

Kunisexuality (Incest) in Hong Kong Literature

Chapman Chen

ABSTRACT

Incest which has always enthralled, confounded and horrified human beings occurs as a major and common theme in Western literary tradition. In Hong Kong literature, it is usually deeply disguised and rarely treated in explicit terms. This paper first renames incest and then redefines it. The major theories about the origin and use of the incest taboo and prohibition are summarized and discussed and then tested against Hong Kong literary works with incest themes. Efforts will then be made to analyze, with reference to Hong Kong literary works, whether or not the social advantages of the incest taboo and prohibition are enough to outweigh the disadvantages. The paper concludes with the claim that universal fraternity should be reasserted.

KEY WORDS

kunisexuality
Hong Kong literature
regression

incest taboo
Freud
exogamy

of whichever race practices it. For, no doubt, inbreeding could group together bad recessive genes and produce inferior offspring; but inbreeding could also group together good recessive genes and produce quality offspring. Inferior offspring will be eliminated through natural selection or competition before long. The result will then be a fitter next generation. Zoologists have long learnt this fact from the breeding of purebred horses and dogs, just that they dare not or will not make it known to the public (Cohen 73; Diamond 127; Ng Man-lun 39; cf. Freud 184). Even if we take for granted that kunisexual breeding really is more likely than non-kunisexual breeding to produce disabled children and to affect adaptability, the existence of humanity will still not be threatened unless the whole of mankind goes for kunisexuality, just as the decriminalization of homosexuality will not lead to universal homosexuality and to extinction of mankind.

How about the reproduction of individual kunisexuals? If they choose to reproduce, the females may check whether their embryos are wholesome and normal by means of X-ray, ultra-sound wave, or amniocentesis. Should seriously deformed or mentally retarded embryos be discovered, abortion may be an alternative. Of course, kunisexual couples could choose to practise contraception or undergo sterilization from the very beginning so as to be free of such worries in the future. The problem now is that even if kunisexuals practise contraception or undergo sterilization, they will still be outlawed. This precisely goes to show that the biological theory against kunisexuality is not reliable. Hong Kong literary works which touch upon the biological theory of kunisexuality may be represented by Zhou Xian's *Luanlun bian* (*The Incest Mutant*, 1996). This three-volume work of science fiction adopts a liberal attitude towards kunisexuality. It rigorously refutes the biological theory with its rich exciting plot and sound arguments with scientific grounds.

In *The Incest Mutant*, the Du's, an old and notable family in Hong Kong, are the descendants of the Ptolemaic Dynasty of ancient Egypt. They have secretly preserved the tradition of kunisexual reproduction but have never produced any disabled or mentally retarded offspring. On the contrary, they have become one of the oldest and most notable

families in Hong Kong. Their offspring are all intelligent and outstanding. In the '90s, their eldest son, Du Xinzi, is campaigning for the office of the first chief executive of the Special Administrative Region. And his mutated son, Du Bing, is actually the first member of a new super species of mankind.⁴

NATURAL AVERSION

Secondly, in 1922, the anthropologist, Westermarck, asserted in his *History of Human Marriage* that close relatives growing up together naturally develop a kind of aversion to any sexual relation to each other (Meiselman 7). During his lifetime, Westermarck's theory was readily rejected by most scholars. However, about seventy years later, another anthropologist, Arthur Wolf,⁵ attempted to revive Westermarck's theory. Wolf tried to argue against Freud's query of Westermarck that society would not make laws to prohibit people from doing things they are interested in doing at all (Freud 183), but what Wolf actually did was just to reaffirm Westermarck's idea of "moral indignation"—when a person becomes sexually interested in an object, the category of which does not arouse sexual interest on the part of the majority, the majority will feel a kind of moral indignation. This kind of emotion is unselfish, universal, and therefore moral (Wolf 509-12). Does it not follow, then, that the majority is entitled to persecute the minority? Does it not follow that since homosexuals only amount to a minor proportion of humanity and heterosexuals naturally feel morally indignant about them, the heterosexuals have the right to discriminate against the homosexuals? The idea of moral indignation as advocated by Wolf and Westermarck is really classical discriminatory fascism.

There are quite a few Hong Kong literary works which challenge the theory of natural aversion, for example, Lin Wenyin's short story, "Gege, wo zhangda hou yao jia gei ni! (Brother, I want to marry you when I grow up!)" (1998):

"Brother, I want to marry you when I grow up!" Eating the ice cream yielded by her brother, the six-year-old daughter uttered this line which stirred the heart of Middle



INTRODUCTION

Incest is a subject that has always enthralled, confounded and horrified human beings. It is a major and common theme in Western literary tradition. In Hong Kong literature, it is usually deeply disguised and relatively rarely treated explicitly. In this paper, incest will first be renamed and redefined. The major theories about the origin and use of the incest taboo and prohibition will be summarized and discussed and then tested against Hong Kong literary works with an incest theme. Efforts will then be made to study, with reference to Hong Kong literary works,¹ whether the advantages of the incest taboo and prohibition are enough to outweigh their disadvantages. And the idea of universal fraternity will be reasserted.

According to Fan Wenshen's *Xingxue cidian* (*A Dictionary of Sexology*), incest refers to "sexual activities between close relatives, which contravene common practice in human relations as specified in the feudal ethical code" (369). As for the definition of "close relatives," it varies with culture and time. The current Crimes Ordinance of Hong Kong only prohibits intercourse between grandparent and grandchild, parent and child, brother and sister (Ma Haoji 52). In Mainland China (and Taiwan), however, even intercourse between parent-in-law and child-in-law, between uncle and niece, between cousins is culpable (Cao Dingjun 255). The definition of parent in both Hong Kong and China includes natural, adoptive and step parents.

Since the term "incest" carries strong negative connotations² and is not objective at all, the author has decided to rename it as "kunisexuality." Kunisexuality³ refers to sexual love among relatives by blood and by affinity, especially those violating taboos and prohibitions of

the culture or community of the parties involved. The sexual love may be simply psychological or physical or both.

Concerning the origin and function of the kunisexuality prohibition, there are about five types of theory—biological theory, natural aversion, exogamy, prevention of family disruption, and avoidance of regression.

BIOLOGICAL THEORY

According to the biological theory, kunisexual unions will increase infertility, produce deformed and mentally retarded offspring, weaken adaptability, and eventually lead to ethnic extinction. This view was first put forth by L. H. Morgan in his *Ancient Society* in 1877 and was subsequently supported by various biologists, sociologists, and anthropologists. For example, Seemanova has examined 161 children of kunisexual unions in Chekoslovakia and found that the percentage of early death is 27 and that of surviving but deformed or disabled offspring is 25 (Shepher 91-92). Gilbert Lindzey (Murstein 21) and William Demarest (Arens 22-23) think that kunisexual reproduction will increase homozygosity, eliminate recessive genes, and affect evolutionary adaptability.

On the other hand, other scientists hold different views. According to the geneticist, Curt Stern, the effects of kunisexual reproduction are very contradictory. Sometimes it results in "undesirable phenotypes and at other times, in normal or even better-than-average constitutions." In a word, no sweeping generalization may be made (qtd. in Boehrer 142). Another geneticist, Theodosius Dobzhansky, thinks that "[t]he increase of the incidence of hereditary diseases in the offspring of marriages between relatives (cousins, uncle and niece or aunt and nephew, second cousins, etc.) over that in marriages between persons not known to be related is slight—so slight that geneticists hesitate to declare such marriages disgenic" (qtd. in Yehudi Cohen 72-73).

Moreover, the anthropologist Yehudi Cohen, the American sexologist, Milton Diamond, and the Hong Kong sexologist, Ng Man-lun, also consider to be a medical myth the assumption that close inbreeding can only lead to degeneracy and, ultimately, to the extinction

Moon. . . . The two children of Middle Moon were very affectionate towards each other. The elder brother, who had just been promoted to Form One, was always trying his best to protect his sister, who was studying at Primary One. When Middle Moon's husband said they had to watch whether the two kids' behavior towards each other was too intimate, Middle Moon intuitively thought about how intimate she and her elder brother Middle Woods were during their childhood. . . . Their four-member family lived together in a rented room less than one hundred feet. As early as Middle Moon's memory allowed her to recall the past, she already slept with her brother in the same bed. The siblings' intimacy probably started with Middle Moon listening to her brother's school stories at night, instead of watching television. . . . Going to the school together with a big brother whose academic achievement was as outstanding as his athletic performance was something to be most proud of before one's pubertal girl-schoolmates. And whenever the two siblings had lunch together, Middle Moon would deliberately nestled up against her brother.

Middle Moon had never thought that her brother, who had always belonged to her, would fall in love with another person, until the girl called first love appeared.

When the brother shifted his affection to another, the "love affair" between Middle Moon and her brother ended up in nothing definite. Unexpected, after she got married, history repeated itself on the person of her son and daughter. (my translation)

Shen Xue's short story, "Zifen" ("Self-burning") (1993) is rather similar to "Brother, I want to marry you when I grow up!," just that the younger sister in "Self-burning" is even more extreme:

The name of the elder brother was Hot Stone; that of the younger sister was Hot Jade; two siblings were welded by

fire.

Ever since their tender age, they went to school hand in hand, head pressed to head, in small school-uniforms, with a school-bag on their shoulders, like conjoined twins.

During school assembly, the brother was unwilling to part from the sister, neither was the sister ready to let go of the brother's finger-tips; reluctant to tear apart, they proceeded to their own row. . . .

Inside the classroom, it was taught that siblings had to love each other. As soon as Hot Jade heard that, she understood and told the teacher that she would certainly do it. . . . When the twelve-year-old Hot Jade was promoted to Form One, Hot Stone was already a fifteen-year-old Form Four student. . . . The scene of sexual intimacy between Hot Stone and Sharon [his first-love] repeatedly appeared in Hot Jade's dreams.

Sometimes, when her thoughts came to this, she could not help brushing her breasts with her hands, and, then, she would stretch the other hands towards her private parts.

She fantasized herself was Sharon.

At this point, Hot Jade realized that she had fallen in love with Hot Stone. (8, 12, my translation)

In the two stories above, sibling sexual love is a result of close association since childhood, and the siblings by no means follow Westermarck's theory in showing "natural aversion" to each other.

EXOLOGY

The third kind of theory of the kunisexuality taboo is the theory of alliance or exogamy as advocated by scholars like L. A. White and the French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss. The theory suggests that no society is self-sufficient. Each society is obliged to ban endogamous marriages and only engage in exogamous marriages in order to forge alliances with other groups, thereby expanding the range of influence and exchanging with other groups goods and necessities which the

society lacks (Meiselman 10; Cohen 75-76). However, according to Cohen, "To the extent that trade is conducted and negotiated by a handful of people, it becomes unnecessary to use incest taboos to force the majority of people into alliances with other groups. Treatises, political alliances, and negotiations by the managers of a few impersonal agencies have replaced marital and other personal alliances" (76).

Also, according to Ng Man-lun, if a clan is large and resourceful, it simply does not require exogamy to avoid being isolated. This is exactly why many a royal family or ethnic group has a long history of legal kunisexual marriage (Chen Chapman 142). By the same token, in a modern democratic society, if a family is resourceful and unremitting in making efforts to improve itself, it would not have to rely on petticoat influence in order to climb up the social ladder. On the contrary, it would worry about being taken advantage of by other families seeking a marital connection with it. So much the more, if a person is mature in character and in thinking, he or she will not isolate himself or herself from the world even after marrying happily someone whom he or she deeply loves.

For example, as noted above, in history as well in the novel *The Incest Mutant* (Zhou Xian, 1996), the Ptolemaic Dynasty is a most famous kunisexual dynasty. Ptolemy was a Greek, but he was also the king ruling Egypt. In order to maintain the noble blood of the Greek royalty, he stipulated that all descendants of Ptolemy must only engage in kunisexual reproduction. Only in this way could the pure blood of Ptolemy rule the Ptolemaic Dynasty for all generations. The Du's in Hong Kong are the direct descendants of Ptolemy XIV, the younger brother of Cleopatra XIV. They have always preserved the kunisexual tradition of the Ptolemy royal family. But the Du's have for decades been one of the most influential families in Hong Kong. In the 90s', Du Xinzi and his younger sister Du Xiaozi are important persons in the political circle and the business world. Du Xinzi is even one of the most favored candidates for the first chief executive of Hong Kong. So the Du's certainly have not been rendered helpless by their kunisexuality.

FAMILY DISRUPTION

This school maintains that the origin and the use of the kunisexuality taboo is to prevent the family from being disrupted. The theory of family disruption may be sub-divided into three aspects, namely, sexual abuse, sexual jealousy, and role confusion.

Regarding sexual abuse, Meiselman thinks that the origin of the kunisexuality taboo is that society wanted (and still wants) to prevent older people in the family from sexually abusing the younger ones (25). However, in ancient societies, especially China and India, boys and girls had to enter arranged marriages when they reached the age of fourteen or even younger (Su Bing & Wei Lin 236, 285, 286). So much the more, Meiselman has neglected the difference between kunisexual love and kunisexual rape. Rape is sexual assault on a person against his or her will while kunisexual love between two persons is a voluntary act between two consenting parties. "None of your business," as the saying goes. Of course, in order to prevent the younger one in a family from being sexually exploited by the older ones, society may stipulate that kunisexuals must all be over eighteen and psychologically mature. Similarly, according to Masters, "there are [already] laws against sexual coercion (rape), whatever the age of the victim. Prevention and punishment of interfamilial sex activity, within the home and the usual family unit, in no way depend upon the laws prohibiting incest" (*Patterns* 197).

Kunisexual rape, especially a ruthless father raping a helpless little daughter, is the most common type of kunisexual intercourse that we can read in the newspapers, but, despite a diligent search, the author of this paper has not been able to locate any such work in Hong Kong literature so far.

Regarding sexual jealousy, according to Freud, in prehistoric times, people lived in primal hordes. Each such horde was ruled by an atrocious, despotic primal father who had all the women in the horde to himself. He would castrate or slaughter without a moment's hesitation any son who seemed to threaten his position or covet his women. Unable to bear his oppression, his sons finally banded together and killed him. Besides hating him, however, they also admired him. As a result,

adopted as a pupil and brought up by Small Dragon-girl, who is four years older than he. Their relationship is one similar to elder sister-younger brother or mother-son. Subsequently, the two fall in love with each other. Eventually, they make known their love before the heroes in the House of the Lu; Yang exclaimed:

“What have I done to hinder you? Whom have I harmed? Auntie [Small Dragon-girl] has taught me martial arts, but I insist that she be my wife. Chop me to pieces, if it suits you, but, still, I want her to be my wife.”

This speech was absolutely shocking. At that point in history, the Sung people (3: 628) placed a premium on law and discipline rites. The seniority in master-pupil relationship was put on same par as emperor-minister and father-son relationships and must never be violated (3: 622). When had they heard of this kind of unruly love relation before? (3: 628, my translation)

So the love between Yang Guo and Small Dragon-girl was really regarded by their contemporaries as violating the order of so-called normal human relations (3: 622). Consequently, even Guo Jing, who had always doted on Yang, was so angered that he almost killed Yang on the spot (3: 628-29). Indeed, in the Taiwanese television serial, *The Celestial Eagle and the Chivalrous Couple*, produced by Yang Peipei (1998), Guo Jing once told his wife, Huang Rong, that the master-pupil love between Yang Guo and Small Dragon-girl was as despicable as mother-son fornication.

REGRESSION

The sociologist, Talcott Parsons, thinks that the kunisexuality taboo has the function of socialization, that it can prevent the individual's personality from regressing to the infantile stage and help the individual to become independent of the parents in his or her psychosexuality (Maisch 60-64). In *Jinguo yu rensheng* [*The Forbidden Fruit and Life*] (1991), Ng Man-lun also asserts:

According to classical psychoanalytic theories, because of human beings' long period of dependence on their parents (in childhood), their incestuous wishes towards their parents are most strong . . . the ability to throw off the incest complex is the stepping stone of every person to a mature personality. If that is really the case, then would the permission of incest cause complete character regression [to infantile stages of life] of people, even when they are adults? Although this possibility is very slim, theoretically it still exists.” (100, my translation)

Moreover, as pointed out by Sun Longji in his *Wei duannai de minzu* (*The Unweaned Race*, 1995), although the genital component of the mother-son relationship is usually taken out, the relationship, being only symbolically kunisexual but immoderately intimate, still fixates most Chinese in early periods of life. For many a Chinese mother regards her children (especially sons) as part of herself or as a symbolic substitute for her husband, and semi-consciously cultivates their dependence so that they will feel that in the whole world, only their mother can be truly good to them. As a consequence, most Chinese are infantilized; they are not self-sufficient, self-assertive, and independent enough. It is very difficult for them to establish equal and mature relationships (especially sexual ones) with other people (14, 18, 21-22, 87-88).

Now, if the kunisexuality prohibition is lifted, there exists the danger that some people who are already psychologically immature would become even more infantilely attached to their close kin when their symbiotic unions could be strengthened by the legitimate adding of the genital component. But in repressing kunisexual impulses into the unconscious, the kunisexuality taboo could also make the impulses even more dangerous than when the taboo is lifted and people can handle their kunisexual impulses with reason. As will be shown below, unconscious kunisexual impulses repressed by the kunisexuality taboo could lead to various infantile complexes and paraphilia such as fetishism and paranoia.

Huang Biyun's short Hong Kong story, "Haozeng" (Gluttony) is particularly suitable as a literary illustration of the danger entailed by a symbolical and unconscious kunisexual union between mother and son. Today, the modern women of Hong Kong have already stood up on their own. But some of them are still under the influence of the mother-son symbiotic union characteristic of traditional China. For example, in "Gluttony," the sexual desire of the wife Ru-ai is extraordinarily strong. Being impotent, her husband Zihan certainly cannot satisfy her. Apart from seducing men here and there, Ru-ai also makes her teenage son sleep next to her. When the son brings a girl-friend home, Ru-ai at once breaks them apart with a dirty trick. When the son resists her, she lavishes all kinds of meticulous care on him when he is ill so that he becomes a baby permanently attached to its mother. Zihan was so agitated that he has a nervous breakdown. In the story, Ru-ai's love of her son is quite obviously sexual, as opposed to the traditional aim-inhibited maternal love. For instance, Ru-ai weakly asks her son, "Your dad no longer wants me. Do you want me? . . . Come and sleep with your mum, mum is scared." Saying this, she scratches her son's hairy thigh with her fingernails (*Qizhong Jingmo* 136). Finding this kind of behavior outrageous, Zihan warns his son, "Henceforth, don't forget to lock your room door when sleeping at night or changing clothes." This is obviously a precaution against Ru-ai seducing the son (139).

Looking back at the above theories about the kunisexuality taboo, the biological theory advocators cannot prove that kunisexuality will threaten the existence of the entire human species; the grounds of the natural aversion theory, such as those concerning the child- bride and Kibbutz, are full of loopholes and probably guilty of being anti-sexual; the theory of exogamy or economic alliance is no longer applicable to modern capitalistic society; prevention of and penalty of interfamilial sexual abuse of the young in no way rely on the laws banning kunisexuality, but on the laws against sexual coercion itself (cf. Masters, *Patterns* 97); Freud's totem and taboo theory is able to explain the unspeakable "kuniphobia" of mankind but it does not follow that the taboo is still necessary in the modern epoch, for we no longer live in a

primal horde and we no longer usually solve love problems by killing one another. Thus, only the concern about personological regression is justified. This is, however, a sort of technical problem. Once we can make reasonably sure that the persons involved in kunisexual activities are mature and responsible persons,⁷ this danger is also removed.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE KUNISEXUALITY TABOO

It is now time to consider whether the advantages gained from the present prohibition of kunisexuality exceed in importance the disadvantages incurred. As just noted, the only genuine advantage of the prohibition is the prevention of personological regression. The disadvantages, however, are serious and plenty. They can be divided into self-punishment and substitution. According to Masters, a process of self-punishment "may be initiated within himself by the individual in our own culture who offends, consciously or unconsciously, against the incest prohibition . . . the . . . self-punishment . . . possibly taking the form of a severe depression leading to suicide, a self-destructive accident . . ." (*Patterns* 194).

As regards substitution, kunisexuality is so abhorred that it could cause a whole variety of paraphilic substitutes, including necrophilia, homosexuality, fetishism, homicide, paranoia, etc.

First of all, the dangerous process of self-punishment triggered off by the kunisexuality taboo may be illustrated with Yan Chum-pou's "Tianqian [Heaven's punishing hands]" (1992). In this short story, "I" and her younger brother, Hong, are new immigrants to Hong Kong. "I" is married and used to be a medical practitioner in Mainland China. After coming to Hong Kong alone successively, the siblings have not been able to achieve their ambitions and to integrate themselves into the community, and both are very much out of spirits. Lodging together in a very small rented room, they offer help and relief to each other. One day, in the grip of passion, they have sex with each other. They then become full of guilt, feeling that they are "shouldering a kind of shame that is not tolerated by Heaven and Earth . . . that they will be struck by lightning and split into two halves . . . What is gnawing at them is more the fear of being trapped in the mesh of sin than carnal

desire" (128, my translation). Hong, the first one to take the sexual initiative, becomes most gloomy and emaciated. Finally, Hong commits suicide by slashing his wrist. And the sister also kills herself by hitting her head against a wall on the day her husband and son come to visit Hong Kong. "Heaven's punishing hands" vividly expose the devilish features of the kunisexuality taboo in contemporary society. The horror and guilt produced by the taboo lays waste the lives of two young and promising persons (cf. Masters, *Patterns* 328). Just as pointed out by Masters, enjoying sex with one's close kin in itself is not harmful. "The behaviour is damaging, partly or entirely, because it is so strongly prohibited. The forbidden act has been psychically charged with a kind of toxic force that strikes at the psyche of the violator" (195).

Another example is Yi Shu's *Yi, Se, Jia* (1997). In this novel, the heroine, Qiangse, is abandoned by her mother during childhood. In her father's house, Qiangse suffers a lot of maltreatment and contempt at the hands of her paternal grandparents. When she is twelve years old, her father marries a business strong woman known as Chen Yilo. Yilo dotes on Qiangse very much. When Qiangse is sixteen years old, Yilo feels that her karmic affinity to Qiangse's father is over, and she falls in love with a university professor known as Li Jiashang. Coincidentally, Qiangse's father is killed in a traffic accident. Yilo and Jiashang therefore marry each other, but they still support Qiangse's schooling and treat her as a good friend. Several years later, Yilo dies of cancer. On her deathbed, Yilo tells Qiangse that Qiangse and Jiashang will make a perfect match, that she, Yilo, hopes the two will love each other as husband and wife. Qiangse and Jiashang do adore each other, but due to public gaze, the pressure exerted by relatives and friends and the academic world in which Jiashang is working, and most importantly, due to the guilty feelings of the two protagonists, they finally fail to become a couple. In reality, the so-called kinship between Qiangse and Jiashang is more distant than ordinary step father-step daughter relationships. Still, common customs and the super-ego will not leave them alone. From this it can be seen how barbarous and unreasonable the kunisexuality taboo is. What is the difference between it and the mon-

strous ethical code of the feudal period?

As shown in Huang Biyun's contemporary Hong Kong story, "Shuangcheng yue" ("A Moon of Two Cities"), the repression of mother-son kunisexuality could lead to fetishism as a substitute. The major fetish of Xiangdong, the hero of the story, who is a contemporary Mainland Chinese young man, is old women's panties. Let us see how Xiangdong deals with the panties of the old woman Cao Qiqiao.

He . . . went up to the top of that falling, dangerous building and with a fishhook hooked up her faded scarlet panties. Having hooked it up, he took deep breaths of its charming smell of death. . . . The whole of China is killing itself. He was excited and he ejaculated . . . Finally, he was caught by a woman. She had a red face and looked a poor peasant. She hit him with a broom: "Son of a bitch, wanna steal my lady's garment!" Xiangdong fled helter-skelter, but did not forget to shelter his camera with the panties, which were now saturated with semen. ("The Butterfly Hunter" 71, my translation)

The fetish turns out to be linked with the maternal parent's body, with her smell, and is a replacement for the maternal parent (Kiell 200). Through masturbating with Cao Qiqiao's panties, Xiangdong copulates in fantasy with her and, in turn, with his mother, of whom Cao is a representative. Xiangdong is closely attached to his mother in an unconscious kunisexual way. And in his childhood, he had the misfortune to eye-witness how his mother was denounced, assaulted, and driven to suicide by the "revolutionary" mob during the Cultural Revolution:

What brings Xiangdong's mother and Cao Qiqiao together in the unconscious imagination of Xiangdong is precisely their common history of suffering during the Cultural Revolution, their frail and dying look, and the wearing of a similar kind of print.

As shown in "Budie zhe" ("Butterfly Hunter"), another story by Huang Biyun, the repression of kunisexual impulses towards the mother could lead to psychotic serial killing as a substitute, too. The hero of the story is a young and educated Chen Luyuan, who rapes and murders women, usually middle-aged, accomplished women whom he also happens to admire.⁸ In my interpretation, Chen Luyuan has been fixated on the loss of his mother,⁹ as shown, for example, by his feet ceasing to grow after his mother's death. Once retriggered off, his infantile depressive and persecutory anxieties in the Kleinian sense cannot be controlled (cf. Klein *Love* 344-45, 369). Apart from pining for his mother, Xiangdong has probably also felt that by passing away, she is aiming at penalizing and depriving him (355). In order to fend off the depression in relation to the loss of the mother, persecutory apprehensions which concentrated on the mother stamping him with the bad father's penis (as represented by the oldish shoes worn by the mother) have been redoubled and projected onto other women (366). In renewal of earlier circumstances of infantile disappointment by the mother, he sadistically penetrates those women as surrogates of the bad mother. At the same time, he also adores those women because they represent for him the idealized mother. However, the idealized mother-mistresses of Chen Luyuan easily change into malevolent objects to be attacked, as idealization is, to quote Klein, "a corollary to persecutory anxiety" (*Selected Melanie Klein* 217).

As shown in Ya Si's contemporary Hong Kong story, "Jian zhi" ("Paper-cut") repressed kunisexuality could also lead to dementia praecox. The story is about Yao, a female mental patient obsessed with ancient arts—paper-cut and Cantonese opera. Yao's father was injured in a traffic accident. According to Chen Bingliang's interpretation, Yao unconsciously wants to take her mother's place in relation to her father. She often imitates her mother's postures. She often talks to a bird symbolizing her father's penis. In her day-dreams, she creates a thin and handsome middle-aged man in a cotton robe and with a pair of glasses with thin legs. She fantasizes about marrying him and bearing his child. In reality, because of the kunisexuality taboo, she rejects her suitor, Huang, a father-figure who unreservedly loves her, praises her

for her kindness, worries about her weakness and isolation, and hopes to support her. For the same reason, she suppresses her own sexuality. When she reads a magazine with an article talking about sex frivolously, she gets so upset as to tear up the magazine instantly, her hands trembling. The failure of her family romance is also implied by her failure to string together plastic beads with a black thread like her mother. This is because from the Freudian point of view, the black thread symbolizes the male organ, and the hole in the middle of the bead symbolizes the vagina. At the end of the story, the author quotes a Cantonese opera scene in which Princess Changping pierces her eyes with a hairpin. It reminds the audience of Oedipus blinding himself upon learning the fact that he has killed his father and copulated with his mother. The allusion implies that under the current social morality, loving one's father sexually can only lead to tragedy (Chen Bingliang 66-73).

CONCLUSION

Scientific evidence, literary cases, reason and human interest have rebutted most theories about the necessity of the kunisexuality taboo and prohibition. Just as pointed out by Masters, whatever its initial purpose, the kunisexuality taboo and ban are now implanted in mythical concepts about "the blood"; kunisexuality is "evil on a metaphysical level" (*Patterns* 198). And the damage done by the taboo and prohibition is greater than the advantages derived. The only benefit of the kunisexuality taboo and prohibition is the possible prevention of people who are already psychologically immature from becoming even more infantilely attached to their close kin as their symbiotic unions with their kin could be strengthened by the legitimate adding of genital component. But the disadvantages are plenty and grave. The kunisexuality prohibition in law would atrociously break apart kunisexual lovers and cruelly ruin their future, whether in erotic life or in career. This will detract from society's useful energy rather than add to it. The kunisexual horror in mind and in culture could cause all kinds of undeserved conscious and unconscious self-punishment and a whole variety of paraphilia. Ultimately, as pointed out by Marc Shell, professor of

comparative literature at Harvard University, the danger of mankind being eradicated by war is so imminent in our time as to make us justifiably wonder whether the threat posed by kunisexuality is more serious than the danger that if we still do not love each other as equals, our whole kind will become extinct.¹⁰

In a word, our conclusion, as drawn from scientific research, from reason and human interest, and from the analysis of Hong Kong literature, is that provided that society is not harmed and given consent on the part of the parties involved, mature individuals should be allowed to freely decide what to do with their own flesh sexually. In order to protect this basic human right¹¹ the kunisexuality prohibition in law should be relaxed. When the kunisexuality prohibition is relaxed, we would still, to use Masters' words, "be free, on a positive, rational basis, to promote sexual self-regulation within the home; and we would have forfeited nothing in the way of punitive powers to be exercised against rapists and exploiters" (*Patterns* 200). Nonetheless, in order to avoid the danger of intensifying characterological regression, actual kunisexual behaviour should be confined by law to those who are psychologically mature and responsible. As for who to ascertain who is psychologically fit for kunisexuality and how to ascertain it, they must be given further thought and discussed in more detail in the future.

But simply relaxing the legal prohibition is not enough. In order to avoid pathogenic consequences of repressing kunisexual impulses, the cultural and psychological taboo on kunisexuality should be lifted and the ruinous, superstition-based conception of kunisexuality gradually removed through proper sex education.

To round up the discussion, it may not be inappropriate to quote Zhou Xian again: Kunisexuality is "in fact something between two adults and it does not affect the public. Why should we permit homosexuality but oppose incest? The answer is . . . social norms and regulations which defy science and logic" (6, my translation).

NOTES

¹ As pointed out by Johnson and Price-Williams, family complex stories are the "voice of the unconscious," reflecting the tension between incestuous impulses and cultural restrictions (102-03).

² "Incestus," the Latin origin of "incest" suggests impurity and non-chastity. Also, Don James writes in his book, *The Sexual Side of Life*: "Today the word incest has assumed such a negative connotation, as a result of the great taboo that it breaks, that a large portion of the populace condemns it as so abominable that it must not even be thought about or discussed. Incest is the unthinkable, the absolutely forbidden, the completely unnatural and perhaps the cardinal sin of sex" (qtd. in Brown 325).

³ *Kuni* is Old Gothic, meaning kin.

⁴ The following is a dialogue between Yu Manzhu, a doctor of philosophy in biology and Fang Wei, a chair professor of history.

"The probability of children of kunisexual union having obvious physical defect is about 0.1 to 1 per cent. . . ."

"I am not talking about kunisexuality between one man and one woman but a whole clan engaged continuously in kunisexuality for generations."

"That depends on whether there is a defect in their genes or not. If there is, then the genetic defect will continually enlarge until the chance of giving birth to deformed, idiotic children is very large—until the defective genes are all eliminated; another possibility is until the whole clan becomes extinct. Which of the two situations will occur depends on how large the genetic defect of that clan is."

"What if the genes of the clan are without defect?"

"Then it must be the example of the Ptolemy family."

". . . What if they have survived till today?"

"Their offspring should become more and more outstanding, in the same way that a pure bred horse whose paternal and maternal origins are both outstanding should gallop faster than

both its father and mother . . . Continuous close breeding improves the genes of the offspring continuously and easily gives rise to mutation of the genes. . . .”

Fan Wei then understands . . . the son of Du Xinzi is not a freak but the first member of a new species of mankind developed by evolution! (Zhou Xian 1: 193-99, my translation)

⁵ Wolf (1995) based his view on three grounds:

Firstly, Wolf had researched for many years into the child-bride (a girl taken into the family as a daughter-in-law-to-be) marital system in some rural areas of Taiwan. He discovered that although the child-bride shared her childhood with her husband, their rate of divorce and extra-marital relationship is relatively high. However, just as pointed out by Murstein and Zhou Xian, the indifferent relationship between the child-bride and her husband may have arisen from indignant displeasure or persistent ill will at being driven involuntarily into a marriage as a child (Murstein 24; Zhou Xian 4). To prove that human beings have a natural aversion to sex with close relatives who have lived with them since their childhood, one has to start with free love amongst inmates and amongst near neighbours (Zhou Xian 4).

Wolf has also given thought to this, so he quotes in his work the Israel anthropologist, Joseph Shepfer's research and survey of Kibbutz (Wolf 436-438). Kibbutz is a kind of collective settlement or commune-like children's home in Israel. Until recently in Israel, children from different families were assigned to the care of Kibbutz soon after birth. These children grew up and studied together until they graduated from high school. Shepfer (1983) discovered from his research and survey that these people rarely married or even fell in love with each other (51-62). Wolf thus thinks that Shepfer's finding supports Westermarck's hypothesis. On the other hand, Yehudi Cohen (1978) thinks that kunisexual avoidance amongst the Kibbutz children has been exaggerated. The genuine reason why the Kibbutz children rarely married each

other is: most of them, out of patriotism, joined the army upon graduation from the high school, and were thus scattered far apart and deprived of the opportunity to marry each other (73-4).

In addition, Wolf (1995) also argues that the kunisexuality taboo is natural on the ground that primates seldom engage themselves in kunisexual intercourse. The author of this paper, however, thinks that this ground is irrelevant. That animals do not do something does not mean that humans will not do it or should not do it. For instance, primates do not write academic articles, but humans do.

⁶ For example, in Greek mythology, the first generation of gods which ruled the world consisted of Uranus (the God of the Sky) and his mother cum wife Gaea (the Goddess of the Earth). Subsequently, because Uranus treated his wife and children too tyrannically, his son, Chronos, seized an opportunity to castrate him, usurp his throne, and marry his mother Gaea and his sister Rhea. Chronos turned out to be as despotic as his father. Out of jealousy of his sons, he devoured all his sons but the youngest son, Zeus, who was fortunate enough to be rescued in time by his mother. When Zeus grew up and became full fledged, he forcefully overthrew, chased away Chronos, enthroned himself, raped his mother, Gaea, and married his younger sister, Hera. Such examples are not lacking in Chinese history either. For instance, during the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420-589 A. D.), Liu Yilong, the emperor of Sung, was murdered by his son, Liu Shao. Soon after this patricidal murderer ascended the throne, he was in turn killed and usurped by his younger brother, Liu Jun. Liu Jun was not only brutal, but he also had sex with his mother, Madame Lu (Wei Xiu 1994: 2140-44). In addition, Yang Guang, also murdered his father—Yang Jian, the first emperor of the Sui Dynasty (581-618 A. D.), usurped his father's throne, and forced his father's concubine, Madame Xuanhua, to be his own concubine.

The Oedipal theme is also common in world literature. The ancient Greek tragedy, *Oedipus Rex*, is a typical example. And in Zhou Xian's *The Incest Mutant*, Du Xinzi and his younger sister give birth to

they became very remorseful after the patricide. In order to redeem their sin and to avoid further murderous struggles among themselves, they renounced all the women in the horde, who had been possessed by the primal father (including the sons' mothers and sisters). This kind of experience and emotion has since then been handed down phylogenetically from generation to generation, forming the adamant kunisexuality taboo (204-06). The anthropologist, G. P. Murdock regards this theory of Freud's as wild fantasy (Meiselman 9). Nonetheless, in both history and mythology, the instance of a prince killing his despot-father and usurping his throne and wives is not rare.⁶ It thus seems that Freud's theory can really account for the unnamable and unreasonable "kuniphobia" (excessive fear of kunisexuality) on the part of human beings. However, even though the kunisexuality taboo and prohibition were probably justified in their origin, it does not necessarily follow that they are still justified now. To follow the Freudian scenario, the kunisexuality taboo is just a defense mechanism adopted by mankind in the infantile stage of history against their ambivalence towards their closest kin. Now that the times and conditions are changed and that mankind is becoming much more mature, envy and jealousy of close kin may be resolved by reason, and blind suppression of kunisexuality is no longer necessary.

Regarding sexual jealousy and role confusion, Malinowski and Meiselman think that kunisexuality would introduce sexual jealousy and rivalry into the family, confuse generations, identities, and roles, thereby disorganizing the family and shaking the foundation of society (Meiselman 9, 11). In his *Xing jinji (Sexual Taboos, 1991)*, Ng Man-lun puts it even more bluntly: the kunisexual taboo originated from the selfish will of the parents to prevent young and strong thieves within the house—the children—from snatching away their spouse. The older generation therefore made laws against kunisexuality to protect themselves (45). In response to the issue of sexual jealousy within the family, Masters points out that if the kunisexuals are mature, independent and responsible persons, then the threat posed by kunisexuality to the family will not be more serious than that by an ordinary extra-marital affair (Patterns 7). Similarly, Ng Man-lun thinks if a couple's relation-

ship is deep and firm, they need not worry about external temptation. On the contrary, if their relationship is in itself problematic, then anything—such as prostitution, the computer, even the broadcast of the World Cup, not just kunisexuality—may affect it. A good literary example is Huang Haoyi's movie, *Leiyu (Thunderstorm, 1996)*, an adaptation of Cao Yu's Early Republican play of the same title. In the film, the wealthy entrepreneur, Zhou Poyuan fell in love with the maid of his house, Shiping, when they were young. After giving birth to two sons—Zhou Ping and Dahai—Shiping was chased away by Zhou Poyuan's snobbish mother, and it was rumoured that she drowned herself afterwards. Zhou Poyuan could never forget Shiping; after marrying the fair lady, Fanyi, every night, he still slept alone in a small room where a photo and things left behind by Shiping were kept. For seventeen years, Zhou Poyuan only executed his bedroom duty to Fanyi once. During daytime, Zhou Poyuan always treated Fanyi indifferently. When she expressed her discontents, he forced her to the psychiatrist and take medicine. Finally, Fanyi's patience was worn out and she took the initiative to engage in kunisexuality with her step-son Zhou Ping.

Moreover, in our modern democratic society, paternalism, in which parents oppress children and the older generation enslaves the younger generation, has already been regarded with contempt. The modern conception of a harmonious family is one in which parents and children, especially grown up children, treat each other as good friends instead of masters and slaves. No doubt, the selfish psychology of the parents involved in the kunisexuality taboo has always existed, as pointed out by Ng Man-lun. But Ng also says that the social welfare for the aged has been steadily improving in recent years. When the elders enjoy a sense of security, they need not worry about their property being snatched away by their offspring.

The Hong Kong literary work which most boldly subverts the hierarchy barrier in kunisexuality must be Jin Yong's *The Celestial Eagle and the Chivalrous Couple* (1991). In this famous Kungfu novel, the hero, Yang Guo, and the heroine, Small Dragon-girl, are not related by blood at all. But when Yang is thirteen or fourteen years old, he is

a super-human, Du Bing. But, as Du Bing has a huge head and a slim body, they think they have given birth to a deformed child, and they immediately ordered their old servant to destroy the baby, just as Laius ordered a servant to kill his son, Oedipus, as soon as the latter was born. Unexpectedly, the old servant, being too kind-hearted to carry out the order, actually brings up the boy. When Du Bing grows up, he designs a plan to force his father to commit suicide in order to revenge himself. Du Bing also develops a sexual love relationship with his younger sister, Du Xue. The widespread occurrence of family complex folktales has been analyzed extensively by Johnson and Price-Williams in their book, *Oedipus Ubiquitous* (1996), too. All these are corroborative evidence of Freud's totem and taboo theory.

⁷ After looking into three hundred kunisexual relationships, Warren Farrell (1991) found that "among mutually consenting adults almost ninety-nine percent of the relationships were reported as positive" (335).

⁸ Let us look at an excerpt from the story:

Mum was a primary school teacher, wearing an oldish greyish cheongsam and a pair of oldish thick-heeled leather shoes. Her hair had turned white since she was a young woman.

He called her in the pitch-dark corridor, she turned on the lamp, smiled at him, and began to mark assignments under the lamp.

Dad was an accountant, who wore an old suit for all seasons . . . "Your dad has run away. I don't think he'll ever come back," said mum under the lamp.

"Yes."

Chen Luyuan continued to cut shoes in children's comic books . . . Many years later, he could remember that mum did not take off her shoes when she went to bed that night. He dreamt of his mother going to stamp him to death while dad was listening to radio at the end of the corridor.

After mum died, Chen Luyuan's feet suddenly ceased growing. He only grew tall, and always found it hard to

maintain balance when standing.

He thought the rest of his life was little more than tottering and stumbling in a pitch-dark corridor.

He was eighteen when he killed the first woman. At that time, he had just left the orphanage and had just been admitted to the School of Law because of his outstanding academic results (Huang Biyun, "The Butterfly Hunter" 152-53, my translation). . . .

On this piece of bloody land, he has found a humble standpoint. Here, here, no one could reject him or forsake him (62, my translation). . . .

He madly penetrated her. To some extent, corpse, whore, mistress, mother were all the same. (176, my translation)

⁹ This story subverts the positive image of the traditional Chinese filial son, echoing the phenomenon in American movies that mother-attached men are usually psychotic killers, e.g., in *Psycho* and *The Silence of the Lamb*.

¹⁰ In fact, both the West and the East have some traditional thoughts which try to query the distinction between kin and non-kin, and the reliability of blood relationship as a criterion of kinship. Christianity has always taught people that all of them are brothers and sisters of one another. "All ye are brethren" (Matt. 23.8; cf. Shell 4, 11). In "Yan yuan" in *Lun yu (The Dialectics)*, it is also said, "Within the four seas, all men are brothers."

Two Hong Kong novels—Zhong Xiayang's *Yihan zhuanqi (A Regrettable Legend)*, 1996) and Jin Yong's *Tianlong babu (The Semi-gods and the Semi-devils)*, 1991)—respectively query the distinction between kin and non-kin and the reliability of blood relationship as the criterion of kinship.

Through its convoluted and complicated plot, *A Regrettable Legend* (1996) reflects and commends the Hindu or New Age thought that all mortal beings are essentially part of an integrated whole. At one point, Yiping, the hero of the novel, comes to think that:

For half of his life, it seemed, he had been going round and round with these few people in the same room . . . Yu Zhen,

Huang Jingyue, Jingyao, Jinzuan, Baozuan, Shi Hongdi, even Cheng Han—at this moment, for these few people, his bosom was filled with a stream of affection that is amoral, non-erotic and undefinable, as if they were all his incarnations with different appearances. (241, translation). . . . They looked like five siblings existing together in harmony (287, my translation).

Among all the above characters, there was a subtle relationship. The father of Yiping and the mother of Jinzuan and Baozuan were siblings, but Yiping married them successively, in defiance of the traditional Chinese taboo against paternal cousins marrying each other; Jingyao was the adopted brother of Jinzuan, but he seduced and impregnated her; on the surface, Cheng Han was a chauffeur of the Huang's, but he turned out to be the half brother of Jinzuan and, at a certain stage, Yiping even mistakenly thought that he and Jinzuan had sex with each other without knowing their blood relation to each other. . . . At the same time, the above characters also symbolize the mortal beings; Yiping regarded them to be incarnations of himself of different looks, just as Hindu and the New Age thought consider the mortal beings—including the good and the bad—to be essentially one single entity, i.e., all in one, one in all.

Jin Yong's *The Semi-gods and the Semi-devils* also queries the position of consanguinity as the boundary of marriage through exposing the indeterminability of biological parenthood.

In *The Semi-gods and the Semi-devils* (1991), Duan Yu, the crown prince of Dali Kingdom during the Southern Song Dynasty, has successively associated with quite a few girl-friends—Zhong Ling, Mu Wanqing, Wang Yuyan—but each time he invariably discovered that they were illegitimate daughters of his promiscuous father, Duan Zhengchun. At the end of the day, however, Duan Yu actually discovered that he was not the natural son of his Duan Zhengchun (It seems that the author, Jin Yong, has deliberately made this the karmic retribution for Duan Zhengchun's promiscuity, in accordance with the Buddhist idea of karma.) From this we can see the absurdity of taking blood relationship as the watershed of marriage—you think that as that

person is not your sister, you can marry her? Okay, she is actually an illegitimate daughter of your father who hides her identity from you. You think that as that person is your father's lost daughter, you cannot marry her? Okay, you yourself actually are not your father's natural son. The situation is similar to that in the comedy, *A King and No King*, composed by Beaumont and Fletcher in 1611. In the play, Arbaces falls in passionate love with Panthea, whom he believes to be his lost blood sister. Due to the kunisexuality taboo, they almost have to die for their love. Fortunately, at the end of the day, Arbaces discovers that he is not the natural son of his king-father. Only then can the two lovers marry each other happily.

¹¹ According to the "Declaration of Sexual Rights" made by the World Association for Sexology in 1999, every human being should have the right to "express their full sexual potential" and to establish all "types of responsible sexual associations" provided that their sexual freedom does not involve "sexual coercion, exploitation and abuse."

WORKS CITED

- Anonymous. *Zhengdong zhengxi* 征東征西 [An Expedition to the East and an Expedition to the West]. Tainan: Shiyi, 1991.
- Ban Gu 班固. *Han shu* 漢書 [The Book on the Han Dynasty]. Beijing: Zhonghua Shuj, 1962.
- Cao Yu 曹禺. n. d. *Leiyu* 雷雨 [Thunderstorm]. Hong Kong: Hong Zhi Shu Dian, 1962.
- Huang Biyun 黃碧雲. "Budie zhe 捕蝶者 [The Butterfly Hunter]." *Wenrou yu baolie* 溫柔與暴烈 [Tenderness and Violence]. Hong Kong: Tiandi Tushu, 1994. 65-90.
- _____. "Duji 妒忌 [Envy]." *Qizhong Jingmo* 七種靜默 [Seven Kinds of Silence]. Hong Kong: Tiandi Tushu, 1997.
- _____. "Haozeng [Gluttony]." *Qizhong jingmo* 七種靜默 [Seven Kinds of Silence]. Hong Kong: Tiandi Tushu, 1997. 128-48.
- _____. "Shuangcheng yue 雙城月 [A Moon of Two Cities]." *Wenrou yu baolie* 溫柔與暴烈 [Tenderness and Violence]. Hong Kong: Tiandi Tushu, 1994. 65-90.

- Huang Haoyi 黃浩義, dir. *Leiyu* 雷雨 [*Thunderstorm*]. Perf. Li Meifung 李美鳳 and Huang Haoyi 黃浩義. Xingguang Yule, 1996.
- Gan Wenhui 甘文輝, dir. *Wo de jia you baba you mama* 我的家，有爸爸，有媽媽 [*My Family Has Papa and Mama*]. Hong Kong Arts Center. 3 Jan. 1999.
- Jin Yong 金庸. *Shendiao xialu* 神鵰俠侶 [*The Celestial Eagle and the Chivalrous Couple*]. 8 Vols. Hong Kong: Minghe Se, 1991.
- _____. *Tianlong babu* 天龍八部 [*The Semi-gods and the Semi-devils*]. 10 Vols. Hong Kong: Minghe Se, 1991.
- Lin Wenyin 林雯茵. "Gege, wo zhangda hou yiu jia gei ni! 哥哥，我長大後要嫁給你 [Brother, I Want to Marry you When I Grow up]." *Mingpao* 18 Oct. 1998: D6.
- Qianlimei 犀利妹. *Douya meng—hou xiandai jiqing bian* 豆芽夢：後現代激情篇 [The Dream of Bean Sprouts—A Post-modern Passionate Version]. Qianlimei. *Hau Nnianhua* 好年華 [*Good Years of Life*]. Hong Kong: Yi Chuban, 1998.
- Shen Xue 深雪. "Lanling 藍靈 [The Blue Ghost]." Shen Xue. *Yeshuang yan* 夜霜艷 [*The Charm of the Night Frost*]. Hong Kong: Huangguan, 1993. 54-75.
- _____. "Zifen 自焚 [Self-burning]." *Wanquan zisha xiaoshuo* 完全自殺小說 [*Complete Suicidal Fiction*]. Ed. Zhang Jiawei. Hong Kong: Wuyin Liangben, 1995. 8-20.
- Wei Jiahui 韋家輝, dir. *Baoyu ranshao* 暴雨燃燒 [*Burning Amidst a Rainstorm*]. Perf. Ren Dahua 任達華 and Guan Yunhe 關詠荷. 35 episodes. Asia Television. ATV, Hong Kong. 8 June—30 July, 1991.
- Wei Xiu 魏收. *Wei shu* 魏書 [*The History of Wei*]. Vol. 1. Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1994.
- Ya Si 也斯. n. d. "Jian Zhi 剪紙 (Paper-cut)." Hong Kong: Suye Wenxue.
- Yan Chun-gou 顏純鈞. "Tianqian 天譴 [Heaven's Punishing Hands]." Yan Chun-gou. *Tianqian*. Hong Kong: Tiandi Tushu, 1992. 117-32.
- Yang Fan 楊凡 (Yonfan), dir. *Meigui de gushi—Qianxi banbun* 玫瑰的故事：千禧版本 [*The Story of Rose—A Millennium Edition*].

- Perf. Zhou Yunfa 周潤發 (Chow Yun-fat) and Zhang Manyu 張曼玉 (Maggie Cheung). Hong Kong: Yonfan Film Limited, 1999.
- Yang Peipei 楊珮珮, dir. *Shendiao xialu* 神鵰俠侶 [*The Celestial Eagle and the Chivalrous Couple*]. Perf. Ren Xianqi 任賢齊 and Wu Qianlian 吳倩蓮. 35 episodes. Taiwan Television. ATV, Hong Kong, 18 July—8 September, 1998.
- Yi Shu 亦舒. *Meigui de gushi* 玫瑰的故事 [*The Story of Rose*]. Hong Kong: Tiandi Tushu, 1997.
- _____. *Yi, Se, Jia* 綺色佳. Hong Kong: Tiandi Tushu, 1997.
- _____. *Yuanwu* 圓舞 [*Waltz*]. Hong Kong: Tiandi Tushu, 1998.
- Zhong Xiaoyang 鍾曉陽. *Yihan zhuanqi* 遺恨傳奇 [*A Regrettable Legend*]. Hong Kong: Tiandi Tushu.
- Zhou Xian 周顯. *Luanlun bian* 亂倫變 [*The Incest Mutant*]. 3 Vols. Hong Kong: Yi Lin Chubanshe, 1996.
- _____. Preface. *Luanlun bian*. Hong Kong: Yi Lin Chubanshe, 1996 1: 1-8.

List of Technical References

- Allison, Anne. *Permitted and Prohibited Desires—Mothers, Comics and Censorship in Japan*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1996.
- Arens, W. *The Original Sin: Incest and Its Meaning*. New York: OUP, 1980.
- Boehrer, Bruce Thomas. *Monarch and Incest in Renaissance England: Literature, Culture, Kinship, and Kingship*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1992.
- Brown, Wenzell. "Murder Rooted in Incest." In *Patterns Incest*. Ed. R.E.L. Masters. 301-27.
- Cao Dingjun 曹定軍. *Zhongguo hunyin lousu yuanliu* 中國婚姻陋習源流 [*The Origin and Development of Undesirable Customs of China*]. Beijing: Xin Shijie Chubanshe, 1994.
- Chen Bingliang 陳炳良, ed. *Wenxue sanlun* 文學散論 [*Miscellaneous Criticism of Literature*]. Hong Kong: Xianggang Chubanshe, 1987.
- Chen Chapman 曾焯文. "Xianggang jinqin lian wenxue 香港近親戀文學 (Hong Kong kunisexual [incest] literature)." *Chung-wai*

- Literary Monthly* 29. 7 (2000): 172-192.
- _____. *Xianggang xingjing* 香港性經 [An Account of Hong Kong Sex Culture]. Hong Kong: Mingchuang Chubanshe, 1998.
- Cohen, Yehudi. "The Disappearance of the Incest Taboo." *Human Nature* 1 (1978): 72-78.
- Diamond, Milton. *Sexwatching*. London: Prion, 1992.
- Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. New York: Random House, 1952.
- Fan Wenshen 樊文勝, ed. *Xingxue cidian* 性學辭典 [A Dictionary of Sexology]. Shanghai: Shanghai Cishu Chubanshe, 1998.
- Farrell, Warren. "The Last Taboo? The Complexities of Incest and Female Sexuality." *Perry* 335-59.
- Fiedler, L. A. *Love and Death in the American Novel*. New York: Stein and Day, 1966.
- Fraiberg, Selma. "Two Modern Incest Heroes." *Reilly* 1970: 73-79.
- Freud, Sigmund. *Pelican Freud Library*. Trans. Angela Richards. Ed. Angela Richards. Vol. 7. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977.
- Hung, Eva, ed. *Paradoxes of Traditional Chinese Literature*. Hong Kong: Chinese UP, 1992.
- Johnson, Allen W., and Douglass Price-Williams. *Oedipus Ubiquitous*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996.
- Keith, McMahon. *Misers, Shrews, and Polygamists—Sexuality and Male-female Relations in Eighteenth-century Chinese Fiction*. Durham and London: Duke UP, 1995.
- _____. *Causality and Containment in Seventeenth-century Chinese Fiction*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988.
- Kiell, Norman. *Varieties of Sexual Experience—Psychosexuality in Literature*. New York: International UP, 1976.
- Klein, Melanie. *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works 1921-1945*. London: Virago, 1988.
- _____. *Narrative of a Child Analysis*. London: Hogarth, 1988.
- _____. *Selected Melanie Klein*. Ed. Juliet Mitchell. London: Penguin, 1991.
- Lindzey, Gilbert. "Some Remarks Concerning Incest, the Incest Taboo, and Psychoanalytic Theory." *American Psychologist* 22 (1967): 1051-59.

- Liu Dalin 劉達臨. *Zhongguo gudai xing wenhua* 中國古代性文化 [Sex Culture of Ancient China]. Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1993.
- Ma Haoji, ed. *Family Life Education—A Teachers' Handbook*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Family Planning Association, 1995.
- Maisch, Herbert. *Incest*. Trans. Colin Bearne. London: Deutsch, 1973.
- Masters, R. E. L. *Patterns of Incest*. New York: Julian Press, 1963.
- _____. *Violation of Taboo: Incest in the Great Literature of the Past and Present*. New York: Julian Press, 1963.
- McLennan, Karen Jacobsen. *Nature's Ban—Women's Incest Literature*. Boston: Northeastern UP, 1996.
- Meiselman, Karin C. *Incest: A Psychological Study of Causes and Effects with Treatment Recommendations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978.
- Morgan, L. H. *Ancient Society*. Chicago: Kerr, 1877.
- Murster, Bernard I. *Love, Sex and Marriage through the Ages*. New York: Springer, 1974.
- Ng, Man Lun 吳敏倫. "Personal Communication." 12 July. Hong Kong: San Lian Shudian, 1998.
- _____. "Telephone Communication." 8 February, 1998.
- _____. *Xing jinji* 性禁忌 [Sex Taboos]. Hong Kong: Ju Xian Guan, 1997.
- Perry, M. E., ed. *Handbook of Sexology, Vol. 7: Childhood and Adolescent Sexology*. New York: Elsevier, 1991.
- Plaks, Andrew. "The Problem of Incest in Jin Ping Mei and Honglou Meng." In *Paradoxes of Traditional Chinese Literature*. Hong Kong: Chinese UP, 1992. 123-46.
- Rank, Otto. *The Incest Theme in Literature and Legend*. Trans. Gregory C. Richter. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1992.
- Reilly, John M, ed. *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Invisible Man*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970.
- Santiago, Luciano P. R. *The Children of Oedipus—Brother-Sister Incest in Psychiatry, Literature, History and Mythology*. New York: Libra Publishers, 1973.
- Shell, Marc. *The End of Kinship*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hop-

- kins UP, 1988.
- Shepher, Joseph. *Incest: A Biosocial View*. New York: Academic Press, 1983.
- Su Bing 蘇冰 and Wei Lin 魏林. *Zhongguo hunyin shi 中國婚姻史 [A History of Marriage in China]*. Taipei: Wenjin, 1994.
- Sun Longji 孫隆基. *Wei duannai de minzu 未斷奶的民族 [The Unweaned Race]*. Taipei: Juliu Tushu, 1995.
- Wang Yijia 王溢嘉. *Gudian jinkan 古典今看 [A Modern View of the Classics]*. Taipei: Ju Liu Tushu, 1995.
- Wilson, James D. "Incest and American Romantic Fiction." *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 7 (1974): 31-50.
- Wolf, P. Arthur. *Sexual Attraction and Childhood Association*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1995.
- World Association for Sexology*. "Declaration of Sexual Rights." Press Release. *14th World Congress of Sexology*. Convention and Exhibition Center, Hong Kong. 27 August, 1999.
- Yan Yuanshu 顏元叔. *Tan minzu wenxue 談民族文學 [On National Literature]*. Taipei: Taiwan Xuesheng Shuju, 1973.

The Experience of the Limit: Approaching the Unknown in Maurice Blanchot's *The Madness of the Day* in Light of Kristeva's Chora

Shuling Stephanie Tsai

ABSTRACT

This study will inquire into Kristeva's notion of alterity and attempt to examine the "dialectic" relationship that Kristeva refers to between the semiotic and symbolic in language. I bring into play Maurice Blanchot's notion of "Absence" based on the analysis of *La folie du jour (The Madness of the Day)* and try to approach Blanchot's "Impossible" (l'impossible) in light of Kristeva's "semiotic chora." I suggest to find a point of intersection, which distinguishes two different but not necessarily opposing approaches to speak the unspeakable. Kristeva's chora helps to illustrate the alterity within the subject, but the effort to work the semiotic chora into the symbolic would be doomed to failure from Blanchot's standpoint. The failure of the subject's intention will constantly call into play the limit of the subjective power. For Kristeva, the subject is what he has successfully materialized in language. For Blanchot, what interests him is the frequency and the rhythm of failure or silence which fashion what the subject "is not." The common ground that links while separating the two discourses would be the concept of "the third term" which opens up the space of literature by calling into question the notion of communication.

KEY WORDS

Kristeva
Chaos
subjectivity
transgression
alterity

chora
Blanchot
postmodern ethics
transferential
madness