness with intellectual or affective blandness. The "whiteness" of the membrane that blocks the non-subject's ultimate understanding of knowledge or feeling (whether it pertains to an external object or to the inchoate self in an attempt to reach that understanding), suggests an

epistemological vagueness or opacity that would soon give way to or be taken over by a moralizing discourse that privileges and celebrates the mind's "purity," that is, its *susceptibility* to the *ethical standards* of the community. Note that I purposely choose "susceptibility" over, say, "willingness to conform" in the above phrase, for in most cases, one simply does exactly as one is told, as if in a hypnotic trance without self-consciousness. What is *good* about Yanli's whiteness, therefore, parallels what it means to be *good* in Zhenbao's case – i.e., being pious to one's mother, getting upwardly-mobile and "doing something beneficial for society" since in both cases being good signifies nothing more than one's unthinking acceptance of a regressive Oedipal norm that would staunchly reject the fundamental distinction of self and other.²⁶ Deprived at the outset of the capability of reflection and self-reflection, it would be, of course, out of the question for Zhenbao to understand his fantasy of upward-mobility as utterly ironic, given that this fantasized up-ward mobility is still motivated by the above liminal logic of susceptibility/suggestibility. In this sense, his imagination of ceaselessly moving upward does not intrinsically differ from the frozen movement of rising that we've seen earlier in his constipated wife. And what Chow refers to as "stopped-up interiority" amounts to nothing more than the self-feeling and thoughts currently blocked off by the white membrane of our culture's communitarianism, through whose metonymic association with the whiteness of Yanli's silkworm-like belly Chang has incisively revealed the animalistic/regressive nature of the Oedipal norm underlying such communitarianism.

Coda: Limitation or Possibility?

²⁶ Confucianism always analogizes filial respect for one's parents to hierarchical social relations from all walks of life, ranging from the ruler and the ruled, the elder and the youngster, to husband and wife. Hence its persistent celebration of the inseparability of all modes of self-other manifestations could be loosely described as Oedipal.

It is my contention throughout this essay to illuminate the regressive inhumanity of Chinese communitarian culture that has standardized its people into robotic entities of no individual feelings and thoughts. Albeit generally critical of this ideological, cultural, and psychological formation, as I conclude this essay, I nevertheless find it opportune to reiterate that even humanism has its own pitfalls. As I've noted at the beginning of the essay, the whole psychoanalytic tradition is a strenuous effort to deconstruct or unsettle humanism by highlighting the significance of the unconscious, or, more specifically put, the perverse life of our sexual or animalistic instincts. Though the anality of these instincts sometimes limits one's linguistic and reflexive agency, it has also paradoxically created a whole set of aesthetics that values silence, telepathy, and impressionism.²⁷ At its best, its fixation upon the non-expressive mode of feeling and the non-verbal mode of communicativeness can generate an interesting aesthetic heterotopia, which, though critical of Chinese communitarianism, also proves ambivalently or perversely attached to it. That Eileen Chang's representation of the unfeeling and unthinking quality of Chinese everyday life can strangely, almost in a hysterically mimetic fashion, affect many of her readers, to the point of traumatizing or paralyzing them as they finish reading her stories, testifies to the paradox that she appeals to these readers – not as individuals willing to suspend their temporary moment of disbelief, but as the highly suggestible members of a communitarian culture.

In conclusion, by calling attention to the ostensibly more “positive” aspects of the same liminal subjecthood, I do not intend to offset the critique I have leveled against our communitarian culture. Rather, I am trying to provide an alternative, or fairer, view that would do more justice to the Chinese by looking from the bottom up, so to speak. That is, getting stuck between humanity and anality, one has something to lose, and yet there is also

²⁷ Liu Jen-Peng and Ding Naifei have famously criticized this aestheticizing tendency in our culture that more often than not covers over the ideological thrust of reticence per se. By reversing their claim, I am not negating their insight, but merely seeking to foreground the necessity of a certain mode of evaluative ambivalence in the negotiation, as it were, between the perception of a half glass of water and that of a half glass of air. See Liu and Ding's “Reticent Poetics, Queer Politics.”

something to gain from it. The de-sublimation involved in such a stasis, in a certain sense, corresponds with what Foucault has famously designated as *ars erotica* in *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*, whereby sex is to be performed as a set of practices that privilege one's own passivity and objectification, as opposed to Western *scientia sexualis*, a knowledge system that has created endless identity categories (57), which in their turn have further occasioned a pervasive atmosphere of violence and aggression triggered by the anxiety of falling into the abyss of anality.²⁸ In underscoring the positively queer aspect of our culture's habitual ceding of autonomy, however, I have no intention to "redeem" what I

²⁸ The arena that can most readily demonstrate the positivity of this sexualized liminal (non-)subjectivity is, of course, pornography. A cursory glance at a clip of white porn and Asian porn suffices to bring home the above distinction. Gay porn, in particular, can shed light upon the contrast in a most dramatic fashion. Given that of all genres of pornographies, East and West, gay porn is the site that most readily and daringly eroticizes masculinity, one can most easily see how the assumption of phallic erectness manifests itself differently through these erotic performances. While in white porn, actors, be they top or bottom, speak out loud – almost too loud – their enjoyment in fucking and being fucked, Asian porn actors are, by contrast, silent and inactive. When a scene of fucking is represented, typically the camera focuses on the bottom's *jouissance* – i.e., pleasure in pain (though the pleasurable part feels rather indistinct compared with pain) – and his utter passivity as he is being used and moved around like a toy or inanimate object. There is something inhuman about this particular type of erotic mis-en-scène, then made doubly perverse when the director stresses the feminized, anal *jouissance* of the bottom, rather than the phallic pleasure that one normally sees in those white porn actors. Moreover, in white porn, the phallicity of the penis gets so eroticized that more than two-thirds of the shots are in effect composed of the close-ups of its thrusting movements. It is apparently not the case with Asian porn, in which the camera seems to be so turned on by its dalliance with the bottom's particular sensitive areas, that whether or not the cum shot (of both top and bottom) gets shown in the end sometimes turns out not a serious issue at all. If the identificatory position in porn sets up an unconscious norm of gender and sexuality, which gets reinforced when one tries to mimic what it means to be sexy as a sexed subject in bed, it would not be far-fetched to reason that the norm being set up in Asian porn is thoroughly and perversely anal. It is almost as if even those male audience self-identified as tops are, at the time of viewing, also formally invited to cross-identify with the perverse norm of silence and inactivity. Spectatorial identification, apparently, is far more dispersed in this situation. Insofar as the ego or any coherent sense of self-identity does not really exist among the viewers in the first place, it would be much easier for someone in a fantasmatic scenario to freely enter into an erotic union with the actors – whether by way of identification, desire, or both at the same time. A different way of putting this is to say that the perverse anality that I've been at pains to elucidate throughout this essay takes on a positive value when it is fully eroticized. Although Chang's story provides a trenchant critique of the formlessness of Chinese Oedipal fixation, it is also imperative to note – by means of juxtaposing her critique with other representations of anality – that the formlessness of our Oedipality, in a more sexualized context, would come to signify failure of Oedipal identification, that is, *a more flexible lineup of gender identifies and, concomitantly, a more malleable state of desire across the hetero/homo or normal/perverse divide*. Simply put, one would be less conscious of what one is and who/what one wants when it comes to sexual matters. In a culture more concerned about the formality or layout of moral proscription rather than what ought to be proscribed (and, for that matter, why), there is simply not much need to make finer distinctions between the permissible and abominable kinds of sex. *Sex in toto* is treated as a taboo – yet only in a superficial manner – while in actuality, one cannot imagine how much permissiveness has been granted to those very practices that would condemn someone to hell should he/she live in the West.

consider to be its major pitfall; rather, my aim is chiefly to stress that my critical appraisal of Chinese communitarianism is context-specific, and that one of the contexts that accommodate the most liberating possibilities is sex. If we conceive our liminality in terms of our proximity to anal *jouissance*, then we realize that de-individuation might also be considered a valuable and indispensable asset in one's erotic and emotional life.²⁹ However, if we are not making any attempt to strive for individual autonomy, our *ars erotica* will always be subject to the communitarian surveillance exerted by the state, the school, the media and the family. My ultimate stance on this issue is therefore that we should simulate Yanli's rise from the toilet – yet in such a manner that we, at certain moments when we almost stand straight, consciously forsake the privileges of uprightness and remain frozen in our developmental or motional stasis. The solution that I'm proposing thus in a fundamental way departs from Freud's emphasis on the inevitability of the model of the Western civilized subject, in that whereas he construes subjectivity as the telos of one's evolution from the animal to the human, I would rather disqualify such telos by privileging instead the evolutionary stage as an ongoing process of learning to become an individual, *without aiming to be a full-blown one*. In so doing, it would be possible to be constantly “upwardly mobile,” while simultaneously staying fixated upon the anal inactivity of our culture's perverse tradition. After all, “white” could *metaphorize* blandness, stupidity, or even death, but it could also be used *metonymically* as a dress code for a multiplicity of interesting communitarian gatherings – say, a rave party, an orgy, a campaign walk against racism or homophobia, and so on. The list goes on indefinitely.

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²⁹ This is a very important argument Leo Bersani makes repeatedly in his works. He has been consistently proposing an ethics of eroticism premised upon a merging with others that would not involve a distinct consciousness of selfhood. See, for example, his *Homos*.

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四、計畫成果自評

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國科會補助計畫衍生研發成果推廣資料表

日期:2012/08/24

國科會補助計畫	計畫名稱: 個人主義的政治性: 張愛玲與瑪麗雪萊憂鬱書寫之對照(II-I)
	計畫主持人: 葉德宣
	計畫編號: 100-2410-H-004-205- 學門領域: 比較文學
無研發成果推廣資料	

100 年度專題研究計畫研究成果彙整表

計畫主持人：葉德宣		計畫編號：100-2410-H-004-205-					
計畫名稱：個人主義的政治性：張愛玲與瑪麗雪萊憂鬱書寫之對照(II-I)							
成果項目		量化			單位	備註（質化說明：如數個計畫共同成果、成果列為該期刊之封面故事...等）	
		實際已達成數（被接受或已發表）	預期總達成數(含實際已達成數)	本計畫實際貢獻百分比			
國內	論文著作	期刊論文	0	0	100%	篇	
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		研討會論文	1	1	100%		
		專書	0	0	100%		
	專利	申請中件數	0	0	100%	件	
		已獲得件數	0	0	100%		
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	參與計畫人力 (本國籍)	碩士生	1	1	100%	人次	
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國外	論文著作	期刊論文	0	0	100%	篇	
		研究報告/技術報告	0	0	100%		
		研討會論文	0	0	100%		
		專書	1	1	100%		章/本
	專利	申請中件數	0	0	100%	件	
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	成果項目	量化	名稱或內容性質簡述
科 教 處 計 畫 加 填 項 目	測驗工具(含質性與量性)	0	
	課程/模組	0	
	電腦及網路系統或工具	0	
	教材	0	
	舉辦之活動/競賽	0	
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