



Summary—Thank you for your presentation! I will use this occasion to summarise your theory-piece titled *Real/unreal—the dream chamber*. I am using a course-standard to address your piece in 3 aspects: **1)** your field of inquiry; **2)** your discussion; **3)** your conclusions. Limited to one A5 page.

Specifically—the *Dream of the red chamber* is your main reference throughout the piece and constitutes the key-stone in a performative initiation to concepts in Chinese philosophy. More than a narrative, the *red chamber* is a ritual location conjured in *images*, your *poetic prose* and ordered *procedure*.

In Chinese, you say, “words lean toward the visual and the accompanying spoken sound”. For instance, there is a garden in the red chamber where the worldly and eternal join. Like a river under the mountain. The mountain is unreal. The river real. The mountain is yang. The river is yin. Taoism.

You write: the “... garden is a microcosm representing the systems of Yin and Yang, as well as the confinement of things. The garden is itself an illusion, the elements within the garden are miniatures of nature, representing the cosmos.” The real conveys the reflections from the unreal.

Precisation 1—with its inclination to the visual, your essay significantly relies on the paintings from the artist Sun Wen (1818-1904) depicting scenes the novel: *Dream of the red chamber*. The Qing dynasty is integral to the reference. Literature and history are closely connected in Chinese culture.

In the story, *red* becomes a metaphor of ‘our world’. In your essay it becomes performance as you introduce a scene from Peter Greenaway’s red movie *The baby from Mâcon* (1993). But only as a visual reference. In the text you expound the historical roots of the narrative. They appear tangible.

But in the sense conveyed in your quote of Tarkovsky: “By means of art man takes over reality through a subjective experience.” And it is at this point you exhibit a sample of your own work. Here you bring the reader to the potential of art to connect cultures: to travel between cultures.

Precisation 2—This emphasis on travelling between cultures—before translation—is performative. Hence the potential of the *Dream of the red chamber* for travel. The red connector to Greenaway, mentioned earlier, occurs in the first half of your piece. Then a second time in the last half.

It is from the *Pillow book* (1996): a scene where a red calligraphy is performed on the bare back of a Chinese woman. This marks a turning point in the query on the gaze—the being looked-at-ness of the matter—where you make a case for Chinese references other than chinoiserie.

From your exposition of the red chamber you achieve a habilitation—to use a term of Baudrillard—of John Galliano’s collection for Christian Dior Haute Couture 1997, and its further elaboration in the 2003 collection. By showing respect to the work of others, you grow respect for this piece, your work.