



The Head and Its Other Parts: The Abject and the Uncanny in Bora Chung's 'The Head'

Pratikshya Mishra

Independent Scholar, Odisha, India

M. A. in English and Cultural Studies, Christ University

Email: pratikshyamishra0810@gmail.com

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Abstract— This paper seeks to understand the concept of Julia Kristeva's Abject Theory and Sigmund Freud's 'The Uncanny' through a short fictional work of speculative fiction titled 'The Head' by Bora Chung. The uncanny and the Abject have been used multiple times in combination to analyze literary works, however, the relationship between these two has not been properly defined. In this work, I attempt to discern this relationship through the primary text and understand the position of the subject, the object and the Abject.

Keywords— Abject, Uncanny, Julia Kristeva, Sigmund Freud, Psychoanalytic Theory



I. INTRODUCTION

Bora Chung's collection of short stories titled 'Cursed Bunny', which is named after one of the pieces in the collection, solicits scholarly attention thanks to its unique marriage of various motifs coming together against a supernatural backdrop. The book is a collection of ten short stories which cannot be categorized into strict generic distinctions, however, in an interview, Chung classifies her work as belonging to the speculative fiction genre, as opposed to the more narrow labeling of her work as a combination of science fiction and fantasy (KBS WORLD Radio, 2021). A precise interpretation of these stories uncovers the symbolic richness of the seemingly mystical and eerie elements. It invites a psychoanalytical reading that is attentive to the abstraction of the non-linear path that is taken by identity formation and the role that is played by the non-subject (the object and the abject). The first story, titled 'The Head', which also happens to be the first in order of chronology, has motifs emblematic of the key events and concepts of subjecthood. In this paper, I will be analyzing this story using the concept of the Abject, a psychoanalytic theory given by Julia Kristeva and the concept of 'The Uncanny' (Heimlich/unheimlich) which was developed by Sigmund Freud in the early 1900s, which proves its pertinence time and again in the field of aesthetics and

literature. I have chosen this story as the concept of the self, other and the enigmatic Abject closely fit the skeletal framework and tropes that this piece is pregnant with. Additionally, the story merits the application of the Freudian concept of the uncanny owing to the stylistic of the fiction. It is also crucial to note here that Chung subtly repudiates her work's affiliation with fantasy and instead links it to the Uncanny (KBS WORLD Radio, 2021). The theory of Abject, also, combines effortlessly with the idea of the Uncanny (as will be demonstrated later in the paper) and helps provide a well-rounded analysis. Here, I will be attempting to situate the narrative technique, plotline and critical storytelling instruments used by Chung in this story on a psychical topography and utilize them to see through the abstruse insignia of psychoanalytic underpinnings, with a focus on abjection and the uncanny. I will begin this exploration by elaborating upon the conceptions of the Abject and the uncanny as a means of constructing a proper setting for my study. After that, I will give a brief review of related literature to lay out the different perspectives and justify the relevance of the critical frameworks to literature. Then, I will move towards trying to present the link between these critical theories and the primary material of my study by illuminating the examples presented throughout the stories.

II. THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

In Julia Kristeva's 'Powers of Horror', the pertinence of corporeality, or, the physical body, in the construction of one's identity and the demarcation of the border that separates oneself from the external, or, the 'Other', is accentuated. The development of this theory does not come from the relegation of the tangible body as the predecessors did not fail to perform their due diligence concerning the role played by the body. Two of the most prominent psychoanalysts- Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan- have underlined the contributions that the physical entity of a person makes from a very early stage of an individual life. Later, Kristeva, in this book-length essay, ruptures through the strict binary of the boundary separating the internal and the external and theorizes how matters found in between this division- the abject- lurk on the margins and have the power to destabilize and sabotage the border. The abject has the power to remove from concealment the origins of these presumably constitutional lines of separation and reveal them as constructed, human-made. The Abject is "Not me. Not that. But not nothing, either. A "something" that I do not recognize as a thing"(Kristeva, 1982, p. 2). The abject, when confronted, unsettles boundaries, thereby unsettling identity. The abject, though harbors the potential for the destruction of the border, is also a tool through which identity is formed. The abject is found in the position of liminality, of ambiguity, a place of incomprehensibility. The abject is thrust aside (Kristeva 1982) continuously in an attempt to push it beyond the boundary of subjectivity, but it never assimilates into a binary- which is the characteristic feature of the abject. Kristeva uses the term 'uncanny', an idea popularized by Freud, to explain the Abject. Despite Kristeva pointing out how the abject differs from the uncanny, the abject and the uncanny are in many ways complementary, something which I will come to later in this section. Elizabeth Gross, while discussing corporeality, invokes abjection and links it to the symbolic order's establishment to alleviate the overbearing omnipresence of the semiotic (Gross, 2012). The abjection, here, is the affect that is adrenalized upon coming in contact with the Abject. She says, "If the object is an externalized correlate of the subject, then the Abject is with the fading, emersion, or disappearance of the subject and its imaginary hold over the object. The abject is that part of the subject (which cannot be categorized as an object) which it attempts to expel" (Gross, 2012). Gross, derived from the reading of Kristeva's 'Powers of Horror', categorizes abject into three types and defines the relationship the abject has with the symbolic order. The abject is nothing but the part of the symbolic that is hidden. It threatens the symbolic order despite being in the symbolic order. It is required for it to be kept at bay from the individual's consciousness for the latter to be anchored

to the symbolic order. If not for the visceral reaction and disgust that marks one's encounter with the abject, the prohibitions put in place by the symbolic collapses and the distinctions required to navigate the symbolic world blurs, leaving the subject without a safe distance from the Real. However, this does not mean that the Abject resides in the realm of the Real. This point is reiterated by the critics who expounded upon the abject theory, pointing out this limitation in Kristeva's analysis. As pointed out by Jela Krecic and Slavoj Zizek, Kristeva's theory does not give an adequate explanation of the link between the symbolic order and the abject, leading to an erroneous assumption that the abject resides in the Real (Krecic, Zizek, 2016). It marks the origin of the symbolic order, coming from a pre-objectal time and phase. The significance of literature in decoding the Abject has been stressed by many notable scholars who have dealt with the subject. Literature and art do not just help one grasp the Abject, but it is also a way of managing one's reaction to the confrontation with the Abject. It is a form of sublimation, a way of dealing with the abject (Krecic and Zizek, 2016).

While traversing through the works and contemplations on the Abject, one cannot help but notice the uncanny resemblance it bears to the Uncanny, at least at first, while one is dabbling in the topic. Both concepts are mostly used in the same disciplinary field and indeed, the seminal text on the theory of abject, 'Powers of Horror', written in a semi-poetic manner with animosity transuding from between the lines, mentions uncanniness using the word. Therefore, while it is instrumental in psychoanalytic theory to know how one is inspired by the other, we must grasp the points where these two concepts diverge. "Essentially different from "uncanniness," more violent, too, abjection is elaborated through a failure to recognize its kin; nothing is familiar, not even the shadow of a memory" (Kristeva, 1982, p. 5). As suggested by Adam Kotsko, uncanny, in the Freudian sense, is what we call 'creepy' now (Kotsko, 2015). Linking this to the point made by Krecic and Zizek, uncanny is one of the forms of abjection that people experience. Uncanniness, therefore, is a type of response to the Abject. Everything uncanny is abject, but the reverse is not true. However, if the relationship between the uncanny and the abject were to be explained by a Venn diagram, a portion of the uncanny does lie outside of the abject. While the idea of the Abject is, on most occasions, associated with tangible things, a category of the experience of uncanniness is purely personal and subjective. As explained in the short essay titled 'The Uncanny' that introduces 'uncanny' to the sphere of psychoanalysis, involuntary repetition can develop a sense of sinisterness, making something uncanny that would otherwise be unremarkable (Freud, 1919). The uncanny, in simple words, is the object that results in the

arousal of a certain type of fear. This fear unsettles, so it's a more intense form of just 'fear' where the affect can be explained. Uncanny, as can be explained by an etymological study of the original German term, is the fear of the familiar that has become unfamiliar. In Freudian psychoanalysis, it is said to be an object of infantile familiarity, something that the child may even have wished for, that gets repressed with the formation of the ego. The feeling of uncanniness is experienced when this repression comes up to the surface, as it is a thing that should have remained closeted in the dark chambers of the unconscious (Freud, 1919). The uncanny is not just a theory through the lens through which literature or any form of art can be analyzed, it is also a tool that art uses. I argue that the sublimation of the Abject through literature can use the implementation of the uncanny as an artistic tool to convey a sense of the Abject. The Abject, as it travels from the artist to the art and then to the consumer of the art, has the potential to translate into uncanny. Therefore, we must look at the literature (in the case of this paper) and examine what manifestations of the abject generate a feeling of uncanniness.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Fredrik Svenaeus' 'Freud's Philosophy of the Uncanny' gives a critical review and sort of a phenomenological reading of Freud's short work and performs the important task of situating it in the context of his psychoanalytic career and the works that come after this essay which helps in giving a sense of completeness to it. As rightly pointed out by Svenaeus, his essay 'The Uncanny' does not reach its potential in terms of conceptual clarity if not read alongside his other seminal works. It is a dense piece of work in progress. (Svenaeus, 1999). In this paper, the author opines on Freud's dismissal of Jentsch's research to give an analysis of the Sand-Man story in an Oedipal direction. The paper delves into the concept of trauma and anxiety concerning the uncanny anxiousness and in doing so, it refers to the other works by Freud and discussions surrounding it. Svenaeus, as we approach the conclusion of this paper, discusses the fragmentary nature of the concept that Freud tried to develop in his essay and mentions that he endeavored to join the missing links in his work by borrowing from his other works to provide structure to Freud's conception of the uncanny.

While trying to grasp the concept of the uncanny given by Freud, it is important to acknowledge the precursor of this idea given by E. Jentsch, which is also mentioned in Freud's essay, albeit for refutation. As agreed upon by critics like Svenaeus, Jentsch's ideas on the topic are defensible, even in the face of Freud's insertion of castration fear. In his short essay titled 'On the Psychology of the Uncanny', Jentsch

starts with a short etymology of the German word *unheimlich* and attempts to define it not in terms of what it is, but in terms of the "...how the affective excitement of the uncanny arises in psychological terms, how the psychical conditions must be constituted so that the "uncanny" sensation emerges" (Jentsch, 1997). Later, then, with examples from everyday psychology, he establishes a correlation between the new and unfamiliar, and the traditional and primitive in terms of how it can generate the same feelings of uncertainty in different people. It is in the second part of the essay that Jentsch talks about the aspect of doubt concerning animate objects and the source and reason for their movement. Jentsch also discusses the importance of this anxiety in the world of art and how artists exploit this knowing the audience lets their guard down and submits to the plan of the artist. Towards the end, Jentsch concludes his essay by reiterating the importance of the desire of humans to gain intellectual mastery of their organic surroundings and how it has provided a starting point for many scientific advancements (Jentsch, 1997).

'Writing the Body: From Abject to Subject' by Allison Kimmich is an important paper that examines the intersectionality of abjection by paying close attention to two autobiographical writings. The paper starts by addressing the gap in scholarly literature concerning the discourse surrounding feminist autobiographical writings. Later the paper uses the theory of abjection to view the journey of Audre Lorde and Paul Monette as detailed in their autobiographical works namely 'The Cancer Journals' and 'Becoming a Man' respectively. Kimmich analyzes how, despite being pushed to the margins by degrees of abjection operating at different levels, this abjection was utilized by them to gain a sense of subjecthood. This work is relevant as it builds a bridge between subjecthood and Abjection through dis-identification (Kimmich, 1998). Other than Kristeva, Judith Butler and Elizabeth Grosz are invoked to belabor the scope of the theory of abject. Later, the etymology of the words 'subject', 'object' and 'abject' are also discussed to trace the evolution of their present meaning. The author of this paper shows how Lorde and Monette fight their way out of abjection into subjecthood through the function of the abject and by redefining subjecthood. Sure enough, the journey is not devoid of anxiety and feelings evoked by abjection, but it leads to a place of subjectivity that the abjected individuals carved for themselves. Here, abjection is seen as being interwoven into gender ideals and the angst that comes with not matching up to it. In the concluding section, the author explains how autobiography was used as a tool in these two cases to look at abjection in the eye to uncover its non-intrinsic and non-natural origins and thus allow the abject to redefine these positions.

In the paper 'The Return of Negation: Doppelgänger' in Freud's "The Uncanny" by Dimitris Vardoulakis, the motif of the doppelgänger is scrutinized concerning the psychoanalytic concept of subjectivity. The paper starts with a brief background of the 'doppelgänger', a term coined by Jean-Paul, and its association with a subjectivity that may be seen as faulty or defective. Later, the paper discusses the part played by negation in the creation of a doppelgänger and in doing so, Vardoulakis invokes Fichte and Jean-Paul. This author then turns to Weber's ideas on the doppelgänger wherein he undertakes a psychoanalytic approach to analyzing German literature. Through a reading of his analysis, the author could conclude that a positive ascription to doppelgänger is indeed possible. The second section of the paper talks about chiasmic subjectivity and how this is manifested in the doppelgänger. The concluding paragraph of this paper presents the argument in a nutshell, reiterating the position occupied by the doppelgänger. This is pivotal to the marriage of the common motifs associated with uncanny anxiety (the affect) and the abject. Vardoulakis states that the doppelgänger occupies a liminal position. He says, "...Doppelgänger's normal state is the overcoming and undoing the limits.." (Vardoulakis, 2006), which is a position occupied by the abject, where it threatens the creation of the fence separating oneself from the Other. This common link will be beneficial in this study.

"Taking a Break: Toilet, Gender and Disgust" by Judith Plaskow talks about the broader social issue of accessibility to toilets and as the title suggests, it takes sort of an intersectional approach to the matter. The paper starts in a gripping manner, mentioning the consequences of a 'toilet break' if taken by a woman, especially someone like Hillary Clinton who is a public and political figure. While the paper goes into detail about the problem of accessibility of clean toilet spaces, it briefly discusses the toilet as an abject space (Plaskow, 2016). Plaskow then proceeds to talk about the process of elimination (i.e. bodily waste) and how it has always been a subject arousing disgust in people. This is nothing but the fact that we are the source of our aversion. Plaskow makes some noteworthy points about our visceral reaction to the Abjected bodily waste and the illusion of our bodies being under our conscious control which will be helpful in our examination of certain themes in the primary text.

A fundamental text discussing the significance of corporeality as stressed in Kristeva's 'Powers of Horror' is Elizabeth Gross' 'The Body of Signification.' Here, Gross talks about the speaking subject- the subject in whose identification of the language and the symbolic order is indispensable. In this piece, Gross reads Kristeva and dwells on the aspect of the body, or, corporeality, that is seen as imperative to the fashioning of the self as a subject.

In the first section of her essay, she invokes thinkers from various fields and departments and briefly outlines their position on the 'body'. She swiftly moves in the direction of psychoanalysis and starts with Freud's conception of the ego, which requires one's perception of their physical body.

This idea, however, was not dealt with adequately by him. Next in line comes Lacan, who ascribes to the corporeal body a great deal of significance as the formation of an imaginary, which is one of the three registers proposed by Lacan, necessitates the idea of how one looks in the totality of their physical existence. Therefore, it also plays a key part in the establishment of the symbolic and the real. The subject, therefore, is not disembodied. In the next section, Gross talks about Kristeva and her ideas on the Abject, which deals with corporeality. Kristeva, in her book-length essay, talks about the abjection of self to sustain the self and identify with it. It is this aspect of corporeality that is tricky to navigate through. In this idea, Gross draws a parallel between early psychoanalytic theory and Kristeva's concept but brings out the novelty in Kristeva's theorization by pointing out the power she ascribes to the abject- the threat it poses to strict distinctions. Gross talks about the maternal body and the occurrence of pregnancy for abjection. First, she outlines Kristeva's ideas and then brings out the irony of her position wherein the pregnant individual is viewed as someone devoid of subjectivity. As we move towards the concluding section, Gross makes a case for the impact of the 'sexually distinguished bodies', especially the maternal bodies when it comes to the discourses on the self and identity.

IV. ANALYSIS

The above discussion concerning the theories is meant to set a contextual backdrop for my analysis of the short stories namely 'The Head' and 'The Embodiment'. To begin with, an interview with the author Bora Chung clarifies the intent of the author about the usage of the motifs and setting of the stories. Even in the interview, Chung mentions her fascination with horror and says she draws her inspiration from the uncanny things and concepts found in abundance in Asian horror fiction (KBS WORLD Radio, 2021). This inspiration is reflected in her first story, 'The Head', where the ominous presence of a human head-like creature haunts the toilet of an unnamed woman, referred to as 'the woman' throughout the story. This creature is called 'the head' by the omniscient narrator. The head calls the woman 'mother' and constantly reminds her of the fact that she is her creator, and it (the head) is her 'indisputable offspring' (Chung, 2023). Though the head wasn't birthed conventionally, it was made from the things that the woman released from her body into the toilet. The head, however, 'completes' its

body by itself. The recurring motif and indeed the title itself is the head, which, as per a psychoanalytic reading, may lead us to the concept of the mirror stage given by Lacan. Without identifying with an image of itself, the infant does not clearly understand its own body as a coherent entity. It has no cognizance of how the head sits on top of the rest of the body and has no understanding of where its body ends and the environment external to its body begins. The uncanny, too, can be a thing familiar to the infant, at a time when the ego takes shape and the formation of one's subjectivity happens. However, this once-familiar object gets repressed once the Imaginary (one of the registers) starts to set in at the beginning of the mirror stage. As mentioned, the knowledge of the placement of the head of the infant plays an important role in this stage. Therefore, one may credibly conclude that the repressions that took place during the mirror stage, especially something that may be related to the head of the subject, contribute to the feeling of uncanniness here. The fact that in the story, this head is made up of the abjected fecal matter and fallen hair of the woman among other things invokes the concept of the Abject here. The head says, "My body was created with the things you dumped down the toilet, like your fallen-out hair and feces and toilet paper you used to wipe your behind" (Chung, 2023, p. 2). Feces and fallen-out hair are abject. These abject materials never totally assimilate into the territory of the subject or the object. It is non-subject, but while the object (another non-subject) helps form the self by clearly demarcating a border between itself and the individual, the Abject threatens to dissolve this boundary. The narrator, while describing the head, talks about its mouth and its speech. The incomprehensibility of the message conveyed by the head is in line with the perplexity of the position the abject bodily waste occupies, and the way it elicits disgust but also gravitates us towards it. In the initial conversation between the woman and the head, there is an evident denial by the woman of her contribution to the creation of the head. This is telling of the relationship between the subject and the Abject. "Such wastes drop so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit—cadere, cadaver" (Kristeva, 1982, p. 3). Bodily waste, which belongs to the other side of the border (i.e. death), is first housed in the body. This ambivalence of the abject which exposes the ambivalence of the subject is the reason why the subject finds it hard to acknowledge the abject as a part of itself. Most of the story is set in the woman's bathroom. This necessitates a discussion on the spatial aspect. Chung, in an interview, stated how she likes bathrooms, and then corrected her statement to say she likes 'clean' toilets. She also expressed how a clogged toilet becomes an unpleasant place to be in (KBS WORLD Radio, 2021). Toilets, as

stated by Broyer, are abject spaces as that is where subjecthood is met with Abjection (Broyer, 2015). As I had argued earlier in the paper, the sublimation of abjection in the form of literature and art has the potential to take the shape of uncanny when it reaches its audience. Relating the story's basic premise to the author's interview reveals this sublimation of this abject combined with an intentional use of uncanny as a narrative tool. As she mentions in the interview, she starts with familiar territory and tries to move in the direction of unpredictability from there (KBS WORLD Radio, 2021). Doesn't it ring a bell for anyone familiar with the concept of the uncanny?

The symbolic order instilled in a subject always tries to keep the Abject at a safe distance from the subject. This is to safeguard the subjecthood of the subject and keep it from being dissolved. The visceral bodily reactions of a subject upon being confronted with the abject is what maintains this distance. When the woman interacts with the head too closely and learns that the head is directly impacted by the bodily condition of the woman, the intimacy is barely tolerated by her and her body responds in a manner that protects the boundary of her selfhood from crumbling. The narrator says, "Then, she vomited into the sink. She vomited for a long time, then rinsed the sink and left the bathroom" (Chung, 2023, p. 4). This constant confrontation with the abject left her with a feeling of being constantly watched, which could be equated to the look of the persecutor in psychosis. The Abject that marks sexual difference (for example: menstrual blood), something that should be thrust aside, was looking her in the eye and speaking to her. Later, this persecutory look becomes pervasive and she develops constipation. Down the lane, however, once she begets a child, her preoccupation with the head lessens (Chung, 2023). This detail is crucial here, as she is the 'mother' of both the head and her daughter, one allegedly and one willingly. While her direct identification with the abjected waste from her body carries a heavy connotation of death and decay, her relation with her birthed child is a reminder of vitality and continuity. However, it is important to note that maternity may also be linked to abjection in many cases. Darian Leader, while discussing the causes of psychosis, says, "In one example, a woman was found to have neglected her daughter, depriving her of food and basic care. Years later, she explained that 'I couldn't believe I could give birth to anything separate from myself.' Her baby, she said, wasn't real, and so she had treated it like an object" (Leader, 2012, p. 149). The pregnant body is a subject of both fascination and dread and is, therefore, abject (Longhurst, 2003). The initial examples of abjection in Kristeva's seminal work are that of abjection towards food and the corpse. Relating this to the pregnant body, Longhurst explains how one of the markers of pregnancy is

the unwonted desire for 'abnormal' food and the looming fear of death, as death during childbirth has been a problem historically (Longhurst, 2003). The pregnant body leaks, making it unfit for public spaces. 'The Head' doesn't mention anything about the woman's period of pregnancy. The narrative fast-forwards from her honeymoon to her becoming the 'mother' of her daughter. Therefore, it is the post-birth body and the birthed child that needs to be discussed about abjection. The woman before childbirth was frequently coming face-to-face with the abjected fluids of her body and communicated with it, thereby experiencing the effects of the threat to the dissolution of identity markers. This abjected fluid is, after all, a reminder of death. The child, on the other hand, is a reminder of life. This creation of her is not just socially accepted but expected and lauded. While 'The Head' destabilized the border, the child brought a sense of stability. It is also important to note that the child performs a crucial function- the addressee function. Previously, the threat from the head was directed just at herself. Now, with the coming of the child, she thought it was possible that the head, who also claims to be her child, is jealous of the former and is out to cause harm to her. This can be read as the personification of the introduction of a third term in this The Woman- The Head relation which may have brought a sense of sanity. The woman tells her daughter, "That was what we call a 'head.' If you see it again, just flush" (Chung, 2023). The woman tries to get rid of the head two times, but she fails. Her dealing with the abject so directly is the representation of the failure of the symbolic order to keep the abject at a safe distance from her. It is the failure in the installation of a third term properly. One of the woman's dreams is narrated in the story, where she is surrounded by multiple heads (who are the same as The Head). This may be telling of the omnipresence of the head in the woman's life and the look that is persecutory. The ending of the dream that wakes her is important, as it ends with the head replacing her daughter's head. This can be seen as the border state encroaching upon her sense of subjectivity. It is the dissolution of every demarcation and border into liminality. This issue of not having a social sense of the body's boundaries has also been talked about by the Leader in his 'What is Madness?' as a marker of psychosis.

Other than the specific events in the story that feature the head popping out of the toilet, or concern the head in any way, there is nothing eventful about the woman's life. The woman leads a regular life, without achieving any remarkable feats or doing anything that would attract negative attention. Despite that, her interaction in a spatial context (i.e. the washroom) is uncanny. The idea that a regular woman is capable of maintaining a work life and a family has a part of herself that is so drawn to the Abject

where the symbolic malfunctions are the element of uncanny in this story. The head itself doesn't account for it, as we are introduced to it at the very beginning of the story, leaving no scope for unpredictability and surprises. It is the woman here who is uncanny in the Freudian sense.

As we approach the end of the story, much time has passed and the woman's daughter is a young woman herself. The woman has also begun to treat the head with disregard, without paying much thought to its appearance and just flushing it down the toilet to deal with it. However, her abjection is triggered again by herself- her aging. Her appearance becomes the Abject. This is when, for the final time, she encounters the head in the washroom. However, 'the head' is a grown woman- a woman that she was in her youth. She was stark naked. The woman gives in to 'her young self's' request to be in her clothes and thereby gets wholly replaced by her. Here, the Abject was successful in fascinating and beseeching the woman towards it. The borders were, in reality, disestablished. Or, the border had trespassed into the realm of subjective and objective territories. "The young approached the old. Young, strong hands gripped old shoulders and neck. The young hands shoved the old's head into the toilet and quick as a flash, lifted her by the ankles. Lightly shoving the old body into the toilet, her young self closed the lid shut and flushed" (Chung, 2023, p. 17).

V. CONCLUSION

In this short story, Chung's usage of the abject and uncanny motifs in a realistic backdrop is brilliant. Literature has always been used in the field of psychoanalysis and this is an example of how literature and fictional characters and settings can make us better understand the concepts of psychoanalysis. Here, the boundary between the subject and the object is threatened with dissolution by the abject from the get-go, and, as the story progresses, a symbolic representation of what would happen when this threat posed by the Abject becomes a reality is given. A reading of this not only reveals the richness that literature offers to the field of psychoanalysis but also tells us about the usage of psychoanalytic concepts that make a piece of speculative fiction what it is.

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