Transforming Emotional Regime:
Pai Hsien-yung's *Crystal Boys*

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Abstract

Pai Hisen-yung's only full-length novel, *Crystal Boys*, is regarded as one of the pioneering literary works of LGBTQ literature in Taiwan during 1970s and 1980s. His intention of writing is to show human nature and feeling of the homosexual people and how these feelings resonate with each character in the book as well as the readers. This humanist approach in the novel leads this paper to evaluate the emotions expressed in *Crystal Boys* and the transformation of the emotional regime, aiming at interpreting the emotional expressions of the characters not merely from a patriarchal way, but a more empathetic way. Based on William M. Reddy's theory of emotion, I aim to explore the "emotional regime" that connects the characters in *Crystal Boys* to the author through his essays and interviews. I aim to examine how this emotional regime transforms in the course of the novel. I argue that three considerations are central to this examination: what constitutes home and family; whether there is a place for homosexual characters to settle physically and spiritually; with the change of the emotional regime of filial piety, whether the idea of homosexual love can be accepted by family. Through the textual analysis of *Crystal Boys* and Pai's own emotional life and his other writings, transformation of the emotional regime is hard to achieve, but it is still possible if members in the original emotional regime are willing to change themselves and promote the change of norms.

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Introduction: *Tongzhi* Literature and *Crystal Boys*

Pai Hisen-yung's only full-length novel, *Crystal Boys*, is regarded as one of the pioneering literary works of *tongzhi* literature, a genre devoted to LGBTQ people and concerns (Chi 2012), in Taiwan during 1970s and 1980s. After the imposition of martial law in Taiwan by the Nationalist government in 1949, people's behavior in Taiwan was under strict censorship till 1987 when the martial law was lifted. Despite this, the 1960s witnessed the birth of *tongzhi* literature. For example, Pai wrote some homoerotic short stories, such as "Moon Dream" (1960), "Youthfulness" (1961), "Seventeen Years Old and Lonely" (1961), and "A Sky Full of Bright, Twinkling Stars" (1969). Other writers also incorporated elements of homosexuality into their work, such as Chiang Kuei's *Double Suns* (1961), Kuo Liang-hui's *Green Is the Grass* (1963), Ou-yang Tsu's "The Last Class Meeting" (1967), "Almost Dawn" (1965), and "Su-chen, My Cousin" (1969) (Chiang & Wang 2017, 5-6), as well as Lin Hwai-min's "The Boy in the Red Pant" (1968) and "Cicada" (1969) (Zeng 2003, 355).

Pai started writing *Crystal Boys* in 1971 and it was serialized in the literary magazine *Modern Literature* starting in 1977. The first publication of the complete version was in 1983 by Taipei Vista Publishing. *Crystal Boys* depicts a group of homosexual people clustered at New Park, a gay hangout in Taipei. The whole story is narrated by the protagonist, A-qing. The story starts with A-qing's escape from his father's home and a notice that he has been expelled for having sex with a male teacher. A-qing flees to New Park and meets leader Yang Jinhai, patron Lord Sheng, recorder Grandpa Guo, and other boys, such as Little Jade, Wu Min, and Death Angel Zhao. A-qing learns about everyone's family background and their love lives (sometimes as male prostitutes). Through the leader of New Park, A-qing also establishes the contact with the benefactor Papa Fu whose care helps him to change his idea about himself and his family. Among all kinds of relationships A-qing witnesses, the most passionate and fateful love is between Dragon Prince and Phoenix Boy. Equally striking for A-qing is the rupture between Dragon Prince and his father when Dragon Prince conveying to his father his special love relationship. During his journey and various encounters, A-qing rethinks his own relationship with his father, mother and little brother.

Crystal Boys has become a canonical work in Taiwanese literature and has been adapted into a film (1986), a TV series (2003) and stage plays (1997, 2014). It has been translated into French (1985), English (1990), Italian (2005), Japanese (2006), among others. Since 1978, comments and research about *Crystal Boys* have emerged continuously. Zeng Xiuping's *Solitary Minister, Perverse Son, Taipei People: On Pai Hsien-yung's Tongzhi Fictions* (2003) offers a thorough literature review and represents a landmark of historicizing and contextualizing *Crystal Boys* along with Pai's other works. In the early research during 1980s, the focus was on the conflict between father and son while neglecting the homosexual love; researchers also attributed the homosexual love to the impoverished family background (Zeng 2003, 202). In the 1990s, with the rise of *tongzhi* movements in Taiwan, researchers concentrated more on the overthrow of and the resistance against the mainstream of heterosexuality by overstating the unwillingness of the gay characters to compromise with patriarchy and their fathers and simplifying the complexity of these characters' inner dilemmas in *Crystal Boys* (Zeng 2003, 207-208). The political dimension of this novel is also a major theme that has been discussed since 1980s till now. A-qing's father is a former Nationalist soldier and they live in the military dependents' village (*juancun*), which is supposed to be the temporary housing before Nationalists fight back against the mainland. Papa Fu and Dragon Prince's father, Wang Shangde, are both generals who have a reputation in the army. These three fathers all have great expectations of their sons before they are shattered by homosexual love. A-qing and Fu Wei (Papa Fu's son) are caught having sex. Dragon Prince has such a tumultuous love affair with Phoenix Boy that he has committed the crime to kill Phoenix Boy. This conflict has been discussed in various studies with thorough textual analysis.

More recently, *Crystal Boys* as a political symbol for the *tongzhi* movement also attracts academic attention. In his *Queer Politics and Sexual Modernity in Taiwan* (2012), Hans Tao-Ming Huang studies *Crystal Boys* as a political "medium of articulation": when New Park was to be rebuilt as a memorial park for the February 28 Incident, the "Tongzhi Space Action Network" rewrote several paragraphs in *Crystal Boys* and resignified it as the political plea to fight against the cancellation of New Park's collective memory as the gay hangout in 1996 (Huang 2012, 3). Huang also points out that although there was no law in Taiwan to "ban same-sex genital acts," "homosexuality was consistently regarded by the

state as an affront to so-called 'cultural tradition' and hence made punishable." Huang also traces the "now defunct Police Offence Law" which forbade all kinds of "'dissolute' mannerism and 'misdemeanors'" as well as most of the "commercial sexual activities" to historicize *Crystal Boys* (Huang 2012, 17). Through politicizing *Crystal Boys*, the "'state affect' of gendered sexual shame linked to prostitution" is replaced by "the emerging *tongzhi* movement through its political praxis of 'coming out'" (Huang 2012, 26).

However, previous research usually generalizes or overlooks the strong emotions in *Crystal Boys*, simply attributing them to the conflict between father and son and the politics of homosexuality, without pondering the complexities of those emotions themselves. As Pai has emphasized time and again in his interviews[1], his intention of writing is to show "human nature" and "human feeling" of "homosexual people" rather than "homosexuality"; the love between homosexual people is full of "passion" (Zeng 2003, 339-340, 343; Cai 1988, 344, 345). Pai's humanist approach in the novel leads this paper to re-evaluate both the emotions expressed in *Crystal Boys,* and the transformation of the emotional regime. It is not merely interpreting the emotional expressions of the characters from a patriarchal way. Drawing from William M. Reddy's theory of emotion, I aim to explore the "emotional regime" that connects the characters in *Crystal Boys* to the author through his essays and interviews. I aim to examine how this emotional regime transforms in the course of the novel. I argue that three considerations are central to this examination: 1) what constitutes home and family 2) whether there is a place for homosexual characters to settle physically and spiritually 3) with the change of the emotional regime of filial piety, whether the idea of homosexual love can be accepted by family.

Emotional Regime

In his book, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*, the American historian William Reddy builds a productive framework about emotion, the central concept of which is "emotional regime". An emotional regime is "a set of normative emotions" and "emotives that express and inculcate them" (Reddy 2001, 129), but "emotive" also indicates the possibility of expressing "the inexpressible" by individuals (Rosenwein 2002, 837). I argue that the change of

emotive might trigger the change of emotional regime, which will be illustrated in the textual analysis of *Crystal Boys*. Emotive is a "speech act" that can motivate self-exploration and self-alteration. It is expressed not only through emotion claims, but also "emotionally expressive gestures" and "facial expressions" which will be discussed with examples in *Crystal Boys* (Reddy 2001, 107). Within the emotional regime, emotives are expressed through "emotional effort," "emotional suffering" and "emotional liberty" (Reddy 2001, 129). Emotional effort aims at realizing a goal within the emotional regime, while emotional suffering is experienced when there is a goal conflict. Emotional liberty symbolizes the capacity to realize the goal and might challenge or change the emotions of a certain member in the emotional regime. However, if the emotional suffering is too much to make more emotional efforts and reach emotional liberty in the emotional regime, "emotional refuge" is the place to escape into. It is also the one that challenges the existence of the emotional regime and requires the transformation, which will be discussed further below.

The Emotional Regime of Filial Piety

In the emotional regime of *Crystal Boys*, the most important norm is the idea of filial piety or filiality (*xiao*). Filial piety, in Chinese history, has changed its original meaning of supporting parents physically to obeying parents and lord by extension; at the same time, the idea of "selfless devotion to one's elders" remains the same in filial piety (Knapp 1995, 195, 222). According to the *Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiaojing*), the relationship between family and state is harmonious from serving parents in an early stage to serving the state, which is regarded as the completion of filial piety because it brings glory for parents (Knapp 2012, 157). This logic of filial piety is clearly shown in *Crystal Boys* with A-qing, Fu Wei and Dragon Prince as representatives. Their fathers all serve in the Nationalist army and hold similar expectations that their sons will follow suit.

Even for other boys in the text who do not have father figures in their lives or cannot follow the father figures as the role models, they adhere to the requirement of filial piety to feed their parents. Unlike other relationships, filial piety is based on blood bond which parents give birth to children and raise them, which cannot be repaid by children. Therefore, the "only adequate way for children to respond to the special

kindness that they have received is by living out of an attitude of loving care, appreciation, and reverence for their parents"; even for "despicable parents," children have to "grin and bear it" based on the examples in *Mencius* (Ivanhoe 2004, 197, 198). Apart from the real parent-child relationship, boys at New Park also follow the norms of filial piety and obey the elders. However, disobedience occurs because there is no real blood bond and the elders complain to each other about this situation. But in other situations, such as the relationship between A-qing and Papa Fu, or Dragon and Papa Fu, they subscribe strongly to the social structures of filial piety.

Since *Crystal Boys* mainly describes human relations based on filial piety, which are interrupted by homosexual love, it is of importance to first explore the operation of this emotional regime based on filial piety. Among all the people connected to New Park, my focus will be A-qing, Fu Wei and Dragon Prince since they are the central figures in the book and they share similar family backgrounds. Also, A-qing and Dragon Prince share the similar experience of interacting with Papa Fu who acts as a surrogate father after they break the conventions of filial piety.

With filial piety as the central theme in the emotional regime, A-qing, Fu Wei and Dragon Prince have tried very hard to live up to the standards of their fathers; in return, their fathers are proud of their deeds and they are proud of themselves. Through A-qing's memory, he recalls his high marks in military training, his model moves in basic drills, his curiosity about his father's pistol, and above all, his goal to become a military officer just like his father. His emotives of happiness and enjoyment show that he is trying to fulfill the duty of filial piety and thus make his father proud of him. Fu Wei's story is narrated by his father, Papa Fu. Similar to A-qing, Fu Wei's performance in school makes his father happy and proud. Fu Wei is even more outstanding than A-qing: he could recite a military treatise when he was small; he could handle a wild horse when he was fifteen; he was the top ranked in his military academy. Fu Wei is a model filial son in his father's eyes. Compared to the stories of A-qing and Fu Wei, Dragon Prince's behavior as a filial son is sketched by Grandpa Guo and Papa Fu. Dragon Prince is planning to study abroad and may pursue a diplomatic career as his father expects.

In sum, if these three boys suppress their homosexual love, they hope to become filial sons and live their lives as their fathers expect and be proud of them. In this emotional regime, the boys have the goals to

become what their fathers expect from them. In other words, the emotional efforts of the boys are clearly for their fathers. These emotional efforts are also self-altering since they are enjoying themselves and they are proud of themselves. However, they are conscious of their emotional suffering to suppress their true self to love because homosexuality is not allowed in the society where heterosexuality is the standard. Challenging this norm means the disruption of the emotional regime of filial piety. Every member in this emotional regime is assumed to follow the standard, including parents and children.

Emotional Regime Disrupted

A-qing's behavior of having sex with a male teacher at school is not allowed in threefold layers: first, sex in the public space is prohibited; second, sex with one's teacher is not allowed; third, homosexual sex is also forbidden. A-qing is expelled because he violates the school rules as well as the cultural norm and tradition. But the most intolerable part in the emotional regime of filial piety is that it prevents him from achieving the goal of being a filial son because his behavior disrupts the original emotional regime. His father, following the normative emotions of the original emotional regime, expresses fury and anguish, which are the major emotives of his father throughout the whole book. His father's emotives are not restricted to emotional claims, but also facial expressions, such as "white hair" "standing straight up" and "blood-shot eyes", and emotionally expressive gesture, such as "screaming in a trembling, hoarse voice" (Pai 1990, 13). These emotives clearly show that his father is also experiencing emotional suffering. For A-qing, this disruption of the emotional regime adds to his emotional suffering of failing to be a filial son entangled with his homosexual love.

Fu Wei has a similar experience as A-qing. His experience occurs first among the three figures I discuss here in the chronological order of the book. He is caught having sex with a solider in the military dormitory. Before he is going to be brought to the martial court, he tries to explain to his father, but Papa Fu refuses to listen to him. Papa Fu's emotives are revulsion and disappointment at that particular point. Papa Fu's self-exploration of emotives is thoroughly illustrated in the book, as I will discuss later. Besides, there is no emotional claim by Fu Wei, but he is going through great emotional suffering through his crying and shaky

voice. Finally, Fu Wei chooses to commit suicide on his father's birthday before going to court. A-qing, after listening to this story from Papa Fu and looking at Fu Wei's photo, interprets Fu Wei's emotive as strong resentment. This disruption of emotional regime is extreme because of the death of the member in the emotional regime. Who is to blame for his death? It seems that the emotional regime of filial piety should be under scrutiny in the society that the book depicts. However, this incident is seen as an accident. Only Papa Fu learns the lesson from his son's death and his change of mindset serves as the impetus for the change of the emotional regime. His conflict with his son helps him to reflect on the issue of homosexual love and he changes his mind later in the book to help A-qing.

In the case of Dragon Prince, he not only falls in love with Phoenix Boy, but also commits the crime of killing his love. He is banished to New York and is not allowed by his father to come back to Taipei until his father's death. His emotional suffering is twofold: one is from his love, the other from his father. His love story with Phoenix Boy is told time and again through different characters in the book, including Grandpa Guo, Death Angel Zhao, and Papa Fu. Their love is compared to "fire" (Pai 1990, 79). While Dragon Prince wanted to always keep Phoenix Boy under his supervision, Phoenix Boy was longing for freedom. When Phoenix Boy was missing, Dragon Prince tried to find him for two months. In Grandpa Guo's narration, Dragon Prince finally found him at New Park one night when Phoenix Boy was bargaining with an old man.

> The old sot offered him fifty, and he was just about to go with him, when Dragon Prince ran up and blocked his way, begging him to come home with him. Phoenix Boy just shook his head and gazed helplessly into Dragon Prince's eyes. So Dragon Prince grabbed his hand and said, 'Then give me back my heart!' Phoenix Boy pointed to his own chest and said, 'It's here, take it.' Well, Dragon Prince took out a knife and plunged it into Phoenix Boy's chest. Phoenix Boy slumped to the ground, blood gushing out of his chest . . . Dragon Prince sat down in the puddle of blood and held Phoenix Boy in his arms. His mind had snapped. (Pai 1990, 80-81)

His killing of Phoenix Boy tortures Dragon Prince physically and emotionally. In a later occasion with A-qing, Dragon Prince claims that he killed himself by killing Phoenix Boy. This strongest emotional suffering of the whole book is not situated within the emotional regime of filial

piety, but it triggers the most intense debate of the whole book between filial piety and homosexual love, which happens between Dragon Prince and Papa Fu about the attitude of Dragon Prince's father. In the debate, Dragon Prince's emotive is mainly resentment and he is so angry that he is not allowed to attend his father's funeral. His emotive also includes regret since he claims himself as "an evil son" who ruins his father's reputation (Pai 1990, 255). This is an example to show that even if the emotional regime of filial piety is disrupted by homosexual love and killing, the member in the emotional regime still has the wish to repair or rebuild the original emotional regime. However, his father's refusal demonstrates that it is impossible to go back to the original emotional regime once the emotional regime is broken. Papa Fu also emphasizes the emotional suffering of pain for Dragon Prince's father and requires Dragon Prince to understand it. This idea of Papa Fu as an elder in the father-son relationship is interpreted to be oppressed by the patriarchal discourse (Zeng 2003, 129), but it also indicates the necessity to change into another emotional regime because Papa Fu is exactly the father figure who changes his attitude towards homosexual love.

Through the interactions between these fathers and sons, it should be noticed that once the emotional regime of filial piety is disrupted, it is impossible to return to its original condition where sons are simply living up to their fathers' expectations. Furthermore, it does not mean that the original emotional regime of filial piety stops operating among its members. But the appearance of homosexual love within the regime of filial piety requires a change of the emotional regime. This change cannot be made easily because every member involved in this disruption experiences emotional suffering and requires more emotional efforts to deal with it. If they can no longer make any more emotional efforts, they need to rely on the emotional refuge.

Searching for an Emotional Refuge

In opposition to emotional regime, emotional refuge plays the role of carving space for a "safe release from prevailing emotional norms" and a "relaxation of emotional effort," yet it "may threaten the existing emotional regime" (Reddy 2001, 129). In this sense, the emotional refuge is a temporary existence rather than permanent. To enrich the concept of emotional refuge, I propose the concepts of "emotional refugee"

and "emotional trauma." When a person has been through emotional suffering and makes emotional effort, yet fails to achieve emotional liberty within the emotional regime, one becomes the emotional refugee struggling with both emotional suffering and emotional trauma. The emotional refugee may still make emotional efforts to go back to the original emotional regime, but ends up with more emotional sufferings and emotional trauma. They finally try to transform the original emotional regime into a new one through emotional liberty with changes of emotives in the emotional refuge. Therefore, emotional refuge also acts as a transition from one emotional regime to another where emotional effort and emotional suffering are also in operation.

In *Crystal Boys*, these three boys and their fathers turn into emotional refugees and they are supposed to find emotional refuge. However, the plot of A-qing's father and Dragon Prince's father finding emotional refuge are absent. Instead, A-qing's and Dragon Prince's interactions with their fathers are replaced by Papa Fu. Fu Wei's searching for refuge is interrupted by Papa Fu's refusal to talk to him. The original father-son relationship, including A-qing and his father, Fu Wei and Papa Fu, and Dragon Prince and Wang Shangde, is displaced. A-qing seeks emotional refuge everywhere in Taipei, but he never meets his father again in the book. Fu Wei has no emotional refuge to turn to and no chance to meet his father. Dragon Prince, similar to A-qing, also searches for emotional refuge in New York and in Taipei, but in a more violent way, which will be mentioned later.

A-qing's emotional refuge includes relations with homosexual partners, cohorts at New Park and family members. His spaces of refuge are both temporal and spatial. His cohorts, Wu Min and Little Jade, homosexual partner Mr. Yu, as well as his mother, serve as emotional refuge at present. His deceased little brother Buddy serves as the emotional refuge in his own memory. Comparatively, there are two little boys named Sonny and Luo Ping that A-qing meets in New Park who are like extension of his little brother. Dragon Prince, another important homosexual partner for A-qing, offers A-qing emotional refuge with both present company and his own memory in New York and Taipei. His emotional refuge is both his search for love and re-discovery of family, both of which are important new norms for the transformation into a new emotional regime.

New Park alone is the most significant space as his emotional refuge where he meets homosexual partners and cohorts who comfort him with homosexual love and friendship. A-qing regards New Park as the "sliver of hope" after "utter despair" (Pai 1990, 179). In New Park, he earns his living by engaging in the sex-work and listening to other boys' stories. In the latter part of the book, the gay pub, Cozy Nest, is a similar emotional refuge to New Park, in which the boys find another source of income and do not need to engage in sexual business. A-qing describes the Cozy Nest as "haven" (Pai 1990, 253), a synonym of refuge.

Mr. Yu is the most pleasant man A-qing encounters. During their talks, they are discussing the martial-arts novels which both of them enjoy reading. A-qing's emotives are always excitement when he is talking to Mr. Yu. However, when Mr. Yu tries to have sex with him, his emotives turn to shame and grief because his experience as a male prostitute is so shameful that he depends on his body for living, while his interaction with Mr. Yu is sincere and enjoyable. Mr. Yu's warm and comfortable house also contrasts with his own miserable family and A-qing feels a sense of family from Mr. Yu's warmth.

Compared to Mr. Yu's company, A-qing's emotive is usually occupied with fear when he is with Dragon Prince. There might be two reasons for A-qing's fear: one is Dragon Prince's intense love with Phoenix Boy and his killing of his love, the other is Dragon Prince's painful self-torture in New Park. They encounter each other five times. For the first two times, A-qing cannot resist the temptation to have sex with Dragon Prince and at the same time, bear the emotional suffering of fear. A-qing describes Dragon Prince's emotions of anxiety with fiery eyes. For the third and fourth times, they merely meet or talk to each other. A-qing escapes from him every time after their meeting because he feels that Dragon Prince's love is too heavy to bear. The last time when they meet, A-qing has found a stable job in an ordinary pub, which means he has settled down physically and his fear of Dragon Prince is gone. Although Dragon Prince offers an emotional refuge for A-qing, it does not release A-qing from his emotional suffering. Instead, it adds to A-qing's emotional suffering. Dragon Prince's stories also remind A-qing of his own emotional trauma.

Besides the love to reaffirm his own self, his interactions with cohorts and family members are emotional refuges to re-think his family. Through his chat with Wu Min, A-qing clearly shows his father's home

as his home and his little brother as his best companion within his family. They distinguish the concept of home and family. Home is the physical existence and family refers to the kinship. Despite the existence of physical home and good memories of his brother, A-qing calls himself and the fellow boys "nomads" who are looking for people like them (Pai 1990, 126). This comparison distinguishes A-qing's physical home and family with his spiritual home where he can settle down with his loved ones. A-qing has another dialogue with Little Jade when A-qing gets angry at Little Jade's joke to question his father and his surname as Li.

> "A-qing, tell me," Little Jade cocked his head with a mischievous grin, "do you have a father?"
>
> "What kind of dumb question is that?"
>
> "What's his name?"
>
> "Li! What do you think!" I resented his question, but covered up my anger by taking a big drink of lemonade.
>
> "Is that really his name? Do you really know who your father is? Hm?" The grin turned malicious.
>
> "Fuck you!" I threw a punch his way.
> "Heh, heh." He was extremely pleased with himself. "How can you get so mad over an innocent question like that?" (Pai 1990, 86-87)

This dialogue shows A-qing's clear recognition of the conventions in the original emotional regime. The norm that a son is named after his father's surname is taken for granted. The questioning of his surname is to question his birth, which is seen as an insult to A-qing. From these two examples, it can be seen that A-qing still identifies with the filial piety in the original emotional regime.

In the family, A-qing's mother, unlike his father's role in the original emotional regime, is also the emotional refuge for him. Actually, his mother is also an emotional refugee herself because she elopes with a young actor, becomes a prostitute and finally dies of venereal disease. His mother used to dislike him because she had a difficult labor when he was born. However, his mother's experience of escape and miserableness are similar to A-qing's experience, which makes him feel a sense of intimacy. His mother's emotives of fear and terror about his husband resonate with him and explain his fear about his father. As his mother dares not to face his father's anguish, he is also afraid of the same thing. His mother's

emotional suffering is partly the same as his. It seems that his mother's suffering becomes his emotional refuge.

Besides, his little brother, Buddy, lingers in his memory as the emotional refuge, combined with surrogate little brothers named Sonny and Luo Ping in reality. There are two memories which are not just related with his brother, but also his father. A-qing recalls that these are the only two instances when his father shows kindness. That is why when A-qing meets the mentally disabled boy Sonny he takes him to his apartment. The only time that A-qing shows the emotive of anger is when Sonny is sent away to the police by his roommate. This anger is out of the loss of his emotional refuge of Sonny and the trigger of his good memories with Buddy. At the end of the novel, A-qing finds another boy in New Park, Luo Ping, and brings him to his new apartment. It seems that the emotional refuge of a younger boy whom he can care about is important for him to settle down spiritually and assert the existence of family.

While searching for emotional refuges, A-qing's emotional sufferings from his father turn into emotional trauma, which keeps coming back to A-qing's thought and dream. He thinks about his father's agony that is too heavy to bear after Papa Fu tells him Fu Wei's story and questions whether he understands his father's suffering. He also dreams about his father's agony at Papa Fu's funeral. He is suffering from the real emotive of anger and aguish of his father and the same yet imagined emotive from himself. A-qing's emotional trauma also indicates that it is necessary to change the emotional regime.

Compared to the complex story of A-qing searching for emotional refuges, Fu Wei's own search for emotional refuge is rather simple. He did not turn to any emotional refuge, but tried to regard his father in the original emotional regime as the emotional refuge. His emotional effort failed and his suicide becomes the permanent emotional trauma for Papa Fu. Papa Fu's emotional trauma is also shown when he tells A-qing his memory that he once killed a young solider in the battlefield with almost the same condition as his son's. Papa Fu finally finds out his emotional refuge to help Phoenix Boy once and all the other boys in New Park and orphans in the orphanage. Thus, he becomes the vital nexus between the original emotional regime and the new one.

Dragon Prince's emotional refuges are usually combined with self-torture. His love with Phoenix Boy is his first emotional refuge from the original emotional regime. But his love is so intense that he cannot keep

this love and finally kills his love. This second action of interrupting the emotional regime is so severe that he is banished to New York. At the same time, his emotional suffering increases with the emotional trauma of killing his love. He lingered on in the Central Park of New York as the emotional refuge, having sex with random people and hurting himself physically. He describes himself with no emotive because he is filled with numbness.

When Dragon Prince is finally allowed to come back to Taipei after his father's death, his emotives become strong again, either strong resentment debating with Papa Fu as I discussed before, or strong agony at Papa Fu's funeral. The latter serves as an effective emotional refuge for him to release all of his emotional sufferings. Besides this, his interactions with A-qing and a disabled little boy named Golden Treasure are also his emotional refuge. Although A-qing escapes from him, Golden Treasure serves as the final emotional refuge for him. His effort to try to cure Golden Treasure's illness also helps him to relieve his emotional suffering. However, his action of retelling his story with Phoenix Boy, even at the end of the novel, shows that he will carry on with this emotional trauma.

Transforming Emotional Regime

The emotional regime of filial piety is established in the long history of Chinese cultural traditions. Therefore, filial piety still plays a vital role in the new emotional regime. The question is whether parents and children can reach a compromise between filial piety and homosexual love. In this book, the central figure to lead to the transformation of the emotional regime is Papa Fu. Among the three boys, A-qing is the only one who has the possibility to have the complete father-son relationship in the new emotional regime because his father is still alive.

A-qing's interaction with Papa Fu starts with a job to take care of Papa Fu's daily life. He lives in Papa Fu's house and Papa Fu tells him to treat it as home. During his stay in Papa Fu's home, Papa Fu's behaviors always remind A-qing of his father. Papa Fu's footsteps and coughing late at night lead A-qing to wonder whether his father is asleep or not. More importantly, Papa Fu's concern and care offers A-qing the fatherly love that is different from his father's anger and anguish. Papa Fu encourages A-qing to try to understand his father's anger and go back to his father's home in their first dialogue and another time after his debate

with Dragon Prince and sharing his own story of his son. There are two reasons that Papa Fu emphasizes: one is that the emotional suffering is mutual, the other is his belief that A-qing's father will forgive A-qing.

Even though A-qing escapes from his homosexual partners' homes all the time, he does not escape from Papa Fu's home, not only because this is the promise he makes to Chief Yang (he escapes once from the sugar daddy that Chief Yang appoints), but also because he feels at home with Papa Fu who understands homosexual love and cares about him. In this emotional refuge, A-qing feels the warmth from a surrogate father and re-thinks his relation with his real father. Papa Fu's home, originally served as A-qing's emotional refuge, seems to turn into a new emotional regime where father and son live harmoniously with mutual understanding. However, this is only a temporary model before Papa Fu's death. Despite of this fact, A-qing' participation in Papa Fu's funeral is an important event. Pai regards it as a ceremony of the reconciliation between heterosexual father and homosexual son (Zeng 2003, 345). The proper care for his dead body is also considered vital to fulfilling filial piety.

Crystal Boys ends with A-qing taking Luo Ping back to his apartment with the military marching slogan. The real transformation of the emotional regime remains unsolved, just as the real situation in Taiwan in 1980s. However, the author, Pai, as an activist of LGBTQ rights, never stops trying to accomplish the transformation of the emotional regime. In 1986, there was a huge upsurge of the interest between homosexuality and the AIDS epidemic (Huang 2011, 117). In the same year, there was also the screening of the film version of *Crystal Boys*. With this, Pai published an article in *Human World* entitled "Not a Sinful Son: A Letter for A-qing" in which he reemphasized the importance of family for A-qing. In the letter, he first acknowledges A-qing's discovery of his true self—that he loves men rather than women—and then encourages A-qing to find his life-long partner. Then Pai explains A-qing's care for young boys who remind him of his brotherhood with Buddy and his respect for elder men because he is longing for the understanding from his father. Pai also points out the sense of homelessness of homosexual people because they are usually banished by their families. But at the end of the letter, Pai, in the same tone as Papa Fu, persuades A-qing to go back to his father's home and ask for "understanding and forgiveness" (Pai 1999, 43; Huang 2011, 118) since his father is also suffering from

pain. Pai further explains that his "father's understanding and forgiveness is tantamount to a pardon, which is extremely important to your personal growth" (Pai 1999, 43; Huang 2011, 118). Pai believes A-qing would receive this pardon because "you are after all the child he used to love and the one that made him proud" (Pai 1999, 43; Huang 2011, 118).

In this letter, Pai points out that the key to transform the emotional regime is filial piety with the recognition of homosexual love. Pai's sense of certainty comes from the familial relationship between A-qing and his father as well as his father's nurturing of A-qing and their days living together. The uniqueness of filial piety, in turn, serves as the starting point to rebuild the relationship between father and son. Pai's hope for A-qing and his father is also a call in reality for reconciliation between parents and children. This mutual understanding of filial piety and homosexual love will eventually lead to the creation of the new emotional regime.

Pai Hsien-yung's Emotional Efforts to Transform the Emotional Regime

Through Pai's letter above, it seems that the transformation of emotional regime is promising in the literary world he creates. However, Pai also hopes to promote this transformation through social change. He publicized himself for the first time as homosexual in 1988 when he was interviewed by the Hong Kong edition of *Playboy*. In his interview with Zeng Xiuping in 2003, he explained the reasons to do so: one is based on the trust of the interviewer, the other more important reason is to advocate lifting the penalty for homosexual love in Hong Kong at that time. When Pai is asked about his parents' attitudes towards his identity, he believes that his parents knew this even though they did not have any direct discussion about it. Pai adds that his own behavior as a good son earned his parents' trust; he wishes A-qing to do the same and ask for his father's understanding because this is what children wish from their parents (Zeng 2003, 340).

As a writer, Pai continues to write about homosexual people and even confide his own story to the public. In 1999, he published an essay entitled *Like A Tree* (*Shu you ruci*) to memorialize his bosom friend, Wang Guoxiang who died of aplastic anemia. He recorded his life-long relationship with Wang in a sincere and emotional way. Especially when Wang fell ill, Wang's optimistic attitude and strong personality facing the

disease and Pai's persistence in trying to cure this incurable disease were so moving that readers easily felt sympathetic towards them.

He also wrote more short stories about homosexual people, such as "Danny Boy" (2001), "Tea for Two" (2003) and "Silent Night" (2016). He also pays attention to AIDS, which is closely connected with discrediting homosexuality. He published essays in magazines and newspapers, including "The Biggest Challenge at the End of the Century: Invasion of AIDS to Humans" (1996), "Brewing Storm: AIDS Epidemic in Taiwan" (2000), "Son of Mountain: Journey of A Person Infected with HIV/AIDS" (2001), "True Feeling out of Epidemic: Remembering Paul Landry Monette" (2008) and "Following Religious Practice: Stories about Du Cong and AIDS Orphans in Henan" (2011). The first two essays call for attention to AIDS epidemic in Taiwan, while the last three record stories of people fighting against HIV/AIDS around the world. All these efforts of writing also represent Pai's emotional efforts to win empathy and resonance to transform the emotional regime in reality.

Pai is a pioneer to build and maintain a special emotional regime where filial piety and homosexual love co-exist with each other. His behavior as a filial son wins the trust and the mutual understanding of his parents. At the same time, he is able to keep his relationship with Wang Guoxiang in this emotional regime. As Pai has mentioned in various talks, it is "passion" that drives him to write and he is willing to record his own emotives through writing.

Conclusion

Emotional regime is a dynamic existence that may be subject to change due to changes of recognition and emotion. Emotional liberty is attainable by following the norms in the emotional regime. Once the norm in the emotional regime is disrupted, every member in the emotional regime will be involved and the emotional liberty is lost. They become emotional refugees because no one is the norm-maker anymore. The operator of the norm and the victim of the norm are both emotional refugees if they are connected to each other emotionally.

Emotional refugees may search for different emotional refuges based on their various conditions. Emotional refuges include interactions with other people and have both temporal and spatial dimensions. In the emotional refuge, emotional efforts still co-exist with emotional

sufferings. Emotional liberty is also possible in this transitional period and space when there are the change of emotive and the potential for a new emotional regime. Emotional suffering may also turn to emotional trauma, which keeps coming back even in the new emotional regime.

Transformation of the emotional regime is hard to achieve, but it is still possible if members in the original emotional regime are willing to change themselves and promote the change of norms. In this paper, the transformation from the old emotional regime of filial piety to the new emotional regime of filial piety with homosexual love is a hard process in Pai's literary creation. The change of emotive of the members in the original emotional regime is possible to result in a new emotional regime. Through Pai's complementary interviews and essays, it seems promising that the literary world is reaching the transformation. At the same time, the transformation in reality is even harder, but Pai is making his emotional efforts to change as a writer. His writings, seen as emotives, are considered to exert a huge influence in public.

Notes

1. Pai was interviewed by Zeng Xiuping for three times in Taipei (January 24, 2000; February 2, 2000; January 15, 2001); for the third time, Professor Mei Jialing also participated in the interview. I quote the interview from the Appendix One of Zeng's book (2003, 335-351). Pai was also interviewed by Cai Kejian from the Hong Kong edition of *Playboy* for three times (April 24, 1988 in Hong Kong; April 30, 1988 in Guangzhou with He Huayi, a journalist of *Anhui Daily*; May 1, 1988 on the train from Guangzhou to Hongkong). I quote the interview from one of the articles in Pai's anthology (Cai 1999, 334-358).

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