The University of Texas at TYLER
The Graduate School

University of Texas at Tyler
Scholar Works at UT Tyler

English Department Theses | Literature and Languages

Spring 4-25-2017

The Formation of the Autonomous Woman Through a Hegelian Lens: A Comparative Study of the British Fin de Siecle "New Woman" and the Post-Mao "Amazing" Woman

Robyn L. Buro
University of Texas at Tyler

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uttyler.edu/english_grad

Part of the Chinese Studies Commons, Comparative Literature Commons, Literature in English, British Isles Commons, Philosophy Commons, and the Women's Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
Buro, Robyn L., "The Formation of the Autonomous Woman Through a Hegelian Lens: A Comparative Study of the British Fin de Siecle "New Woman" and the Post-Mao "Amazing" Woman" (2017). *English Department Theses.* Paper 9.
http://hdl.handle.net/10950/559

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Literature and Languages at Scholar Works at UT Tyler. It has been accepted for inclusion in English Department Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholar Works at UT Tyler. For more information, please contact tbianchi@uttyler.edu.

The University of Texas at TYLER
The Graduate School

THE FORMATION OF THE AUTONOMOUS WOMAN THROUGH A HEGELIAN LENS:

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE BRITISH FIN DE SIÈCLE NEW WOMAN AND THE POST-MAO "AMAZING" WOMAN

by

ROBYN BURO

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of English

Carolyn Tilghman, Ph.D., Committee Chair

College of Arts and Sciences

The University of Texas at Tyler
May 2017

The University of Texas at Tyler
Tyler, Texas

This is to certify that the Master's Thesis of

ROBYN BURO

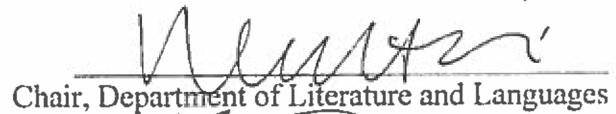
has been approved for the thesis requirement on
March 21, 2017
for the Master of Arts degree

Approvals:

Thesis Chair: Carolyn Tilghman, Ph.D.

Member: Hui Wu, Ph.D.

Member: Catherine Ross, Ph.D.



Chair, Department of Literature and Languages

Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

© Copyright 2017 by Robyn Buro
All rights reserved

Dedication

For my parents who gave their unending support and for Dr. Brady Peterson's words of wisdom.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my thanks to the tireless support of Dr. Hui Wu and Dr. Carolyn Tilghman who provided constructive criticism and encouragement throughout this process. Also, I would like to thank Richard Buro for his editorial support as well as providing a sounding board for complex ideas.

Table of Contents

List of Figures iii

Abstract iv

Chapter 1 A Hegelian Transcendence Lens for Comparisons Between the New Woman Literature of the Fin de siècle and the Amazing Woman of the Chinese Women Writers in Post Mao Chinese Literature 1

The Fin de siècle "New Woman" 1

The Post-Mao "Amazing Woman" 4

Hegel's Self-Conscious Dialectic and its use as a transcendental lens 7

Chapter 2 Review of Literary Criticism for the Fin de siècle New Woman and the Chinese Post-Mao Women Writers 10

Criticism for the New Woman 10

Problem Areas of New Woman Criticism 19

Individuality and New Woman Criticism 23

Criticism for Post-Mao Women Writers 25

Deductions about the New Woman and Post-Mao writers 35

Chapter 3 Hegel's Transcendental Dialectic and Its Functionality as a Scholarly Lens for New Woman and Chinese Post-Mao Woman Writers' Literature 37

Chapter 4 Analysis of New Woman and Chinese Post-Mao Women Writers' Texts Through a Hegelian Transcendental Lens 46

An Explanation of the New Woman and Post-Mao Primary Sources 46

Viewing New Woman and Post-Mao Women Writers' Depiction of the Female Through a Hegelian Transcendental Lens 50

Charlotte Mew's "Passed" 51

Victoria Cross' "Theodora: A Fragment" 57

George Egerton's "A Little Gray Glove" 61

Thomas Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles 64

Hu Xin's "Four Women of Forty" 69

Lu Xin'er's "The Sun is Not Out Today" 72

Fang Fang's "Dead End" 75

Chapter 5 Conclusions about New Woman and Chinese Post-Mao formation of the autonomous female 80

References: Works Cited 88

List of Figures

Figure 1: Eric Steinhart's "The Absolute Eternity" 43

Abstract

THE FORMATION OF THE AUTONOMOUS WOMAN THROUGH A HEGELIAN LENS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE BRITISH FIN DE SIÈCLE NEW WOMAN AND THE POST-MAO "AMAZING" WOMAN

Robyn Buro

Thesis Chair: Carolyn Tilghman, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Tyler
May 2017

This thesis utilizes the Hegelian concept of self-consciousness development to explore the formation of the autonomous woman within the New Woman movement of the British fin de siècle and the literature of women writers in 1980s Post-Mao China. The sexual figuration of the New Woman via an unremitting male gaze as well as the absence of individual awareness due to limited reflective self-assessment lead to a misrepresentation of the female figurehead in fin de siècle Britain. Through an in-depth study of literature by Charlotte Mew, Victoria Cross, George Egerton, and Thomas Hardy, the reader can identify key points of failure within the figuration, psychological

development, and socio-cultural creation of the New Woman image which forces her into a singular, static definition of woman. Conversely, Post-Mao women writers' focus upon realistic representations of individual women enables the female voice to be heard. Authors such as Hu Xin, Lu Xin'er, and Fang Fang connect their female characters to real women through shared suffering and internal reflection. The unity of these individuals enables Post-Mao women writers to create an authentic representation of the autonomous Chinese woman. By utilizing a lens created from Hegel's theory of self-consciousness development and mimetic reflection. The unity of these individuals enables Post-Mao women writers to create an authentic representation of the autonomous Chinese woman. By utilizing a lens created from Hegel's theory of self-consciousness development and mimetic reflection, the reader can identify those qualities that are essential to the development of female autonomy and individual freedom.

Chapter 1: A Hegelian Transcendence Lens for Comparisons Between the New Woman Literature of the Fin de siècle and the Amazing Woman of the Chinese Women Writers in Post Mao Chinese Literature

The Fin de siècle "New Woman"

As noted by Oxford Bibliographies Online, the final decade of the 1800s, or fin de siècle, in England was a time of social upheaval and modernized development (Livesey "Fin de siècle" www.oxfordbibliographies.com). A primary literary and societal focus of the British fin de siècle was the New Woman (Dowling 438). At her finest discrimination, the New Woman exemplified women's burgeoning push toward gender equality in the patriarchal world of Europe. The New Woman in late nineteenth-century literature is a quintessential symbol of feminism; therefore, she is a figurehead upon which fin de siècle feminist authors and their male supporters subvert "the autonomy—the subjectivity—that the pen represents…she [the New Woman] also becomes herself an embodiment of just those extremes of mysterious and intransigent Otherness which culture confronts with worship or fear, love or loathing" (Gilbert and Gubar 19). The symbolic figurehead of the feminist movement in Britain is intended to be subversive and reactionary to the masculine desire for dominance. Though the New Woman functions as a figurehead of female independence, I agree with scholars who contend that her figuration within Victorian society further ensnares women within the confines of the male "protective" gaze (Collins 311; Dowling 447; Kramer 150; Rosenthal 35; Silverman 19; Stannard, qtd. in Youngkin 311). In Victorian literature, the male "gaze" derives its connotation from the manner in which male authors see (i.e. define) women--through

figuration or as Silverman asserts "it *constructs* its object through a process of colonization, delimitation, configuration and inscription" ("History, Figuration and Female Subjectivity in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*" 7). According to the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* the term "figure" is associated with the "bodily shape, especially that of a woman" (529). When connected to the suffix "tion," the woman's figure is given "ornamentation by means of designs" (529) from a removed, typically masculine, source. The female perspective viewed the New Woman as a powerful female figure who would bring social change (Heilmann 27) while the male gaze saw the New Woman as an androgynous "Other" who directly opposed traditional, patriarchal standards (Bauer 100). The dichotomy between the male and female interpretation of the New Woman undermined her efficacy as the figurehead of early feminism. Additionally, the emphasis upon class distinction in New Woman authorship called into question her universal role as a character for social change (Dowling 444). Because the New Woman's definition exists within this gendered and classed dichotomy, she was trapped by her own reactive desire to gain independence from the masculine dominator. It is the reactive nature of the New Woman movement that led to her inevitable dissolution at the beginning of World War I (Diniejko "The New Woman Fiction" www.victorianweb.org). The New Woman serves multifarious purposes within social and literary spheres; however, I have chosen to focus on her functionality as a reaction to masculine dominance; therefore, I will refer to her formation and subsequent use as "reactionary." It is important to note that the term "reactionary" does not denote a specific political agenda but a social intention (*COED* 1196). The authors, male and female, that made up the New Woman era created the New Woman character as means of rebelling against strongly held ideology about the female's

place within society (Rosenthal 36). The reactionary figurehead of the New Woman was created to ensure female autonomy; however, as the First World War progressed, women were "allowed greater freedom" due to their service in the war effort (Rudersdorf "The New Woman" https://dp.la). Increased freedom helped to satisfy the need for female autonomy; thus, a feminist figurehead was no longer necessary. Though New Woman scholarship has reemerged in recent years, the reactionary force of female individuality remains noticeably absent from research.

Per G. W. F. Hegel, the consciousness' ability to throw off all "semblance of being burdened with something alien" to finally acquire "its own essence" is called Absolute Knowing (*Phenomenology* 56-57). For any human being, the capacity to recognize the qualities unique to the individual self is what provides each of us with autonomy. We can make our own decision despite positive or negative influence. The female's quest for individuality is directly correlated to Hegel's premise because women, like men, possess consciousness. Hegel's theory of Absolute Knowing is transcendental. Through life experiences and recurrent reflection upon those experiences, the individual possesses an opportunity to grow toward a complete sense of self (de Laurentiis 262; Redding https://plato.standford.edu; Steinhart www.ericstienhart.com; Westphal 3). Both the New Woman and the Post-Mao "Amazing Woman" were created by their respective female authors to attain female individuality. Though their aims were similar, the New Woman authors and the Post-Mao women writers take divergent approaches toward the goal of individual autonomy. Rather than focus on the characteristics inherent to each individual woman, the New Woman was created as a response to "debates over marriage, sexualities, political rights, labor conditions, life styles, and fashions" (Hughes 233). The

New Woman figure was created as a reaction to patriarchal dominance rather than as a method of exploring the inherent freedoms within the female consciousness; therefore, the New Woman failed to help women achieve Hegel's definition of Absolute Knowing. Conversely, the Post-Mao woman writer created a "gallery of female images" which "powerfully project the anguish and frustration suffering and accusation, love and ideals of women in contemporary China" (Lai-fong Leung 137). Post-Mao women writers choose to focus on an authentic representation of the Chinese female; therefore, they created a montage of various individual Chinese women to better show the unique life events that define this group of females. The multi-faceted portraits created by the Post-Mao women writers offer a unique opportunity for Chinese women to acknowledge the feminine qualities that have previously been denied to them throughout Mao's regime and to reflect on life experiences that enabled further transcendent growth to Absolute Knowing. To better understand the New Woman's failure to transcend beyond patriarchal limitations, I intend to compare her creation and purpose to that of the Chinese "Amazing Woman" as depicted in Post-Mao women's literature.

The Post-Mao "Amazing Woman"

Post-Mao women writers, like their fin de siècle sisters, seek female emancipation from a repressive patriarchy (Wu 407). Under Mao Zedong, political isolation, xenophobia, and collectivist attitudes forced women to give up their gender difference and adopt a neutral, "equal" position in the proletariat (Kristeva 67). Upon the death of Mao, the necessity for economic reforms opened China to Western influence, making gender difference a primary goal of social change (Anthony 110; Barlow 1288; Wang

151; and Xiaomei 5). While Post-Mao women do not feel an affinity for feminist doctrines, they, like Han Xiaohui, are inspired by theorists such as Simone de Beauvoir and Betty Friedan as well as literature dedicated to the image of the New Woman (*Once Iron Girls* 81). Post-Mao women writers may be inspired by feminist philosophy; however, they do not lose sight of their national history (King "Chinese Literature Post-Mao" www.oxfordbibliograhies.com). The personal experience narrative dominates the field of female literary creation within Post-Mao China because it gives a unique voice to the individual's struggle for self-acquisition: "For many years our literature has been confined to the extreme of collectivism, with nobody having self…People had no preparation to receive purely private expression" (Wang 165). The Post-Mao female author, through her emphasis on the individual, establishes a view of "woman" that focuses on each distinctive trait of the individual rather than defining the entire group of Chinese women by a single image or figurehead. Post-Mao women writers emphasize realistic depictions of the individual woman through several strategies: acknowledgement of and appreciation for gender difference (Fang, "On Women," *Once Iron Girls*, 62); emphasis on the necessity of self-reflection (Bi, "Seeking Amazing Women," *Once Iron Girls*, 52); the prominence of life experience narratives about women and men within Post-Mao China (Zhang, "The 'Grand' Realm Versus The 'True' Realm," *Once Iron Girls*, 163); and recurrent references to the unifying humanity within man and woman (Lu, "Women and the Crisis," *Once Iron Girls*, 133). Through their realistic depiction of the Chinese woman, Post-Mao women writers oppose the traditional views of the Maoist state while advancing their cause of gender equality in modern China (Hershatter et al., *Women in China's Long Twentieth Century*, 94). Post-Mao women writers wish to

portray woman as an individual within the Chinese social system rather than a figurehead for an isolated gender movement (Duke, Xiaomei, Anthony, Hershatter et al., Leung, and Yi); therefore, they effectively move beyond the limitations imposed by Mao's regime.

Individual experience is a key element within the Post-Mao woman writer's story. To more fully understand the events that lead to female oppression and the drive for autonomy, the reader must be exposed to the multi-faceted characters that make up China's other "half of the sky." A major point of divergence between the British New Woman and the Chinese Post-Mao woman is the emphasis on the collective versus the individual. For the Chinese citizen, oppression within Mao's regime directly correlates to the collective; thus, when Mao's rule was at an end, the importance of the individual becomes part of the intellectuals' desire to embrace the individual voice through "setting free [*fang*]" instead of maintaining a collective ignorance through "closing off [*shou*]" (Schwarcz 580). The freedom to speak out against the political and social oppression of Mao's regime engenders the Chinese intellectual and Post-Mao women in particular, to seek individuality. While the Post-Mao woman writer seeks to move away from a collective consciousness, the British New Woman desires to unify all females behind a single rebellious figurehead (Hetherington 57). The New Woman authors of the fin de siècle want to emphasize the need for social rebellion; however, they do not take into consideration the unique facets of the women that make up the figurehead they create. As Matthew Beaumont states, "The New Woman is not a singular but a plural and conflicted phenomenon" (217). She is a conglomeration of individual attitudes toward female autonomy. By attempting to fit multifarious attitudes into one reactionary symbol, the New Woman authors' actions result in a futile attempt to move women away from the

oppressive force of patriarchal dominance. If New Woman authors would attempt to show the individual attitudes and experiences of women, the vision of female autonomy would be better served.

Hegel's Self-Conscious Dialectic and its use as a transcendental lens

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel published *Phenomenology of Spirit* in 1807 as an introductory piece for his philosophical theory of consciousness development (Findlay v). Within the complex text of Hegel's philosophical introduction, the formation of the individual consciousness takes precedence. According to Hegel, self-consciousness is broken into two separate entities, consciousness "being in-itself" and consciousness "being for-an-other" (*Phenomenology* 104). Hegel notes, that these two entities are one and the same, and it is the process by which the individual defines the entities which make up individuality: "This curtain [of appearance] hanging before the inner world is therefore drawn away, and we have the inner being [the I] gazing into the inner world…an inner being containing different moments, but for which equally these moments are immediately *not* different—*self-consciousness* (*Phenomenology* 103). Acquisition of self-awareness depends upon a unified cognition that integrates objects (i.e. people, places, events) that surround the individual and the individual's own self-conception (Westphal 5). The cyclical process of analysis within the individual mind is the driving force behind the development of self-consciousness and transcendence toward what Hegel calls "Absolute Knowing" (Steinhart, "Absolute Knowing" www.ericsteinhart.com). For an individual to reach a state of "Absolute Knowing" s/he must rationally reflect on what makes up his or her existence—experience. Allegra de

Laurentiis posits that our natural consciousness (innate self-awareness) can be the source of this reflective action, "precisely on account of its implicit self-reflexivity, natural consciousness can eventually reflect upon itself (be "for-itself") and become self-consciousness (become "in-and-of-itself")" (*Blackwell's Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* 252). Despite the complex nature of Hegel's theory, the concept of reflection is clearly definable. In order for an individual to gain a clear sense of self, s/he must reflect upon the experiences and influences that make up his/her unique life (Levinas, qtd. in Vasseleu; Chiereghin 55; de Laurentiis 262; McLaughlan 52; Stone 134). Only through consistent self-reflection over the course of one's life, is it possible to achieve Absolute Knowing (i.e. gain a true sense of self).

For the purpose of this paper, Hegel's theory of self-reflection as a means of transcendence will be used as the scholarly lens to examine key pieces of literature from New Woman and Post-Mao women writers. Within each of these groups, several authors stand out as primary examples of the failure and success of self-reflection. During the New Woman era, Charlotte Mew's "Passed," Victoria Cross' "Theodora: A Fragment," George Egerton's "A Little Gray Glove," and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* all represent primary facets of the New Woman character; however, they also exemplify the reactionary nature to the figurehead's formation during the fin de siècle. During the Chinese Post-Mao era, several authors provide key points of wisdom about the philosophy of women writers in *Once Iron Girls* by Hui Wu. Additionally, short stories such as "Four Women of Forty" by Hu Xin, "The Sun is Not Out Today" by Lu Xin'er, and "Dead End" by Fang Fang each demonstrate the Chinese woman's quest for autonomy and transcendence. Through analysis of the literary criticism for these two

literary periods as well as critical analysis of the selected texts using the self-reflective lens found in Hegel's transcendental dialectic, this paper will attempt to add a new perspective to New Woman and Post-Mao women writer scholarship by demonstrating how the reactionary attitude of New Woman authors toward male dominance forced their figurehead into gender and class stasis (Mendes "The New Woman" www.oxfordbibliographies.com). While the figurehead of the New Woman diminishes at the end of the nineteenth-century, the emphasis on individual experience and self-reflection allows the Post-Mao "Amazing Woman" an opportunity to transcend patriarchal limitations.

Chapter 2 Review of Literary Criticism for the Fin de siècle New Woman and the Chinese Post-Mao Women Writers

Criticism for the New Woman

Scholarship about the New Woman has primarily focused on the feminist response to figuration by the dominant patriarchy, and the dichotomous opinions related to the social criticism dictated by the female figurehead of the fin de siècle. The nineteenth-century sees the term "figuration" as a denotation of the sexualized, visually appealing/repellant female form. Periodical articles such as "The Girl of the Period" would define the Victorian woman as "'a creature who dyes her hair and paints her face, whose sole aim is unbounded luxury and whose dress is the chief object of such thought and intellect as she possesses'" (qtd. in Tusan 170). This visual figuration of the female is attributed to both sides of the New Woman debate as she is also shown in "caricatures of so-called 'independent women'...depicting women in masculine dress and following non-traditional pursuits" (Tusan 170). Figuration for the New Woman possesses a negative connotation due to its connection with sexualized and submissive depictions of women. However, the New Woman author utilizes figuration within his/her writing to provide a visual reference which "might be defined outside that construct" of negative, sexualized visual connotation established by the patriarchy that places women "'in relation' (as object) to man" (Helland 16). The limited view of authors and critics is clearly indicated by the current feminist and social criticism of the New Woman. Limited attention is given by scholars to the individuality of the female or the importance of

realistic representations of feminine autonomy as a means of counteracting the dominance of the patriarchy.

In addition to the lack of attention paid to female individuality, the reactionary tactics often used by the New Woman author to formulate the feminist figure misrepresent the goal of female autonomy. For example, rather than destroying the masculine figuration of the female, New Woman authors reinforced the visual, often sexual, connotation associated with female figuration by creating a caricaturized feminist figurehead (Collins 311; Law 251; Ouida 613; Pykett 158; Silverman 19; Tusan 172). Additionally, New Woman authors frequently reinforce their reactionary position by taking on the masculine persona to publish within patriarchal social circles. Adoption of masculine pseudonyms and masculine narrators ensures New Woman authors' failure to gain what Gilbert and Gubar state is the most important element of female authorship: "In order to define herself as an author she must redefine the terms of her socialization…she can begin such a struggle only by actively seeking a *female* precursor who…proves by example that a revolt against patriarchal literary authority is possible" (49). Throughout New Woman scholarship, it is the male gaze by which the New Woman is judged. No attention is given to qualities inherent within the female; rather, it is her sexual nature and untraditional attitudes or behaviors that hold most critical interest. It is for these reasons that alternative sources of criticism should be found to enhance understanding of feminist discourse around the world (Diniejko "The New Woman in Late Victorian Fiction" www.victorianweb.org).

Feminist criticism of the New Woman figure is the primary focus of many critical articles about the late nineteenth-century female figure. A major source of criticism about

the New Woman's formation is Tracy Collins' article, "Athletic Fashion 'Punch', and the Creation of the New Woman." Collins addresses the formation of the New Woman as a social critique by an anxious male patriarchy: "[Punch] created a liberating picture of women at the end of the century but, at the same time, used its captions and border texts to make the New Woman's body signify the anxieties patriarchal culture had about her social personality and politics" (310). By creating a figure of the female, *Punch* authors sought to create a way in which males could regain their dominance over the anxieties associated with the New Woman. In "'A Confusion of Many Standards': Conflicting Value Systems in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*," Bernard Paris addresses figuration as a means of patriarchal control in the field of literary scholarship. Paris utilizes John Stuart Mill's assertions about a "confusion of many standards" (Mills, qtd. in Paris 59) to explain Hardy's difficulty in squaring Tess' figure with an assertion of "purity." The patriarchal tradition of female subjection by dominant men is represented by Nature: "In obedience to the law of sexual selection, [the milkmaids] are all in love with Angel Clare, the most attractive male they have seen…they are doomed to lives of frustration of despair" (66). Jules Law, in "A 'Passing Corporeal Blight': Political Bodies in 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles,'" also uses Nature to explore the figuration of the female body. He notes, "the ways in which her [Tess'] gender makes her susceptible to certain kinds of class manipulation, and the ways in which her class make her susceptible to certain kinds of sexual construction…" (247). Law sees Tess' body as a metaphorical link to the temporality of the New Woman image; therefore, she functions as a reactionary symbol against the dominant patriarchal culture of the fin de siècle.

The figuration of the female takes on a new meaning in the colonial literature of late nineteenth-century Britain. In "Closed to Oriental Heroines: Ethos of the Colonial Text," Hager Ben Driss notes, "His [male's] observation of an Oriental female resembling a white woman leads him to the conclusion that the civilized woman internalizes the degenerate native female" (169-70). In the colonial text, figuration of the female is related to imperialist anxieties of ownership and slavery. The New Woman exemplifies the male anxiety about loss of control. Driss notes that subjectification is the masculine coping mechanism, "either devaluating and punishing the female, or over-evaluating and transforming her into a fetish" (170). Rebecca Stott takes the male gaze further when she notes its use as a warning about the "debilitating effects of woman" ("The Dark Continent" 70). Additionally, figuration of the female also links her to racial prejudice. Stott notes, "The white body conceals the black body with its threatening and primitive sexuality, threatening to consume the virility of the white male" (81). The colonial attitudes of suppression through devaluation or fetish bled over to other literature of the fin de siècle. In a similar colonial vein to Driss and Stott, Kaja Silverman notes, in "History, Figuration and Female Subjectivity in 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles,' that "the gaze never innocently alights on its object. Rather, it *constructs* its object through a process of colonization, delimitation, configuration and inscription" (7). Rather than focus solely on the negative aspects of the male gaze, Lyn Pykett, in her article, "Ruinous Bodies: Women and Sexuality in Hardy's Late Fiction," addresses the use of the male gaze to destroy the "doll of English fiction" (158). Additionally, she notes Hardy's negotiation of the patriarchal standards through the male gaze. Pykett states, "Hardy is working within a system of representational codes in which the female body was rendered as a series of

(usually eroticized) fetishized physical parts" (159). To create a story that would epitomize the purpose of the New Woman, Hardy must utilize the male gaze in order to subtly negate the figuration of the female; however, the complexity of the female figure cannot easily be subsumed.

The figure of the New Woman exemplifies the sexual and social anxieties of the late nineteenth-century; therefore, her figure is also determined by her negative social connotations. Michelle Elizabeth Tusan notes, "Feminists had high hopes for the icon…she embodied both traditional and progressive ideals in her role as a politically engaged social reformer" ("Inventing the New Woman: Print Culture and Identity Politics During the Fin-de-Siècle" 172). The figure of the New Woman is no longer a simple object to subjugate; she has now become a figure of political revolution. As Gilbert and Gubar note in "The Queen's Looking Glass," the New Woman figure is no longer a fragile image; instead, she must "kill the angel's necessary opposite and double, the 'monster' in the house," (*Madwoman in the Attic* 17). Figuration of the New Woman is fraught with complexity because the feminist ideal is not simply a figure; instead, she is a mixture of fragility and power, sexuality and virginity. The complexity of the New Woman does not lend itself to the absolutism of figuration. As Naomi Hetherington notes, "…the New Woman novel complicates this binary through the figure of the female freethinker…in her inability to imagine her sexual self outside of its discursive structures" (57).

The New Woman is introduced to society through the figure of patriarchal periodicals like *Punch*. Though feminists appropriate and rebuild the figure of the New Woman to fit their own political agenda, her figuration continues to be sexualized or de-

sexed by the male gaze. Sexualization is seen most clearly in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy. Despite Hardy's intention to create a "pure" figure in Tess, he attempts to show this purity through figuration: "The novel abounds in lyrical praises of her beauty…'little upward lift in the middle of her red top lip' that is 'distracting, infuriating, maddening'" (Paris 76) Hardy, when he attempts to create a New Woman character cannot escape the sexualized figuration found within the dominant male gaze (Pykett 160). Through Hardy's failure to move away from the dominant patriarchal perspective of women, the reader can easily identify the officious quality of the patriarchy and the New Woman authors' inequality to the task of transcendence towards female autonomy.

A second focal point for current New Woman criticism is her status as a revolutionary symbol. In her novel, *The Victorian Spinster and Emerging Female Identities*, Carrie Wadman draws upon the attitudes of the female spinster to explain the subversive political agenda for fin de siècle feminists. She notes the spinster's qualities such as "lack of husband, lack of children, lack of traditional home, lack of financial support, presumption of masculinity and unattractiveness … gave this figure its radical possibility" (1). For Wadman, the spinster is the New Woman; thus, the figure of the intellectual, powerful, masculine woman is politically relevant to female emancipation. Heike Bauer also addresses sexual inversion and the transgendered New Woman. In "Theorizing Female Inversion," she notes that fin de siècle feminists embraced the rhetoric of anthropological scientists of the time because they provide a new response for the woman question. Bauer posits, "This rhetoric represented the New Woman as social and sexual hermaphrodites, as an 'intermediate sex' that existed between and thus outside of the biological and social order" (Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, qtd. in Bauer 100). The

New Woman's desire for emancipation via masculine dress and behavior also links her to the male decadent. Linda Dowling compares these two rebels in her article, "The Decadent and the New Woman." According to her research, Dowling notes, "both raised as well profound fears for the future of sex, class, and race" (436). For the patriarchy, the New Woman is an emblem of rebelliousness and social disquiet among all women.

Several critics address the New Woman's rebelliousness through her actions and philosophical connections to other radical sources. In "A Club of Their Own," Linda Hughes asserts, "The Literary Ladies were a crucial component of the pre-history of New Woman writers: the widespread ridicule and publicity of 1889 helped familiarize the public with images of women entering hitherto off-limits public spaces to pursue professional goals" (253). The intention of the Literary Ladies organization was to provide women with a social space in which their views would be accepted; however, it also served as an encroachment on the male-dominated intellectual sphere. Similarly, Elizabeth Carolyn Miller's *Framed* draws upon the politically charged connections between the New Woman writers and other revolutionary movements such as the French Reign of Terror and Irish bombings of the late 1800s: "The figure of the woman terrorist…linked the modern problem of political crime to debates about who should have political representation" (189). Female acts of violence and/or rebellion served to highlight the radicalization of the New Woman in the later years of the fin de siècle; however, they also move her further away from autonomy since the primary focus of radical feminists is political: "Revolutionary women… [emphasize] that revolutionary action conflicts with traditional divisions between public and private—a salient theme in the context of New Women and first-wave feminism" (Miller 190). Through their

emphasis on political agendas, the first-wave feminists of the New Woman era lose sight of the drive for autonomy from the patriarchy.

In scholarship related to the political symbolism of the New Woman, only two researchers focus on the complexities found within the New Woman/feminist discourse. Matthew Beaumont, in "'A Little Political World of My Own': The New Woman, the New Life, and 'New Amazonia,'" analyzes the breakdown in purpose between the New Woman and the radical feminist within the fin de siècle. He quotes, "'rather than a unified and cohesive body, feminists comprised a fractured collectivity of groups and webs of affiliation marked by disagreement as much as by consensus'" (Felski, qtd. in Beaumont 221). Dichotomous purposes lead to the dissolution of the New Woman in the years following World War I; however, the continued push for female individuality and emancipation is not dissuaded by the destruction of the New Woman. Abigail Rosenthal provides a reason for the contention surrounding the New Woman as well as emphasizes the need for individuality. She notes, "Perhaps one would get closer to feminism if one could determine a motive for it that would not require one to wear the mask…the feminist has already risked too much not to be struck by the question" ("Feminism Without Contradiction" 31). By fighting for their freedom, women have moved toward a sense of autonomy; however, they have not accepted the independence that comes from transcendental self-knowledge. Women are still enslaved by their adherence to and utilization of the fragile female figure established in literature and society. The New Woman has become trapped by her own revolutionary, reactionary symbolism.

Criticism about the New Woman is varied, especially when addressing the functionality of her role as a figure of social change. In her article, "'Independent in

Thought and Expression, Kindly and Tolerant in Tone,'" Molly Youngkin addresses the negative views of the women's rights publication, *Golden Gates* and its editor, Henrietta Stannard. Youngkin notes, "By April 1895, *Golden Gates* seems to have become downright hostile toward women [the New Woman]; two particularly negative items about women include: 'Are Bearded Women Coming,'...and a poem titled 'A Woman's Weakness'" (322). The traditional views of society work in stark contrast to the rebellious attitudes of the New Woman, and these contentious attitudes lead to separation even among proponents of feminine freedom. Similarly, Joan Busfield criticizes the use of madness in females as a literary metaphor for gender difference. She notes, "there are dangers of misrepresentation in its [feminist writing's] almost exclusive focus on women… is not very helpful if the objective is to understand and explain, not just describe, women's situation" ("The Female Malady?" 260). Busfield's assertions about feminist misrepresentation of history as a means of furthering the ideal of the New Woman indicate a clear ulterior motive in fin de siècle literature. Per Busfield, the frequent connection of madness to women, especially by New Woman authors, creates a false sense of emphasis. Busfield argues that the madness within late-Victorian patients should be addressed equally for both sexes rather than erroneously focusing on women: "The changes in the images of madness during the [late nineteenth] century not only incorporated and reflected perceptions of men and women...they also helped to modify and change the cultural assumptions and expectations about gender difference" (275-76). The New Woman's primary focus is placed squarely on women's comparative difference from men rather than exploring the facets of what makes women independent as human beings. Lauren Simek, in "Feminist 'Cant' and Narrative Selflessness in Sarah Grand's

New Woman Trilogy," argues that the New Woman exemplifies a dualistic viewpoint. First, she represents the "active self-consciousness and public expression and debate of moral belief." Second, she represents the "more intuitive, private, and often unvoiced conception of virtue" (338). Simek acknowledges the dualistic opinions of the New Woman in the nineteenth-century and details Grand's resolution to this problem. Per Grand, women may gain an understanding of themselves through a continual movement between "a realization of the importance of understanding oneself from the perspective of others" and "an understanding of the ethical risks posed by being too concerned with one's moral appearance" (345). It is evident from Grand's argument that the New Woman holds a tenuous position within nineteenth-century society. She depicts the possibility of female autonomy, but she also serves as a harbinger for sinful narcissism.

Problem Areas of New Woman Criticism

There are two primary points in the criticism of the New Woman negate her functionality as a symbol of feminine emancipation. These areas of concern are the overarching attention to the figuration of the New Woman despite her clear purpose for emancipatory individuality and the dichotomous view of the New Woman from feminist and patriarchal critics. These two areas of concern indicate the reactionary nature of the New Woman's development as well as the continuous misconception of her purpose within modern feminism. Each area of concern for the fin de siècle New Woman is a point of direct contrast to the emphasis Post-Mao women writers place on the individual woman's story as a means of representing her emancipation from not only the patriarchal dictates of her time and locale but also the universal attitudes of gender difference (Yi 46-47).

Two critical foci dominate New Woman scholarship: the sexualized figuration of the New Woman character and the misrepresentation of individual women through the all-encompassing image of the New Woman. Too much attention is paid to the figuration of the New Woman that forces her into a state of continual subjugation to the dominant patriarchy. The majority of criticism related to the New Woman addresses her figural formation and/or the masculine gaze upon that figure. A major source of criticism is directed toward the formation of the New Woman in the periodical *Punch*. Collins' assertion that "an analysis of vision gives crucial insight into the way the Victorians constructed experience" (316) shows the depth of figuration's importance on the Victorian literary tradition as well as the elemental nature of the New Woman figure. Throughout the critical reception of the New Woman, attention is given to the characteristics of her form rather than her philosophical purpose. She is nothing but a picture that has been put before society to, as Jules Law states, "adopt [a specific attitude] in response to the social fate of her gendered body" ("A 'Passing Corporeal Blight'" 251). The fate of the New Woman is directly related to the critical interpretation of her bodily figure. She cannot escape her gender because it is what defines her as female. However, critical attention is not given to the power of the individual female voice that would allow her to resist the given definition; rather, it continuously refers to figuration through the transgressive New Woman or the temptation shown in the eroticized female physique. The New Woman's duality as a sexualized and de-sexualized figure within feminist literature from the British fin de siècle intensifies the sense of misrepresentation through figuration. Male and female authors of the fin de siècle focus on her sexual or

sexless nature while ignoring the realistic, individualized qualities of the New Woman figurehead.

Kaja Silverman examines the fictional representation of the New Woman in her article, "History, Figuration, and Female Subjectivity." Her critical interpretation of Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* frequently attempts to shed light on the use of figuration to defend the purity of the subjugated female; however, she fails to acknowledge Hardy's attempt to represent the real woman of the fin de siècle. Silverman asserts, "Her [Tess'] construction as image, on the other hand, speaks to her viewer's or maker's desire for visual control" (27). Again, the male gaze of the narrator is the critical focus. While Silverman addresses Hardy's desire to use Tess as a representation of the pure modern woman, it is the figure that dominates her criticism rather than the realistic qualities of this modern woman. It is this reoccurring motif and critical attitude that suggests the New Woman's status as a reactionary tactic against patriarchal oppression rather than as a real movement toward female autonomy.

The negative attitude toward the New Woman's reactionary nature is emphasized through the criticism about her efficacy as a symbol of female autonomy. Heike Bauer asserts that the New Woman author embraces masculine figuration to assert her "affirmative politics of female inversion, because it was understood as a form of rational female masculinity, marginalized same-sex desire" (99). Critical interpretation of the masculinized New Woman moves her purpose toward that of the militant feminist; however, not all women agree with this strategy. Henrietta Stannard states that branding all women "was foolish because it focused on the 'innate foolishness of single individuals" (qtd. in Youngkin 320). Critical figuration of the New Woman isolates her

into a single figure that envelops all women. Female emancipation should move women away from a singular, fragile figure in the eyes of the social patriarchy. As noted in "Clash of Cultures in the 1910s and 1920s," the New Woman goal is "expressing autonomy and individuality" ("The New Woman" https://ehistory.osu.edu). However, critical interpretation of the New Woman indicates that her goal focuses on responding to or opposing the male ideal instead of finding her own sense of self.

In "Inventing the New Woman," Michelle Elizabeth Tusan notes, "By early 1897, the New Woman had faded as a contested icon in British culture...Although feminist papers such as *The Woman's Signal* and *Shafts* kept their virtuous and respectable image until their own demise around 1900, the New Woman was no longer used as a symbol for the movement" (177-78). The dissolution of the New Woman as a figure for female individuality is intriguing, but there is no explanation for this breakdown. One can deduce that the dichotomous nature of New Woman discourse between patriarchy and New Woman proponents could provide the source of her devolution; however, critical scholarship is noticeably absent on this issue. While critical attention is paid to the formation of the New Woman and her functionality within the nineteenth-century social sphere, acknowledgement of her transcendent quality is almost nonexistent. The lack of critical attention to the growth of individuality within the fin de siècle emphasizes the reactionary nature of the New Woman formation. The oppressive force of patriarchal standards in Victorian England leads to the development of rebellious ideology---the New Woman exists as one facet of this temporally finite movement.

Individuality and New Woman Criticism

While it is clear that the majority of critical attention paid to the New Woman relates to her figuration and dualistic interpretation by male and female audiences, a few critics have been able to move beyond the temporally finite sphere of the British fin de siècle. In "Feminisms/Pretexts: Fragments, Questions, and Reflections," Barbara Babcock addresses the varied opinions related to the formation of feminist ideology and the function of the "new woman" within this paradigm: "[The new woman] means the woman not yet classified, perhaps not classifiable, the woman *new* not only to men, but to herself" (Parsons, qtd. in Babcock 62). For Babcock, the New Woman and all female figures enable women to discover their own individual identity. The process is unending and complex; however, it is essential to the development of autonomy: "If we postmodern feminists do our work well…our texts will, of necessity, simultaneously claim and deconstruct our identities as women, as feminists…" (64). Babcock looks at the New Woman figure as a catalyst for the individual discovery of identity rather than emphasizing her functionality as a sexualized figure in response to masculine domination.

Daniel Brown approaches the New Woman within George Egerton's *Keynotes* in a similar manner to that of Babcock. In his article, "George Egerton's 'Keynotes': Nietzschean Feminism and 'Fin-De-Siècle' Fetishism," Brown compares the theories of Nietzsche with Egerton's emphasis on autobiography and female boldness: "This principle, of constantly creating one's selfhood by embracing change and impermanence, is the overarching theme that draws *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and must also be what Egerton understands…through her female protagonist" (147). Like Babcock, Brown's article examines the New Woman as a vessel for deeper analysis of the individual's self-

consciousness. Through the exploration of life, the female character engenders the drive to grow reflectively into a more fulfilled and actualized individual. This growth moves beyond the text toward female autonomy: "While Egerton, like Nietzsche, maintains categories of 'woman' and 'truth,' her critique of a reductive masculine quest for 'the *ewig weibliche*,'...there is a truth to woman but that it is not accessible to the dogmatic masculinist will to truth, for it is dynamic and perspectival" (151).

Matthew Beaumont's article "'A Little Political World of My Own,'" stands out from other New Woman criticism in its attention to the spuriousness of the fictional New Woman figure. Beaumont directly addresses the failure of the imaginary utopia of the New Woman author. He notes, "The narrator...enjoys a liberating dream of an ideal country run collectively by a far-distant feminist sisterhood, but finally awakes in the present to find herself alone in her study" (216). Per Beaumont, the New Woman figurehead is superfluous if the reality of her dream is not made clear. New Woman writers utilize the fictional world as a means of escape from the patriarchal oppression of their time; however, their figurehead's realistic qualities are not clearly shown. Critics must look beyond the fictional account toward the individual's beliefs, as Beaumont does, to better understand the emancipatory nature of the New Woman. Though Babcock, Beaumont, and Brown look beyond the figuration and dichotomous critical lens associated with the New Woman, their theories of female autonomy through reflection and transcendence are subsumed by the overarching critical emphasis on the New Woman as a figurehead.

Criticism for Post-Mao Women Writers

While fin de siècle New Woman critics focus on female figuration and male/female difference, the critical interpretation of the Post-Mao women writers is dedicated to the concept of individuality within the collectivist framework. Within the spectrum of criticism about Post-Mao literature, and women writers, three primary themes stand out: the influence of Western schools of thought such as feminism upon Chinese women's literature; the junction between female writing and nationalistic patriotism; and the reclamation of a gendered self-awareness after the sexual oppression of Mao's regime (Anthony 109; Barlow 1288; Hershatter and Wang 1406; Schwarcz 592; Stevens 83; Yang 336). By looking at the critical reception of Post-Mao women writers, self-discovery is clearly emphasized within their works rather than a reactionary measure to government or patriarchal oppression.

In "A New Romantic Generation? Young PRC Writers of the Post-Mao Era and the Romantic Tradition in China," Michael Duke addresses the formation of literary movements after the Cultural Revolution. Duke emphasizes the individual's story in his discussion of various Chinese authors: "Our young autobiographical protagonists' melancholy does not lead to nihilistic despair…but their longing for something better and their faith that it must exist lead them to a powerful reassertion of the claims of individual self" (468). Through his exploration of these Post-Mao texts, Duke ascertains the cultural significance of "Truth" and its purpose within the Post-Mao writers' discovery of self: "Truth is a sharp sword that can cut through the repressive 'mind forged manacles' of feudal modes of thought as well as a bright light that can lead mankind toward a better future" (470). Per Duke, individual growth and transcendent self-discovery defines the

literature of Post-Mao China. In "China, Gender, Feminism," Ross Anthony addresses the influential nature of Western conceptions of feminism for the Post-Mao woman writer. The oppressive nature of Mao's regime, especially during the Cultural Revolution, caused women to lose their sense of self and connection to Western feminist conceptions: "[S]exuality struggles to break free from its Maoist past—a period in modern Chinese history when parallels with feminism in the non-socialist Western world come to an abrupt end" (107). Anthony details the renewed interest in Western conceptions of feminism and other capitalistic attitudes; however, he contrasts this interest with his emphasis on the "female essence" within the indigenous Chinese culture (109).

Ling Bo takes a different approach to feminist scholarship in the article, "Chinese Studies of Female Characters in Hardy's Novels: A Feminist Approach." Ling traces the connections between Hardy's New Woman protagonists and the growth of female individuality in China: "Hardy studies in China gained momentum during the 1980s, when the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy led to the second booming of cultural development" (162). Ling details the influence of de Beauvoir's *Second Sex* and other feminist treatises on Chinese feminist scholarship; however, equal emphasis is paid to the dominance of traditional Chinese cultural mores: "While traditional ethical readings are greatly influenced by the 'Three Obediences and Four Virtues'...critics with a feminist stance started to review and question in their interpretation of literature the old moral standard and ideology concerning women's integrity and identity" (167). Ling draws attention to the impact of comparative scholarship on Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*, emphasizing these novels within the development of self: "The comparisons seek to unveil the collective experience of women at the junction

of social transition, exploring how they develop new ideas and how their gender awareness awakes and changes and how the conflict between the old and the new influences their lives" (170).

Unlike the New Woman, Chinese Post-Mao women were deprived of their gendered figure under Mao Zedong's regime (1966-1976). When analyzing Post-Mao women writers' denial of feminist identification, Hui Wu points out that "Post-Mao women writers feel, not without limitation, that *nüquanzhuyi*, or Western feminism, in promoting gender equality, also promotes gender *sameness*; they feel this rhetoric is like that of Maoist women's liberation, which denies womanhood and female dignity" (407). Wu details the de-sexing that Chinese women were forced to endure during Mao's regime. Post-Mao women writers wish to reclaim their identity at the end of Mao's rule; however, this goal is not easily attainable: "Post-Mao women were disassociated from centuries-long gender ideology, only to find that we were still sexually unequal despite our confidence and our equal, or even stronger, professional competence" (410). The Post-Mao woman emphasizes her true, authentic voice because it was denied to her during Mao's push for collective conformity. To effectively attain self-actualization, the Post-Mao woman must make her own path and share her individual story. Recognition must be paid to the cultural dynamics which affect her life; however, she must be able to exist in her own way, on her own terms.

Julia Kristeva, in *About Chinese Women: From This Side*, explores the social and cultural dynamics of China through the lens of Western feminism. Kristeva draws the reader's attention to the importance of cultural awareness when comparing Chinese women's issues to those of Western feminism. Additionally, she notes the despondence

of Chinese women to comparisons between their life experiences and those of feminists: "A crude but enormously effective trap for feminism: to acknowledge us, to make us into the truth of the temporal order, so as to keep us from functioning as its unconscious 'truth', formless beyond true, and false, beyond present-past-future" (37). Kristeva delineates the inherent gender difference within Chinese culture. The dominance of patriarchal, Confucian teachings places women within the "safe" environment of the home. As time has progressed, the attitudes about women change; however, development of female autonomy remains a source of contention within Chinese society: "The problem now lies in giving the female population access to the sphere of politics and production by giving women an ideal that can serve as a standard of measurement by which everyone will acknowledge him or herself as a useful, necessary, 'legitimate' member of the society" (150). Kristeva argues that Chinese women have the potential to gain self-awareness, but they must continue to take on the challenge of social inequality.

In "Engaging Nüquanzhuyi: The Making of a Chinese Feminist Rhetoric," Bo Wang compares the Chinese development of female autonomy to that of the Western feminist tradition. Rather than emphasizing the direct points of contrast between the two fields of theory, Wang identifies the unique attributes of the Chinese theory. Per Wang, critics give too much attention to the Western tradition; therefore, it is necessary to look at Chinese female self-awareness in a new light: "Instead of engaging the issue of how Chinese literary discourse is both feminist and different, these scholars seem to show that Chinese texts are feminist and non-feminist only because they fit in the pattern laid down in the Western analytical categories" (386-87). Wang acknowledges the support of radical male intellectuals for female autonomy within China; however, equal emphasis is

placed on Western influence: "[T]he emerging Chinese feminist discourse is the result of gradual and continued discursive formation, so to speak, influenced by both indigenous feminist thought and imported feminist ideas" (389). While women's issues may be controversial for Chinese society, the modernization and growth of national pride in the country paves the way for female subjectivity.

In "A Stage of Their Own: The Problematics of Women's Theatre in Post-Mao China," Xiaomei Chen not only develops a clear depiction of Chinese feminist theatrics but also details the unification of women writing with the nationalistic political movement: "The concept of Chinese women's legendary equality with men, popularized for Western feminists by the early theoretical writings of Julia Kristeva, was first mythicized and spread by Mao Zedong" (4). While Xiaomei emphasizes the power of the individual female voice as a vessel through which to tell the story of all women's suffering, she notes how the Party manipulates this message to serve their own purposes: "[O]fficial feminism consists in 'the emancipatory discourse of the state, which always subsumes woman under the nationalist agenda'…'only socialism can save China,' and that only the Communist Party can rescue women from the heavy burdens of a feudal ideology" (6-7). Per Xiaomei, the unification of women's liberation and nationalistic pride is limiting the voice of women. Vera Schwarcz builds upon Xiaomei's assertions about women and politics. Her article, "Behind a Partially-Open Door: Chinese Intellectuals and the Post-Mao Reform Process" highlights the influence of Western theory upon the ideals of Chinese nationalistic society: "It includes not only the openness to the West, and increased autonomy in one's own sphere of socialization, but also the right to think and write critically about the fate of Chinese society" (579). Schwarcz

points out the importance of self-reclamation in her article: "What spurs them [Post-Mao women writers] on is an obsession with the 'lost time' of the Cultural Revolution…Both groups look with envy at the intellectual accomplishments of the May Fourth generation and those of the anti-Japanese war generation" (592).

Tani Barlow addresses the global link between various female authors and China's apparent failure to meet the mark in her article, "Globalization, China, and International Feminism." Barlow argues that China's sluggish growth toward feminist literature can be attributed to the dominance of Western conceptions of feminism: "[T]his style of international feminism returns the gaze of U.S.-based feminism back onto the putative West" (1287). Barlow believes that China's growth of female autonomy is present despite its difference from the Western traditional standard: "The Chinese women's movement is old. It and its affiliated modes of thinking about women's liberation possess a written record that is arguably 'international'" (1287). Barlow's article provides a different perspective about female autonomy within Chinese culture.

Another group of scholars who address the connection between women studies and politics is Esther Ngan-Ling Chow, Naihua Zhang and Jinling Wang. In their article, "Promising and Contested Fields: Women's Studies and Sociology of Women/Gender in Contemporary China," Ngan-Ling, et al. trace the development of women's studies in China and the connection between Chinese feminism and the state. This group highlights the May Fourth Movement as the starting point for political/female unification: "This anti-imperialist, anti-Confucian, nationalist, and intellectual movement aimed at rejuvenating the nation made women's issues one of the central foci for public and scholarly discourse" (163). Ngan-Ling, et al. address the growth of women's studies

beyond their nationalistic beginnings to the Post-Mao push for self-acquisition: "Reclaiming a feminine self through dress appearance, social roles, behavior, and occupation in the 1980s, especially among the younger generation, signaled the birth of femininity discourse in Post-Mao China" (179).

In Chapter 4 of her book, *Personal Matters: Women's Autobiographical Practice in Twentieth-Century China*, Lingzhen Wang addresses inherent connections between politics and women's issues. As women push to make their individual voices heard, the Party emphasizes the importance of censorship to maintain order and nationalist ideology. As a means of progressing nationalism, the Chinese government chooses to highlight women's issues but only as far as they assist the party line: "[C]lass origin, political terror, and poverty were accepted as exclusive categories for describing a woman's misfortune during the Mao years. But other, more subjective and individually negotiated meanings of the experience were as a consequence lost" (144-45). At the end of the Mao regime, women's issues improved slightly, but new problems have arisen. Specifically, Wang points out the sudden growth of masculine bias that takes over as women acknowledged their gender difference: "Many educated Chinese women gradually came to the painful realization that if they had been officially ignored as gendered beings during the Maoist era, they were now publicly devalued, silenced, and even slandered because of their gender in the post-Mao era" (153). Additionally, Wang notes the continued influence of the Chinese government on the individual's voice and self-image.

Lai-fong Leung in "In Search of Love and Self: the Image of Young Female Intellectuals in Post-Mao Women's Fiction," addresses the loss of sexuality under the

oppressive force of Mao's regime: "These young female writers, who grew up under the Red Flag and who have suffered through the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution…have formed their own, often unconventional views of life and society" (136). Leung notes the prominence of ambiguous female characters as a means of reclaiming individuality in a culture of unknown gendered diversity. Additionally, she emphasizes the power of love for the female's reclamation of self: "What awakens the female protagonist to a recognition of the loss of her own femininity is the power of love" (138). Leung notes that early Post-Mao texts, particularly "Wound Literature" emphasize the loss of sexual identity and the importance of reclaiming this facet of self as a step to individuality.

In "Chinese History: A Useful Category of Gender Analysis," Gail Hershatter and Wang Zheng address the development of female individuality within Chinese culture before and after Mao's regime. In their essay, Hershatter and Wang analyze scholarship about the growth of Chinese women's individuality. They note three major points of scholarship: Margery Wolf's analysis of kinship practices; the impact of the Communist revolution; and research related to the presence of women in the labor force (1405). Hershatter and Wang note that gender in relation to these areas is not of significant importance to the PRC though it does have a significant impact on the social consciousness within China: "More recently, gender in the post-Mao reform period was used both to articulate and to obscure emerging class tensions in an environment where the language of class is not largely shunned" (1411). Despite the inattention to women's issues, Hershatter and Wang assert that feminism in China, "has had a long history as a radical vision, a term of opprobrium, and a state project" (1412). The 1980s have brought a renewed interest in gender difference due to Western influence. Chinese women are

introduced to the idea of "women's studies" which "legitimize women as the subject of scientific study in the West, an inspiring new concept that might enable them [Chinese women] to create new intellectual and social spaces" (1415). Hershatter and Wang emphasize the growing trend of female consciousness and autonomy depicted in literature and its continuance over time.

Sarah Stevens explores the continual development of the autonomous female within Chinese culture in her article, "Figuring Modernity: The New Woman and the Modern Girl in Republican China." Stevens traces the formation of the Chinese individual woman from her beginnings during the May Fourth Movement to her current depiction in the Bad Girl writings of Wei Hui and others. The growth of the individual female depicts "the tension between contending ideals of womanhood…anxieties associated with changing roles for women [and] the anxieties associated with modernity and the modern nation" (82).Stevens notes that the Chinese "New Woman" was an ambiguous figure who did not become "fully articulated until well into the twentieth century" (87). In her comparative study of the New Woman and Modern Girl image, Stevens details the dual face of modern women: "The revolutionary New Woman, who finds fulfillment in her duty to the nation, has obvious daughters in the works created after Mao Zedong's 1943 'Talks at Yan'an'…As for the Modern Girl, glimpses of her re-emerge in post-Mao fiction created after 1978" (100). Despite the differences between the divergent types of Chinese women, the emphasis on individuality and self-awareness remains strong.

In "*Nennu* and *Shunu*: Gender, Body Politics, and the Beauty Economy in China," Jie Yang explores the explosion of interest in female beauty at the end of Mao's regime.

Yang begins by defining the terms *nennu* and *shunu* within the context of Chinese language and culture: "These two gendered representations resemble the two female images that dominated Chinese television advertising…which constituted advertising strategies to bring together two gender ideologies representing 'Western modernity' and 'Confucian tradition'" (335). The end of the Cultural Revolution and the death of Mao brought about renewed interest in physical beauty, thus opening the door to gender difference: "[W]omen are in decline in the public sphere of labor and are being sexualized by a masculine business and entertainment culture" (338). Yang asserts that the growth of interest in beauty and sexuality represents women's reclamation of the gender they lost during Mao's regime: "Since the early 1980s, the liberation of women's bodies has been perceived as a form of therapy to redress women's exhaustion because of their participation in the labor process in Mao's planned economy" (340). Yang notes that female emphasis on beauty opens the door to masculine manipulation. To gain awareness of self and reclaim one's identity the individual must reclaim her "entire sensibilities" (342) rather than allowing herself to be subjugated to male sexual or social oppression.

In "'Personalized Writing' and Its Enthusiastic Critic: Women and Writing of the Chinese 'Post-New Era,'" Yi Zheng discusses the commercially prominent journalistic writing of the 1990s and the literary movement that led to this era. Yi defines the New Era as those years after the end of Maoist rule [1976]: "[W]omen's literature in the New Era first emerged with the longing for human liberation in China after the dark ages of the Cultural Revolution" (46). The emphasis on female self-awareness is also prominent within Yi's article. For women to gain a place within society, they must acquire their own sense of self: "In many ways the acute and timely female self-awareness is brought about

as much by the relative freedom of expression as by the actual loss of their 'half of the sky'" (50). As Yi asserts, Post-Mao women writers' ideals subsist in the writing of their modern counterparts through their emphasis on the independent female voice.

Deductions about the New Woman and Post-Mao writers

Criticism of the fin de siècle New Woman writers reveals the dominance of patriarchal attitudes towards female figuration. While many New Woman writers choose to embrace the male gaze through masculine pseudonyms, male narrators, or sexual vixens, the emphasis on masculine dominance is inescapable. Additionally the dualistic views of the New Woman as a sexualized or de-sexualized figure lead to contention and misrepresentation within the literary genre. Scholarship in these two areas demonstrates the reactionary nature of the New Woman author in her attempt to gain social equality with her male counterpart. To attain a voice within the male-dominant society of Victorian England, the New Woman author has to embrace masculinity (Collins 318). She does not have the opportunity to find her true sense of self because she projects an inauthentic façade due to her figuration by a patriarchal society. Additionally, the contention and misrepresentation within the feminist movement of the time, forces New Woman feminists to reassess their ultimate purpose and sacrifice any foothold they have against the tidal wave of the patriarchy (Hetherington 57).

While critical scholarship reveals the presence of misrepresentation and contention within the literature of Post-Mao women writers, it also reveals their primary focus—female autonomy. Despite government manipulation and disillusionment with Western feminism, Post-Mao women writers clearly show a dedicated effort to achieve individuality through self-acquisition. The emphatic rejection of Western philosophy and

adoption of indigenous concepts of femininity reveals the strength of Chinese culture and social dynamics. Detailed analysis of social movements reveals an evident interest in women's issues throughout history. Unlike the fin de siècle feminists, Post-Mao women writers use their personal experiences during and after Mao's regime as the basis of their stories. Reality replaces fantasy, and human suffering leads to personal, individual growth.

Chapter 3 Hegel's Transcendental Dialectic and Its Functionality as a Scholarly Lens for New Woman and Chinese Post-Mao Woman Writers' Literature

New Woman and Chinese Post-Mao authors utilize literature as a clarion call for female autonomy. For these literary groups, the individual is paramount; however, the methods for defining or exemplifying the individual differ dramatically. Numerous women of the fin de siècle desire freedom from male dominance, and they use the New Woman as a figurehead to laud the rights of women: "All [New Woman authors] wrote of sexual behaviour with a frankness which had previously been unthinkable; all employed as mouthpieces women unusually independent, intelligent and free from convention" (Cunningham 178). The New Woman is a single female figure that stands as a metonymical representation of an entire generation of British women despite numerous contradictory qualities. Through study of her depiction in literature, scholars have developed an identity for the New Woman that applies to progressive women living at the end of the nineteenth-century. Unlike literature of the British New Woman, women's literature from Post-Mao China depicts the "Amazing" woman as an exemplar to follow rather than a representation of current women: "Aren't women without intelligence like birds with broken wings? To women, aren't qualities like persistence, bravery, tenacity as important as pretty clothes...For a better world, for our own perfection...let us all strive to be amazing women" (Bi Shumin "Seeking Amazing Women," *OIG* 52). The Chinese Post-Mao "amazing" woman is a unique individual in each literary depiction. She can be a doctor, mother, laborer, daughter, or leader. In each case, the "amazing" woman within the story is an individual with unique qualities and failures. Readers of this era possess a

tapestry of varied female identities that define a particular time and culture. Both the New Woman and Post-Mao "Amazing" Woman strive to represent or alter female identity. To better understand the challenges each group of authors face in their journey toward identity acquisition, it is necessary to utilize a lens—specifically a lens designed by Hegel to analyze the formation of an autonomous identity.

The philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel focuses upon the acquisition and growth of self-consciousness (Westphal 3). According to Hegel, self-consciousness is defined through three moments: the "pure undifferentiated 'I'" as the primary object; the development and satisfaction of Desire which is the "reflection of self-consciousness into itself"; and the development of truth as certainty which requires "double-reflection, the duplication of self-consciousness" (*Phenomenology* 110). The formation of self-consciousness depends on the individual's ability to see and accept him-herself completely. This sense of individuality is isolated from the rest of humanity because of the consciousness' awareness of "being for self" (*Phenomenology* 53). Hegel identifies "being for self" as essential to individual awareness; however, he warns of the dangers inherent in isolation: "Hegel's phenomenological method is designed to induce forms of consciousness to reflect more carefully on their initial principles" (Westphal 6). As Kenneth Westphal asserts, the individual must be able to review his/her interpretations of the world with logical and reason rather than isolate his/her view through perception alone (*Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* 7). For the individual to move on toward the next moment of self-conscious development, s/he must move out of egocentric isolation. This movement is achieved through internal reflection on life events. Each of these moments depends on the unification of consciousness with the individual's

life experience to gain a true, pure sense of self. Hegel notes that this unification of the consciousness with life experience is essential "so that [consciousness] may purify itself for the life of the Spirit, and achieve finally, through a completed experience of itself, the awareness of what it really is in itself" (*Phenomenology* 49). Human beings learn through experience, and refashion their understanding of the world based on the failures or successes they encounter. Franco Chiereghin notes, "Thought in fact aims to gather and express the unity of being and of the knowledge of it, of the subject and the object" (*Blackwell's Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology* 55). As Chiereghin asserts, the unification of subject (i.e. consciousness) with object (i.e. life experiences) is what allows the individual to see beyond him-herself and move away from isolation toward a clear sense of self within the world.

The primary action that unifies consciousness and life experience is reflection. Allegra de Laurentiis asserts that natural consciousness (innate being) is naturally self-reflexive; therefore, it can "eventually reflect upon itself (be 'for-itself') and become self-consciousness (become 'in-and-for-itself')" (*Blackwell's Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology* 252). The process of reflection occurs over a life time, and the individual may never fully attain what Hegel terms "Absolute Knowing" or complete self-awareness (*Phenomenology* 9). The idea of "Absolute Knowing" is defined by Hegel as a complete unification between perception, self, and world. Allegra de Laurentiis asserts that the movement toward "Absolute Knowing" follows two contradictory paths, "while the Self expands into the world as its substance, it also intensifies its inwardness. Every objectification of its activity in space and time is accompanied by a deepening of its interiority" (*Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* 258). When the

individual consciousness attains "Absolute Knowing," the interiority and objectification of the subject is seamless. Eric Steinhart best depicts the course of reflection as a means of transcendence in his image of "The Absolute Eternity."

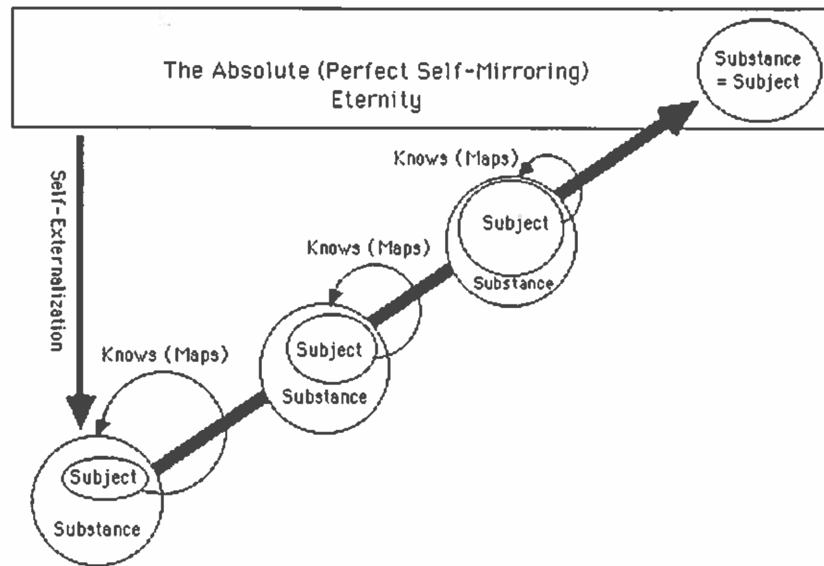


Figure 1

In this image the individual is identified as the "subject." The "substance" which surrounds everyone is the life experience during a particular point in time. Through "mapping" or cognitive reflection, the individual fully understands him-herself through analysis of his/her reaction to the substance which surrounds him or her. As Steinhart notes in his image, this process continuously progresses forward until the individual reaches a state of complete unity with his/her life experience—"Absolute Knowing." In the process of reflection, the individual negates or nullifies facets of his/her "Self" that do not function harmoniously with the natural consciousness. For Hegel, "self-consciousness knows this nullity of the object to be the result of self-consciousness emptying itself of itself—for this self-emptying it posits itself as object" (Boldyrev 86). The growth of the individual depends on his/her ability to destroy, through rational skepticism, the

superfluous experiences and influences that do not work in harmony with the Spirit (*Phenomenology* 50). Per Hegel, the process of reflection is continuous for the individual because it provides the education necessary to fully understand the self.

Continuous self-reflection through life experience is also the prominent conception of Transcendentalism. Per the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, Transcendentalism developed from the philosophy of Immanuel Kant who emphasized the theory "in order to understand the nature of reality, one must first analyse [sic] the reasoning process which governs the nature of experience" (1531). Though Hegel disagrees with Kant's emphasis on intellectual "transcendental" consciousness and "ordinary" consciousness, he maintains the same emphasis on experience and reflection. Robert R. Williams explains Hegel's opinion about the importance of ordinary consciousness for transcendence as follows: "Ordinary consciousness itself will not only provide the criteria for its assessment, in the course of its own experience vis-á-vis these criteria; it will also test such criteria" ("Hegel and Transcendental Philosophy" 600). While Hegel's consciousness dialectic agrees with Kant's Transcendentalism, it is the fusion of self-awareness with reflection that is significant to this paper.

Within Hegel's consciousness dialectic, the unity between self (i.e. Spirit) and consciousness is predominant (*Phenomenology* 59, 61, 63, 68, 70-78). The purpose of Hegel's unification of self and consciousness assists the individual's attainment of truth: "This return of consciousness into itself which is directly *mingled* with the pure apprehension [of the object]—for this return into itself has shown itself to be essential to perception" (71-72). However, unification does not occur in isolation. When defining the term "isolation," one must take into consideration the individual's view of self. An

isolated view is one which possesses no awareness and/or concern with the individual's influence on another or vice versa. However, isolation cannot exist within Hegel's progression toward Absolute Knowing because self-consciousness requires interaction between the individual and an "other." Richard A Lynch notes, "For Hegel, the formation of self-consciousness is made possible in the realization or recognition that one is recognized (or acknowledged) as a consciousness by another consciousness" ("The Alienating Mirror" 216). The "other" functions as a mirror through which the individual may gain further information to determine his/her identity. As the individual continues to grow, s/he encounters various "others" from whom they learn more about their own individuality through imitation and reflection which is often referred as mimesis. Per the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, mimesis is "the deliberate imitation of the behaviour [sic] of one group of people by another as a factor in social change" (907). Within the confines of this definition, mimesis focuses upon the effects achieved by imitation; however, Hegel makes an alternative assertion. In his chapter, "Lordship and Bondage," Hegel notes that mimesis is essential to the development of self because it requires both individuals to "prove themselves and each other through a life-and-death struggle…for they must raise their certainty of being *for themselves* to truth, both in the case of the other and in their own case" (*Phenomenology* 113-114). Imitation of mannerism, speech, philosophy, etc. allows an individual to not only change his/her social condition but also discover additional facets about his/her consciousness through the bond s/he creates with the "other." Several psychologists, including Sigmund Freud, would agree with Hegel that development of self-identification is determined by mimesis: "Freudian psychoanalytic theory posits that we are all shaped by a process of mimesis, that identity

is partially formed through the uncanny repetition of our parents' behavioural [sic] tics and verbal mannerisms" (McLaughlan 56). Everyone encountered on the transcendental journey to Absolute Knowledge acts as a mirror against which the self must compare its consciousness; however, Hegel notes that this mimesis should be done reflectively in order for the individual to avoid subjection by the "other" (*Phenomenology* 112-113, 213). Humans must look to each other to learn more about their individual self. It is Hegel's fusion of transcendent development and self-consciousness that I would like to use as a lens for examining the female movement toward autonomy within the British fin de siècle and Post-Mao periods of history.

Both New Woman and Post-Mao "Amazing" Woman authors write about women's identity. Whether they are railing against the dominant patriarchy or reflecting on the suffering endured during a specific political regime, these authors attempt to define "woman" by her identity. Brinda Roy notes, "[T]he late-Victorian body became a controversial site over which advertisers and the government fought a continuous battle to assert supremacy of control" ("Late-Victorian Spectacles of 'Allegoresis': Narrative and the Staging of Empire in the 'fin de siècle'" 78). The fin de siècle author must sift through the influences of government, commercialization, and politics to discover the New Woman's identity. During the fin de siècle disparate examples of the New Woman caused dissention and controversy because of the figurehead's imitation of masculine characteristics such as smoking, unchaperoned travel, and masculine clothing (Collins 311; Dowling 437; Law 248; Paris 59; Tusan 170; Youngkin 309). The New Woman author exemplifies this definition in their attempt to effect social change through the manipulation of the figural female from male literature into a symbol of female

opposition. Their utilization of masculine dress, behaviors, and aggression misrepresent the female as an androgynous "other" who does not fit into either gendered sphere of society (Corbett 21). In addition to the de-sexed harridan, the fragile "madwoman" examined in Gilbert and Gubar's scholarly work represents the confusion of the female's role in Victorian society. In her effort to escape the masculine gaze, the New Woman figurehead fails to find herself; instead, she traps herself in the internal evaluation of her own sense of worthlessness (Showalter 29). The misrepresentation of the New Woman centers on the difference between her feminine and masculine characterization. However, Hegel's definition of mimesis functions by embracing difference: "[T]here ought to be no absolute severing between the pictures we create and the reality they capture. So, while this reality is not *original* in the sense of independent, it still may serve as a tribunal to which our pictures are compared and held accountable" (Kukla 249). Hegel acknowledges that the individual is different from the "other." The reflection between these two individuals benefits each because they gain an awareness of their difference while also learning of the connection that exists between all human beings thereby transcending the limited, isolated view of the individual consciousness (*Phenomenology* 132). Using what I am terming the "Hegelian transcendental lens," misrepresentations of the female self-consciousness can be discovered thereby enabling the reader to understand the failure of New Woman authors to reach female autonomy. The Hegelian transcendental lens also provides a standard by which readers can measure Post-Mao women writers' use of reflection as a method to achieve autonomy.

Within Chinese culture, reflection is held as a primary means of transcendence, especially for the Post-Mao woman writer who has a "tendency to turn inward toward an

all-embracing subjectivity: a search for individual freedom, for a pure motive for imaginative creativity, and for ways to manifest the rebellious power in expressive language" (Yongchun and Batt 50). Post-Mao women writers create stories to give a voice to the voiceless woman of Mao's regime. This motivation for individuality is indicated through the multifarious stories of the era. By looking through the Hegelian transcendent lens, readers can trace the formulation of female identity as well as analyze the differences which enable the Post-Mao woman writer to succeed in her graduation from the silence imposed by an oppressive patriarchy to a fully realized individual capable of making herself heard in a world of her peers and fellow human beings. Thus, Hegel's fusion of self-consciousness and transcendence opens a new door to a discussion about identity acquisition. By using the Hegelian transcendental lens as a scholarly frame to explore the New Woman and Chinese Post-Mao women writer's formation of female identity, I intend to show how each of these groups' use of reflection and self-awareness determine the success and/or failure of their definition of "woman."

Chapter 4 Analysis of New Woman and Chinese Post-Mao Women Writers' Texts Through a Hegelian Transcendental Lens

An Explanation of the New Woman and Post-Mao Primary Sources

Both New Woman and Chinese Post-Mao women writers assert female autonomy as an essential element within their respective societies (Babcock 61and Wang 388); however, each group's establishment of this autonomy requires exploration. Six authors, three authors from the New Woman era and three Chinese Post-Mao women writers, present a clear picture of the "ideal" female. The New Woman ideal is a figure whose feminine frailty is offset by her political power: "[T]he outstanding woman who, because she defied the law of the father, had become monstrified by patriarchal culture" (Heilmann 28). As the figurehead of the fin de siècle feminist movement, the New Woman had to exemplify those qualities which separated the sexes. Smoking, unchaperoned travel, and wearing masculine clothing were believed by New Woman authors to be some of the essential actions for the attainment of female autonomy. Conversely, the Post-Mao "amazing" woman is identified by her reclamation of those qualities which made her female (i.e. feminine clothing, make-up, sexuality). Post-Mao women writers wish to share their picture of woman for a variety of reasons, specifically to emphasize individual autonomy during a time of collective dominance.

Within the sphere of Hegelian transcendentalism, self-definition through reflection on life events ensures the transcendence of the individual's self-consciousness toward truth and autonomy (Hong 13). The New Woman defines herself by her similarity to man. Her behavior imitates that which she sees in the male individual; however, she is so consumed with imitation that she misses the key to transcendence—self-

acknowledgement. The Post-Mao "amazing" woman spends most of her time not only defining herself as a woman but also as an individual member of humanity. The Post-Mao woman writer uses imitation to bridge the individual woman with her other suffering sisters. The unity of these individuals enables Post-Mao women writers to create an authentic representation of the autonomous Chinese woman.

Fin de siècle authors such as Charlotte Mew, Victoria Cross, George Egerton, and Thomas Hardy focus on the sexual difference between man and woman. Their depictions of the New Woman signify the inherent flaw within the feminist figurehead. The overt attention to gender difference is exemplified through two recurring motifs: the sexual figuration of women via the unremitting male gaze; and the absence of individual awareness due to limited reflective self-assessment. Charlotte Mew's "Passed" serves as a primary example of the dangers of egocentrism, and the class insularity demonstrated by this attitude. Her narrator's refusal to connect to the poor people in the street as well as her self-centered reflection on the night's events depict the New Woman as someone who insulates herself through a "luxurious self-indulgence" (*COED* 370). Her attitude along with her concern for her own well-being highlights a common trend throughout New Woman literature. For Victoria Cross, the central character of her short story, "Theodora: A Fragment," exemplifies the New Woman through her impulsive actions and intelligence; however, she also represents the egotistical vapidity of the "being-for-itself" (*Phenomenology* 109). Theodora's actions are facile due to her devotion to her own sensations as well as her limited understanding of the world and herself within it. While George Egerton's "A Little Gray Glove" shows the power and independence of the New Woman, her story also fails to move away from the male gaze thus in that it is narrated

by a man thus stymieing the audience's ability to identify a female's transcendence from patriarchal dominance toward female autonomy. The main character of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is recognized as an emblematic representation of the pure, misunderstood woman; however, she never moves beyond her desire for social acceptance and love of man. Tess' worldly ignorance can be attributed to her natural upbringing, but it is the impulsivity of her action that dooms her to the status of femme fatale and victim. Each of these texts serves a pivotal role in the formation of the New Woman figurehead, but each also portrays the qualities that lead to the dissolution of the autonomous image they wish to create.

The cultural background of Post-Mao China lends itself to self-reflection. As Duke points out: under the pen of Post-Mao women writers, "Our young autobiographical protagonists' melancholy does not lead to nihilistic despair, resignation, nor even less to cynical opportunism…but their longings for something better…lead them to a powerful reassertion of the claims of individual self" (Duke 468). In stark contrast to the growth of the New Woman, collectivist attitudes in Mao's regime provided a keen opportunity for the growth of female individuality as a means of reclaiming what had been lost due to political upheaval. Women's stories are meant to reflect not only their experiences during and after Mao's regime, but also provide a voice for those silenced. The writing of the Post-Mao women writers "reflected a new frankness and eagerness for self-expression that had been forgotten for some forty years in China" (Hong 19). Unlike the New Woman authors, the Post-Mao women writers emphasize a third-person perspective that removes any bias on the audience's interpretation of the stories. The lack of "gaze" by either a female or male narrator

establishes the character as the primary focal point. Additionally, the third-person perspective enables the author to more easily navigate between the characters' stories and their reflective inner dialogues about life experiences. These elements emphasize what Hegel deems to be the most important element of the transcendent process: "[T]he capacity of the organism to react at the same time that it is reflected into itself, the actualization which is opposed to the initial quiescent *being-within-itself*, an actualization in which that abstract being-for-itself is a being-*for-another*" (*Phenomenology* 161).

Post-Mao women writers such as Hu Xin, Lu Xin'er, and Fang Fang highlight the importance of reflection as a means of individual self-discovery. The emphasis on figuration and sexual difference is minimal except in its influence upon each character's life experience and sense of autonomy. The past is an essential element in each story; these events allow each character to define his/her individual self while attempting to establish a place in the world. Self-reflection and the importance of the individual's perception are primary qualities which link Post-Mao woman writing to Hegel's transcendental lens. In "Four Women of Forty," Hu Xin exemplifies the importance of reflection through each woman's story; however, Liu Qing epitomizes the transcendental journey toward autonomy by reflecting on the pain of her past while acting as a memetic catalyst for her friends' self-reflection. "The Sun is Not Out Today" by Lu Xin'er emphasizes the political and social power of the female voice through the intimate revelations of the waiting room patients. Additionally, the bond created by these women enables one of them, Dan Ye, to acknowledge the equality which should exist between individual desires and social expectations. Fang Fang takes a different approach in her story, "Dead End." Rather than emphasizing self-reflection through positive example, she

chooses to highlight the negative consequences of isolation. The destruction of the marriage between Yan Hang and An Xiaoyue serves as a warning to all individuals who choose to focus upon what Hegel calls the "being-for-itself." Each author explores the importance of unifying individuality with social connection. It is this fusion of the individual with the "other" that enables humanity to transcend beyond gender difference, material possessions, and physical limitation—to attain Absolute Knowledge.

Viewing New Woman and Post-Mao Women Writers' Depiction of the Female Through a Hegelian Transcendental Lens

New Woman authors frequently adopt a male persona, male pseudonym, or masculinize the female character to attain acceptance within patriarchal society: "For all literary artists, of course, self-definition necessarily precedes self-assertion…for the female artist the essential process of self-definition is complicated by all those patriarchal definitions that intervene between herself and herself" (Gilbert and Gubar 17). Through their adoption of masculinity, New Woman authors create characters whose sense of self is fractured between the natural (female) consciousness (*Phenomenology* 49) and the Unchangeable (male) consciousness (*Phenomenology* 127). The New Woman figurehead cannot transcend to a complete autonomous consciousness because the masculine narrator defines her through figuration. The sexualized female is predominant within Victorian patriarchy "confining women, as Virginia Woolf long ago noted, not just to corsets but to the 'Private House,' with all its deprivations and discontents" (*The Mad Woman in the Attic* xxxi). Masculine definitions of women make feminist action impossible because it "means that the evidence of feminine servitude is 'silence,' but the

most morally authoritative negation of [subjugation] would appear also to take the form—of silence" (Rosenthal 30). Rosenthal's assertion of female "silence" correlates to the negation of femininity by the feminist push for power: "[T]he New Woman, in her hypermodernity, her ambitious attempt to transcend established notions of sexual consciousness and behavior, would irreversibly unfit herself for her essential role as wife and mother" (Dowling 446). The New Woman character must maintain her balance on the narrow path between refuting the fragile, subjugated femininity of the patriarchy and espousing independence. It is essential that New Woman authors complete this action without allowing their character to fall into an over-masculinized authority; however, navigation of this path results in these authors forgetting the individuality that is indispensable to female autonomy. New Woman authors' emphasis on the male gaze is not the only hindrance to New Woman transcendence. Throughout New Woman literature, the female figure is shown to be impulsive, mad, or spiteful (Cohler 2; Dowling 438; Driss 173; Heilmann 25; Stott 70). Whether these impulsive, aggressive actions are utilized for political purposes or as a means of dispelling the image of the Victorian woman as "delicate, picturesque, pretty, pleasant, and decorative" (Helland 15); one of the dominant motivators for New Woman literature is the formation of a figure rather than a real, transcendent individual.

Charlotte Mew's "Passed"

Charlotte Mew in her short story, "Passed," attempts to address the social plight of the Victorian woman (Merrin 202); however, Mew's choice to emphasize the narrator's higher social class undermines her representation of the New Woman because her female narrator adopts an air of superiority toward the "other" (i.e. the poor woman in

the streets). Her emphasis on individual sensation suggests an affinity with fin de siècle decadence. Moreover, the narrator's superior behavior and tone throughout the story isolate her within Hegel's first movement of individual perception or "being-for-itself" (*Phenomenology* 77). When viewing the "prison" walls of the tenement housing, the narrator states, "These shelters struck my thoughts as travesties—perhaps they were not—of the grand place called home" (2). The narrator's class-based view forces her to see the poor in two ways: they are inferior to her because of social mores, and they are to be pitied because of their difficulties. The narrator does not see the poor as fellow individuals because she possesses an "essential of which they were bereft" (2). These people, though pitied by the narrator, cannot function as an "other" within the Hegelian transcendent lens because the narrator does not see beyond those points of difference to the similarities that both she and they possess. The impoverished characters' presence and general "desolation" make the narrator so uncomfortable that she seeks an escape from the "shadow of the brick work" (2). The narrator's desire to escape the desolation she sees further emphasizes her separation from the impoverished "other." Additionally, Mew's attempt to show the moral and spiritual beauty of the impoverished residents is marred by the narrator's acute awareness of the child's sallow countenance: "[T]he dying sun caught the rough edges of a girl's uncovered hair, and hung a faint nimbus round her *poor desecrated face* [emphasis mine]" (2). Her vision of the child is dichotomous. The angelic representation by the "nimbus" is juxtaposed by the "poor desecrated face." Class difference jades the narrator's perception in such a way that she cannot square the fantastical picture of her imagination with reality. The narrator sees the child as if she were a corporeally ambiguous figment or spirit which automatically removes any

connection between herself and the subject of her study. Per Hegel, self-consciousness requires reflection by an "other" to gain a sense of awareness beyond itself: "Self-consciousness is faced by another self-consciousness; it has come *out of itself*...but in the other sees its own self" (*Phenomenology* 111). Nineteenth-century scholars view social reflection as "expressing a psychic desire to transcend the painfully starched and stultifying milieu of middle-class manners" (McLaughlan 57). Mew's characterization of the New Woman falls flat due to the narrator's class-based self-centeredness: "I left it [the courtyard], and then the glamour was already passing…the place would reassume its aspect of sordid gloom." (3). As the narrator moves away from the courtyard scene, Mew instantaneously removes the beauty her presence afforded. Now this place will "reassume" the dirty, squalid reality it possesses without the narrator's "glamourous" view.

The privileged status of the narrator keeps her in a position that reduces her ability to see beyond her individual desire for "the perfection of a latent appetite" (Fitche, qtd. in Williams 598); therefore, she cannot act as a representative of anyone except herself. When progressing toward the next movement within Hegel's self-consciousness dialectic, the individual must look beyond him-herself to his/her interaction with the "other." Hegelian transcendental thought holds that "'the ultimate ground of all consciousness lies in an interaction for the self with itself, by way of a not-self which has to be regarded from different points of view'" (Fitche, qtd. in Williams 598). To transcend beyond a limited view of the world, the narrator must interact with the poor, not just observe them. While the importance of the connection between human beings is obvious, my contention agrees with that of Linda Dowling who felt that the New Woman's haughty attitude

originates in the fin de siècle aversion to "sympathy for unsavory topics on the part of 'decadent essayists' and 'yellow' lady novelists…the tendency to introduce into 'New' literary works 'unfortunates' and other members of the unsavory lower classes" (Dowling 442). Mew's narrator is limited by her class-specific view of the world. Her opinions and behavior are dictated by the social mores of a collective group rather than her own individual desires; therefore, she does not show the reflective growth essential to the Hegelian transcendental lens.

Another factor that isolates the female narrator within Mew's story is her egocentrism or, as Hegel identifies it, "being-for-itself." The narrator interacts with no other individual within the story except the young woman whom she sees in the Church "flung face downwards across the seat. The attitude arrested me. I went forward. The lines of the figure spoke unquestionable despair" (4). The narrator's diction in this quotation reveals the connection created by the figure in "unquestionable despair." The audience can see that the narrator possesses the capability to empathize with this individual; however, the narrator's next acknowledgement of the young woman as a "Thing" (4) negates the assumed air of humanity within the narration. The importance of connection between an individual and the "other" is stressed throughout *Phenomenology of Spirit* (79-80, 102-103, and 105-111) as the path to transcendence because it allows the individual consciousness the opportunity to reflect on life experiences through another perspective. The narrator's repugnance toward the young woman reveals her inability to see beyond herself, and the social mores of her class ensure her imprisonment within patriarchal society as well as her limited, subjugated identity. While curiosity leads the narrator on a journey with the "other," there is no verbal interaction between the two

individuals: "We said nothing. I had no care or impulse to ask our goal" (4). The connection between the narrator and the young woman is merely physical proximity rather than a sense of understanding or reflection. The narrator's behavior with the young woman starkly contrasts with what Chiereghin posits about Hegelian self-consciousness development. He states, "[consciousness] thus abandons its attempt to join itself to the divine through mere feeling and devotion, and tries instead to learn from its experience by giving up its search for any *actual* unchangeable individuality" (*Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* 68). Mew's narrator gains negligible depth of understanding from her journey; instead, she provides an image of class distinction and female impulsivity rather than an individual's quest for self-acquisition and independence.

The solitary moment of recognition between the narrator and the poor young woman occurs when she realizes that this young woman and her deceased flat-mate "fronted the world from a sumptuous stage" (5). Suddenly, the narrator's "apathy gave place to an exaggerated observation" (5) due to the assumed class connection she makes between herself and these women. The girl's societal connection to the narrator establishes her as an "other" from whom the narrator can learn more about life and the female sex. Per the transcendental dialectic, the life experience of meeting the girl as well as listening to the girl's life story would help each woman achieve a sense of reflection that enables self growth (*Phenomenology* 111). However, the narrator never takes advantage of her connection with the young girl because of her selfish concern for her reputation and comfort: "The proximity was distasteful. An alien presence has ever repelled me. I should have pitied the girl keenly perhaps a few more feet away" (6). The

narrator's reference to the girl as an "alien presence" as well as her discomfort at the proximity of the girl further highlights the narrator's sense of superiority and class distinction.

Another point of conflict within the narrator's tale is her blatant disregard for the girl when she pushes the creature away with "unnatural vigour" (10). The narrator's immediate reaction to the girl's "alien presence" is forceful rejection; however, this initial attitude does not follow with her decision to return to the street a day later to find the girl and make amends. Despite her effort to achieve atonement, the narrator's class-based fragility disrupts her reconnection with the "other": "Hunger and weariness at length sent me home, with an assortment of embellished negatives ringing in my failing ears" (14). The narrator's detailed account of her failed quest to find the girl only harkens back to her egocentrism. She wants to satisfy her "own tingling soul" (13); however, her quest for atonement fails because of her concern for her own wellbeing. The New Woman figure within Mew's story finally discovers the girl she abandoned in the company of a man who is believed to be the architect of the flat-mate's death: "The two faces were merged into one avenging visage—so it seemed…As they turned towards the carriage waiting them, I heard a laugh, mounting to a cry" (15). The final action of the story sees the narrator gaining awareness of her "part then in the despoiled body, with its soul's tapers long blown out" (15). In this scene the awareness comes, but the reflection associated with this awareness is too late to help the "other" or the individual who only understands a self-centered and class-based insularity.

Victoria Cross' "Theodora: A Fragment"

While Charlotte Mew utilizes a female narrator for her short story, Victoria Cross chooses to follow the trend of New Woman authors and take on a male persona for her story, "Theodora: A Fragment." The first person perspective within Cross' story enables the audience to acquire a keen understanding of the narrator's sense of self through his various reflections on life events; however, the critical element that is missing from Cross' New Woman story is the individual female voice. "Theodora: A Fragment" begins with a discussion between the narrator, Cecil Ray, and his decadent friend, Digby, about the qualities of Theodora, a woman whom Cecil wishes to court. Throughout the discussion, it is Cecil and Digby's depiction of Theodora that defines her character for the audience: "'She is very peculiar,' I said merely. 'But you like everything extraordinary. I should have thought her very peculiarity was just what would have attracted you.'" (157). The male gaze throughout this dialogue pushes the female into sexual figuration which reifies her as an object. However, despite the tendency towards objectification that is inherent in an emblematic figure, the sexual figuration of the female is frequently propounded by the New Woman movement: "This representation of the New Woman enabled feminists to lay claim to a special role for their sex" (Tusan 172). Though some New Woman advocates want to maintain some of the traditional roles of women, they also desire freedom from patriarchal subjugation (Beaumont 216). By choosing a male as narrator for her New Woman story, Cross creates a scenario in which the New Woman is subjugated by the male and the story he tells. The first visual reference of Theodora is Cecil's reflection on her dress, which "fitted closely to her, and let me see the harmonious lines of her figure as she came up to me" (160). When looking

through the Hegelian transcendental lens, Theodora stands out as Cecil's "other," which he uses to define and develop his own sense of self. However, the connection between these two individuals is unequal. Cecil sees Theodora as something to own rather than an equal, thus mirrored, human being: "It is no good; whatever happens I must have you" (184).

Equality is essential within Hegel's theory of transcendence. An individual not only must make a connection to another consciousness, but as s/he acknowledges the qualities of the "other," they, in turn, recognize a mirroring of their self-consciousness: "Hegel must advocate the emergence of a more encompassing social structure that incorporates both state and family within a relation of harmonious interdependence and reciprocal recognition" (Stone 134). If the individual cannot learn about themselves fully without the recognition of another individual consciousness; then Cecil's recognition of Theodora must be equal to facilitate his transcendence of the limitations imposed on him by Victorian social mores. Cecil refuses to see Theodora as anything but a sexual figure which limits his awareness of his own consciousness as reflected by her. Within Cross' text, the pivotal moment of New Woman ideology occurs as Theodora "deliberately took my ring from the head of Shiva, put it above her own diamonds on the other idol, and laid the god I had chosen, the god of austerity and mortification, prostrate on its face, at the feet of the leering Venus" (181). Clearly, Theodora's action is revelatory of a New Woman's desire to claim power for herself from masculine domination. However, this moment is also revelatory of the inequality of the male individual and the "other." Theodora and Cecil choose opposing god-like figures that differ in gender as well as emphasis. Theodora chooses "'Venus'...'We must certainly crown her...for her

beauty!'" While Cecil chooses 'Shiva,' I said curtly…'The god of self-denial'" (179-180). Theodora's choice depicts the importance of feminine beauty and sexuality; however, Cecil only defines the goddess as "deformed and stunted" (179). His attention to the figure of the goddess is heightened by his acknowledgment of her "allegorical significance" (180). The negative description of the goddess' figure exemplifies Cecil's feelings about female power while revealing his sense of self-worth. He cannot let Theodora's challenge pass unanswered because "this woman must be nothing to me" (180). In addition to gender, societal expectations about class distinction increase the sense of imbalance between the two characters. Cecil knows he is not on the same social level as Theodora, but when she assumes power for herself by crowning her female goddess and making statements such as "You can never be her [Nature's/Woman's] conqueror. Consider yourself fortunate if she allows you to be her charioteer" (181). Cecil's response to the New Woman ideal is immediate and physical: "there was a flash in her eye, directed upon me—yes, me—as if she read down into my inner soul, and it sent the blood to my face" (181). Cecil blushes because he suddenly realizes Theodora's intended meaning—women have the same power for self-reflection as men. Rather than recognizing it and reflecting upon its implications for Theodora and himself, Cecil chooses to shift his reflection to the sexualized "mingling of extremes" in Theodora: "At one moment she seemed will-less, deliciously weak, a thing only made to be taken in one's arms and kissed. The next, she was full of independent uncontrollable determination and opinion…" (182). Cecil's response to Theodora's implications about female power further enhances the schism between his patriarchal "gaze" and the New Woman. Sexual difference defines Cecil's view of himself and Theodora, and because of

his view of the female as "other," Cecil does not understand himself or the woman he wishes to possess.

Another facet of Cross' story which limits the development of autonomy within Theodora's character is her submissive reactions toward Cecil's sexual subjectification. The audience's view of Theodora is inescapably linked to Cecil Ray; however, there are moments in the text which beg the audience to interpret Theodora's actions for a deeper level of individuality. Cross frequently emphasizes decadent attitudes in Theodora's dialogue and action: "[O]ne feels quite free and at ease lying on the floor, whereas on a couch its limits are narrower, and one has the constraint and both of taking care one does not go to sleep and roll off" (165-166). The diction within Theodora's dialogue is indicative of her decadence, but it is also revelatory of her reactionary attitude to Cecil's critical analysis of her room and herself: "'Do you prefer the floor generally?' I asked, taking the armchair as she indicated to me" (165). As Cecil is analyzing Theodora, she is also analyzing him and his response to her rebelliousness. It is unclear to the audience whether this behavior from Theodora is authentic or a façade that she uses to effect a reaction from a suitor. Cecil's reflections throughout the text are directly related to the attention he pays to Theodora's appearance and physical responses: "I noted that all the rings had been stripped from it [her hand]…I recollected my last night's pressure, and the idea flashed upon me at once that she had removed them expressly to avoid the pain of having them ground into her flesh" (169). Cecil's reflections show Theodora's submissive reaction to masculine desire. She removed her rings so that he could take her hand, and when he does not, it is her look of disappointment reveals her slavish submission to the "master" male: "'Are you not going to press it [my hand], then, after

all, when I have taken off all the rings entirely that you may'" (169). The audience is given opposing views of Theodora: is she a submissive female or she is being misrepresented by the bias of the masculine gaze? The answer to this question is illusive due to Cross' utilization of the masculine narrator within the confines of a New Woman text. Per Hegel, "it can happen that consciousness apprehends the object incorrectly and deceives itself" (*Phenomenology* 70); thus, Cecil's truncated view ensures the ambiguity of Theodora's character, which limits the development of Cecil's character as well as the depiction of the New Woman. Significantly, Cecil's act of "clothing" Theodora in men's apparel succinctly demonstrates the ambiguity of her individuality within Cross' story. After crowning the figure of Venus with both hers and Cecil's rings, Theodora allows herself to be robed in male Oriental clothing: "She gave me the zouave and turned for me to put it on her…I did offer her a cigarette, to enhance the effect" (183-184). Theodora's action mirrors that of the masculine depiction of the New Woman (Collins 310), but the most significant facet of this scene is Cecil's action. He is the one physically covering Theodora in the raiment of masculinity. Her attitude throughout the story has been one of submissive reaction to Cecil's lead; therefore, is she the one taking on the New Woman role or is Cecil placing it upon her? Here again, the question is indecipherable because Cross fuses Cecil's masculine view with Theodora's assumed New Woman intent. Individual action is unclear, thus transcendent growth is untenable.

George Egerton's "A Little Gray Glove"

Like Cross, George Egerton depends on the male voice to narrate her short story, "A Little Gray Glove." Unlike Cross, Egerton's narrator abhors the decadence of society, specifically feminine society: "[A]ll [women] humbugged me equally, so I gave them up.

I took to rod and gun instead, *pro salute animæ*; it's decidedly safer" (102). Rather than adopting an air of supremacy, thus removing himself from the "other," Egerton's narrator wishes to physically remove himself from all female "others." The male chooses to avoid the pain and struggle of female companionship for the "safety" of masculine blood sport. Despite his efforts to avoid women completely, the masculinized, female huntress catches the narrator: "I find I am caught; the tail-fly is fast in it [his ear]. A slight gray-clad woman holding the rod lays it carefully down and comes toward me" (107). In this instance, the woman literally catches the man, thus mimicking the masculine action of fishing. The similarities between the narrator and the woman whom he meets are striking. They both enjoy the outdoors and sport (114), and they both physically isolate themselves from society. This isolation is evident in the narrator's emphasis upon renting every room so that he can enjoy his own company: "She [the landlady] hesitated about a private sitting-room; but eventually we compromised matters, as I was willing to share it with the *other visitor* [emphasis mine]" (104). The only people at the secluded inn are the narrator and the independent woman character; the isolated quality of the inn, "there is no village" (104), indicates that both characters seek a way to escape some element of society which they deem indecorous. Every aspect of the Hegelian transcendental dialectic depends on the interaction of human begins: "[T]he movement of perceiving, in which the two sides, the percipient and what is perceived, are indistinguishably one in the *apprehension* of the True" (*Phenomenology* 82). While the narrator and the New Woman as she is represented in the story interact, there is no real connection that develops between them: "[S]he neither avoided me nor sought me" (114). Despite the narrator's willingness to connect, Egerton's female character embraces her isolation, and when the time comes to fully

entrust the narrator with her inner secrets, she says, "I will make no apology, no explanation, no denial to you, now or ever" (120). The female character understands herself within the social sphere; however, her ability to connect to the masculine "other" of Egerton's story is aborted through her refusal to share any information about her divorce and its effect upon her emotional state. In her choice to remain silent, the female character has broken the mimetic mirror between herself and her male counterpart in the story. She cannot transcend toward Hegel's Absolute Knowing without sharing and reflecting upon her life experiences.

By remaining isolated from other people, the New Woman in Egerton's story also reveals her illusive nature to the male as well as the audience. Egerton's narrator frequently refers to the "presence" of the story's female character as if she never really exists: "I go over and stand next her chair; I don't like to sit in it, but I like to put my hand where her head leant, and fancy, if she were there, how she would look up" (112). Both the narrator in Egerton's story as well as Cross' Cecil Ray see the female character as an object to be pitied and/or desired. However, in "A Little Gray Glove," the narrator is portrayed as the submissive "other." The narrator's attempt to make physical contact with the woman he desires is thwarted by her authoritative admonition: "No, you must listen without touching me…I don't want to influence you a bit by any personal magnetism I possess" (119). Egerton's female character knows the power she possesses over the narrator, but she will not allow it to be recognized by him or the audience. Her illusiveness is established through the gray glove she leaves behind: "If it isn't in my breast-pocket or under my pillow, it is some place where I can see it" (104). The gray glove functions as a memento, a representation of the impossibility of the connection

between them. The pair of gloves is incomplete, and, at the end of the story, the glove has yet to be reunited with its missing twin or the narrator reunited with his lost love. The emphasis Hegel places on mirroring is acute in this setting: "Hegel has in mind that a purely singular individuality is unable to affirm itself in the world because it is abstract…as consciousness, it is the unity of itself and its opposite" (Boldyrev 69). Egerton depicts a New Woman whose ambiguity in both physical action and symbolic representation lacks full corporeality. She cannot be fully embraced by the narrator or fully understood by the audience; therefore, she remains in a state of obscurity. In "The Little Gray Glove," the female character's self-imposed isolation ensures her abstract, ambiguous nature within the story, an enforced singularity of mind and being that prevents her attainment of transcendence.

Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Like Cross and Egerton, Thomas Hardy uses the dichotomy between Nature and society to comment on Victorian social mores in his novel, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. The central premise of Hardy's text revolves around the principle character's "Natural" upbringing. It is Tess' ignorance of the world which Hardy uses to affect her purity of action: "How could I be expected to know? I was a child when I left this house four months ago. Why didn't you tell me there was danger in men-folk? Why didn't you warn me" (103). Tess does not fully understand herself because of her inexperience in the world; however, as life events occur, Tess gathers a rudimentary knowledge of society, and with "[a]lmost at a leap Tess thus changed from simple girl to complex woman. Symbols of reflectiveness passed into her face, and a note of tragedy at time in her voice" (122). Tess internalizes these tragic events to minimize her shame within patriarchal

society. Even when Tess possesses more life experience, she maintains her sense of pastoral innocence: "[S]he resembled him [her father] in being content with immediate and small achievements, and in having no mind for laborious effort towards such petty social advancement" (130). Tess is content with her simple life of agricultural bliss because it is an escape from both the societal pressure of the D'Urberville name and Alec. However, her sense of self is easily influenced by the men who surround her: "Society is hopelessly snobbish, and this fact of your extraction may make an appreciable difference to its acceptance of you as my wife, after I have made you the well-read woman that I mean to make you" (228-229). Tess' submission to Angel's "molding" indicates her innocence and lack of self-awareness. Her life experiences provide her with the knowledge she initially lacks about men, but she continues to allow others to make her into whatever they choose because of her inability to define herself. Tess is trapped within the initial movement of Hegel's self-consciousness dialectic. In *Phenomenology* Hegel notes that consciousness must go through the cycle of perception in order to understand "how its perceiving is essentially constituted, viz. that it is not a simple pure apprehension, but *in its apprehension* is at the same time *reflected out of the True and into itself*" (71). The individual must recognize its own definition before s/he can gain a more complete understanding of his/her self-consciousness. Because Tess is only aware of the Natural world, she is unable to perceive herself in any way that is removed from the land she knows: "She was not existence, an experience, a passion, a structure of sensations, to anybody but herself. To all humankind besides Tess was only a passing thought" (113). Tess' defines herself by her link to the simplicity of Nature, but in that simplicity, there is a hidden trap—isolation. Tess knows nothing of the modern world.

She is isolated in her ignorant understanding of society and her place within it; therefore, modern men whom Tess encounters have no challenge to their influence upon her unrealized identity.

The innocence of Hardy's New Woman figure highlights another failing in her characterization--her acquisition of identity. Though Hardy's third-person narrator provides an alternative view to that of a limited masculine narrator in Cross and Egerton, the persona falls into the same snare through the male gaze. There is prominent sexual figuration of Tess throughout the novel, especially during the scenes with Alec D'Urberville and Angel Clare who both see her in sexual terms; however, the narrator's greatest failing is his unbalanced depiction of Tess' reflection on her impulsive actions. Early in the novel Tess is described as self-deprecating: "Nobody blamed Tess as she blamed herself" (43). The narrator further emphasizes this attitude by Tess' dialogue with Alec after he rapes her in the forest: "[I]f I had ever sincerely loved you, if I loved you still, I should not so loathe and hate myself for my weakness as I do now" (97). The narrator makes it clear that Tess internalizes her shame despite the inaccuracy of her assumed guilt, and it is this shame that jades Tess' definition of self as she moves to Crick's dairy farm. It is within this shift from tragedy that the narrator identifies a facet of Tess' character that causes an imbalance in her identity. Tess sees herself as a damaged, but good, woman; however, her "zest for life" (130) does not fully match with the reflective process of transcendence. Eric Steinhart asserts that Hegel views reflective self-consciousness as "waking up" because the individual gains a "more accurate" understanding of his/her identity ("The Absolute Comes into Focus" www.ericsteinhart.com). Reflection allows the consciousness to come out of slumber (i.e.

isolation via ignorance) through the cyclical process of life experience, review, and mental growth. Tess has not accepted herself as a changed woman as evidenced by her prevarication regarding Angel's proposal: "'O no-no!' replied she with grave hopelessness, as one who had heard anew the turmoil of her own past in the allusion to Alec d'Urberville. 'It *can't* be!'" (211-212). Despite her inner turmoil, Tess makes choices that place her in a position of social disgrace. She marries Angel without revealing the truth about her relationship with Alec, and when the truth is finally revealed, she expects Angel's forgiveness without any thought of the social implications of her action: "'O Tess—you are too, too—childish—unformed—crude, I suppose! I don't know what you are. You don't understand the law—you don't understand'" (283). Tess' simplicity ensures her purity in the eye of the narrator, but it also limits her ability to fully understand herself and the social world in which she must survive. Tess' desire for Angel Clare truncates her focus on self-awareness so completely that she ignores the cost to her physical and mental life. Angel's love is what Hegel calls a "limited object," and Tess' inability to claim her goal of that limited object leads to physical and spiritual violence: "When consciousness feels this violence, its anxiety may well make it retreat from the truth, and strive to hold on to what it is in danger of losing. But it can find no peace" (*Phenomenology* 51). Tess desires Angel above all else, and her desire keeps her from rational skepticism of her position in relation to Alec and the social world. Her final act of murder reveals her ignorance of social standards as well as her impulsivity: "'[W]ill you forgive me my sin against you, now I have killed him? I thought as I ran along that you would be sure to forgive me now I have done that'" (449). Tess freely admits her guilt to Angel because she has attained her goal; however, the narrator's

detailed account of Angel's reaction to the confession highlights the imbalance within Tess' identity: "Unable to realize the gravity of her conduct she seemed at last content; and he looked at her as she lay upon his shoulder…and wondered what obscure strain in the d'Urberville blood had led to this aberration" (450). Hardy's narrator characterizes Tess as a pure woman to provide a positive view of the New Woman (Pykett 165); however, her impulsive actions negate the reflective capability of the New Woman. Tess' innocence in the social world hampers her transcendence away from its oppressive influence.

New Woman authors fail to represent their feminist symbol as a fully realized female individual. Emphasis on the masculine narrator as well as the insularity established by the New Woman's superior attitudes towards the lower class as well as her ignorance toward self-reflection force the identity of this feminist figurehead into a cycle of submission and/or destruction which highlights her state of transcendental stasis (de Laurentiis 263 and Driss 170). As Hegel asserts in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the necessary elements required for an individual to gain an awareness of truth are his/her ability to define his/her sense of self as well as connect that natural consciousness to the world through reflection and mimesis (*Phenomenology* 61). New Woman authors depict women as a reaction to patriarchal dominance. This female emblem of power possesses no authentic sense of self; therefore, she has no place in reality or ability to claim individuality in the social world. The New Woman cannot escape the insularity imposed by her own definition of "otherness." Although this essay explores this particular failing within the New Woman's character, it will now turn to other female authors who have

discovered a path to female transcendence through the individual female voice rather than figuration.

Chinese Post-Mao women writers differ greatly from the New Woman of fin de siècle Britain. Rather than focus on creating an image to respond to patriarchal figuration of the female, women writers in 1980s China use the individual stories of various females to establish a voice for the silenced woman (Duke 469). Post-Mao women narratives reflect on life experience which breeds a deeper understanding of the self: "The profound desire to express her [Post-Mao woman's] emotional, psychological, and physical sufferings constitute the major motivation for her confession-like account of her life and story" (Wang 150). Reflection is essential to the emotional growth of the Post-Mao individual as well as his/her transcendence to a true state of autonomy. In addition to their emphasis on reflection, Chinese Post-Mao women writers hold a like attitude to Hegel who states that the isolated individual has "not as yet exposed themselves to each other [another individual] in the form of pure being-for-self, or as self-consciousness. Each is indeed certain of its own self, but not of the other, and therefore its own self-certainty still has no truth" (*Phenomenology* 113). Within the narrative stories of Post-Mao women, the bonding of the individual with the group/collective enables reflective growth as well as a sense of purpose.

Hu Xin's "Four Women of Forty"

In her short story, "Four Women of Forty," Hu Xin emphasizes the importance of female bonding through the close-knit friendship of four women. Despite multiple years apart, these women "knew each other immediately, without a moment's hesitation" (160). The struggles and hardships which define their temporal lives have no effect on their

ability to recognize their sisters. Hu's detailed description of the reunion between these friends highlights the importance of the bond between them. Though they are in the middle of a crowded thoroughfare, they each "joined the general hugs and shouts of delight, oblivious to everything else" (161). Each woman is identified as an individual consciousness in the crowd; however, their reunion disrupts that sense of egocentric isolation because it shows each woman another part of herself which is buried beneath time and expectation. The unification established by their sisterly bond is exemplified through storytelling: "This is such a precious meeting...Come let's say something about the last twenty years" (167). Every story's difference harkens to the individuality of the female voice; however, the act of sharing is paramount in Hu's story. Hegel asserts in *Phenomenology* that the individual consciousness must be recognized by another to gain truth; mutual recognition is even more important within the formation of female identity (Green and Roffey 380). The women in Hu's narrative respond to each other's story with compassionate sympathy that draws the audience's attention to the bond not only of the women but also fellow human beings. Yehyun's story highlights the shared strength found in the sisterly bond. As she complains about the struggles of the modern woman: "I had lost what is most precious to a woman—her good name. How can you expect people to penetrate the surface and understand all the intricacies of my case" (174). Her sisters remain silent because they understand what she has experienced and do not judge her bad actions. As Hu notes, "What could they say, after all" (175). Each woman sympathizes with Yehyun, and through their silent attention to her despair, the friends acknowledge and share the pain of one of their own. The four women in Hu's story find balance in the bond they share; through friendship they are able to face the pain and joy life presents,

and, most importantly, they grow as individuals through communion of shared experience.

These four women share everything with each other; no subject is taboo. Hu utilizes authenticity in each woman's reflection to establish reality and represent the power of transcendent growth. Life for each of these women is made up of difficult or shameful moments which society attempts to ignore; however, by voicing the difficulties they have faced, each woman finds an individual truth. Though her characters are female, Hu emphasizes the universality of life struggles for all human beings. Every painful recitation presents a moment of reflection that moves each woman outside of her gender or physical limitation. Lingling's story is a quintessential example of this reflective moment. She acknowledges her good fortune in husband and life style; however, she also recognizes her unhappiness. "'Shouldn't I be satisfied? But when alone, in the stillness of night, something gnaws at my heart…'" (176). Lingling's story is similar to those of New Woman authors because it responds to the limitations placed on women by the patriarchy; however, this similarity ends with Liu Qing's statement: "'You've lost your soul'" (177). Liu Qing's words not only show her understanding of Lingling's plight but also look beyond the individual's suffering to a common problem for all Chinese Post-Mao individuals. Lingling's confirmation of Liu Qing's statement is the first step to transcendence. As the "subject," Lingling recognizes her position in the "substance" of her life experience, and by reflecting/"mapping" on the positive experience she had while helping a pregnant farm laborer give birth, Lingling realizes the truth about her identity as a doctor (Steinhart "The Absolute Comes into Focus" www.ericsteinhart.com).

Of the four characters within Hu's story, Liu Qing represents the ideal/"amazing" woman because of her ability to look beyond herself toward what Hegel terms *being-for-another*. Per Hegel, self-consciousness is based on the individual's definition of self as well as his/her confirmation or refutation of this definition through constant reflection and growth (Westphal 5). The individual's ability to see beyond his/her definition of self indicates his/her awareness of the larger world (i.e. society) and how s/he attempts to function in this sphere (*Phenomenology* 80). Despite suffering from breast cancer and the loss of her love, Liu Qing maintains a positive attitude about her life and its purpose: "It was his love for the villagers that gave me inspiration, his unswerving attachment to his work that gave me strength. As I love him, I must love my work" (186). Liu Qing's attitude follows Hegel's self-consciousness dialectic thereby ensuring her transcendence to Absolute Knowing. Her relationship with the man she loves is not based on desire but mutual recognition. Liu Qing mirrors his love of others through her attitude of service to her students and that attitude is thus reflected in her students' support of her. As Liu shares her story, her friends also reflect and mirror her attitude of *being-of-another*: "Her three friends were stunned. So this is love, which they thought they knew about" (186). The four women recognize an important truth about life through the power of their bond with each other as well as Liu Qing's transcendent reflection. It is the unification of these four individuals that enables each one to see beyond herself and transcend her personal limitations.

Lu Xin'er's "The Sun is Not Out Today"

The importance of female bonding is also prominent in "The Sun is Not Out Today" by Lu Xin'er. Like Hu's narrative, Lu's story revolves around the shared

experiences of women facing life's difficulties. Lu's choice to set the story in an abortion clinic highlights a common struggle for modern Chinese women while also pointing out the ever-present bond that exists between individuals: "By then, even more people had arrived. But nobody complained. They squeezed against each other, shoulder to shoulder, finding place for everyone" (195). Despite the cramped quarters and their individual sense of shame or suffering, every woman in the waiting room finds a place of sympathy in her heart for sisters. This bond is not only shown physically through Lu's description of the scene but also through the open and rebellious dialogue of the patients: "Faced with these women, strangers yet completely understanding, Fan Hong, for the first time, let down all her barriers. She confessed all the secrets that she could never have borne to reveal and had had no one to tell" (197). For the individual in Post-Mao China, personal feelings were a new luxury because Mao's regime removed the individual's identity to increase effectiveness in the labor force (Wu 409). The patients in Lu's story are embracing what has been denied to them by joining their voices together to share the struggles women face in modern life. Hegel's theory of mimesis is apparent in the behavior of these women. Each woman is an individual in the clinic; however, their shared experience acts as a mirror which reflects their connection to others. Fan Hong reveals her darkest secrets because each woman in that room understands her plight. Like Fan Hong, Dan Ye, the protagonist of Lu's story, is affected by the women's open dialogue: "Dan Ye was shocked. These women were so frank, so naked—no hedging about. Their candor made her want to speak out, too" (199). Dan Ye's attitude at the beginning of the story is starkly different from this sudden burst of comradery. Upon first entering the abortion clinic, she feels isolated in her own sense of shame and fear: "Dan

Ye didn't care to hear about other people's affairs. Nor did she want others to know hers" (190); however, after spending time listening to these women sympathize and support one another, Dan Ye realizes the importance of the female bond. Lu makes the connection between Dan Ye and the patients stronger by focusing on a particular "other" who is reflective of Dan Ye's sense of self: "The woman turned her head to answer. 'Thank you'...Dan Ye was intrigued. 'Please take my arm.' Is she newly married? An actress?" (194). Dan Ye chooses to offer the actress her arm even though the woman's sickness has driven away most of the other women. The interest Dan Ye has in the actress reveals her attention and empathy towards others that moves her out of egocentric isolation and enables her transcendence toward self-awareness and autonomy from patriarchal expectations.

Lu Xin'er utilizes a similar narrative framework to that found in Hu Xin's "Four Women of Forty," there is a significant difference in her incorporation of internal dialogue. In Lu's story, the individual's reflective capability is emphasized through Dan Ye's inner reflections. The third-person narrative style of the story enables easy movement from spoken dialogue to the internal thoughts that are unique to Dan Ye. The connection between Dan Ye and the actress is even more indicative of the importance of mimesis to Hegel's transcendental lens. When the audience pays attention to Dan Ye's unspoken monologue they can comprehend her reflective analysis of self: "Doesn't your husband care for you?' Dan Ye wondered. There her thoughts lighted on her own condition. But does *he* care for *me*" (194). It is clear that Dan Ye sees her own struggle in that of the actress. Mirroring is important to the development of self, but it can also hinder the transcendent progression of the individual: "The compulsion to repeat, if

unconscious, gestures toward the significance of the double in the production of uncanny affect by blurring a sense of agency" (McLaughlan 53). Dan Ye's internal monologue reveals her difference from the female patients at the clinic: "Only through this as-yet-uncompleted cycle could she ever know what it is to be a woman. No, she did not want to start all over again. In a flash, she came to a decision" (205). Dan Ye's decision comes after the other patients have endured the abortion procedure. These women are silenced, which reaffirms that "[t]hey were strangers after all. The confidences on the waiting benches seemed lost in memory" (202). Dan Ye has not forgotten the bond she made with these women. Her internal monologue reveals the importance of individual reflection and mimesis. Dan Ye recognizes qualities about these women which she did not consider in her initial isolated state. Additionally, her internal dialogue reveals the transcendent nature of her reflection; therefore, her final decision to keep her child holds true to the development of her character: "Dan Ye treasured her love. More, she treasured the life so naturally born of that love. Fort that, she was prepared to pay the price" (206). Her experience and shared bond with the patients in the abortion clinic provide Dan Ye with a new perspective that she embraces as she continues to transcend the limitations imposed on her by society.

Fang Fang's "Dead End"

"Dead End" by Fang Fang differs from the narratives of Hu Xin and Lu Xin'er because it focuses on the destruction of unity by egocentric isolation and individual desire. Where other Post-Mao women writers attempt to show the female voice in stark contrast to patriarchal domination, Fang places the focus of her story squarely on the male character, Yan Hang. Through the third-person perspective, Fang is able to describe

Yan Hang's egocentrism while pointing out the negative effects his attitude has on others: "A book would enhance his standing at the institute. The centre [sic] of gravity would be wherever he was" (215). Fang's development of Yan Hang is revelatory of the dangers inherent in Hegel's concept of individual self-consciousness. Chiereghin notes, "For there to be thought requires that the 'being-in-itself' of things and the 'being-for-itself' of consciousness are no longer distributed into separate and independent entities; it requires that they are recognized as identical in the unity of consciousness" (*The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology* 56). Yan Hang is only aware of himself and his problems throughout the story. His failure to see anyone else ensures his complete isolation from the autonomy he craves: "As long as I prepare and teach properly, I will have done my duty he reasoned. There is nothing I can do if they choose to be disinterested…However, Yan Hang never dreamed that the administration would put his fate in the hands of these donkeys" (244). The future that Yan Hang dreams of as a professor in America depends on the connection he makes with the people around him such as his students, administrators, and his wife. The most important union in Fang's story is the one that is utterly destroyed by egocentric isolation and individual desire. The pressure Yan Hang puts on himself to go to America forces his wife, An Xiaoyue, into a position of power; however, her acquisition of freedom is a pretense because it separates her from the unity of love: "Because of money, An Xiaoyue seemed to have elevated herself, and in the process, put him [Yan Hang] down" (219). The power that comes with materialism is the driving force behind An Xiaoyue's continuation as a lounge singer. At the beginning of the story, Lu makes frequent references to An Xiaoyue's desire to help her husband achieve his goal through the money she makes (218); however, this sense of

duty ebbs, especially as Yan Hang's selfish attitude becomes more prominent: "Because of her the couple's standard of living had improved. Imperceptibly her attitude toward her husband had changed. Where she had been yielding now she was resistant" (260). An Xiaoyue desires some form of recognition that she is not getting from her selfishly individualistic husband; therefore, she takes solace in her individual desire for happiness and freedom rather than working to reinforce the bond between herself and Yan Hang. Both Yan Hang and An Xiaoyue fall into the trap of egocentric isolation through their individual desire for recognition. By focusing on what makes them individually happy, the couple fails to see the recognition that exists within their bond of marriage.

An Xiaoyue focuses her attention on materialism while Yan Hang is dedicated to his ambition, but their truncated focus on these individual desires breaks the memetic mirror that unites the couple: "An Xiaoyue treated the news of Yan Hang's acceptance with indifference…He was completely oblivious that An Xiaoyue had changed, that her heart was turning in a new direction, and she was miserable" (258-259). This dialogue reveals the importance of Lu's third-person perspective because it enables the audience to comprehend the warning presented through the character's actions. Yan Hang ignores An Xiaoyue in his blind effort to gain intellectual freedom; thus, An Xiaoyue, in response to her husband's egocentric ignorance, establishes her own form of recognition outside of the marriage. In the beginning of the story, neither Yan Hang nor An Xiaoyue attempt to reflect on the damage that is being done to their marriage through their actions. It is only when the marriage begins to fall apart that either character attempts to identify their failure: "I'm sorry I made you unhappy. I didn't do a husband's duty. It was because I didn't have financial resources to make your life easier that you were forced to go out and

sing to help support this home" (274). Yan Hang's admission of guilt, while reflective in nature, still speaks to his selfish attitude. Rather than assigning blame to himself for his lack of attention to An Xiaoyue, he blames her decision to sing on the lack of money coming into the house. An Xiaoyue's reflection about her relationship with Jiang Tianbai is no less self-centered: "She wanted to be with Jiang Tianbai, but she wasn't ready to drop Yan Hang and the chance of going to America" (271). An Xiaoyue freely admits that she wants to cheat on her husband, but she does not want to risk her opportunity of going to America, the same opportunity that she previously viewed with nonchalance. Through Yan Hang's and An Xiaoyue's reflection, Lu shows the unfortunate truth about egocentric isolation. When the individual forgets the bond between him-herself and the "other," s/he cannot gain autonomy; s/he is forever trapped in the "dead end" of transcendental stasis.

Chinese Post-Mao women writers such as Hu Xin, Lu Xin'er, and Fang Fang take the audience on a journey through the individual soul. Their narratives, like others of the Post-Mao era, emphasize the individuality of the Chinese female while also building a bond between these individuals that catalyzes mimesis and self-reflection. Lihua Wang states, "Thinking back, I can see this image of a heroine hid many levels of representation which shaped my gender consciousness…[Sister Jiang] was a strong woman with revolutionary qualities of devotion, endurance, and responsibility for the society whose life did not revolve around a man" ("Gender Consciousness in My Teen Years" 122-123). Wang, connects herself to the women depicted by Post-Mao women writers. The Chinese female/male audience views each Post-Mao woman writer's story as an example to follow or as a warning of the dangers inherent to individuality. The primary focus of the

Chinese Post-Mao woman writer is not the creation of a figure that represents the entire female gender, but emphasis on the small, day-to-day stories of Chinese women who live their life in silent duty. In her essay, "Women's Eyes," Fang Fang notes, "Women's views on life are as profound as men's, but are expressed in a peaceful and gentle voice, not in a radical manner…At this, I remembered what a poet has written: To a man's eye, life is living; to a woman's eye, life is her identity" (*Once Iron Girls* 59). Female identity acquisition and the establishment of autonomy are essential to the Post-Mao woman writer. It is their attention on the individual female's story that connects the Chinese Post-Mao women writers to Hegel's transcendental lens. As the audience journeys through the individual's story, they learn about themselves and enhance their own quest for autonomy.

Chapter 5 Conclusions about New Woman and Chinese Post-Mao formation of the autonomous female

The female quest for autonomy is a dominant theme in both New Woman and Chinese Post-Mao literature. After analyzing the literary criticism of both literary groups as well as comparing the development of individuality within Hegelian thought to New Woman and Post-Mao primary sources, I have discovered inequality between the female representations of these two female groups. The New Woman fails to secure a stable autonomy because of the dichotomous attitudes toward the female in British patriarchal society during the fin de siècle. Conversely, the Post-Mao women writers of China use realistic representations of women to establish a foundation for the transcendence of female consciousness. The development and application of Hegel's transcendent lens to the writings of Charlotte Mew, Victoria Cross, George Egerton, Thomas Hardy, Hu Xin, Lu Xin'er, and Fang Fang enable the reader to see how New Woman authors fell into a cycle of submission/destruction thus ensuring stasis. Their emphasis on egocentric superiority based on social class as well as their attention on social ignorance and ambiguity through the male gaze places New Woman authors in an untenable position for female transcendence toward autonomy. Conversely, Post-Mao women writers highlight characters who reflect on life experiences to look beyond themselves, thus enabling their movement toward Absolute Knowledge.

Criticism of New Woman literature in the British fin de siècle has demonstrated that successful acquisition of female individuality is not achieved during the "first wave" of feminist political maneuvering: "The 'purity school' novels did not reject the value of matrimony.... The second type of the New Woman fiction depicted the traditional

Victorian marriage as repugnant and emphasized the sexual double standard and male degeneration" (Diniejko "The New Woman Fiction" www.victorianweb.org). The New Woman movement is initiated as a response to male attitudes about the subjugated woman; however, the dual view of the female as powerful force, whether a superfluous spinster or sexual siren, disrupts her reception by the fin de siècle audience, thereby damaging her definition in society as well as the audience's interpretation of her self-awareness. Brinda Roy equates this dualism of the female form to that of Queen Victoria's two bodies "the one moribund and material, the other deathless and immaterial" (79). Roy identifies these two forms of the Queen as intentionally representative of transcendence; however, this action fails because even though the material body "lacks charm," it takes precedence over the "intrinsic charisma" of the immaterial body (79-80). The Victorian populace value the visual sensation over all others (Collins 316), thus the figure of the female form is the dominant facet of her definition. New Woman authors attempt to destroy this sexualized figure through the adoption of male dress and behavior. Conversely, the common method of destruction for the androgynous female figure is death, either be her own hand or by the hand of the morally righteous patriarchy (Heilmann 26). The New Woman author's emphasis on the visual representation of the female form failed to address the inner consciousness of the woman: "Most of Tess Durbeyfield's dilemmas…are staged as questions about the temporality of her body—but her body as organism or as cultural construct" (Law 248). As Law points out, the figuration of the New Woman creates more questions than answers for the feminist movement. The Victorian definition of femininity is based primarily on the visual representation of her form, but this representation is disparate

because the visual perception is individualized. Each person's view and interpretation of a given figure and/or character is determined by his/her life experience and understanding of his/her self-consciousness; therefore, it is virtually impossible to create a single figure that can effectively represent multiple unique individuals (*Phenomenology* 67).

Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* emphasizes a clear definition of self through a process of "rational skepticism" (50) in which the individual reflects upon his/her life experiences to gain a more complete sense of self. While reflection is a primary function of Hegel's transcendent lens, fin de siècle feminists frequently isolate the New Woman in egocentrism, their subversive actions, and self-imposed difference from the male standard. "[P]recisely because a woman is denied the autonomy—the subjectivity—that the pen represents, she is not only excluded from culture (whose emblem might well be the pen) but she also becomes herself an embodiment of just those extremes of mysterious and intransigent Otherness" (Gilbert and Gubar 19). The New Woman never freely embraces her difference from man; instead, she is shown to react with vehemence (Hughes "A Fin-de-Siècle Beauty and the Beast" 95). The "rational skepticism" of Hegel is lost in the impulsivity, sensational behavior, and insulation of the elitist female who wishes to be like a man rather than transcend this attitude to embrace the reality of her equality with and autonomy from men.

In addition to the disparate purpose and egocentric isolation of the New Woman, the most significant hindrance to her journey toward autonomy is the male gaze. New Woman authors typically fashion their stories around a male narrator or a masculinized female protagonist (Simek 350). A great deal of emphasis is placed on the separation of the narrator from the audience as well as the New Woman; however, this separation

destabilizes the mimesis required by Hegel's transcendent lens. Allegra de Laurentiis asserts that reflection is the primary method by which the individual can gain autonomy through Absolute Knowing. She states, "what absolute knowledge knows is the being…or substance of its Self. As it directs its gaze outward, it gains inward insight. To inwardize (*insichgehen*) means also to recollect or remember (*erinnern*) one's past being, and thus to preserve what lacks external reality" (*The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* 262). The separation between the narrator and the New Woman or the New Woman and the audience ensures stasis within the development of feminism within the fin de siècle because there is no opportunity for self-reflection or reflection through a memetic bond with the "other." Feminist authors create the New Woman as a reactionary movement against patriarchal oppression; however, the figure they tout as an emblem of female freedom further ensnares women under the male subjective gaze. Transcendence is impossible for the New Woman because she does not have a clear definition of self, she does not reflect on the lessons she learns about herself from past experiences, and she depends on a male or masculinized voice to tell her story.

Unlike the New Woman, Chinese Post-Mao women writers take great pains to establish a clear definition of the Chinese female. Zhang KangKang addresses the importance of female self-recognition in her essay, "We Need Two Worlds." Zhang states, "[I]f we want to motivate women to change their lives, merely criticizing the male in our writing does not suffice. Women writers must gather courage to face ourselves, focus on women, and educate and improve them" (*Once Iron Girls* 157). By acknowledging their physiological attributes as females, Post-Mao women take a transcendent path which is lost to the New Woman. Femininity is not a source of shame

for these women; rather, their feminine beauty is what makes them "amazing" women. Additionally, Post-Mao women writers do not emphasize a single female figure that represents their movement for women's rights; instead, they tell stories of unique women in every-day situations. Realistic narratives show Post-Mao women in a true light which emphasizes "what happens between women, between women and men, between other women and themselves, women write, little by little and piece by piece, to strengthen one another" (Zhang KangKang, "The 'Grand' Realm Versus The 'True' Realm," *OIG* 163). Every action by the Post-Mao women writers focuses on the transcendence of the female toward individual autonomy. Through self-recognition, the Post-Mao female gains a sense of self which is the essential first step in Hegel's transcendent dialectic (*Phenomenology* 67). From this point, the individual can develop his/her consciousness through mimesis and reflection.

To achieve their transcendent goal, Post-Mao women writers emphasize self-reflection, especially within the female bond, to ensure the growth of all women. The personal story is the primary vehicle for identity acquisition, social bonding, and mimesis: "Women writers' insistence on divergent, gendered, personal experiences and historical specificities in the early 1980s thus functioned to question and challenge the dominant control over literary production and to articulate an alternative literary and discursive public" (Wang 160). The "alternative literary and discursive public" Wang references is the independent "amazing" woman. For the Post-Mao woman writer, individuality is a recent luxury provided by the fall of Maoist rule. However, the collective attitude that dominated China during Mao's regime is not lost within the Post-Mao era. Rather than being a purely political entity, the collective becomes a bond

between individuals moving toward transcendence. As individual Post-Mao women share their story, the audience forms a mimetic bond with the storyteller: "Post-Mao Chinese women writers must take into consideration 'the relationships between and among the individual, the family, the community, and the society'" (Wu, qtd. in Wang 397). Chinese culture is built around the collective (i.e. family unit); therefore, the mimetic bond required for Hegel's transcendent lens is already present. In her narrative, "The Sun is Not Out Today," Lu Xin'er juxtaposes the self-imposed isolation of Dan Ye with the bond formed by the waiting female patients. Lu's emphasis on the openness and rebellious nature of the bond highlights its importance to Dan Ye's character as well as the political implications of female unity. Dan Ye, like other female characters within Post-Mao narratives, sees her own struggles mirrored in the women that surround her. Hegel's transcendent lens requires the individual to recognize and be recognized by the "other" (*Phenomenology* 107). Through mimesis the female characters in Post-Mao narratives serve as teachers as well as learners on the journey to transcendence.

In addition to their acknowledgement and praise of femininity, Post-Mao women writers create stories that act as life lessons for the audience. Characters' struggles with day-to-day life mirror those of typical Chinese women; therefore the audience can easily connect to the protagonist and learn from her reflections on life events. Lai-fong Leung describes literature since 1979 as that dominated by an emphasis on individual tales of realism and the difference between males and females. Leung states, "[Post-Mao women writers] have created a gallery of female images which powerfully project the anguish and frustration, suffering and accusation, love and ideals of women in contemporary China." ("In Search of Love and Self" 137). Because of their emphasis on reality, Post-

Mao female writing, achieves what New Woman fiction does not—it engages the audience within the transcendent framework. Bi Shumin's essay "Seeking Amazing Women" exemplifies the powerful connection between the female audience and the Post-Mao woman writer. While Bi delineates the qualities of what she terms an "amazing" woman, she is also challenging the female audience to find these qualities within themselves: "Beautiful women are in perfect harmony—harmony in the face and the figure, harmony in the body and the soul. But harmonious beauty is not simply a good combination of fine physical features, but a presentation of the whole" (*OIG* 51). Bi sees the "amazing" woman as an individual who is not focused on the figural representation of feminine beauty, but one who strives to better her soul through reflection and transcendence. Fictional characters in the Post-Mao narrative are not removed from the audience because of the emphasis women writers place on realism. Because of their realistic representation of women, Post-Mao women writers' narratives functions as a mimetic mirror through which the audience can see themselves and their own struggles represented through the protagonist and those with whom she shares a bond. As Hegel notes, transcendent self-acquisition depends on the acknowledgement of the individual consciousness by another (*Phenomenology* 69). The Post-Mao female protagonist's realism is in stark contrast to the fictionalized figurehead of the New Woman. The "amazing" woman mirrors those attitudes and behaviors which define women in modern China, thus she is more acutely representational of women's ability to transcend their physical and social limitations.

Perhaps the most important quality of the Post-Mao woman writers' narrative is its catalytic quality within the female development of self. In *Phenomenology of Spirit*,

Hegel warns the audience of the dangers found within isolation. He argues that only within the individual's connection with others can s/he find his/her true self: "In a free nation, therefore, Reason is in truth realized…The wisest men of antiquity have therefore declared that wisdom and virtue consist in living in accordance with the customs of one's nation" (214). Post-Mao women writers deplore the adoption of Western feminism because it directly opposes their conception of self (Wu 407). These women emphasize the importance of maintaining gender, cultural, and social authenticity, and it is their attention to realism versus alteration to achieve an unreachable goal that stabilizes Chinese women's transcendence beyond patriarchal limitations. The Post-Mao woman is not interested in comparing herself to Western concepts of feminism (i.e. attainment of masculine power); instead, she focuses on the struggles she endures within the social and cultural confines that define her. This attitude follows Hegel's assertion that "[existent individuals'] deeds and destinies in their reciprocal relations to one another are the dialectic of the finitude of these minds, and out of it arises the universal mind, the mind of the world, free from all restriction" (Hegel, qtd. in Lai 121). Because they are not concerned with comparing themselves to other feminist movements, Post-Mao women writers do not lose sight of their sense of self. These women define themselves through their acknowledgement of femininity as a step toward acquiring individuality. The catalytic quality of Post-Mao female literature can be found in the authors' emphasis on sexual pride as well as their continuous drive for personal growth. Unlike New Woman literature of the British fin de siècle, no woman is perfect in the eyes of the Post-Mao woman writer; however, each woman possesses something absolutely invaluable—individuality.

References: Works Cited

Anthony, Ross. "China, Gender, and Feminism." *Women: A Cultural Review* 21.1 (2010): 107-111. *JSTOR*. Web. 19 Oct. 2016.

Babcock, Barbara A. "Feminisms/Pretexts: Fragments, Questions, and Reflections." *Constructing Meaningful Dialogue on Difference: Feminism and Postmodernism in Anthropology and the Academy Part 1*. Spec issue of *Anthropological Quarterly* 66.2 (1993): 59-66. *JSTOR*. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

Barlow, Tani E. "Globalization, China, and International Feminism." *Globalization and Gender*. Spec. issue of *Signs* 26.4 (2001): 1286-1291. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 Nov. 2016.

Bauer, Heike. "Theorizing Female Inversion: Sexology, Discipline, and Gender at the Fin de siècle." *Feminine Sexual Pathologies in Nineteenth- and Early-Twentieth-Century Europe*. Spec. issue of *Journal of History and Sexuality* 18.1 (2009): 84-102. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Oct. 2016.

Beaumont. Matthew. "'A Little Political World of My Own': The New Woman, the New Life, and 'New Amazonia'." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 35.1 (2007): 215-232. *JSTOR*. Web. 27 Oct. 2016.

Ben Driss, Hager. "Closed to Oriental Heroines: Ethos of the Colonial Text." *Middle East Studies Bulletin* 36.2 (2003): 164-188. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Aug. 2016.

Blackwell, Kenneth R. ed. "Hegel's Phenomenological Method and Analysis of Consciousness." *Blackwell's Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*. Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester, 2009. 1-36. Print.

Bo Wang. "Engaging Nüquanzhuyi: The Making of a Chinese Feminist Rhetoric." *Studying Chinese Rhetoric in the Twenty-First Century* Spec. issue of *College English* 72.4 (2010): 385-405. *JSTOR*. Web. 22 Jan. 2017.

Boldyrev, Ivan. "*Faust* and the *Phenomenology of Spirit*: In the Footsteps of Lukács and Bloch." *Russian Studies in Philosophy* 49.4 (2011): 65-95. *JSTOR*. Web. 3 April 2014.

Brown, Daniel. "George Egerton's 'Keynotes': Nietzschean Feminism and 'Fin-de-Siècle' Fetishism." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 39.1 (2011): 143-166. *JSTOR*. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

Busfield, Joan. "The Female Malady? Men, Women and Madness in Nineteenth Century Britain." *Sociology* 28.1 (1994): 259-277. *JSTOR*. Web. 27 Oct. 2016.

Casey, Ellen Miller. "Edging Women out?: Reviews of Women Novelists in the 'Athenaeum,' 1860-1900." *Victorian Studies* 39.2 (1996): 151-171. *JSTOR*. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

Chiereghin, Franco. "Freedom and Thought: Stoicism, Skepticism, and Unhappy Consciousness." *Blackwell's Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*. Ed. Kenneth R. Blackwell. Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester, 2009. 55-71. Print.

Cohler, Deborah. "The Imperialist Classifications: Sexology, Decadence, and New Women in the 1890s." *Citizen, Invert, Queer: Lesbianism and War in Early*

Twentieth-Century Britain. U of Minnesota P: Minneapolis, 2010. *JSTOR*. Web. 1 Dec. 2016.

Collins, Tracy J. R. "Athletic Fashion, 'Punch,' and the Creation of the New Woman." Victorian Periodicals Review. 43.3 (2010): 309-335. *JSTOR*. Web. 27 Oct. 2016.

Corbett, Mary Jean. "Performing Identities: Actress and Autobiography." *Autobiography and Changing Identities.* Spec. issue of *Biography* 24.1 (2001): 15-23. *JSTOR*. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

Cross, Victoria. "Theodora: A Fragment." CLAS. Web. 23 Oct. 2016. <users.clas.ufl.edu/snod/VictoriaCross.Theodora.042515.pdf>.

Cunningham, A. R. "The 'New Woman Fiction' of the 1890's." *Victorian Studies* 17.2 (1973): 177-186. *JSTOR*. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

de Laurentiis, Allegra. "Absolute Knowing." *Blackwell's Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*. Ed. Kenneth R. Blackwell. Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester, 2009. 246-264. Print.

"Decadent." *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. 11th ed. Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford UP: Oxford, 2004. 370. Print.

Diniejko, Andrzej. "The New Woman Fiction." *Victorian Web: Literature, History and Culture in the Age of Victoria.* Web. 13 Oct. 2016.

Dowling, Linda. "The Decadent and the New Woman in the 1890's." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 33.4 (1979): 434-453. *JSTOR*. Web. 27 Oct. 2016.

Duke, Michael. "A New Romantic Generation? Young PRC Writers of the Post-Mao Era and the Romantic Tradition in China." *Tamkang review* 15.1-4 (1984): 467-483. *JSTOR*. Web. 19 Oct. 2016.

Egerton, George. "The Little Gray Glove." Keynotes. Internet Archive. Archive. Web. 24 Oct. 2016.

Fang Fang. "Dead End." Digital Documents for ENGL 5370 Contemporary World Literature. Web. 21 Oct. 2016.

"Figuration." *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. 11th ed. Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford UP: Oxford, 2004. 529. Print.

"Figure." *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. 11th ed. Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford UP: Oxford, 2004. 529. Print.

Findlay, J. N. "Foreword." *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*. Trans. A. V. Miller. Oxford UP: Oxford, 1977. v-xxx. Print.

Gilbert, Sandra M. and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. 2nd ed. Yale UP: New Haven, 1984. Print.

Green, Karen and Nicholas Roffey. "Women, Hegel, and Recognition in *The Second Sex*." *Hypatia* 25.2 (2010): 376-393. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Jan. 2017.

Hardy, Thomas. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles. Barnes and Noble Classics*. Ed. George Stade. Barnes & Noble Books: New York, 2005. Print.

Hegel, G. W. F. *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*. Trans. A. V. Miller. Oxford UP: Oxford, 1977. Print.

Heilmann, Ann. "Medea at the Fin de siècle: Revisionist Uses of Classical Myth in Mona Caird's The Daughters of Danaus." *Victorian Review* 31.1 (2005): 21-39. *JSTOR*. Web. 13 Oct. 2016.

Helland, Janice. "Frances Macdonald: The Self as Fin-de-Siècle Woman." *Woman's Art Journal* 14.1 (1993): 15-22. *JSTOR*. Web. 13 Jan. 2016.

Hershatter, Gail. *Women in China's Long Twentieth Century*. Global, Area, and International Archive, U of California P. *UCPress*. Web. 2 Dec. 2016.

Hetherington, Naomi. "Feminism, Freethought, and the Sexual Subject in Colonial New Woman Fiction: Olive Schreiner and Kathleen Mannington Caffyn." *Victorian Review* 37.2 (2011): 47-59. *JSTOR*. Web. 27 Oct. 2016.

Hong Jiang. "The Personalization of Literature: Chinese Women's Writing in the 1990s." *The Cultural Configuration of Literature and Film in 1990s China: A New Perspective*. Spec. issue of *China Review* 3.1 (2003): 5-27. *JSTOR*. Web. 22 Jan. 2017.

Hu Xin. "Four Women of Forty." The Serenity of Whiteness: Stories by and about Women in Contemporary China. Ed. and Trans. Zhu Hong. Ballantine Books: New York, 1991. 158-187. Print.

Hughes, Linda. "A Club of Their Own: The 'Literary Ladies,' New Women Writers, and *Fin-De-Siècle* Authorship." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 35.1 (2007): 233-260. *JSTOR*. 13 Jan. 2016.

---,---. "A Fin-de-Siècle Beauty and the Beast: Configuring the Body in Works by 'Graham R. Tomson' (Rosamund Marriott Watson)." *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 14.1 (1995): 95-121. *JSTOR*. 30 Dec. 2016.

Jie Yang, "*Nennu* and *Shunu*: Gender, Body Politics, and the Beauty Economy in China." *Signs* 36.2 (2011): 333-357. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Oct. 2016.

Johnston, Scott. "Dewey's 'Naturalized Hegelianism' in Operation: Experimental Inquiry as Self-Consciousness." *Transactions* 46.3 (2010): 453-476. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 April 2014.

King, Richard. "Chinese Literature Post-Mao." Oxford Index, Oxford UP. *Oxford Bibliographies*. Web. 13 Oct. 2016.

Kramer, Lawrence. "Fin-de-siècle Fantasies: 'Elektra', Degeneration and Sexual Science." *Cambridge Opera Journal* 5.2 (1993): 141-165. *JSTOR*. Web. 8 April 2014.

Kristeva, Julia. "Confucius: An Eater of Women." *About Chinese Women*. Trans. Anita Barrows. Marion Boyars Inc.: New York, 2009.66-99. Print.

Kukla, Rebecca. "Reading Literature after Hegel." *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 12.4 (1998): 245-254. *JSTOR*. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

Lai, Amy. "Hegel, the Tiananmen Incident and Falun Gong." *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 9.1 (2010): 119-133. *JSTOR*. Web. 27 Dec. 2016.

Lai-fong Leung. "In Search of Love and Self: the Image of Young Female Intellectuals in Post-Mao Women's Fiction." *Modern Chinese women writers: critical appraisals* (1989): 135-151. *JSTOR*. 20 Oct. 2016.

Law, Jules. "A 'Passing Corporeal Blight': Political Bodies in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*." *Victorian Studies* 40.2 (1997): 245-270. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Aug. 2016.

Lihua Wang. "Gender Consciousness in My Teen Years." *Some of Us: Chinese Women Growing Up in the Mao Era*. Eds. Xueping Zhong, Wang Zheng, and Bai Di. Rutgers UP: New Brunswick, 2001. 120-131. Print.

Ling Bo. "Chinese Studies of Female Characters in Hardy's Novels: A Feminist Approach." *Literature Compass* 13.3 (2016): 162-173. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 Nov. 2016.

Lingzhen Wang. "A Chinese Gender Morality Tale: Politics, Personal Voice, and Public Space in the Early Post-Mao Era." *Personal Matters: Women's Autobiographical Practice in Twentieth-Century China*. Stanford UP: Stanford, 2004. 140-166. Print.

Livesey, Ruth. "Fin de siècle." Oxford Index, Oxford UP. *Oxford Bibliographies*. Web. 13 Oct. 2016.

Lu Xin'er. "The Sun is Not Out Today." Selected Short Stories in Reprint. Eds. Xiao Shuo and Xuan Kan. 1987. Seven Contemporary Chinese Women Writers. Panda Books: Beijing, 1990. 188-207. Print.

Lynch, Richard A. "The Alienating Mirror: Toward a Hegelian Critique of Lacan on Ego-Formation." *Human Studies* 31.2 (2008): 209-221. *JSTOR*. Web. 21 Aug. 2015.

McLaughlan, Robbie, "Hegel, Freud and The Double." *Re-imagining the 'Dark Continent' in Fin de siècle Literature*. Edinburgh UP (2012): 53-30. *JSTOR*. Web. 13 Jan. 2017.

Mendes, Clare. "The New Woman." Oxford Index, Oxford UP. *Oxford Bibliographies*. Web. 13 Oct. 2016.

Merrin, Jeredith. "The Ballad of Charlotte Mew." *Modern Philology* 95.2 (1997): 200-217. *JSTOR*. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

Mew, Charlotte. "Passed." The Yellow Book. Vol. 2. Wikisource. Web. 23 Oct. 2016.

Miller, Elizabeth Carolyn. "'An Invitation to Dynamite' Female Revolutionaries in Late-Victorian Dynamite Narratives." *Framed: The New Woman Criminal in British Culture at the Fin de Siècle*. U of Michigan P: Ann Arbor, 2008. 186-222. Print.

"Mimesis." *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. 11th ed. Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford UP: Oxford, 2004. 907. Print.

"The New Woman." Clash of Cultures in the 1910s and 1920s, Ohio State UP. *EHistory*. Web. 1 Dec. 2016.

Ngan-Ling Chow, Esther, Naihua Zhang, and Jinling Wang. "Promising and Contested Fields: Women's Studies and Sociology of Women/Gender in Contemporary China." *Gender and Society* 18.2 (2004): 161-188. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 Nov. 2016.

Ouida, "The New Woman." *The North American Review* 158.450 (1894): 610-619. *JSTOR*. Web. 27 Oct. 2016.

Paris, Bernard J. "'A Confusion of Many Standards.': Conflicting Value Systems in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 24.1 (1969): 57-79. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Aug. 2016.

Pykett, Lyn. "Ruinous bodies: women and sexuality in Hardy's late fiction." *Thomas Hardy* Spec. issue of *Critical Survey* 5.2 (1993): 157-166. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Aug. 2016.

"Reactionary." *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. 11th ed. Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford UP: Oxford, 2004. 1196. Print.

Redding, Paul. "Hegel's Philosophy." *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Stanford UP. Web. 13 Jan. 2017.

Rosenthal, Abigail L. "Feminism Without Contradictions." *Women's Liberation: Ethical, Social, and Political Issue*. Spec. issue of *The Monist* 57.1 (1973): 28-42. *JSTOR*. Web. 21 Aug. 2015.

Roy, Brinda. "Late-Victorian Spectacles of 'Allegoresis': Narratives and the Staging of Empire in the 'fin de siècle'." *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 2.1 (2000): 67-86. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 Dec. 2016.

Rudersdorf, Amy. "The New Woman." *Primary Source Sets. Digital Public Library of America*. Web. 5 Feb. 2017.

Schwarcz, Vera. "Behind a Partially-Opened Door: Chinese Intellectuals and the Post-Mao Reform Process." *Pacific Affairs* 59.4 (1986-1987): 577-604. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 Nov. 2016.

Silverman, Kaja. "History, Figuration and Female Subjectivity in 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles.'" *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 18.1 (1984): 5-28. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Aug 2016.

Simek, Lauren. "Feminist 'Cant' and Narrative Selflessness in Sarah Grand's New Woman Trilogy." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 67.3 (2012): 337-365. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 Dec. 2016.

Steinhart, Eric. "The Absolute Comes into Focus." William Patterson University. *Absolute Knowing*. Web. 13 Jan. 2017.

Stevens, Sarah E. "Figuring Modernity: The New Woman and the Modern Girl in Republican China." *Gender and Modernism between the Wars, 1918-1939*. Spec. issue of *NWSA Journal* 15.3 (2003): 82-103. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Oct. 2016.

Stone, Alison. "Hegel's Dialectic and the Recognition of Feminine Difference." *Philosophy Today* (2003): 132-139. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Jan. 2017.

Stott, Rebecca. "The Dark Continent: Africa as Female Body in Haggard's Adventure Fiction." *Feminist Review* 32 (1989): 69-89. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Aug. 2016.

"Transcendentalism." *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. 11th ed. Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford UP: Oxford, 2004. 1531. Print.

Tusan, Michelle Elizabeth. "Inventing the New Woman: Print Culture and Identity Politics during the Fin-de-Siècle: 1997 VanArsdel Prize." *Victorian Periodicals Review* 31.2 (1998): 169-182. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Oct. 2016.

Vasseleu, Cathryn. "The Face before the Mirror-Stage." *Feminism and the Body*. Spec. issue of *Hypatia* 6.3 (1991): 140-155. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 Dec. 2016.

Wadman, Carrie. *The Victorian Spinster and Emerging Identities: A Critical Study of Fin de siècle Literature and Culture*. Edwin Mellen Press: Lewiston, 2014. Print.

Westphal, Kenneth R. ed. "Hegel's Phenomenological Method and Analysis of Consciousness." *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*. Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester, 2009, 1-36. Print.

Williams, Robert R. "Hegel and Transcendental Philosophy." *Eighty-Second Annual Meeting American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division* Spec. issue of *The Journal of Philosophy* 82.11 (1985): 595-606. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Jan. 2017.

Wu, Hui ed. trans. Once Iron Girls: Essays on Gender by Post-Mao Chinese Literary Women. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010. Print.

---,---. "Post-Mao Chinese Literary Women's Rhetoric Revisited: A Case for an *Enlightened* Feminist Rhetorical Theory." *College English* 72.4 (2010): 406-423. PDF File.

Xiaomei Chen. "A Stage of Their Own: The Problematics of Women's Theater in Post-Mao China." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 56.1 (1997): 3-25. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 Nov. 2016.

Yi Zheng. "'Personalized Writing' and its Enthusiastic Critic: Women and Writing of the Chinese 'Post-Mao Era.'" *Where in the World is Transnational Feminism*? Spec. issue of *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 23.1 (2004): 45-64. *JSTOR*. Web. 13 Oct. 2016.

Yongchun Cai, and Herbert J. Batt. "Into the Labyrinth: An Introduction to Postmodern Chinese Fiction." *The Mystified Boat: Postmodern Stories from China*. Spec. issue of *Manoa* 15.2 (2003): 49-55. *JSTOR*. Web. 22 Jan. 2017.

Youngkin, Molly. "'Independent in Thought and Expression, Kindly and Tolerant in Tone': Henrietta Stannard, 'Golden Gates,' and Gender Controversies in 'Fin-de-Siècle' Periodicals." Victorian Periodical Review. 38.3 (2005): 307-329. *JSTOR*. Web. 13 Oct. 2016.