

2016

Genuineness and Love: A Study of Feng Menglong's Collection of Mountain Songs (Shan'ge 山歌)

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**GENUINENESS AND LOVE:
A STUDY OF FENG MENGLONG'S COLLECTION OF MOUNTAIN SONGS
(*SHAN'GE* 山歌)**

A Thesis Presented

By

YUJIA YE

Submitted to the Graduate School
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

September 2016

Chinese

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A STUDY OF FENG MENGLONG'S COLLECTION OF MOUNTAIN SONGS
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DEDICATION

To my beloved grandma,
who shows no fear even at the hardest time of her life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my gratitude to my thesis advisor, Prof. Elena Chiu for her patient and thoughtful guidance on all stages of this thesis. I deeply appreciate her detailed reading and useful suggestions of each drafts of my thesis. Without her comments and suggestions, this thesis would not come out as structured and clear as it is now. Prof. Chiu's patience, carefulness and responsibility will be greatly appreciated.

I also owe many thanks to Prof. David Schneider, for his reading of my initial drafts and thoughtful comments. His encouragement and support for this thesis have always been a stimulation for in-depth thinking. I also thank Prof. Schneider for his course "Research in Chinese Source Materials" and his suggestions of secondary source materials, which have played significant roles in my research.

My appreciation also goes to Prof. Zhongwei Shen, for his timely reminder, genuine support and nice encouragement along the way. I also thank Prof. Shen for his course "Graduate Seminar in Chinese", which initiated my interest in my research topic, practiced my presentation skills and prompted me to do more meaningful studies. Deep appreciation also goes to Prof. Shen's selfless share of Prof. Shi Rujie's annotation and study of *Shan'ge*, which has been a key resource of my research.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the professors and friends that have supported my research in the past two years. Prof. Enhua Zhang has read my abstract and offered suggestions. Prof. Zhijun Wang patiently supported my job hunting during the time of my thesis writing. My fellow graduate students (Cai Ying, Mingjia Zhang, Xiao Yu, He Kai and Katie) have always been around to share the sweetness and

sorrows of the thesis-writing process. They are the greatest friends I have met at Amherst.

Lastly, I extend my deepest appreciation to my parents for their understanding of their unyielding daughter. I especially would like to say thank you to my beloved grandparents, whose love and support will be forever remembered. Also, I wish to thank my best friend (Tuanzi Jun) for his unconditional support during the tough period of my thesis writing.

ABSTRACT

GENUINENESS AND LOVE:
A STUDY OF FENG MENGLONG'S COLLECTION OF MOUNTAIN SONGS
(*Shan'ge* 山歌)

SEPTEMBER 2016

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Shan'ge 山歌 is a collection of popular songs in Wu dialect by the late Ming scholar Feng Menglong 冯梦龙 (1574-1646). Due to a lack of detailed literary analysis of the songs, and a lack of appreciation of these songs from the perspective of rhetorical aesthetics, I aim to provide a close reading of the *siqing* (私情) songs in *Shan'ge*. With the intention to offer a fresh perspective into the depiction of emotions and sentimental feelings, as well as the various ways of presenting the people's perception of love and sexual desire in these songs, I endeavor to both enrich the understanding of *Shan'ge* and call critical attention to the subject matter of *siqing*. In my thesis, I argue that these *Siqing* songs are strong spokesmen and representatives of genuineness promoted by Feng Menglong in the preface of *Shan'ge*. I will examine how genuineness was promoted by the late Ming scholars and particularly, how Feng Menglong views genuineness and how he utilizes genuineness in the songs as a means to promote vernacular literature. The representative *siqing* songs will be categorized

and explored in three sections, with the purpose of answering the following questions: How could Feng's promotion of these popular songs be situated in the late Ming discourse of genuineness? How does *Shan'ge* vividly create a world that not only celebrates true and romantic love but also allows the display of the vent of irresistible desire, and the rustic expression of sex? How are carriers of genuine *qing* explicitly portrayed in these songs through their ingenious conversations and tricks in love affairs? And lastly, how do the songs in different ways showcase a vivid and dynamic picture of a sexually liberate and joy-oriented late Ming Suzhou?

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INTRODUCTION

Shan'ge 山歌 is a collection of popular songs in Wu dialect by the late Ming scholar Feng Menglong 冯梦龙 (1574-1646). Altogether ten chapters, with six chapters titled “Private Feelings (*siqing* 私情)¹, two chapters titled “Miscellaneous Songs” (*zage* 杂歌), one chapter titled “Songs of Objects” (*yongwu* 咏物), and one chapter titled “Tongcheng Popular Songs” (*Tongcheng ge* 桐城歌)², these ten chapters demonstrate a large collection of popular songs prevalent in late Ming Suzhou Area. This large collection of songs shows Feng Menglong’s painstaking effort in preserving as many songs as possible.

Feng Menglong, the song collector, was a late Ming scholar and vernacular writer. He was born in Changzhou, now Suzhou, in Jiangsu Province. The major works collected by Feng Menglong include the vernacular stories *sanyan* 三言, namely, *Illustrious Words to Instruct the World* (*Yushi mingyan* 喻世明言), *Comprehensive Words to Warn the World* (*Jingshi tongyan* 警世通言), and *Constant Words to Awaken the Word* (*Xingshi hengyan* 醒世恒言). He also wrote *chuanqi* plays including mainly two works: *A Record of Two Heroes* (*Shuangxiong ji* 双雄记) and *All Things Satisfied*

¹ *Siqing* could be translated as private relationship, intimate relationship, clandestine relationship, or illicit feelings in different contexts. Here I argue that *si* could best be translated as private. As illicit or clandestine relationship seems to contain moral judgment, Feng Menglong, however, does not criticize the love relationships portrayed in the mountain songs from the very beginning. I will mention this point again in the following part of my introduction.

² This chapter, featuring popular songs in the city of Tongcheng, is distinctly different from the rest nine chapters, because the songs were not written in Wu dialect.

(*Wanshi zu* 万事足). Besides, the historical novel *Chronicles of the Eastern Zhou Kingdoms* (*Dongzhou lieguo zhi* 东周列国志) is also an important contribution of him. The two collections of mountain songs *Gua zhi'er* 挂枝儿 and *Shan'ge* 山歌, however, are among his greatest achievements in promoting vernacular literature. Moreover, Feng highly promotes genuineness (*zhen* 真) in writing. As he once praised his own works, he said, “My songs are by no means elegant in language, but they have one feature that is superior: genuineness” (子犹诸曲, 绝无文采, 然有一字过人, 曰真).³ His ambition of fighting against “hypocrisy of Confucianism” (*jia daoxue* 假道学) and archaism were also clearly written in the preface of *Shan'ge*: he “employed the genuine *qing* of the mountain songs to expose the quackery of Confucian moralism” (借山歌之真情, 发名教之伪药). Feng’s interpretation on *Shan'ge* and his promotion of genuineness are the main focus of my thesis and will be further discussed.

Shan'ge has been a type of songs in Wu dialect circulated in the Suzhou area. Literally translated as mountain songs, *Shan'ge* does not mean songs sung in the mountainous areas. Geographically, the city of Suzhou is located on the plain of middle and lower Yangtze River, so mountains are not commonly seen. *Shan'ge* is a kind of folk songs, recording lyrics sung by villagers or commoners. In the preface to Feng’s collection, Feng stated the reason for naming this song collection as *Shan'ge*: “(Since the) voices from common people are not listed in poetic circles, therefore I try to call

³ Ziyou, as mentioned in the quotation, is one of the courtesy names of Feng Menglong. This was mentioned by Hu Shiying in his book *Huaben xiaoshuo gailun* 话本小说概论 (2 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 413, and originally from Feng Menglong’s *Celestial Songs Played Anew* (*Taixia Xinzou* 太霞新奏).

them as mountain songs. They are casually produced by farmers and rural youngsters for expressing random thoughts, and they are not discussed by gentlemen and scholars” (而民间性情之响，遂不得列于诗坛，于是别之曰山歌，言田夫野竖矢口寄兴之所为，荐绅学士家不道也).⁴ According to Feng Menglong, these songs are called *shan'ge* because they represent the voices of the rural people, and they are more spontaneous than writings by gentlemen and scholars in poetic circles in terms of style and language.

Due to Feng's separation of these mountain songs from the elite writings, it is therefore meaningful and reasonable to categorize *shan'ge* as a genre in popular literature. Zheng Zhenduo, in his work *Zhongguo suwenxue shi* 中国俗文学史, defines popular literature as “literature that depicts and belongs to the commoners and the mass” (俗文学”就是通俗的文学，就是民间的文学，也就是大众的文学)⁵. He elaborates, “popular literature are writings that are unqualified for elite circles, that are not paid attention to by literati. They are popular among folks, and are loved and enjoyed by folks” (所谓俗文学就是不登大雅之堂，不为学士大夫所重视，而流行于民间，成为大众所嗜好，所喜悦的东西).⁶ He mentions literary genres including fiction, drama, transformation texts (*bianwen* 变文), and folk songs as popular literature. Zheng even praises the significance of *Shan'ge* in his book. He says, “these

⁴ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 1.

⁵ Zhenduo Zheng, *Zhongguo suwenxue shi* 中国俗文学史 (Beijing: Eastern Press, 1996), 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*

songs, by singing in the dialect of the Wu area, celebrate private feelings among people. The achievement of *Shan'ge* is extremely great.”⁷ Therefore, *Shan'ge* could be well situated in the field of popular literature.

However, some scholars tend to deny their folk origins and argue some songs in Feng's collection are imitations by scholars and literati, with the purpose of turning their attention to “the ‘low’ tradition, local matters, informal expressive genres, and matters of the the heart.”⁸ Kathryn Lowry points out that many songs are imitations by literati in pleasure quarters. She argues in her book that the pleasure quarter is the place that generates numerous songs:

The pleasure quarters was a private space with great public impact, where intellectuals, talented courtesans, and nouveaux riches converged — and where virtually any one of these three groups could repeat song-texts as they chose, imitating one another, and reversing interpretations, as was the rule in this new verse tradition.⁹

The problem is that no solid evidence was found about the authorship of these songs. Lowry did not pinpoint the songs that were revised and imitated in the pleasure quarters. It is hard to fully accept her argument. I tend to agree with the Japanese scholar Oki Yasushi, whose views sound more reliable and close to Feng's own opinion. Oki points

⁷ Zhenduo Zheng, *Zhongguo suwenxue shi* 中国俗文学史 (Beijing: Eastern Press, 1996), 453.

⁸ Kathryn Lowry, *The Tapestry of Popular Songs in 16th and 17th Century China* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

out that the origins of Feng Menglong's songs include four sources. They are: mountain songs from the village, mountain songs from the city, mountain songs from pleasure quarters, and imitation by literati.¹⁰ It is now hard to trace the origin of the songs as they are not specifically commented on by Feng Menglong. However, Oki states that imitations by literati are very few. He has only located one song that was written by Feng Menglong's good friend, to which Feng Menglong has commented. Feng Menglong states, "This was written in a poem by my friend Su Zizhong. He is an honest and sincere scholar, and his thinking is extraordinary!"¹¹ Based on this, I agree with Oki that very few of the songs are imitations of folk songs by the literati. Moreover, Feng Menglong himself clearly points out in his another song collection *Guazhi'er* that he dislikes the writings polished or imitated by scholars. In his comments on the song "Net Towel" (*wangjin* 网巾), which is an imitation by a scholar, he writes, "very proper. Proper songs are far from natural. This should be the work of a scholar" (极贴切。惟贴切，愈远自然，当是书生之技).¹² Certainly he despises works from a scholar. In another case, he comments on the song titled "Moon" (*yue* 月), "no adornment, yet full of taste" (不雕琢而味足).¹³ This time he thinks that the song is not adorned by

¹⁰ Yasushi Oki and Paolo Santangelo, *Shan'ge, the "Mountain Songs": Love Songs in Ming China* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 10.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹² This was pointed out by Fu Chengzhou in his article, "Mingdai wenren dui min'ge de renshi" 明代文人对民歌的认识, *Academic Journal of Suzhou University* (Philosophy and Social Science), No. 4 (2006): 61.

¹³ *Ibid.*

scholars, therefore it is full of taste. From his comments, we can see that Feng despises songs edited or simply written by scholars. He prefers songs that are not adorned or polished, and thinks these songs are meaningful and interesting. Therefore, I believe the songs in *Shan'ge*, if not pointed by him, are genuine and natural voices from town folks, villagers, or courtesans in pleasure quarters. In this sense, these songs indeed should be categorized as popular voices. Even the few imitations by literati, because of their vulgar language and rustic lines, are never for the circle of the elite. These songs are tremendously different from the lyric models and *ci* collections canonized by the elite class; their frank and bawdy lines, abundant graphic descriptions of sentiments, and free and unrestrained references to body and sex, unprecedentedly mark their distinction and uniqueness in the late Ming dynasty.

Shan'ge the book has attracted scholarly attention since its discovery by Zhu Ruixuan in the year of 1934. In China, scholars have paid much attention to *Shan'ge*. It was first published by the Shanghai Chuanjingtang Press. Scholars including Gu Jiegang, Hu Shi, Qian Nanyang, Zhou Zuoren, Zheng Zhenduo and others wrote prefaces for this publication. These scholars affirmed *Shan'ge's* contribution for promoting vernacular and popular literature. Zheng Zhenduo also discussed the importance of *Shan'ge* in Ming dynasty in his book *Zhongguo suwenxue shi* 中国俗文学史 as mentioned earlier. Feng Menglong's collection of *Sanyan* vernacular stories and popular songs were also discussed in the book *Mingdai wenxue yanjiu* 明代文学研究, edited by Shi Tieliang and Deng Shaoji.¹⁴ In the section of Feng Menglong, this

¹⁴ Tieliang Shi and Shaoji Deng, eds., *20 Shiji zhongguo wenxue yanjiu: Mingdai*

book introduces a summary of the achievements scholars have done for Feng and his works. Hu Shiyong, as mentioned in this book, specifically brought up one important issue about Feng's literary view: *qing* and *zhen* are two key terms in Feng Menglong's works.¹⁵ In the following part, I will explain why I agree with Hu and will base my argument on his interpretation of Feng's literary view.

Afterwards, Fu Chengzhou also wrote several papers on Feng Menglong, Feng's folk songs, and his contributions to the late Ming period. Fu did a very detailed research into the promotion of popular songs in late Ming, pointing out that Feng's collection of *Shan'ge* is closely related to the trend of collecting folk songs back then.¹⁶ Fu also did a very comprehensive study on the Ming philosophical movements mainly championed by Li Zhi 李贽 (1527-1602) and Wang Yangming 王阳明 (1472-1529). Fu argues that these two scholars largely influenced Feng's literary views.¹⁷ In addition, Wu Cuncun at Hong Kong wrote an article on the bodily imagery and eroticism in Feng Menglong's two collections of songs: *gua zhi'er* and *Shan'ge*. Wu Cuncun mainly

wenxue yanjiu 20 世纪中国文学研究: 明代文学研究 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 2003), 492.

¹⁵ In his own book *Huaben xiaoshuo gailun* 话本小说概论, Hu also explains the two key terms *qing* and *zhen* for Feng Menglong. Please refer to Shiyong Hu, *Huaben xiaoshuo gailun* 话本小说概论 (2 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 416.

¹⁶ Chengzhou Fu, "Mingdai wenren dui minge de renshi" 明代文人对民歌的认识, *Academic Journal of Suzhou University* (Philosophy and Social Science), No. 4 (2006): 57-61.

¹⁷ Chengzhou Fu, "Feng Menglong yu mingdai zhexue sichao" 冯梦龙与明代哲学思潮, *Nanjing shida xuebao*, No.2 (1995): 87-100.

offered her idea on the link between the portrayal of female awareness and the expression of desire in the song collections.¹⁸ In sum, these scholars paid attention to *Shan'ge's* status in the history of Ming folk songs. They pointed out the significance of exploring the song's strong relation with vernacular literature as well as local culture. Besides, the Chinese linguist Shi Rujie, together with Huang Mingming annotated *Shan'ge's* Wu dialect lines and published "*Feng Menglong Shan'ge jiaozhu*" 冯梦龙《山歌》校注.¹⁹ This was divided into six sections and published separately in Japan. As an expert at Wu dialect, Shi Rujie's annotation is a valuable reference for my translation and analysis of *Shan'ge*.

Outside China, while Feng Menglong's vernacular stories have attracted numerous scholars' attention, *Shan'ge* seems to be a relatively less explored topic. However, *Shan'ge* is very important both because of its literary qualities reflected by its vivid portrayals of romantic feelings and sexual desire, and its unprecedentedly large collection of songs recorded in Wu dialect. One of the most significant scholars of *Shan'ge* is Oki Yasushi, a Japanese scholar, has published an entire book in Japanese titled *Study on Feng Menglong's "Mountain Songs"* (冯梦龙『山歌』の研究：中国明代の通俗歌謡), which includes a translation of the complete collection of the songs and a study on them. Recently, Oki Yasushi, together with Paolo Santangelo, translated the songs into English and published the book *Shan'ge, the 'Mountain Songs': Love*

¹⁸ Cuncun Wu, "It Was Who Lured the Boy': Commoner Women, Intimacy and the Sensual Body in the Song Collections of Feng Menglong (1574-1646)," *Nan Nü* 12 (2010): 311-343.

¹⁹ Rujie Shi and Mingming Huang, *Feng Menglong Shan'ge jiaozhu* 冯梦龙《山歌》校注 (Kumamoto Gakuen Daigaku, Gungaku Gengogaku Ronshu, 2007).

Songs in Ming China. This is the first English translation of Feng's *Shan'ge*. Oki also offered valuable annotations along with his translation. Paolo Santangelo, an expert on the history of emotions, wrote a preface to explain the treatment of emotions in *Shan'ge*. Meanwhile, he did a comprehensive analysis of specific terms dealing with emotions in *Shan'ge*, which was also included in their book. Therefore, this book is of significant importance for scholars interested in Wu dialect songs, and the history of emotion and sexuality in late Ming China.

Apart from them, scholars such as Kathryn Lowry and Pi-ching Hsu also explored *Shan'ge* from various perspectives. Kathryn Lowry did a study of the manuscript circulation and imitation of popular songs in late-Ming China. She argues that “the value of popular song texts lay not in their content but in their intrinsic form and its capacity to be imitated, repeated, varied, or used in games of bricolage with courtesans or among peers at drinking parties to establish social cohesion.”²⁰ However, as I pointed out earlier, as the authorship remains to be unknown for the popular songs, I tend to agree with Oki Yasushi that the songs mostly are genuine voices from the common people. Another scholar Pi-Ching Hsu focused her research on late-Ming pleasure quarters and courtesan culture based on the writings of Feng Menglong in her paper “Courtesans and Scholars in the Writings of Feng Menglong: Transcending Status and Gender”. However, her research is more general, covering various works of Feng Menglong such as *Sanyan* vernacular stories and *Celestial Songs Played Anew*

²⁰ Kathryn Lowry, *The Tapestry of Popular Songs in 16th and 17th Century China* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 6.

(*Taixia xinzou* 太霞新奏).²¹ Hsu did not go further to literary analysis of the works.

Due to a lack of detailed literary analysis of the songs and appreciation of these songs from the perspective of rhetorical aesthetics in the study of *Shan'ge*, I am to provide a close reading of the *siqing* songs in this thesis. *Siqing* songs are a very important part of the songs in the collection. My thesis will focus on the first six chapters of the collection, with a particular focus on the first four chapters, which are under the same category of *siqing* songs. Covering all the songs in this collection might be too aggressive a project to make the analysis pithy. Limiting my study within the short songs allows me to go deeper into the argument and analysis, and draw more concrete and valuable conclusions.

Translated as private relationship, intimate relationship, clandestine relationship, or illicit feelings in different contexts, *siqing* is the central theme of these songs. Here I argue that *siqing* could best be translated as private relationship. As illicit or clandestine relationship seems to contain moral judgment, Feng Menglong, however, does not criticize the love relationships from the very beginning of this song collection. Rather, he promotes that it is just because of the genuineness of these songs that they should not be abolished.²² Therefore, *siqing*, in this sense, is better to be interpreted as private relationship between men and women, without any ethical judgment. With the

²¹ Pi-Ching Hsu, "Courtesans and Scholars in the Writings of Feng Menglong: Transcending Status and Gender," *Nan Nü*. 2.1 (2000): 40-77.

²² In the preface to *Shan'ge*, Feng wrote, "today what prevails are those *siqing* songs...These *siqing* songs cannot be abolished because they carry genuine *qing*" (今所盛行者, 皆私情谱耳...以是为情真而不可废也). From Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 1.

intention to offer a fresh perspective into the depiction of emotions and sentimental feelings, as well as the various ways of presenting the people's perceptions of love and sexual desire in these songs, I endeavor to both enrich our understanding of *Shan'ge* and call critical attention to the subject matter of *siqing*.

According to Feng, through depicting the genuine emotions, the songs are collected for the sake of "exposing the quackery of Confucian moralism."²³ Therefore, in my study, I attempt to investigate why the *siqing* songs are strong spokesmen and representatives of genuineness (*zhen* 真) promoted by Feng Menglong in the preface of *Shan'ge*. In this thesis, the representative *siqing* songs will be categorized and explored in multiple sections, with the purpose of answering the following questions: How could Feng Menglong's promotion of these popular songs be situated in the late Ming discourse of genuineness? How does *Shan'ge* vividly create a world that not only celebrates true and romantic love but also allows the display of the vent of irresistible desire, and the rustic expression of sex? How are carriers of genuine *qing* explicitly portrayed in these songs through their ingenious conversations and tricks in love affair? And lastly, how do the songs in many ways showcase a vivid and dynamic picture of a sexually liberate and joy-oriented late Ming Suzhou?

In the first chapter, I will introduce genuineness and the promotion of popular literature in the cultural context of the late Ming. The important literary theories from Li Zhi, Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (1568-1610), and Feng Menglong will be discussed. I

²³ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 1.

will also examine how other scholars, who directly or indirectly, influenced Feng Menglong's perception of genuineness, and motivated him to start collecting popular songs. I will particularly explore how Feng Menglong views genuineness and how he utilizes genuineness in the songs as a means to promote vernacular literature.

In the following chapters, I will explore representative songs thoroughly by categorizing them into three groups based on themes. Paolo Santangelo's observation largely inspires me to categorize these songs. As observed by Paolo Santangelo, in these songs, "the love relationship is presented in each of its main acts: from the beginning with the first awkward attempts to approach the person, followed by falling in love, then the various trysts, the desire to be close, and finally separation, nostalgia, the emotional complications, and so forth."²⁴ I also find out similar representation of love relationships in the six chapters and I group these songs into the following three categories.

The first category mainly focuses on *siqing* songs with themes of longing and yearning for a lover. They are songs describing initial stages of romantic love, for example, songs about male or female's longing for a lover, songs related to one's loneliness and melancholy, and also songs that simply portray a man or woman's imagination of love relationships. These songs mainly emphasize the state of *qing* and longing. However, we can also find depiction of desire to be with a lover, but the extent of physical desire is not as intense as songs in the latter category. This category of songs will be discussed in chapter two of my thesis. In chapter three, the second category

²⁴ Yasushi Oki and Paolo Santangelo, *Shan'ge, the "Mountain Songs": Love Songs in Ming China* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 54.

includes songs will be examined. This category of songs is about men and women's indulgence in private love relationships. The themes of these songs include celebrating fulfillment of sexual intercourse, celebrating the wit of conducting love affairs without being found out by others, as well as directly describing men and women's seductive quality when involved in relationships. These songs mostly center on the bold description of physical desires, either directly or indirectly. A large number of the songs in this category also depict the wit and strategy of men and women when striving hard to involve in love affairs. The last category, which will be discussed in chapter four, contains songs with themes of dissatisfaction, separation and reunion between men and women. In this category, these people face predicaments such as problems of separation, betrayal, or resentment. There are also a group of songs that speak men and women's efforts in trying to get reunion with their lovers.

However, these *siqing* songs are full of complexity and richness, and my categorization might be hard to fully include or address all the songs. Some songs, due to their inherent nature of ambiguity and vagueness, could also be cross-boundary. I am fully aware of the above issues, but I aim to emphasize different themes and different state of feelings, such as pure *qing*, mix of *qing* and *yu* (欲), and abstract *yu*. In each category, so these songs could be explored in thoroughness. *Qing* and *yu* are two key terms in this thesis. *Qing* is translated as feelings and sentiments, and *yu* is more related to physical desire.

Therefore, in chapters two, three and four, I will focus on representative songs in the three categories respectively, and explore how these songs vividly reveal genuine

affections, emotions and desires between men and women. I aim to take a close look at the portrayal and celebration of desire and love -- encapsulated in the word *siqing* -- between men and women. Issues including point of view, images, metaphorical expressions, and tones and context set by the rich figurations will be discussed to show how these songs reveal Feng Menglong's concept of genuineness. As the songs in each category feature different themes, I will analyze how men and women involved in love relationships act differently in order to fulfill their love relationships, and how these songs come to create a world of genuineness, characterized by openness, playfulness, and crudity.

CHAPTER 1
THE LATE MING CULTURAL CONTEXT:
THE CONCEPT OF GENUINENESS (*ZHEN* 真) AND POPULAR
LITERATURE

In the late Ming period, the society features the prosperity of economy, the hedonism of the scholar-officials and merchants, as well as the blooming number of anti-orthodox literati when confronting with the increasingly loose neo-Confucian doctrines. Terms such as *xing* 性 and *qing* 情 caught scholarly attention and were redefined by the literati. “Genuineness” (*zhen*) was also a frequently discussed term by late Ming radical scholars including Feng Menglong. These scholars emphasized the necessity of genuineness in their writings. In this chapter, I would like to explore the concept of genuineness by examining literary views of scholars including Li Zhi, the late Ming iconoclast yearning for “a child-like heart-mind” (*tongxin* 童心), Yuan Hongdao, an influential member of the late Ming *Gong’an* School, and most importantly, Feng Menglong the collector of *Shan’ge*. I would explore how their theories and writings directly or indirectly contributed to the collection of the popular songs and the promotion of genuineness. Most importantly, I will investigate Feng Menglong’s contribution to the rise of popular literature, and how his emphasis on genuineness is intertwined with the ideas of *qing* and *su*.

Li Zhi, or better known as Li Zhuowu 李卓吾, is regarded as one of the representative late-Ming iconoclastic thinkers. He attacked especially neo-Confucianism, and was viewed as a “heretic” by the orthodox scholars. He was widely influential, so popular as to the exaggerating state that “no one does not read Li’s works

in the world.”²⁵ Even Feng Menglong was a loyal follower of Li Zhi. According to the Ming scholar Xu Zichang 许自昌 (1578-1623), Feng was “an addict of Li Zhi’s works. He treated Li Zhi as a sage” (酷嗜李氏之学, 奉为蓍蔡).²⁶ Therefore, in order to fully understand Feng Menglong’s *Shan’ge* and its promotion of genuineness, it is necessary to examine Li Zhi and his important literary theory on “child-like heart-mind”.

With a philosophy mainly centers on the idea of “child-like heart-mind”, Li Zhi articulates a coherent vision on the expression of genuine feeling in his essays. He advocates that genuineness cannot be separated with the child-like heart-mind. As he stated in his essay “On the child-like heart-mind”: “The child-like heart-mind is the “genuine heart-mind” (*zhenxin* 真心). If one denies the child-like heart-mind, then he denies the genuine heart-mind. The child-like heart-mind is free of all “falsehood” (*jia* 假) and entirely “genuine” (*zhen* 真); it is the “original heart-mind” (*benxin* 本心) at the very beginning of the first thought.”²⁷ (夫童心者, 真心也。若以童心为不可, 是以真心为不可也。夫童心者, 绝假纯真, 最初一念之本心也。) Li celebrates the possession of child-like heart-mind, and concludes that only a child-like heart-mind can be entirely genuine. He seems to equalize the child-like heart-mind and genuine heart-mind. Then questions would be that how many aspects this child-like heart-mind contain, and what exactly is a child-like heart-mind?

²⁵ Benke Wang 汪本钊, “*Xu fenxu*” 续焚书, *Li Zhi wenji* 李贽文集 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2000), 10.

²⁶ Zichang Xu 许自昌 (1578-1623), *Chuzhai manlu* 樗斋漫录, <http://guji.guoxuedashi.com/5627/60847.pdf>.

²⁷ This was translated by Pauline Lee in her essay “‘There is Nothing More Than Dressing and Eating’: Li Zhi 李贽 and the Child-like Heart (*Tongxin* 童心)”, *Dao* 11 (2012): 68. The Chinese quotation was originally from Zhi Li, “On Child-like Heart-Mind” *Tongxin shuo* 童心说, *Li Zhi wenji* 李贽文集 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2000), 92.

I would interpret that a child-like heart-mind, or a genuine heart-mind refers to a heart-mind that naturally expresses emotions and feelings without any restraints or moral concerns. In one occasion, when Li Zhi mentions how to write a genuine essay, he highlights the importance of writing from one's natural instinct and expression. As in his essay "Discussing how to write essays with my friend", he wrote,

When people comprise proses, they start from the outside and then attack the inside. I am different. I start from the inside and attack the outside. My proses have the power to attack city walls, consume grains, and command soldiers and horses. They can rip, tear, and completely destroy bases.

凡作文皆从外边攻进里去，我为文章之就从里面攻打出来，就他城池，食他粮草，统率他兵马，直冲横撞，搅得他粉碎，故不费一毫气力而自然有余也。

He emphasized the importance of writing from the inner mind, which contains energy and could attack the outside. This exactly extols the preservation of natural instincts of individuals and speaks highly of the expressive nature of essay-writing.

In emphasizing the expressive nature of essay-writing, Li Zhi thus points to a very extreme way of direct expression of strong emotions and feeling. He praises the way of the complete expression of natural and spontaneous feelings without any restraints. This is the hallmark of the literary movement of promoting genuineness. This kind of complete expression has the strongest power to draw out one's innermost genuine feelings. They write not because of their need to write, but their irresistible desire to express. As Li wrote, "Those who truly know how to write, their intention is not for the sake of writing at the beginning...However, when these things have been accumulated to some degree, they are coming out with overwhelming power...They cannot help but go crazy, cry out loud and shed bitter tears" (且夫世之真能文者，比其初，皆非有意于为文也.....蓄极积久，势不可遏。发狂大叫，流涕恸哭，不能

自止).²⁸ Those who write usually “pour out” explicitly things that are unique, personal, emotional inner feelings. Only these very extreme and strong emotions that are closely associated with the genuine writing. And the genuine writers are those who would take the risk of being killed in order to grasp the opportunity to express inner feelings. Genuineness thus could be further linked with boldness, courage, and complete expression of feelings and sentiments.

By combining the aspects related to a genuine heart-mind, I emphasize that Li Zhi’s genuine heart-mind mainly involves natural, direct, spontaneous expression of behavior and emotions, with no affiliation to any nurtured, cultivated, and refined behavior or sentiments. It is closely related to one’s own “pouring out” of sentiments and inner feelings.

Apart from linking genuineness with natural and spontaneous explosion of feelings, Li Zhi also attempts to link genuineness with popular literature. Li Zhi is known as one of the significant figures in promoting popular literature in late Ming. In many places he prioritized popular culture while condemning the orthodox culture. For example, he claimed once, “why should the ancient *wenxuan* be the representatives of poems? And why should the essays in pre-Qin be the representatives? When the poems’ formats developed into the formats in six dynasties, and then to those of *jinti*, and essays developed into *chunqi*, *yuanben*, *zaju* drama, and then to *The Romance of the West Chamber* and *Water Margin*, as well as today’s eight-legged essays, all of them are greatest literary works at all times.” (诗何必古选，文何必先秦，降而为六朝，变而为近体，又变而为传奇，变而为院本，为杂剧，为《西厢曲》，为《水浒传》，

²⁸ Zhi Li, “*Za shuo*” 杂说, *Li Zhi wenji* 李贽文集 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2000), 90.

为今之举子业，皆古今至文).²⁹ No poems and essays should observe the rule of the traditional formats. The popular forms in different periods , as far as Li concerned, are all the greatest works.

If the poems and literary format are not important in judging a good literary work, then what is more important? A child-like heart mind is the necessity. A child-like heart mind could generate genuine essays or literary works. These works naturally refer to popular literatures, including aforementioned *The Romance of the West Chamber* and *Water Margin*. On the contrast, Li Zhi criticized orthodox works such as “*Mencius, Analects and Six Classics*” as “cheating words of neo-Confucianists and hiding places for hypocrites” (道学之口实，假人之渊藪).³⁰ Reading and writing orthodox works would make literati’s become hypocrites who do not possess genuine hearts. Therefore, Li Zhi holds the opinion that popular literature can fully express one’s genuine nature. His main purpose of promoting the popular literary works is for the gratification of genuineness. In this way, we say that Li Zhi played a very significant role in introducing popular literature characterized by genuineness to late Ming scholars. His efforts in boldly claiming the literary status of popular literature, and de-emphasizing the predominating role of orthodox literature in that era were unprecedented, and powerful.

As the precursor of the late Ming cultural movements, Li Zhi, as well as his illuminating philosophical vision, inspired writers and scholars to take reforms. Later, many important thinkers such as Yuan Hongdao and Feng Menglong, developed their

²⁹ Zhi Li, “On Child-like Heart-Mind” *Tongxin shuo* 童心说, *Li Zhi wenji* 李贽文集 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2000), 93.

³⁰ Zhi Li, “On Child-like Heart-Mind” *Tongxin shuo* 童心说, *Li Zhi wenji* 李贽文集 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2000), 93.

ideas based on Li Zhi's theory. It became a phenomenon in the late Ming that the scholars tried to find genuineness in popular writings.

Yuan Hongdao, one of the three Yuan brothers in *Gong'an School*³¹, was also known as one of the radical theorists in the late Ming. Directly influenced by Li Zhi, Yuan Hongdao boldly condemned the action of imitating classical formats and raised his own vision on the composition of writings. He was a very important member of the late Ming iconoclast circle. His literary theories and writings, especially at his early age, clearly demonstrated features of a non-conformist of neo-Confucianism. During the year of 1596 to 1598, Yuan Hongdao was the magistrate of Wu district. Under the influence of the people and customs in the Wu district, Yuan Hongdao's life philosophy and literary views changed. It was during Yuan's stay in the Wu district that he had a deeper understanding of genuineness. In this section, I will analyze how Yuan's life in the Wu district, and the popular songs there exert significant impacts on his understanding of genuineness.

Yuan Hongdao was attracted by the hedonistic culture in the late Ming Wu area and he in turn, greatly promoted this culture. According to Li Shenghua, In the late Ming, Wu area was a place characterized by economic growth and literati's hedonism. Li states in her paper, "scholars in Wu district indulged in music, women and travelling. People were not economical, but extravagant."³² These are the characteristic of the Wu district. Directly influenced by this phenomenon, Yuan Hongdao generated his view on

³¹ The *Gong'an school* is mainly combined by three Yuan brothers (Yuan Zongdao 袁宗道 (1560-1600), Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (1568-1610), Yuan Zhongdao 袁中道 (1570-1623)). The other members in the school also include Jiang Yingke 江盈科 (1553-1605), Tao Wangling 陶望龄 (1562-1609), and Lei Sipei 雷思霈 (1597-?).

³² Shenghua Li, "Yuan Hongdao yu wudi renwen" 袁宏道与吴地人文, *Academic Journal of Suzhou University (Philosophy and Social Science)* 2 (2011): 83.

happiness. He said that, a significant factor of happiness is that humans should be able to “see all the colors, hear all the sounds, go to all the uncommon places and tell the most interesting things in this world” (目极世间之色，耳极世间之声，身极世间之鲜，口极世间之谭).³³ These words show his pursuit for a joyful and hedonistic life. This also reflects his rebellious attitude toward the traditional ideal of rationalism. The preference of hedonism in Wu later led Yuan Hongdao to explore the life of common people in Wu district, which directly led to his advocating of genuineness through his adherence to and understanding of popular songs.

The prevalence of popular songs was a feature of the Wu district in the late Ming period. According to the contemporary scholar Li Shenghua, “people in the Wu area enjoyed wandering around, places such as the wine and flower parties in the Huqiu mountain, or the boats in the lotus pond or the west bank, were all surrounded by people singing Wu songs. The Wu people enjoyed the happiness of the mundane world.”³⁴ In a poem, Yuan Hongdao also mentioned the scene of the prevalence of popular songs in late Ming Suzhou, “In front of the brooks, girls in Wu district sing Wu songs while wavering their moon-shaped fans” (团扇前溪上，吴娘唱子歌).³⁵ Yuan Hongdao also spoke highly of the popular songs, and even treated these songs as the ultimate source of joy. He wrote, “The people treat poems as poems. They would naturally feel bitter by the poems. I treat *Dazaogan* and *Pipoyu* as poems, so I feel enough joy” (世人以诗

³³ Hongdao Yuan, “Gong Weichang xiansheng” 龚惟长先生, “Yuanzhonglang chidu” 袁中郎尺牍, in *Yuanzhonglang quanji* 袁中郎全集, (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1964), 17.

³⁴ Shenghua Li, *Yuan Hongdao yu wudi renwen* 袁宏道与吴地人文, *Academic Journal of Suzhou University (Philosophy and Social Science)* 2 (2011): 86.

³⁵ Hongdao Yuan, *Zeng Jiangjinzhi qi ba* 赠江进之其八, “Yuanzhonglang shiji” 袁中郎诗集, in *Yuanzhonglang quanji* 袁中郎全集, (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1964), 78.

为诗，未免为诗苦。弟以“打枣竿”、“劈破玉”³⁶为诗，故足乐也。³⁷ *Dazaogan* and *Pipoyu* were two tunes of folk songs in the late Ming period, similar to the tunes of *Gua zhi'er*. They were popular love songs among the common people. By treating these popular songs as poems, Yuan elevated the status of folk songs.

More specifically, Yuan Hongdao stated that the main reason for treating popular songs as the source of ultimate joy is their embodiment of genuineness. In his essay, he wrote:

Nowadays women and children in rural places sing tunes such as ‘*bopoyu*’, ‘*dacaogan*’. These tunes seem to be composed by genuine people without fame and knowledge. Therefore, these songs could reveal genuine feelings. They imitated neither the songs of Han and Wei periods, nor those from the glorious age of the Tang dynasty. Rather, they are composed at their own will. They could connect with people’s emotions of happiness, anger, sorrow and joy, as well as their hobbies, and feelings of *qing* and *yu*. This is gratifying.

今闻閭妇人孺子所唱《劈破玉》、《打草竿》之类，犹是无闻无识真人所作，故多真声，不效颦于汉、魏，不学步于盛唐，任性而发，尚能通于人之喜怒哀乐嗜好情欲，是可喜也。³⁸

Yuan’s point is very clear. Popular songs are true expressions of emotions and feelings of common people. They are not imitations of the songs of Han and Tang dynasty, but composed spontaneously at people’s own will. Notably, *Dazaogan* and *Bopoyu* are two tunes not originally from Wu region, but were national tunes prevalent in China.

³⁶ In another occasion, Yuan wrote *Bopoyu* 劈破玉 instead of *Pipoyu* 劈破玉. These two terms (although one should be a handwriting mistake), however, would both be referred to the tunes of the folk songs in this thesis.

³⁷ Hongdao Yuan, “*Boxiu*” 伯修, “*Yuanzhonglang chidu*” 袁中郎尺牍, in *Yuanzhonglang quanji* 袁中郎全集, (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1964), 30.

³⁸ Hongdao Yuan, “*Xu xiaoxiu shi*” 叙小修诗, “*Yuanzhonglang wenchao*” 袁中郎文钞, in *Yuanzhonglang quanji* 袁中郎全集, (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1964), 5.

Moreover, the two tunes were popular enough so as to the condition that “everyone is familiar with that, and everyone likes to hear that” (人人习之，亦人人喜听之).³⁹ Therefore, Yuan mentions these most popular tunes to demonstrate his prioritization of genuineness in popular songs.

Then how does Yuan Hongdao view and define genuineness embodied by these popular songs? First of all, by saying that “[t]hese tunes seem to be composed by genuine people without fame and knowledge”, Yuan Hongdao speaks highly of the songs’ nature of being common. They are from commoners, mostly anonymous writers, without the influence of orthodox poems. Secondly, Yuan Hongdao points essentially to the spontaneous and natural expression of feelings of the songs. He says that these songs could connect to one’s genuine emotions and feelings. And by following one’s own nature, each moment of one’s emotion and expression could be noticed. Furthermore, when Yuan says that these songs could express explicitly human’s happiness, anger, sorrow, joy as well as interests and desires, we can notice that his understanding of genuineness is similar to Li Zhi’s. Although Li Zhi does not specifically celebrate the genuine nature of the popular songs, he also values the importance of popular literature. Therefore, both of them shifted their attention from the orthodox literature to popular literature in order to find genuineness. And Yuan Hongdao went a step further to notice the intrinsic value of the popular songs.

In sum, by exploring Yuan Hongdao’s literary theory and his influence by the Wu culture, I come to conclude that Yuan’s preference of popular songs mainly comes from the songs’ genuine nature. And Yuan’s understanding of genuineness, similar to

³⁹ Defu Shen 沈德符 (1578-1642), *Wanliyehuo bian* 万历野获编 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), Volume 25.

Li Zhi's literary view, lies in its reference to the commoners, and to their spontaneous, explicit and natural flow of emotions and feelings.

After introducing two major radical figures in the late Ming and their views on genuineness, in the next part, Feng Menglong and his literary theory on genuineness will be explored. Issues of how he promoted the collection of the popular songs *Shan'ge*, how he developed his ideas mainly from the previous two scholars' views, and how his ideas are both similar and different from Li Zhi's and Yuan Hongdao's understanding of genuineness will be discussed.

Feng Menglong was strongly influenced by Li Zhi's literary views and radical ideas. As I wrote earlier, Feng Menglong was a loyal follower of Li Zhi. According to Fu Chengzhou, "In the works that Feng has collected and commented on, such as *A History of Qing* (*Qing shi* 情史), *Talents* (*Zhi nang* 智囊), *The Hilarious History of the Past and Present* (*Gujin tangai* 古今谭概), *The Transcription of the Extensive Records of the Taiping Era* (*Taipingguangji chao* 太平广记钞) and so on, Feng has quoted a large amount of views from Li Zhi, and highly affirmed Li Zhi's views."⁴⁰ As Li Zhi denounced Confucianism as "cheating words of neo-Confucianists and hiding places for hypocrites" (道学之口实, 假人之渊藪),⁴¹ Feng Menglong, similarly, ridiculed Confucianism in his preface to *The Extensive Collection of Jokes* (*Guang xiaofu* 《广笑府》), "I also laugh at the old man Confucius. What kind of neo-Confucian articles are you talking about? You just kill many men without any reason" (又笑那孔子这老

⁴⁰ Chengzhou Fu, "Feng Menglong yu dangdai zhexue sichao" 冯梦龙与当代哲学思潮", *Nanjing shida xuebao* (*Shehui kexue ban*) 南京师大学报 (社会科学版) 2 (1995): 87.

⁴¹ Zhi Li, "On Child-like Heart-Mind" *Tongxin shuo* 童心说, *Li Zhi wenji* 李贽文集 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2000), 93.

头儿，你絮叨叨说什么道学文章，也平白地把好些活人都弄死).⁴² Also, as pointed out by Fu Chengzhou, Li Zhi's high evaluation of dramas and fiction directly led to Feng Menglong's promotion of vernacular literature.⁴³

Apart from Li Zhi, Yuan Hongdao's understanding of genuineness, specifically from the popular songs, also has a close relationship with Feng's view on popular songs. Living almost in the same era, both as radical scholars, Feng Menglong and Yuan Hongdao both gave popular songs a very high status. However, if Yuan Hongdao treats these popular songs more as weapons for attacking and reforming orthodox essay and poem writings, Feng Menglong, I would argue that, is more as an advocate of popular songs than a reformer of orthodox writings. His purpose, as already explained clearly in the preface of *Shan'ge*, is to celebrate the genuine *qing* of these mountain songs and denounce neo-Confucianism.

In terms of Feng Menglong's literary views on genuineness, first of all, it cannot be separated with *qing*. According to Hu Shiyong, "Feng Menglong's literary view is based *qing* and *zhen* (情真说)"⁴⁴ He further explains, "Feng Menglong treats *qing* as the main source of literary creation, and genuineness (*zhen*) as the highest standard for literary creation."⁴⁵ I agree with Hu that *qing* is the main source of literary creation for Feng Menglong. His understanding of *qing* cannot be separated with the cult of *qing* in the late Ming period.

⁴² This was mentioned by Fu Chengzhou in his essay, "*Feng Menglong yu dangdai zhexue sichao*" 冯梦龙与当代哲学思潮", *Nanjing shida xuebao (Shehui kexue ban)* 南京师大学报 (社会科学版) 2 (1995): 87.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁴⁴ Shiyong Hu, *Huaben xiaoshuo gailun* 话本小说概论 (2 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 416.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

It is known that the concept of *qing* has been strongly advocated and remarkably celebrated in the late Ming era. Throughout the late Ming period, the term *qing* was a central concept in literary works as well as literary theories. The word *qing* could be translated as sensualized romantic sentiments in its cultural context. Martin Huang did a very detailed study on the cult of *qing*. According to him, the concept of *qing* was both “sensualized” and “secularized” in late Ming writings. “*Qing* was often presented as sexual love between man and woman, instead of, say, a literati poet’s aesthetic response to a magnificent landscape as in a lyrical poem.”⁴⁶ Moreover, *qing* shares a blurred boundary with *yu*. As Martin Huang says, “an interesting corollary during this period was the blurring of the distinctions between *qing* and *yu*: physical desire was being sentimentalized, romantic sentiments were becoming sensualized.”⁴⁷ Despite that, this blurred distinction instead has fueled “*qing* as a new or reinvented concept”⁴⁸ in late Ming discourse. Many literary works have been analyzed as representative works of *qing*, such as *the Peony Pavilion* by Tang Xianzu 汤显祖 (1550-1616) and *Romance of the Western Chamber* by Wang Shifu 王实甫 (1260-1336). Martin Huang even argues that *Jin Pingmei* 金瓶梅 is also a work that celebrates the sensualized *qing* in certain sense.

Many late Ming scholars and writers expressed their views and opinions on *qing*. Tang Xianzu, in his masterpiece *The Peony Pavilion*, pointed out his philosophy on “the utmost of *qing*” *zhiqing* 至情. For him, the utmost form of *qing* could transcend

⁴⁶ Martin Huang, *Desire and Fictional Narrative in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center: Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2001), 34.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

life and death. In the preface, he says, “You do not know where *qing* starts from, but when it starts, it goes deep. Those alive could die, and those dead could be alive again. If those alive could not die, or those dead could not be alive again, they have not reach the utmost of *qing* (情不知所起，一往而深。生者可以死，死可以生。生而不可与死，死而不可复生者，皆非情之至也).⁴⁹ Tang Xianzu even raised a radical interpretation of the saying “the poem articulates what is on the mind intently” (*shi yan zhi* 诗言志).⁵⁰ According to Tang Xianzu, “‘*zhi*’ actually means *qing*” (志也者，情也).⁵¹ Therefore, Tang believes that what is intently on the mind is *qing*. In this way, Tang wants to redefine the poetics of the *Book of Songs* and go back to feelings and emotions. This is a negation of the previous criterion for the purpose of writing. Tang Xianzu brings forth a new and sensational cultural movement for promoting the utmost expression of *qing*.

Largely influenced by this trend, Feng Menglong also shows his worship of *qing* in many of his works. In the preface of *A History of Qing* (*Qing shi* 情史), Feng Menglong expressed with fervor on the concept of *qing*:

Since young, I have been proud of being addicted to *qing*. When I meet my friends, I would bare my soul to them, and always be with them whether in good or bad times...When I meet a person rich in *qing*, I want to bow to him. If I meet a person without *qing*, and his idea I do not agree with, I would try to guide him with *qing*. I would not give up

⁴⁹ Xianzu Tang, *Mudan Ting* 牡丹亭, (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2005), 1.

⁵⁰ This saying is a canonical statement of what poetry is in *the Book of Documents* (*Shangshu* 尚书). See Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1992), 26. According to Stephen Owen, “*Zhi*” means “what is on the mind intently”.

⁵¹ Originally by Xianzu Tang, *Dongjieyuan xixiang tici* 董解元西厢题辞. This was quoted from Fu Chengzhou’s book *Feng Menglong yu Hou Huiqing* 冯梦龙与侯慧卿 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 128.

until he shows absolute refusal. I once joked that after my death, I cannot forget the *qing* people have in this world. I would become a Buddha to save the world, and the Buddha's name should be called "Buddha of Boundless Love and Joy".

余少负情痴, 遇朋侪, 必倾赤相与, 吉凶同患……见一有情人, 辄欲下拜, 或无情者, 志言相忤, 必委屈以情导之, 万万不从乃也。尝戏言我死后, 不能忘情世人, 必当作佛度世, 其佛号当云“多情欢喜如来。”⁵²

In this passage, Feng Menglong expressed his opinion on *qing*, claiming that he is a *qing* fanatic and shows respect for people rich in *qing*. He even identifies himself with a Buddha, and claims that *qing* could also be a religion, so that everybody could show *qing* toward each other. While Tang Xianzu argues that *qing* could transcend life and death, Feng Menglong argues that *qing* could stand alone as a religion, and be worshipped by people. This kind of strong promotion of *qing* demonstrates his adamant belief in *qing*.

However, Feng not only strongly advocated *qing*, he also tried to link the discourse of *qing* and genuineness together. As in the preface of *Shan'ge*, he indicates that the most important value of these songs is their "genuineness". For Feng Menglong, only writings out of one's genuine mind could fully express *qing*. In a poem he once wrote, "who spread the love songs to people rich in *qing*? When *qing* reaches the state of being genuine, these stories become genuine too" (谁将情咏传情人, 情到真时事亦真).⁵³ Clearly, Feng emphasizes the state of being genuine. Genuineness links people with *qing* and their romantic stories together. While in the preface of *Shan'ge*, he also wrote similarly, "These *siqing* songs cannot be abolished because they carry

⁵² Menglong Feng, *A History of Qing (Qing shi 情史)* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), 1.

⁵³ This was mentioned by Fu Chengzhou in his book *Feng Menglong yu Hou Huiqing 冯梦龙与侯慧卿* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 126.

genuine *qing*".⁵⁴ These mountain songs are valuable because *qing* revealed by them are genuine. Fully expression of true feelings is one significant criterion for Feng Menglong to collect and preserve these songs.

Moreover, similar to Li Zhi and Yuan Hongdao, Feng also advocates writings that show a writer's natural and spontaneous feelings. In the preface of *Celestial Songs Played Anew* (*Taixia xinzou* 太霞新奏), Feng states, "Talking about works that could express *xing* and *qing*, essays could not be compared with poems. The three hundred poems could excite people, because they are created from one's inner *qing*. They naturally become so" (文之善达性情者, 无如诗, 三百篇之可以兴人者, 惟其发于中情, 自然而然故也).⁵⁵ This term "inner *qing*" (中情) refers to a state of spontaneous and natural expression of feelings without restraints, as he says that these poems "naturally become so". Therefore, Feng Menglong's view of "inner *qing*", as a key factor of his concept of genuineness, directly develops from Li Zhi and Yuan Hongdao's literary views.

In addition, Feng Menglong's understanding of genuineness is also closely related to "*su*" 俗 or "*li*" 俚, referring to the nature of vulgarity or coarseness of the common people, the popular literature as well as the emotions and feelings of the common people. According to Sophie Volpp, *su* "connotes unhesitating emotional expression. It is allied with the earthy, practical, material, and somatic and, in this wise, comes to represent authenticity (*zhen*)".⁵⁶ As Volpp further mentions, in Feng

⁵⁴ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 1.

⁵⁵ Menglong Feng, *Celestial Songs Played Anew* (*Taixia xinzou* 太霞新奏), <http://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&res=4662>.

⁵⁶ Sophie Volpp, "Texts, Tutors, and Fathers" in *Dynastic Crisis & Cultural Innovation*, ed. Der-Wei Wang and Wei Shang (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia

Menglong's *Collection of Jokes* (*Xiaohua ji* 笑话集), Feng points out that classical language is "a badge of distinction" and tries to "locate authenticity in the sounds and sights of the natural world – the cries of a bird or the speech of a farmer".⁵⁷ Feng Menglong's collection of mountain songs is combined of songs from farmers, courtesans in pleasure quarters, merchants living in cities as well as other various common people from different social backgrounds. Therefore, it exemplifies his promotion of *su*.

Moreover, again, in his preface of *Shan 'ge*, Feng directly states:

Although mountain songs are extremely rustic (*li* 俚), are they not the heritages of love songs in Zheng and Wei?⁵⁸ ...If we could employ the genuine *qing* of the mountain songs to expose the quackery of Confucian moralism, then the contribution of this collection is higher than *Gua zhi'er* and other collections.⁵⁹

Feng states that these songs' characteristic of *li*, or in other word, *su*, could exactly be used as weapons to attack the hypocrisy of the Confucian orthodoxy. As these mountain songs embody the genuine *qing* of common people, they are radical voices against hypocritical orthodox teachings. Even in *Gua zhi'er*, another collection of popular songs, Feng Menglong also mentioned many times that "songs that are shallowest, and

Center, 2005), 32.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 27-28.

⁵⁸ "Zheng and Wei" are referred to the songs from the states of Zheng and Wei in the section of "Airs of the states" (*Guo feng* 国风) in *the Book of Songs*. Songs of Zheng and Wei are mostly love songs.

⁵⁹ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 1.

li'est, are the most genuine” (最浅、最俚、亦最真)⁶⁰. Therefore, Feng highly promotes the characteristic of *li*, and clearly he links genuineness with *li* or *su*.

By collecting mountain songs, Feng Menglong highly valued *li* or *su*. Oki Yasushi also confirmed Feng Menglong's devotion to the popular songs in his essay, “Able Official or Comedian? How was Feng Menglong Perceived through the Eyes of his Contemporaries”, Oki states,

Feng Menglong himself acknowledged the correlation between traditional verse and prose and the folk songs he had collected, emphasizing the value of the latter's *zhen* 真 (genuineness) and 俚 *li* or 俗 *su*. In effect, Feng Menglong, in compiling his anthology, was part of a trend in late Ming times. Intellectuals who has grown dissatisfied with the stalemate in traditional verse and prose became more and more interested in, and sympathetic towards, the folk songs of the common people because of their plain and unadorned style and the frankness with which they expressed emotions and feelings (especially between men and women)”⁶¹.

Oki has clearly pointed out that Feng shows his genuine interest in showing the nature of *su*. Plain, unadorned style and frankness brought forth by popular literature are exactly what Feng Menglong tried to find in his collection of popular songs. These features are closely related to Feng's idea of genuine *qing* between men and women. Therefore, I agree that Feng Menglong's upholding of genuineness is indispensable with his promotion of *su* or *li* in popular literature.

In sum, “genuineness” mentioned in the preface of *Shan'ge* gradually develops from the late Ming thinkers' literary theories and comes to a firm and solid definition

⁶⁰ Menglong Feng, *Gua zhi'er* 挂枝儿 (Jiangsu: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2000), 10.

⁶¹ Yasushi Oki, “Able Official or Comedian? How was Feng Menglong Perceived through the Eyes of his Contemporaries,” *International Communication of Chinese Culture* 3 (2016): 11.

by Feng Menglong as a revelation of “*inner qing*” (中情) -- natural, direct and spontaneous expression of feelings and desires, embodied mostly by popular literature from common people. Starting from Li Zhi’s celebration of genuineness in popular literature, to Yuan Hongdao’s connection of genuineness with popular songs, and then to Feng Menglong action of collecting songs to seek for genuineness and fight against orthodox teachings, we can see their efforts in contributing to the rise of popular literature in the late Ming. The popular songs are mostly voices from the commoners; therefore, they are utilized by Feng Menglong as representatives of genuineness to challenge orthodox literature. In order to fully grasp the meaning of genuineness, the two terms *qing* and *li* (or *su*) should be taken into special consideration. In the following chapters, I will focus on literary analysis of representative sections of the popular songs in *Shan’ge*, and explore how these songs embody genuine *qing* and *su*.

CHAPTER 2

SIQING SONGS ABOUT LONGING FOR LOVE

In this chapter, I will mainly examine songs of the first category portraying feelings and emotions of men and women longing for love. In observation, I find that a large proportion of the songs in this category are dedicated to themes of yearning for a partner or a lover, depicting interaction and mutual seduction between strangers, or otherwise complaining the predicament of being alone. These songs, by recurring to different figurative methods, portray and praise genuine feelings – usually partake of erotic undertones -- through the voices of young men and women. I will analyze songs in this category, and see how these songs feature compelling yet complicated affections in their unique ways.

Before I start with the analysis of the songs, I would like to briefly introduce the figurative methods employed in Feng's *Shan'ge*. In this collection, figurative methods including analogies, metaphors, homophones and double entendres are extensively used. These figurative methods liven up the lines of the songs. Images of everyday life, including food, transportation, living places and everyday objects are applied by these songs. These images are rarely noble. Rather, they are from daily life. Altogether the figurative methods create a world of genuineness with their undertones of *qing* and *yu*. In the following part, I will analyze how each song skillfully and ingeniously employs these methods to convey genuine love.

The first song “A smile” is a subtly written love song. “A Smile” delightfully evokes the theme of seduction through its meaningful images, metaphors, and rhetorical

question.

A Smile

From aside the Southeast wind comes;
among the leaves such a beautiful flower blossoms.
You young lady please do not giggle;
how many private feelings sprout from a smile.

笑(01.01)

东南风起打斜来，
好朵鲜花叶上开。
后生娘子家没要嘻嘻笑，
多少私情笑里来。⁶²

As the very first song of the collection, this song directly and most possibly deliberately brings forth the key concept *siqing* 私情. Rather than describing the process of love relationship, this song vividly depicts how a private relationship comes into being.

The whole song starts with “affective image” (*xing* 兴)⁶³ to set up the tone for the romantic sentiments. In the first two lines, the song pictures a cozy and serene scene of spring, demonstrated to readers -- through multiple images (the south-east wind, the beautiful flower and the leaf) -- how the affective romance is aroused. The south-east wind, a common image usually associated with the spring season, evokes themes of hope, vitality, vigor and reproduction. The flower image, similarly, indicates the wonderful weather of the day. The whole atmosphere set up by first two lines is full of

⁶² Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 1.

⁶³ Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1992), 45.

life and liveliness. The flower image⁶⁴ is also a metaphor for a pretty woman. Comparing the woman to a blooming flower shows the man's joyful mood. Praising the pretty woman as a beautiful flower is an indication of the man's desire toward the lady. Notably, these two people's romantic sentiments are brought up by the usage of the word “*xie* 斜”. It is a homophone for “*xie* 邪”⁶⁵, meaning illicitness or some private feelings toward romantic affairs. *Xie* discloses their sentiments toward private relationship. It implies that both the woman and man are thinking of something uncommon or illegitimate, most possibly their fantasy on private love affair.

The next two lines of the song could be read as a direct portrayal of the woman's seduction toward the man. The repeated usage of the onomatopoeia “*xi* 嘻” is a woman's innocent but alluring giggling sound. The woman's anticipation for love is conveyed through her giggle, which, in turn, evokes the male's sentiment. With the utterance of the rhetorical question, “how many private feelings sprout from a smile”, the man confirms his desire toward the woman, because this rhetorical question functions as a confirmation that the man agrees *siquing* is coming from a giggle. We see,

⁶⁴ The flower image, however, could also be read as a metaphor of female sexual organ. As in a similar mountain song that is recorded in the Jiangnan region, the flower image clearly refers to the female sexual organ, which goes, “You separate my two small feet and look, a beautiful flower is soon blooming (小奴一双小脚分开看, 鲜花一朵正待放). In this sense, the second line could also be read as the man's description of his sexual intercourse with the beautiful woman. His private and romantic feeling toward her is conveyed in its passionate form--sex. This song, if treated in this way, naturally belong to the second category. The erotic reading of this song works perfectly well with its lines, as no further information is given. For the time being I would tentatively treat the song as describing a woman's seduction toward a male before a love affair.

⁶⁵ Feng Menglong also comments on this song: “the homophone is the most interesting part.”

therefore, a transmission of desire from the woman to the man. While the first two lines using flower and wind images as a method of *xing* to generate romantic feelings, the last two lines of the song show readers subtle yet substantial portrayal of woman's seduction and its response.

However, the next two lines of the song could also be read as a third person narrative commenting on his/her observation of the scene. This observer, looking at the pretty woman standing in the warm spring weather, seems to inform her that if she keeps smiling with a seductive sound, she could not avoid the private relationship that would come. Here I argue that if the song is read in this way, this song similarly evokes the sentiments of romantic relationship through the narrator's question: "how many private feelings sprout from a smile?" By asking such a question, the narrator in fact confirms that the seductive quality of this woman, and her desire of finding a lover. This narrator also brings forth the key term *siqing* of the song through his/her rhetorical question. However, one thing important to note is that some people might read these two lines as the narrator's warning of the woman by suggesting her not to giggle. If read in this way, the song demonstrates from a different angle that woman's giggling sound would invite or encourage *siqing*. Hence, this reading also supports the theme of *siqing* between men and women.

Moreover, in this song, the female figure unavoidably conveys her spontaneous and frank sentiment toward the male through her sound. This woman shows us how a woman, enforced by her genuine feelings toward love, full of initiative, vitality, and seductive ability could be. The way of her smile and the giggling sound demonstrate

the characteristic of *su*. Other songs, which will be analyzed later, all share the same features. The females' actions and words all seem to be genuinely flowed out of their mind. This is how genuineness is reflected from the songs.

Also, it is important to note here that the woman is described by the term “*housheng niangzi jia* 后生娘子家”, which, according to Professor Shi Rujie, means a married young lady in the Wu dialect.⁶⁶ This further shows how this woman, despite her status of being a wife, still takes advantage of her smile to convey love message to a man. For the woman, genuine expression of her feeling surpasses moral refinement of a marriage. Her seemingly unnoticeable sound description is pertinent in revealing to us the female's genuine attraction by the man, seen through her initiative in alluring the man. Therefore, this song, by portraying an unconventional woman yearning for love, shows its genuine concern for the *qing* of common people.

The second song in the collection, titled “A Glance”, also features the theme of female seduction. It is also a song evoking feelings of seduction through depicting a woman's eagerness for love. The female voice in this song is also courageous, brave and genuine. While the song “Smile” depicts the seductive quality of a female through her smile, this song evokes the similar emotional sentiments through a female's glance. As the seductive quality of the female in “A Smile” is flowed through her giggling sound, the seductive quality of the woman in “A Glance” is conveyed through her expression in eyes. Moreover, while the first song employs many different figurative

⁶⁶ Rujie Shi and Mingming Huang, *Feng Menglong Shan'ge jiaozhu* 冯梦龙《山歌》校注 (Kumamoto Gakuen Daigaku, Gungaku Gengogaku Ronshu, 2007), 3.

techniques to convey its intimate relationship, this song is characterized by its dominant use of double entendres.

A Glance

In a daze, I am thinking of being with you.

I need neither a matchmaker nor dowry money.

Fishes are all captured through the mesh of a net.

A-thousand-*zhang* long cloth comes from a single spindle.

睨(01.02)

思量同你好得场睨，

弗用媒人弗用财。

丝网捉鱼尽在眼上起，

千丈绦罗梭里来。⁶⁷

The puns employed on the two words “*yan* 眼” and “*suo* 梭” in the song emphasize the female’s impatient crave for a love affair. They entrust the song with profound meanings. “*Yan* 眼” refers to the mesh of the net, through which fish could be captured. But “*yan* 眼” also could refer to eyes. “*suo* 梭” refers to the spindle that is used to weave silk cloths. Similarly, it is also a homophone for “*suo* 睨”, literally, “a glance”. The two words both reveal the seductive quality of the female, who takes advantage of her eye expression and glance to attract her lover. At first sight, the song seems to portray a female boasting about her capability of fishing and weaving. But with the usage of the double entendre, this song also demonstrates exclusively the female’s alluring glance. This intentional multiple reading of the song caused by the double entendre on the one hand opens up different interpretations, on the other hand, brings

⁶⁷ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970),1.

more images into the songs so as to make it more concrete and vivid.

Compared with “A Smile”, “A Glance” depicts a female narrative more active in seeking for a love relationship. This song showcases a brave, bold, and intrepid woman. From the very beginning, she expresses frankly her desire to be with her beloved man: “I am thinking of being with you”. This direct expression of love toward a man is already beyond conventional rules in Ming dynasty. However, she goes on to utter in a reckless way, that “I need neither a matchmaker nor dowry money”. One possible reading of this line could be that she is so eager to be in love that there is no time for her to consider necessities -- a matchmaker and dowry money -- that prepare her for a marriage. Another possible reading would be that this demonstrates the woman’s boldness in going against the traditional norms that require for a marriage, a matchmaker and some dowry money. Clearly, she does not yearn for marriage, but she simply needs a man to be with. Therefore, either way of interpretation does not affect the extent of this woman’s eagerness for a love relationship. This shows that this female disregards the conventional social rules for marriage and love, and genuinely expresses her longing through the lines. Without attempting to sound moderate, she lets her feelings flow naturally.

This female’s braveness could further be proved by the third and fourth lines. As the song reveals, she is very nimble and proficient in catching fish and weaving silk. Describing herself as a fisherwoman with strong ability to catch fish, the female narrator in this way demonstrates her power and ability as a love seeker. Feng Menglong in his comments, points out that this woman’s braveness and powerfulness

shows her courage. As he writes, “neither smiles nor glances are allowed: these are the rules from *Zhou nan* (周南) and *Nei ze* (内则) . A “shuttle” and a “glance” are amazing expressions with their ambiguous meanings!”⁶⁸ *Zhou nan* and *Nei ze* are books about the rules of female conduct. *Zhou nan*, combined with eleven odes, is collected in the first chapter of *the Book of Songs*, *Guo feng* section. *Nei ze* is mentioned in the tenth Chapter of *the Book of Rites* (*Li ji* 礼记).⁶⁹ As Oki states, “both in the *Nei ze* and in the *Zhou nan* odes, the Confucian ideal of women and their position within the social hierarchy are outlined and defined.”⁷⁰ By commenting this way, Feng Menglong shows his stance in scoffing against the rules of in *Nei ze* and *Zhou nan*, and instead supporting female’s natural expression of their emotions and genuine pursuit for love. Therefore, combining with Feng Menglong’s comments, this song, to a large extent, celebrates woman’s freedom in expressing genuine emotions, without being constrained by the social conventions.

Other songs sharing the same theme of yearning for a man, are different because they portray relatively passive female figures. These women’s way of seeking for a lover are usually demonstrated through waiting and complaining. The song “No lover” serves as a good example:

No lover
The lady stands by a window screened with a green gauze,

⁶⁸ Yasushi Oki and Paolo Santangelo, *Shan’ge, the “Mountain Songs”: Love Songs in Ming China* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 67-68.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 67.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

looking at the lonely wild goose, and feels deep in sorrow.
She is so bitter, as bitter as a pig's head when stuffed with yellow gentian.
She has no lover, just like a decadent temple has no corridor.

无郎(01.08)
姐儿立在碧纱窗，
眼观孤雁好恹惶。
黄连抹子猪头苦恼子，
好像个败落山门无子廊。⁷¹

Bitterness is the main theme of the song. It was caused by, as the title shows, the state of being no lover. Unlike the female roles in the previous two songs who are active and voluntary, this lady seems to be indulged in a bitter condition of futile waiting. She complains about her situation by identifying her with the wild goose in the sky. As wild geese usually fly in flocks, a single wild goose in the sky is not a normal state. Likewise, being alone is also abnormal for the lady. Loneliness is for the wild goose, as well as for the lady. It is the method of “expressing *qing* from a scene” (*Jiejing shuqing* 借景抒情), writing the scene of the wild goose is for the evocation of the feeling of human beings. The method exactly shows how lonely she is and how desperately she desires to have a lover.

What is noticeable here is that wild goose seems to be a common image in traditional Chinese literary writing, poetry in particular. A single wild goose is often described as “*duanhong* 断鸿” or “*guyan* 孤雁”. It is used to express feelings of melancholy, sorrow, and loneliness. For example, in Liu Yong 柳永 (987-1053)’s *ci*

⁷¹ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 4.

lyric, he used the voice of the wild goose to indicate sorrow caused by long trip.⁷² The famous female poet Li Qingzhao 李清照 (1084-1155) also titled her melancholic poem as “*Guyan'er* 孤雁儿”⁷³. By referring to these poems, I would like to point out it seems that Feng Menglong and the Ming heretics did not entirely reject the valuable aspects, including the images and words from the orthodox writing. We can in fact still find many literary images such as paper, ink, ink stone mentioned in these songs. However, more images in the entire song collection are related to the common and the rustic, such as boats, rice and yellow weasel. Therefore, I would say that these songs never satisfy with the traditional methods, they go beyond it, especially beyond the elite writing of beautiful and hackneyed images. This is exactly what the discourse of genuineness attempts to achieve – to care and concern more for the common and rustic. This is the essence and value of popular literature.

In this song, the final two lines vividly and rustically portray the extreme bitterness this lady suffers through its referral to the common and rustic images of gentian and pig head. When the lady says that the pig’s head becomes bitter when is stuffed with yellow gentian, the bitter pig head in fact alludes to the bitterness and vexation in her mind. Yellow gentian is a Chinese herb that tastes extremely bitter. The bitter taste of the herb has been transferred to the psychological bitterness. Here the song applies the method of synesthesia (*tonggan* 通感). The lady’s anguish is also

⁷² The *ci* was written to the tune of “*Ye ban le*” (夜半乐), which was recorded in Liu Yong’s collection of lyrics “*Yuezhangji*” (乐章集).

⁷³ This poem uses a lonely wild goose to represent a lonely woman, who has no one around to turn to. This poem evokes deep melancholy and sorrow through multiple images aside from the lonely goose.

explained through the taste of the herb. The reference to bawdry images exactly shows the genuineness and playfulness of the mountain songs.

The last line, along with the word 廊 *lang* (corridor) as a homophone to 郎 *lang* “male lover”, makes an analogy between a decadent temple without a corridor and a morose lady without a lover. As this line implies, a Buddhist temple cannot be a perfect temple without a corridor. So as a woman, she would not be a whole person without a lover. Here by singing that union with a man could make a woman perfect, the song emphasizes the pairing feature of a couple, that it becomes a necessity for either man or woman, to be a person rich in *qing* when in company with his/her lover.

Moreover, the temple not only is an analogy, but it also adds a contrast to the poem. The image of Buddhist temple -- usually evoking the theme of austerity, and asceticism -- strikes a stark contrast with the passionate, desirous and erotic female. In the entire song collection, monks and Buddhist temples are popular images. This method of deliberate irony is also a common practice in popular fiction and dramas. The implied intention of sneering at the emotionless monks exactly demonstrate the magnificence of genuine and romantic the feelings lovers hold.

Another song, with the similar theme of female torturing because of no lover, is full of vigor with its homophonic expression. A young woman’s bitterness, anguish and gloom inflicted upon by being no lover is shown in the following lines:

Suffering

The sleepless 20-year-old girl sits beside the bed, pedaling on the footstool.

Her whole body of white flesh is as cold and frozen as ice.

Even the prisoner in the jail would only suffer the same bitterness as her.
Making gold on red-hot coals will cause the silver (the girl) suffer in pain.

熬(01.09)

二十姐儿晒弗着，在踏床上登，一身白肉冷如冰。
便是牢里罪人也只是个样苦，
生炭上薰[熏]金熬坏子银。⁷⁴

If the female character in “No lover” states her bitterness in melancholy and hopelessness, this song shows a woman complaining her tragic condition with deep anguish and vehement power. Instead of entrusting her bitterness on the lonely wild goose, the narrator frankly talks about her pain, and tries to, through her violent pedaling, transmit her pain to the innocent footstool. Moreover, her pain is exacerbated by the cold winter night, as her whole body is frozen as ice. This direct, frank and lively description of pain and suffering, recurring to the action verb “*deng* 登” and the metaphor of coldness, makes this song more rustic and sordid.

However, her anguish is not assuaged, rather, the girl goes on to compare herself with the prisoners in jail. The analogy between the girl and the prisoners exactly shows the girl’s severe pain in mind. As the pain prisoners suffer are usually both mental and physical, this girl also seem to suffer pains both physically and psychologically. Physically, she suffers from the coldness of the night. Psychologically, she is all alone by herself, sitting aside her bed, despite her longing for a lover to share the bed and to warm her body as cold as ice. The song is associating the girl with the prisoners in jail. She is one of them, locked up in the room with no one to turn to. Moreover, this line

⁷⁴ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 4.

could also be read as a metaphor. A girl without a lover, like a prisoner, is guilty. Once again, the song mentions how important it is for a woman to be with a man. But I think the song's mentioning of the female's ultimate belonging to or union with her lover does not mean to debase the female gender, or in other words, to reveal the inferior condition of the female. Instead, the song in fact highlights the importance of a human to share *qing* with his/her lover. And this, exactly shows the song's upholding of genuine *qing*.

The climax of the emotion in this song is reached by the last line, when the narrator aguishly complains with homophonic euphemism that she is suffering so badly as to die in pain. As noted in the song collection, the word “*yin* 银” is a homophone of “*ren* 人” in Wu dialect. Therefore, the last line, stating that “making gold on red-hot coals will cause the silver (the girl) suffer in pain”, only becomes coherent with the rest of the song, when it is interpreted as depicting the girl's suffering. Metaphorically, the girl is compared to the silver plate being melted on the red-hot coals. The coals however, clearly refer to the state of being no lover. This state drives her suffer deep in pain. This kind of coarse presentation of pain exactly shows the extremity of the flow of feelings. It is exactly because of this line, that this song stands out and spices up the emotion it contains.

Lastly, by comparing “No lover” and “Suffering”, both songs show the figurative methods, when used in different scenes with different images, have very different effects. The extent of pains and sorrow of the two females in “Suffering” and “No lover” is strikingly different. The girl in “Suffering,” could be sensed that she has a strong urge

to vent her feeling. The figurative methods empower and enliven the songs, so as to demonstrate how the genuine feeling could be expressed in various ways. Later, when I move to the songs in the second category that are related to sexual intercourse, this effect will become much clearer.

We have explored two songs about longing from female perspective, here is a song from a male. This song, titled “Stealing”, is about a man’s desire to seduce a woman.

Seducing⁷⁵

The south-east wind blows, carrying sorrow.

The young man says, “how can I seduce a pretty lady aged sixteen or seventeen?”

Into the boiling water, I cannot put my hand.

As to the loose thread, without a needle I cannot put the head through.”

偷 (02.06)

东南风起响愁愁，郎道：“十六七岁个娇娘**𨔵**亨偷？百沸滚汤下弗得手，散线无针难入头。”⁷⁶

This song is both different and similar to the previous songs. It is different because it is sung from a male’s perspective. It is similar because the figurative methods employed and the feelings conveyed are similar. Although the song is written from a man’s

⁷⁵ In the original Chinese version, the title “偷” does not mean “steal” in general but it is short for “偷情” in Wu dialect. To have a private relationship with a woman is called “stealing the wife” 偷婆娘. Here “偷” in fact has the meaning of conducting a secret love affair with someone. As the title in Chinese is only one word, so I translate it into “seducing”.

⁷⁶ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 14.

perspective, this song, as a representative of most of other male songs, portrays male as romantic, erotic and desirous as female. They are similarly passionate and eager for love. The image of southeast wind, which the first song “A smile” also mentions, is a symbol for hope, and a messenger for the awakening of human emotion in the season of spring. However, this time the southeast wind brings sorrow because the man is complaining for the lack of a pretty woman. He poses a question for himself, and answers with a melancholy tone, “Into the boiling water, I cannot put my hand. As to the loose thread, without a needle I cannot put the head through.” These two lines metaphorically refers to his condition that he cannot find a way to seduce a pretty lady. The boiling water implies that it would be sensational if he publicly seduces a pretty woman. However, in terms of finding a woman to have a private relationship, it is hard, as implied in the fourth line, he cannot do it without a helper or a “needle.” “The needle” here is a metaphor for a matchmaker or a helper who can introduce a pretty woman to him. The term “入头” in fact is a double entendre (pun). It means to pierce the head through. It also means, in Wu dialect, to seduce someone by communicational methods such as talking.⁷⁷ The ingenious usage of pun vividly shows how gloom and thirsty is the man when lacking the opportunity to seduce a woman.

Both men and women are similarly desirous when they are longing for a partner. As Li Zhi says, the genuine heart-mind only belongs to a child-like heart-mind. A child-like heart-mind is genderless. Both men and women have been entrusted with power

⁷⁷ Rujie Shi and Mingming Huang, *Feng Menglong Shan'ge jiaozhu* 冯梦龙《山歌》校注 (Kumamoto Gakuen Daigaku, Gungaku Gengogaku Ronshu, 2007), 5.

and energy to bravely pursue their genuine feelings. Females interact with males, and exchange feelings with males in equal passion, enthusiasm and zeal. Both men and women's awareness of pursuing genuine love is undoubtedly extolled in *Shan'ge*.

However, questions are that whether the brave females could be viewed as potential feminists who have the awareness to fight against the patriarchal system dominating in that era? These are the questions constantly brought up by scholars. According to one Chinese researcher Xiao Yanfang, who mentions the issue of female awareness in *Shan'ge*, she argues that these female personae have the awareness to liberate themselves from the traditional regulations and their vehement actions would have strong effects on society. As she says, “[these females move] from their boudoir to the crowd of folks, from subservience to rebellion. This is the first step they take to liberate themselves. Although their actions are not solid and in its early status, they will become irresistible like a burning fire on the prairie.”⁷⁸ Xiao treats these brave females all as rebellious and courageous fighters for a liberation. Xiao even argues that the females' actions could be a burning fire to influence more people. The problem is that in fact many females in the songs are actually very aware of the societal regulations. Their actions are reserved and they caution against the social rules, especially marital rules in the society. In the following chapters, readers will be able to see more of such songs. Therefore, I doubt that the females in *Shan'ge* could be viewed as feminists that go for liberation. Prof. Wu Cuncun also claims that “The songs record young women

⁷⁸ Yanfang Xiao, “*Shan'ge zhong siqinggeyao de nüxingyishi yanjiu* 《山歌》中私情歌谣的女性意识研究,” *Xiangtan daxue* 206.2 (2003): 21.

who have a ready sense of their own right to agency, and it is this ability to make their own choices that is being celebrated as much as pleasure in the sex act itself, perhaps more so.”⁷⁹ Wu to a large extent also holds females’ ability to make choices and free themselves from the patriarchal system.

My opinion is that what is truly celebrated in these songs is the genuineness of their feelings and emotions as well as desires, although female dignity and initiative are indirectly mentioned. I increasingly believe that these songs pay less attention to gender roles but more to genuineness itself. Feng Menglong’s aim in collecting these songs, lies in the fact that these songs are the spokesmen of genuine people, whether they are courtesans or labor women, villagers or town folks. They explicitly present a world of the most spontaneous feeling, and natural instinct. These songs show characteristic of openness of the late Ming literati, Feng Menglong as one of them. They are weapons used by Feng to tackle against the reserved expression of emotions in neo-Confucianism and for the celebration of genuineness. That is why I prefer not to treat the females in the songs as potential feminists seeking for the freedom of breaking conventional rules. They are desirous and genuine women that seek for the love they long for, although it indirectly reveals that these women despise traditional values.

Above all, in this chapter, I have analyzed songs on themes of longing for a lover. These songs are closely related to the discourse of genuineness. The narratives in the songs possess genuine heart minds that naturally express emotions and feelings without

⁷⁹ Cuncun Wu, “It Was Who Lured the Boy’: Commoner Women, Intimacy and the Sensual Body in the Song Collections of Feng Menglong (1574-1646),” *Nan Nü* 12 (2010): 312.

restraints or moral concerns. They pour out explicitly feeling that are unique and personal. The lines of the songs all explicitly portray the genuine and romantic yearning and longing of the men and women, without limited by rules or regulations. It is what Feng Menglong calls “Inner *qing*” 中情. They reveal portrayal of natural and genuine flow of emotions expressed by the common class. The lines and contents are simple to understand, characterized by their feature of *su* or *li*. With the usage of different figurative methods, their contents and ideas are ingeniously expressed, simultaneously catering to the tastes of the common people. In sum, these songs in this part show how they try to demonstrate the portrayal of genuine *qing* with their romantic and somewhat erotic lines. In the following chapters, I will go on to analyze songs in the second and third categories and to explore how those songs reveal genuineness in their unique ways.

CHAPTER 3

***SIQING* SONGS ABOUT MEN'S AND WOMEN'S INDULGENCE IN LOVE**

In the previous chapter, I have explored multiple songs about male and female's longing for a lover. These young men and women, act either passively or actively, complain their sorrow and pain without a lover. Now I would like to move on to the second category of songs that portray men and women indulging themselves in private love affairs. If the songs that portray the theme of longing and yearning have already been engrossing and enthralling, these songs celebrate human passion with extremity and obscenity. These narratives in the songs are making an ideal world of genuineness with their lyrics. In this section, I will examine these songs and analyze how private relationships are portrayed in its utmost playfulness and openness, and how these songs address to the concept of genuineness in its rustic and vulgar language.

The songs in this category mainly contain two groups. The first group of songs are direct portrayals of love and sex between lovers with various rhetoric devices. The second group contains songs that indirectly depict love relationships and affairs by showcasing how these people try hard to be together with their little tricks. There are various ingenious ways people take advantage of to conduct love affair by avoiding other people (parents, husbands for married women, and the general public). For the first group, I will analyze representative songs featuring the theme of sexual intercourse between men and women, in order to show how these songs directly depict a world that is generated entirely through the lovers' innate spontaneous feelings, and how this rustic world effectively reveals the songs' explicit representation of *qing* and *yu*. After that, I

will examine the second group of songs and try to argue that these songs remarkably reveal human wit, talent and desire in seeking for the fulfillment of love.

In the first group of songs, male and female protagonists express their desire with the employment of various figurative methods. The first song is titled “Sleeping together.”

Sleeping together

Last night I slept together with my lover,
He pulled my quilts, and lifted my legs in the air.
I became the leech in deep water, twisting hardly my waist.
My lover, just like pulling a stranded ship, carried the stern on his shoulder.

同眠 (02.19)

昨夜同郎一处眠，吃渠掀开锦被捉我脚朝天。小阿奴奴做子深水里
蚂蝗，只捉腰来扭；情哥郎好似边江船搁浅，只捉后艄掬。⁸⁰

This song vividly portrays a man and woman involved in love making. The female narrative compares herself to a leech in deep water. When captured by her lover, she could only twist her hips, like the leech twisting their waist in the water. The action of twisting implies that the woman shows reluctance to make love with her lover. However, resistance of the female exactly shows the man’s uncontrollable passion and urging desire toward their love affair. His desire drives him to act violently by lifting the female’s legs up in the air. Alternatively, the female’s resistance could also be interpreted as her strategy to hide her eagerness and desire toward her lover. In this way,

⁸⁰ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 19.

the man would be more motivated to be with the young woman. This reflects the female's unfailing wit even in sexual intercourse. Comparatively speaking, the man seems to be trapped into the woman's camouflage reluctance. The power relationship of these two characters is therefore reverted: the male becomes the prey of the woman's enticement. Moreover, the woman's resistance also reveals that the female is not a traditional complaisant female. Submission and docility largely gives way to genuine expression of desire.

In the last line of the song, the woman is compared to an everyday object -- a boat, the stern of which is dragged by the man. This is also a pun. The expression of "carrying the stern on his shoulder" implies their love making position, which indicates that the man carries the legs of the female on his shoulders. The legs of the woman are dragged by her lover on the shoulders. This picture becomes much vivid with the use of the two action words "*zhuo* 捉" and "*kang* 掙". Both the man and woman ultimately fulfill their desire through their intercourse. Noticeably, the female does not feel restrained of describing the most intense and erotic sexual life of her and her lover. She is open and direct in revealing genuine desire and lust.

Notably, the female body is compared to a boat. The image of the boat, constantly appeared in these songs, first of all indicates that these songs are sung by the lower class and common people in a place surrounded by rivers and canals. As Suzhou is a city with intricate water system, boat is the main transportation vehicle for most of the commoners. They create these songs for the celebration of their everyday life. The metaphor of boat, however, also entrusts the song with profound sexual connotations

when depicting intercourse. Here are some examples of songs rendering the image of boat with sexual connotations. Sexual intercourses between lovers are implied through mutual cooperation of their punting a boat, handing the rudder or pulling the oar.

1. The Boat

My private love affair is just like a boat, swaying on the tide with the mast upright. The girl says: “my lover, I am used to this kind of condition. You only need to hold the rudder tight without falling asleep.”

船 (06.52)

结识私情像隻船，竖起子[舟回]竿浪里颠。姐道：“郎呀，个样风水小阿奴常经惯，你只要挡牢子个舵梗莫贪眠。”⁸¹

2. Also

My lover holds the rudder. I hold the pole. When he propels the boat, I wave my pole. The girl says, “my lover, I hold the pole correctly against the current. When you turn the head aside, I will handle the rudder.”

又

郎把舵，姐撑篙，郎若撑时姐便摇。姐道：“郎呀，逆水里篙只要撑得好，郎若头歪奴便艖。”⁸²

3. Also

My lover holds the rudder. I hold the pole. our boat bumping along the tide, what kind of strong wind is that? I hold the oar firmly and my lover rows the boat. The harder he propels the boat, the harder I pull the oar.
⁸³

又

郎撑船，姐摇船，耍[啥]样风潮有介多呵颠？姐挡子橹牙全靠郎打水，郎越撑篙姐越扳。

⁸¹ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 54.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

All the three songs compare the way of men and women cooperatively operating a boat to the way they engage in sexual intercourse. In the first song, the female character claims that she is used to the situation of the boats being tossed in the river. This is the metaphoric euphemism, implying that she is used to conducting intense sexual intercourse with her lover. The second song, similarly, compares their sexual intercourse with their way of holding the pole and rudder. The female admits that their sex is coordinated very well by both of them. However, in the third song, by asking a rhetorical question: what kind of strong wind is that? The female confirms that she undergoes different circumstances of the intense sexual intercourse and she could deal successfully with each one of them. This showcases her remarkable confidence toward herself and her lover.

Altogether, in the above three songs engaging the image of the boat, the verbs related to running a boat and the nouns that refer to the structure of a boat reveal that these men and women are well aware of how these boats work. Altogether these songs show that these women and men enjoy expressing their genuine feelings and exchanging ideas through boat songs. Their sexual life and romantic affairs can hardly be disentangled with these boats. The romantic feeling, genuine desire and sentiments, just like a boat, serve as a necessity for both men and women. Free expression of love and lust is entirely significant for these carriers of genuine *qing*.

Here is another song about sexual intercourse, also sung from a female's perspective. If the female in "sleeping together" tactfully resists her lover, the girl here irresistibly and directly longs for an overwhelmingly intense sexual intercourse.

At the Backdoor

Private relationship should be conducted at the backdoor.

But it is not good to roll on the dirty ground.

The girl says, “my lover, why don’t you imitate the way they bleach white cloth in the dye house?”

You stand straight, twist your waist, out-stick your belly, and then slap it hard.

Like whipping a horse, you should slap it on the back.”

○后门头（02.25）

结识私情后门头，地上麀糟弗好偷。姐道：“郎呀，你貶了弗学染坊里漂白布儿，[才袅]腰凸肚立子了贯，马上加鞭背后抽？”⁸⁴

In this song, the girl speaks in an indirect way by using metaphoric language. While she complains her lover’s lack of skill in love making, she teaches him to imitate the way those people do in the dye house. Just like the way they bleach white clothes, the girl requires her lover to stand straight, twist his waist, out-stick his belly, and slap her as hard as he could. She compares herself to the white cloth, and compares the way they bleach clothes to their love making style. Moreover, she emphasizes that he should slap her hard just like the horseman whips a horse. The analogy, metaphor as well as the pun contain in these lines all together picture a girl of insatiable need for sex.

Violence, being one feature of this song, is worthy of analysis. Upon first reading, it seems that the female enjoys abuse by the male. She somehow seems to suffer from masochism. The two verbs “*guan* 贯” and “*chou* 抽” and the noun “*bian* 鞭” by all means attest to the abusive nature of sexual intercourse. However, I argue this is the

⁸⁴ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 20.

true reflection of the woman's spontaneous feeling and desire when they have the chance to enjoy the most intense sexual life. As women in the traditional society underwent arranged marriages with husbands they barely knew, they were deprived of the right to choose a lover. Many of them lived under the desperate condition of sexual dissatisfaction. Therefore, it becomes natural and reasonable that once they have the chance to choose a private love partner, their emotion, passion and repressed sexual desire are aroused, and they demand a sexual intercourse as hard, violent, and hysterical as what the female demands in this song. Only in this way that their strong desire could be fulfilled. Here is another exemplar song that demonstrates a woman's strong passion and desire. The song is about a woman's complaint of a man's sexual ability.

Lack of Ability

When conducting private relationship, he is not very capable. Happy time does not last long.

The girl says, "my lover, you are just like the unsuitable house, whose foundations are not stable. My whole body has been aroused, and I am so itchy with scabies."

本事低 (02.24)

结识私情本事低，一场高兴无多时。

姐道：“我郎呀，你好像个打弗了个宅基未好住，惹得小阿奴奴满身癩疥养[痒]离离。”⁸⁵

The woman complains her lover's incapability in love making skills and expresses her urgent desire toward sex. He stops while her desire is fully aroused. Therefore, she feels so itchy aroused by sexual desire as if her whole body is full of scabies. The man's

⁸⁵ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 20.

incapability is shown through the metaphor of an “unsuitable house”. Without a good foundation, the man just like the unsuitable house is unstable during their sex intercourse. The word “*yang* 痒” is an exact adjective describing the condition of being unfulfilled and aspiring for more.

In this song, the woman has a strong demand of a capable man, who could interact with her, and somehow save her from the complication of sexual depression. Also, the female is not afraid of complaining about her lover’s incapability. She expresses her unfulfilled desire about her partner with a strong tone, which shows that her expectation towards their sexual life is higher than what turns out in reality. Her genuine expression of sexual dissatisfaction strongly proves to us how women are voicing their irresistible desire out in such an outward, frank and direct way. Similar themes that demonstrate woman’s desire could be found in a series of songs that share the same title of “Lustful” (*Sao* 骚).

Also

I feel itchy inside, so I casts a glance toward my lover. When he comes, he does not give me a break. The fire from the head of the boat burns directly into the cabin. Thanks my lover for saving my boat.

○又

姐儿心痒捉郎瞟,我郎君一到弗相饶。船头上火火着直烧到船舱里,亏子我郎君搭救子我个艖。⁸⁶

Also

I am so lustful, so lustful. Hiding in the corner of the door, I enjoy sex two or three times a day. Just like the monk offering food, I offer

⁸⁶ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 3.

everyone who comes. My lovers are like those boatmen, sailing and propelling the boat in their own ways.

○又

真当骚，真当骚，大门阁 [角] 落里日多添介两三遭。小阿奴奴好像寺院里斋僧，来个便有分；我情郎好像撑船哥，各人有路各人摇。

⁸⁷

Also

I am so lustful, so lustful. Standing at the door, I look at passers-by with a cold eye. I am just like a pair of wooden sandals from Hangzhou that anyone could try on. My lover is just like an old customer of the inn, whom I no longer need to invite.

○又

真当骚，真当骚，大门前冷眼捉人瞧。姐儿好像杭州一双木拖随人套，我情郎好像旧相知饭店弗俏 [消] 招。⁸⁸

With interesting metaphors in these songs, women's lustfulness and frivolousness are depicted thoroughly. For them, desire seems like a fire. As the line says, "the fire from the head of the boat burns directly into the cabin." Women are eager to have sex with their male lovers. Their desire and passion by no means could be inhibited. In order to fulfill the desire, they are willing to devote themselves to their lovers. Only through sexual relationships could these women be saved from insatiable desire. These sexual relationships, as the second and third song show, need not to be honest to any particular lover. The females, by comparing them to the monks offering food and wooden sandals from Hangzhou that could be tried on by anyone, devote to any lovers who could satisfy them. This as I have argued earlier, precisely shows that these females are yearning for

⁸⁷ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 3.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

sexual satisfaction without caring for the social norms. Their directness, outspokenness and indulgence in love affairs are their ways of rebellion and defiance. Therefore, instead of treating these female characters as suffering from masochism, one has reason to view them as the most genuine figures that express their sexual needs.

Nevertheless, we still can discern that the vulgarity and bawdiness of the female role in “Backdoor” is so revealing and laid-bare. This woman is very different from the females in the previous songs. However, if I have to classify, I believe these two types of women all belong to the category of active females. I would treat these songs as involving in two large categories of women: active and passive. Active women are those willing to approach their lovers with strategy or strength, while passive women are those who yearn for love eagerly, but do not take actions to seek for their lover, represented by the female character in the song “No lover”. Nevertheless, both of these two categories are characterized by their openness and vulgarity.

After analyzing the songs from female perspective, the following song is an erotic song from a male’s perspective. In this song, the male voice, rather than speaking toward his own lover, speaks toward a large audience. Somehow he seems like a preaching man.

Long Term Relationship

When you conduct a private relationship, conducting a long one.

When you buy pork meat, you should buy the meat from the buttocks.

If you want to touch a woman’s breasts, touch those like steamed buns.

If you want to kiss a woman’s lips, kiss those that are red.

长情（02.35）

结识私情须要结识长久好私情，

买肉须买坐豚精。
摸奶要摸蒸饼奶，
亲嘴须亲红嘴唇。⁸⁹

This song is similarly erotic. Although the man does not directly mention sex, he points out how to select a sexual partner with reference to sexual organ, including breasts and lips. If women are desirous to seek sexual fulfillment by finding someone capable of sexual intercourse, the man undergoes the same process of selecting a sexually capable partner. In this song, the man's undertone is that women with breasts as soft and beautifully shaped as buns could best fulfill his sexual desire. The metaphor of bun also connotes that the man hopes that the woman's breast should also smell as nice as the buns. And the red lips allude that a young woman is attractive when she is decorating herself. The song's male voice, by speaking publicly, shows that he is not afraid of revealing his desire toward females.

However, this song could also be read as a female's comment on love affairs, especially on teaching males how to select a love partner. If one reads the song in this way and assumes that the narrator is a girl, then the narrator is slightly different from the females in the series of "Lustful" (*sao 骚*) songs, where the females care more of temporary or momentary pleasure than a long term relationship. In this song, the first line indicates the narrators' faith in a long-term private relationship. The difference in selecting partnership, however, does not weaken the sexual undertone of this song. The

⁸⁹ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 22.

direct reference to sexual organs shows the narrative's genuineness toward sexual affairs. Erotic desire can be sensed in any way.

In the above songs that mainly center on the theme of sex, men and women, as either subjects or objects of sexual desire, are embodiments of genuine feelings and emotions. These songs are ferociously interesting without a trace of caution, restraint or deliberate concern of the social norms. Men and women voice their erotic desire out directly. This, as I have argued, demonstrates and promotes genuineness. Obviously, the above songs extensively portray physical desire, which is closely related to the Chinese word “*yu* 欲”. Moreover, their physical desire is characterized by obscenity and vulgarity. With the depiction of violent sexual intercourse, and the mentioning of rustic words, these songs unhesitatingly feature sexual desire while giving equal importance to the nature of *su*.

The second group of songs, however, with themes of seeking for love by concealing love affairs from others, shows from a different angle how desirous these people are. They greatly indulge themselves in private love affairs. In the following series of songs, young men and women try hard to utilize their wit and talent to seek private love affairs. Various strategies, mostly characterized by playfulness and hilariousness, are used to conceal their love relationships from parents, husbands as well as the general public town folks. In this section, I focus on how the songs in this group indirectly show people's desire to pursue genuine love.

First of all, I will look at a series of songs on the theme of concealing private love affairs from parents. These songs, despite focusing on the same theme, are different in

varying extents due to the singers' unique figurative and expressive methods. Here are two songs on the theme of concealing love relationships from parents.

Also (Seduction)

My parents allow me to enjoy the cool, and I sit there for the whole dusk.
I see my lover come to me, and seduce me.

Fearfully, I soon pretend to sing to the fireflies, "My father is here. My mother is here."

But I am also afraid that my lover would leave soon, so I sing again, "grasshopper, please stay in the grass."

○又

爹娘教我乘凉坐子一黄昏，只见情郎走来面前来引一引。姐儿慌忙假充萤火虫，说道：“爷来里，娘来里。”咦怕情哥郎去子，喝道：“风婆婆，且在艸里登。”⁹⁰

Midnight

The girl says, "My lover, if you come during midnight, do not knock on the backdoor. You'd better catch a chick and pluck its feather (in the yard) in front of my house. You make the chick squawk as if caught by a weasel, so that I could come out to chase the wild cat off, with just a single layer of dress."

○半夜(01.18)

姐道：“我郎呀，尔若半夜来时没要捉个后门敲，只好捉我场上鸡来拔子毛。（行间评：好计。）假做子黄鼠郎[狼]偷鸡，引得角角哩叫，好教我穿子单裙出来赶野猫。”⁹¹

These two songs both demonstrate how smart the girls are when they try to be with their lovers when parents are around. In the first song, the girl ingeniously uses mountain songs publicly known to deceive her parents and warns her lover about her

⁹⁰ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 6.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

parents' presence. Singing a child folk song is the technique the girl uses to cheat her parents. As commented by Feng Monglong, the folk songs mentioned in this mountain song are very popular in the district of Wu. Feng comments in this way, "'firefly, my mother is here. My father is here. I use a hemp rope to tie them here.' And 'grasshopper stays in the grass. Once it hears a sound, it jumps up.' These are children's songs popular in Wu district." ("萤火虫，娘来里，爷来里，搓条麻绳缚来里。"及"风婆婆，艸里登，喝声便起身。"皆吴中相传小儿谣也。) ⁹² Her quick wit could be sensed by her way of using valuable information from two different songs for her own need. When she tries to warn her lover, she uses the song of "firefly" to tell the truth. Yet she cannot simply watch her lover leaving, therefore, the song "grasshopper" is sung for the sake of making the man stay. It seems that the popular child songs are the secret passwords these lovers use to convey their private message, for their own purpose of being together.

Reciting a child song could be a very successful cheating method, however, other cheating methods are also very ingenious. In the second song, the girl tells her lover to make up a scene of a weasel catching a chick, so that she could get her parents' permission to come out and meet with the man. As conducting private love affair is hard for her, the girl has to think of small tricks to deceive her parents. The female, obviously a girl living in the countryside, takes advantage of the common problems in villages, where villagers often face the tricks of the weasel's clandestine catching of their chicks. Therefore, it would not raise doubt from her parents, if the chick squawks

⁹² Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 7.

constantly during the night. Their immediate reaction to the squawking is that the weasel comes, so it becomes logical and well-reasoned for the girl to get parents' permission to come out to save the chicks. The weasel in the song is also metaphorically referring to the man. Just as the weasel secretly catches the chick, he clandestinely catches the girl. Moreover, in the last line, the phrase "chasing the wild cat off" (赶野猫) is, as pointed by Oki Yasushi, also a pun alluding to "*gan yemao* 赶野冒"⁹³, which means to chase the wild lover off.

Feng Monglong also commented on this song, as he says, "my fellow friends comment, 'this is a great scheme.'"⁹⁴ It is true that thinking of a plan like this requires talent and braveness. However, instead of personally praising that the girl's method is great, Feng frankly points out that it is his fellow literati friends that praise the girl's witty trick. This shows that Feng Menglong's literati friends stand close with Feng Menglong to celebrate genuine pursuit of private relationships. By then, there are people in the literati circle that support Feng's contribution in collecting these meaningful mountain songs. This again proves the fervor of promoting genuineness in the late Ming society.

The girls in these songs certainly are very skilled in conducting private relationships. They are talented and resourceful. Aside from that, females also adopt many different ways to hide love affairs from parents. Below is a song that fully shows

⁹³ Yasushi Oki and Paolo Santangelo, *Shan'ge, the "Mountain Songs": Love Songs in Ming China* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 90.

⁹⁴ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 7.

how the lovers fulfill their desire with boldness. They are brave enough to conduct their love affair on the presence of the girl's mother. Yet they try to act silently without interrupting the sleep of the mother.

Also (Hiding from My Mother)

Last night I slept with my lover on the bed. My mother slept at the foot of the bed.

I said, "my lover, when you shovel the rice in the Yangzi River, please shovel it silently. When you lift the steel wire, please lift it slowly."

○又 (瞒娘)

昨夜同郎做一头，阿娘晒在脚根头。姐道：“郎呀，扬子江当中盛饭轻轻哩介铲，铁线升粗慢慢里抽。”⁹⁵

In this song, two young people seem remarkably brave in conducting their private love affair when sleeping on the same bed with the female's mother. Two metaphors are used when the girl alludes to her sexual intercourse with the male lover. The Yangtze river is a metaphor of a woman's vagina. The steel wire is a metaphor for male sexual organ. The two verbs "*chan* 铲" and "*chou* 抽" vividly describe the process of sexual intercourse. These two vivid metaphors, marking both the tempo and sound of their sexual intercourse, add much fun to this song.

What makes this song distinct is that the girl asks her lover to behave silently and slowly because her mother is sleeping on the other side of the bed. The couple, on the one hand, wants to hide their love affair from one of the authoritative figures in the family; on the other hand, they cannot resist their passion and desire toward each other.

⁹⁵ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 8.

The scene of three people sleeping on the bed only makes the love affair hilarious and facetious. It is even sarcastic because it scoffs at the mother's dullness and unawareness about the ongoing sex. The contrast of being awake and being asleep seems to show that the authoritative figure's power in restraining these love pursuers is limited. The girl and her lover's wit and courage are reinforced through the contrast. Meanwhile, their urging desire in conducting love affair is also indirectly demonstrated by this scene. Regardless of the presence of a third person, they still successfully satisfy their own needs. This again reveals Feng Menglong's intention of prioritizing these love songs, because of their support for the underprivileged, and their celebrating of the genuine love and desire.

Apart from songs that are about concealing love affairs from parents, a similar proportion of songs are devoted to the theme of concealing love relationships from husbands. These female characters, already married, are expressing aloud their true emotions and feelings when confronting the transgressive situation of adultery.

Here is an example:

Concealing Love Affair from My Husband
From the beachhead of the rapid water, I cast the net.
Both crabs and eels, I have caught.
For the man with fortune, I do not know how many female crabs you
have eaten from me.
And for my husband, I do not know how many eels you have eaten.

瞒夫(01.25)

急水滩头下断 [箭] 簾，又张蟹了又张鳗。有福个情哥弗知吃子阿
奴个多少团脐蟹，我个亲夫弗知吃子小阿奴奴多少鳗。⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental

This song mainly uses metaphors and homophone to uncover the woman's relationship with her lover and husband. The first two lines intentionally prepare for the metaphorical usage of the two words "crab" and "eel". As it implies, casting the net when the water is rapid, the woman would catch a lot of freshwater species in the river. The flowing rapid water is a metaphor stands for the women's strong desire. While the nets' ability to catch numerous fishes and crabs metaphorically refers to the woman's ability in seducing men. In the third line, the woman asks a rhetorical question: how many female crabs does my lover eat from me? It exactly means that her lover has received countless female crabs from her. Similarly, the last line means that her husband has eaten countless eels. Female crab, if read it literally, refers to delicious food that the woman feed for her lover. This showcases her concern and solicitude. However, as the shape of "female crab" is similar to female sexual organ, it could also be read metaphorically as the female sexual organ, rendering the third line more lustful and erotic. The image of "eel" (*man* 鰻) in the last line, instead of used as a metaphor for sexual organ, is a homophone for the word "*man* 瞞", meaning concealing. Therefore, it echoes with the title of the song.

The fourth line of the song also serves as sarcasm. The success of the woman's numerous times of concealment jokes at her husband's unawareness. As a dominant figure in the family, the husband is rendered incapable in finding out his wife's secret. This brings forth the issue of power relation between a married couple. The female seems to be more powerful in enjoying her private relationship, while the husband fails

Cultural Service, 1970), 9.

in finding out his wife's secret. This again is a sign of deriding the patriarchy and convention. In this way, the song shows its purpose of celebrating private love affair.

Here is another song in this category of concealing love affair from husbands.

However, the lovers do not seem as fortunate as the couple in the previous song.

Also (Concealing Love Affair from my Husband)

I run into my lover on the way.

When seen by my husband, we separate abruptly.

As if I had eaten a green plum whose size is that of a soybean, I feel sour and bitter.

My lover, as if had some cold rice without water, feels struck dumb.

又

姐听情哥拍面来，再吃我里亲夫看见子了两分开。小阿姐儿好像吃子黄豆大青梅，当弗得酸溜溜又介苦；我郎君好像冷饭无茶噎噎里介来。⁹⁷

In this song, the woman's union with her lover is coincidentally found out by her husband. She then uses a metaphor of the taste of green plum to reflect her feeling -- sour and bitter. And the feeling of her lover -- being struck dumb -- is conveyed through the metaphor of having rice without the wash of water. These common images, including green plum, soybean, cold rice, and water are essentially linked with a common family in the south of China. The woman cleverly uses these images to showcase their reactions to the unexpected encounter. Although the woman does not depict the aftermath of this scene, we can guess that she would probably deny the assumed love affair her husband suspects. She would probably explain to her husband

⁹⁷ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 9.

that the man walking with her is just a stranger. Although we are not shown the outcome for the embarrassing situation, the first-person narrative from the girl's perspective makes the song lively and interesting. Although the female and her lover are eager to meet each other, perhaps due to their high frequency of meeting up, they have to face the condition of being caught on scene by the girl's husband. However, this further confirms the genuine love between the two love seekers, and their indulgence in their love relationship.

It is also noticeable that this song shows an awkward situation of three people being together in a same scene. This reminds the reader of another song where the two lovers are sleeping on the same bed with the woman's mother. That is also a situation involving three people. While in that situation, the two lovers successfully fulfill their erotic desire without the mother's awareness, the two lovers here, however, have to confront with the difficult situation of being found out by the female's husband. Pondering upon the triangular situation, one may suspect that this is a very common issue that would be faced by seekers of private love affairs. This exactly highlights the “*si 私*” part of their genuine love. Because it is a private relationship, the married woman has to confront with her husband, while the unmarried would have to confront with the parents, who are the caretakers of the unmarried girl. Therefore, by situating the female figure in different situations, these mountain songs show us their variety and diversity. That is also one of the reasons that make these songs full of playfulness.

In this song, we can see that the female character is not as facetious on her love affairs as those females in songs related to conceal love affairs from parents. She is

more restrained and worried about their extramarital relationships. One significant reason is that the females in the previous part mostly are not married, while in this song, she is married. As I have explained, the punishment inflicted on adultery is much harsher than simply conducting secret relationship with a man before marriage. These married women reveal more caution and scrupulousness in carrying out love affairs. However, those who still seek for genuine love under the restricted law, are true carriers of *qing*.

Apart from songs about concealing love affairs from husbands, women also need to ingeniously deal with the gossip from general public, who also seem to be the strong surveillance of adultery. Women's attitude toward the public audience, as the first song of "the deception" (*man ren* 瞒人) section in *Shan'ge* states, "when you conduct a private relationship, you should be careful. Do not exchange secret glances and let other people suspect" (结识私情要放乖, 弗要眉来眼去被人猜).⁹⁸ Below are some songs that demonstrate how couples engaging in love affairs try to delude the general public with their strategies and wit beyond expectation.

Also (Deception)

The woman says, "my lover, when you come, please come alone. Don't come with anyone else. For the person is just like the old crow on the roof, croaking out loud before the dawn of a day."

又

姐道：“我郎呀，你要来时便自来，没搭子闲人同走来。间[闲]人便是屋头顶上个星老鸦口，未到天明喊出来。”⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 10.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

In this song, the female narrator warns her lover of the big mouth of a stranger. She casts doubt on the people around her lover, and compares those people as old crows on the roof. They would divulge private love affairs loud and early, as the crows usually croak early in the morning. The image of crow often contains negative connotation. When crows are mentioned, they often symbolize something infelicitous or simply disaster. Here the woman abominates those people coming along with her lover, because she worries about the divulgence of her intimacy with her lover. Tactful as those in the previous songs, the woman narrator in this song also knows exactly how to protect her love relationship. Open and straightforward, the female tells her lover to be cautious of the people around him. She is even more strategic and talented than her lover in keeping their love affair in secret. Her worry is reasonable because women suffered from a more restricted rule on love relationship under the patriarchal system.

Below we can see more songs that were written from female perspective. These songs involve various intriguing and interesting methods generated exclusively from the ingenious minds for the purpose of avoiding the public. I will analyze two songs that are typical songs that characterize lovers' disengagement from their love affairs in public. In the first song, the two lovers fake a scene in the public to convince others of their innocence.

Also (Deception)

People say that we have private relationship, and we should find a public place to insult each other, so we could wash our both bodies clean (dispel the rumors).

You raise your fist and say you want to beat me.

I point to the Mount Wu while cursing Mount Dongting.

又 (瞞人)
人人说我与你有私情，寻场相骂洗身清。你便拔出子拳头只说打，
我便手指子吴山骂洞庭。¹⁰⁰

The female narrator in this song makes up a scene to convince the audience that their private relationship is sheer imagination of them. The narrator and her lover try to publicly denounce each other. Her lover pretends to beat her in front of the large audience, while she would just make oblique accusations for the sake of saving their innocence. In the last line, the female's words echo with the famous Chinese idiom “*zhisang mahuai* 指桑骂槐” – pretending to insult somebody while actually insulting someone else. Her scheme thus creates a humorously comic effect of whole scene.

The comic effect is strengthened by the quarrel and fight in this song. Violence and cruelty in the song is brought forth by the action verbs such as “beat (*da* 打)”, “scold (*ma* 骂)” as well as the noun “fist (*quantou* 拳头)”. It does not seem common that two people, under no circumstance, would burst into fierce quarrel and even vilification. These words and the scene itself all create a dramatic effect. It is because that these two lovers, by no means could let their intimacy known to the public; they arduously fake a terrible show to protect themselves. The woman's excessive performance and complete disengagement from her lover shows exactly that she desperately wants to keep their love affair as a secret, and simultaneously, belies starkly

¹⁰⁰ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 10. *Dongting*, according to Shi Rujie, refers to the east Mountain near the *Taihu* Lake in Suzhou. It is not referred to the *Dongting* Lake. Rujie Shi and Mingming Huang, *Feng Menglong Shan'ge jiaozhu* 冯梦龙《山歌》校注 (Kumamoto Gakuen Daigaku, Gungaku Gengogaku Ronshu, 2007), 17.

the deeply intimate relationship between her and her lover. This again emphasizes how deep they indulge in their private relationship. Only by concealing the others could they still keep their private love relationship and enjoy themselves in love. It is her witty overact that makes this song so much interesting and humorous.

The female in the next song could also be termed as quick-witted and resourceful. She employs a different trick to confuse the public.

Also (Deception)

My lover comes to my home through the snowy road.
The footprints around the house would arouse suspicion.
With three copper coins, I have bought a pair of straw sandals for my lover, and asked him to wear it upside down.
So people will only think someone has left and no one has ever come.

又

搭识子私情雪里来，屋边头个脚迹有人猜。三个铜钱买双草鞋我里情哥郎颠倒着，只猜去子弗猜来。¹⁰¹

Without any rhetorical device, this song still engrosses readers' attention vividly with its humorous tone and ingenious trick. In a snowy day, the stark contrast between the cold weather and the couple's firing desire to meet each other is implied. However, the

¹⁰¹ Shi Rujie mentions that a similar song is recorded in the book *Xinqin qianjiashi wuge* 新銀千家诗吴歌. It is titled "Avoiding Gossip" 避嫌. It goes, "Last night I was waiting my lover coming from a snowy weather. Outside my window there will be some foot prints that I am afraid to cause suspicion. I said, 'my lover, you should spend three coins to buy a pair of straw sandals and wear them upside down. Therefore others would only guess someone is going out instead of coming in'" (昨夜期郎雪里来，窗前头又更几个脚迹以怕外人猜，姐道：‘郎，你只苦更三个铜钱买双草鞋丁倒着，只猜你去弗猜来). This circulated during the Ming Dynasty. It supports the fact that Feng Menglong collected songs from the folk literature. The people's wit and talent should be acknowledged. This song is from Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 10.

cold weather also seems to pose obstacles for their union. As walking on snowy road could easily catch other people's attention, the female is afraid that her lover's visit would arouse their suspicion. Therefore, she bought a pair of straw sandals for her lover, and asked him to wear it upside down. If other people happen to see the footprints, they would only think that someone from the girl's house is going out. In this way, the female's love affair would not be found out by others. This is a remarkably smart trick to confuse the public.

However, some readers might argue that the footprints showing people going out is not effective because this could be viewed by others as the female going out to meet her lover. So this cannot exclude the suspicion from the public. As far as I am concerned, as we do not know what exactly the situation was and to what extent these public audiences cast doubt on the female, the female's trick must be effective in this way. The song was not written for the detective purpose; it is a love song. What it reveals is how the desirous couples overcome difficulties and attempt to meet each other. Although the trick or scheme is not flawless, the female is still very brave and ingenious. Even the large snow could not block her interaction and connection with her lover. Naturally this shows their intense love and affection.

Above all, the lovers in these songs all think of various ways to get united and fulfill their desire. They make efforts to avoid the awareness of parents, husbands, and the public. The above songs showcase their playful feature. Moreover, these songs truly reveal these young men and women's natural flow of emotions and sentiments. There are similar natural reactions of those men and women toward hindrance against their

love relationships. Whether they are facing the surveillance of parents, husbands or the public, they showcase their genuine worry, intimidation and courage. These feelings are flowed from their heart-mind to the lyrics in the songs. Their feelings are intense and genuine. For example, in the song “Playing backgammon”, a married woman’s horrification out of her suspicion is vividly depicted. And a woman’s firing desire toward her lover is portrayed in the song “Also (Hiding from my Mother)” when she and her lover have sex with the mother’s presence. These men and women are not heroes that are intrepid and indomitable in seeking love. The essence of natural flow of their emotions and their natural expressions of fear, dread and worry exactly echo with Feng Menglong’s upholding of genuineness.

Furthermore, the reader can also feel, through the depiction of the tricks and strategies of concealing love affairs, the lovers’ strong desire of being together and preserving their private love relationships. If they do not have the desire to be with each other, they would not have thought of numerous small tricks to play with parents, husbands or the public. Therefore, although these songs do not directly portray the state of *qing* or *yu* these young lovers indulge in, they show their desires and love sentiments in an indirect way. Together with the previous subcategory of songs depicting love affairs in a direct and frank way, these two types of songs show us a vivid world of genuineness characterized by these young lovers’ true feelings and sentiments. They are the representatives of *siqing* songs portraying men and women indulging in love affairs.

CHAPTER 4

***SIQING* SONGS ABOUT DISSATISFACTION, SEPARATION, AND REUNION IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS**

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of the third category of the *siqing* songs. As I have explained earlier, the third category mostly involve songs that depict men and women facing predicaments in their love relationships. Due to the nature of shortness and precariousness of private relationships, it becomes clear that problems such as quarrel, misunderstanding and separation will occur. Therefore, their love relationships cannot be fulfilled. However, there are circumstances that separation is caused by external factors such as the female's arranged marriage. But the lovers do not seem to yield to these hindrances. They still long for a possible love relationship and make efforts to get their love fulfilled. In the following part, I will explore songs in this category and analyze how these songs portray complicated private relationships with its vivid and vulgar language, and explore how genuineness is shown through mostly female's voices. I will also analyze, how these songs, not only characterizing true and intense love and desire of young lovers to be together, but also representing their innermost true feelings of anguish, anger and sorrow when their love is unfulfilled.

The first song that I am going to examine is titled "Coldness". It is a song that involves the conversation between a woman and a man. Both of them express their feeling when confronting with a worsening relationship.

Coldness

The woman says, "my lover, when I met you, you treated me like

treasure. Now how come you become cold as ice? I am just like a bookworm that has eaten a lot of paintings (words) at a picture mounter's. I am also like a new statue of Buddha that has been painted with so much gold (shock).”

The man says, “my dear lover, when I met you, I did treat you like treasure. Now our relationship indeed becomes cold. You are just like the sediments of the medicine, pouring yourself on the road and being tramped by many people. You are also like a baby within one-month old, accepts anyone without selecting.”

冷 (03.05)

姐道：“郎呀，我当初结识你哈里好像宝和珍，**眨**间**眨**了你冷如冰？我好像裱褙店里个蛀虫吃子别人多少画，新粧塑个天尊受子多少金。”

郎道：“姐儿呀，我当初结识你哈里真当宝和珍，**眨**间果系冷如冰。吃你好像煎退个药查[渣]拦路倒，月里个孩童弗拣人。”¹⁰²

This song is twice as long as the short ones. It could be divided into two parts, speaking, respectively, from a female's and a male's point of view. The first half is sung from a female's perspective. This female directly points out the problem between her and her lover. She says that their relationship is now cold as ice. Her increasing tone of blaming her lover's change of mind is indicated by the rhetorical question in the second line: “Now how come you become cold as ice?” This direct question shows her puzzlement and confusion toward her lover. It seems that she cannot accept the sudden change of mind of her lover, who previously treated her like treasure.

Her lover's coldness toward her even brings her to think about the good old days when they were attractive to each other. In the third and fourth lines, she candidly expresses her dissatisfaction by addressing her sufferings. This is shown by the

¹⁰² Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 24-25.

figurative device of homophone. The picture (*hua* 画) in the third line is a homophone for words (*hua* 话). And the gold (*jin* 金) in the fourth line is a homophone for shock (*jing* 惊). Therefore, through this euphemistic expression, the female points out that she has undergone many gossips since they were together, and her private love affair also has frightened her many times. In this way, this song echoes to the females who choose to conduct love affairs by avoiding the general public, because the cost they have to pay when an affair is uncovered is large. It is natural and true that the female in this song frankly says that she has suffered a lot of shocks while in affairs. However, mentioning her shock and misgiving toward gossips is not for the sake of emphasizing the strong power of the public in condemning a private love affair, but for reminding her lover of her long-time suffering. She seems to beg for her lover's sympathy and compassion for all the bitterness she has suffered since the beginning of their love relationship. In this way, the lover's unreasonable change of mind naturally becomes the target for blame.

If this song stops at here, readers might follow the female's idea and treat her lover as a betrayer or a capricious person. Readers might also tend to view the female as the victim of the love relationship. And the relationship between the man and the woman might be read as a vulnerable woman suffering from the deception of an evil and changeable male lover. Far from that, the second half of the song provides readers with a new and hardly expectable answer for the male's coldness.

The man repeats and confirms the woman's words in his first two lines. However, his answer toward his change of mind is shown in the next two lines, featured by two

analogies. The first analogy is that he links the woman with the sediments of Chinese medicine on the road. According to Shi Rujie and Oki Yasushi, both of them mention the issue that people in the past believe that if they step on the sediments of the medicine, their diseases could be cured.¹⁰³ Therefore, sediments of medicine on the road will naturally be stepped on by many people, with the hope of getting cured. The third line thus indicates that the woman, when she is willing to let herself be stepped on by other people, would be easily seduced. Therefore, the man is complaining his lover's casualness in attracting partners. He is not the only lover that the woman has.

Similarly, the fourth line also implies the same information with the analogy of a small child. Just as the little child less than one-month old does not select people to hug him/her, the woman does not choose a specific person for a love relationship, either. Therefore, from the man's words, a different picture of their love affair is depicted. Instead of feeling guilty about his change of mind, the man complains his lover's frivolousness and easiness in seducing and being seduced when she is together with other people. If simply examining from the man's perspective, we might think that the woman is the one that has caused the deteriorating love relationship.

With the contrasting statements from the two lovers, we can more or less tell that their worsening love relationship is not simply caused by one person. Both of them seem to find faults from the partner. While the woman complains the man's increasing

¹⁰³ Rujie Shi and Mingming Huang, *Feng Menglong Shan'ge Jiaozhu* 冯梦龙《山歌》校注 (Kumamoto Gakuen Daigaku, Gungaku Gengogaku Ronshu, 2007), 18. Yasushi Oki and Paolo Santangelo, *Shan'ge, the "Mountain Songs": Love Songs in Ming China* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 155.

coldness, and tries to seek some sympathy by expressing her fears and misgivings in dealing with gossips; the man imputes the problem to the woman's casual selecting of men. In this case, it is hard to find out a simple answer for their predicament. However, as far as I am concerned, finding out the answer is not as important as appreciating the song's vivid and true portrayal of lovers' stuck in problems. This song, with its attention to perspectives of both male and female, demonstrates how lovers, when facing a tough relationship, would straightforwardly express their worry, upset and distrust on the partner. This already shows that their affection toward each other once was deep, otherwise they would not care about the change of their love relationship. In their mutual criticism, we also observe their jealousy, anger, and dissatisfaction toward each other. This is a true portrayal of emotional sentiments in a problematic relationship.

This song furthermore implies that both the man and woman prioritize fulfilling their own desire to maintaining a faithful relationship. The change of state in terms of their relationship demonstrates that they choose to satisfy their own desire first. Desire becomes more important than faithful love. This reveals their faithfulness toward inner feeling. They would not fake love and affection toward their lover if their desire toward the lover has already decreased. Apart from that, change of mind and randomness in selecting a partner are natural and reasonable, because the nature of a private relationship -- being short and vulnerable -- determines the occurrence of problems. Therefore, it seems destined that a love affair would go through a process of deterioration. And coldness or a lack of passion, is a significant factor leading to deterioration or failure.

The second song also portrays a worsening relationship. It is written from a female's point of view.

Crack¹⁰⁴

One cock dies; another cock will crow. How come there would be no cock to wake up the deep sleeper? You would rather join the army and stand under the flag. I would not come to plead you not. ¹⁰⁵

隙 (03.07)

一鸡死子一鸡鸣，嘍见无鸡睏杀子人？你情愿充军旗下立，小阿奴奴弗来搭强求人。

The female in this song sounds very brave, daring and reckless. She expresses her emotion and feeling with absolute decisiveness and steadfastness. The third and fourth lines tell us that her lover would rather join the army than be with her. Their problematic relationship is thus implied. The female knows clearly that her lover's preference to join the army is a way of abandoning her. However, instead of showing weakness facing his abandonment, the female utters with a strong tone to clarify her stance, that she is not going to plead him. This shows the female's courage in facing and dealing with a worsening relationship.

Confronting the problem, she even declares her ability of finding a new lover soon. This is shown in the first two lines with the metaphor of cocks. The first two lines

¹⁰⁴ Oki translated the title as "A Break between the Two Lovers." As the Chinese word "xi 隙" means gap, estrangement, or conflicts between two lovers, I prefer to translate the title as crack, which means a crack in their relationship.

¹⁰⁵ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 25.

literally indicate that there will always be cocks to wake up those in deep sleep. Metaphorically, it points out that the girl will always find a man to be with her. If someone has left, a new one will come soon, just like the continuous crowing of the cocks. This metaphor shows the girl's confidence in her physical attraction. More importantly, at first, it seems that the girl might be vulnerable when being abandoned by the male. However, through this metaphor, we know that in fact the girl has many other choices as a love partner. Her freedom of selecting a partner and her confidence in having a partner largely deny her weak position in this gender relationship. In addition, this song also indicates that the female indulges in endless love affairs, and can hardly withdraw herself from romantic relationships. When one partner that would possibly leave, she would wait for another one that will soon come. Love affairs have already preoccupied her life. She is a woman preoccupied with abundant feelings of *qing* and *yu*.

In addition, it is interesting to compare the female voice in this song, with some female voices in the traditional Chinese poems. A common theme that we can see in traditional Chinese writing is that a female is often waiting at home for their husbands who serve in the army, or a female is lamenting her husband's leave.¹⁰⁶ These females,

¹⁰⁶ Many poems are devoted to the theme of females yearning for their lovers who are far away. Females are sad and lonely at home. One representative poem is written by the Tang Poet Zhang Jiuling 张九龄 (678-740), titled "Watching the Moon and Longing for the person far away". The poem includes a direct portrayal of longing: "The female lover complains about the long night. The whole night she is longing for the man" (情人怨遥夜, 竟夕起相思). Another poem by the Jia Fengji 贾冯吉 (lifespan not clear) in the Northern and Southern Dynasties also vividly portrays the sadness of the female when being alone: "Since you left for the army, my beauty has waned. My longing for you is just like burning the candle: the heart is suffering, the tears are

who often show melancholy over separation with their lovers, hardly possess the personality of courageousness, steadfastness and resolution as the female in this song does. One important factor of this difference might be that the traditional female characters in poems are speaking for those women in elite status. Most of them have to obey the orthodox rules and therefore they are conservative and subservient. However, the mountain songs are true voices of the common or lower class people singing in Wu dialect. They are by no means conservative. These females speak with genuine emotions and sentiments. They express their anger, and dissatisfaction in the most direct and intense form. Their words are not restrained and their behaviors are largely indigenous. That is why we can see a very powerful song like the above one. This is also an embodiment of Feng Menglong's term "Inner *qing*" (中情).

Similar songs depicting deteriorating love affairs with strong female voices could be seen as follows: .

Splitting up¹⁰⁷

She kept her secret relationship for three or four springs;
Yet her jealousy suddenly caused it to split up.
The woman says, "my lover, after the Mid-Autumn and the Double
Ninth Festival, mosquitoes start to split their mouth up, and I will break
up with you too. The beggar-monks can never read any orthodox

shedding" (自君之出矣, 红颜转憔悴。思君如明烛, 煎心且衔泪). The poem titled "Walking and Walking" (行行重行行) in *Nineteen Old Poems* is also a poem portraying a female's longing for her far-away husband in the army. The female also shows sorrow and melancholy toward the husband's long-term absence.

¹⁰⁷ Oki has literally translated the title into "Removing a Mosquito Net." But I would rather choose to use its metaphorical meaning of breaking up here. Yasushi Oki and Paolo Santangelo, *Shan'ge, the "Mountain Songs": Love Songs in Ming China* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 158.

Buddhist scriptures.”

拆帳 (03.08)

浪搭私情三四春，一场吃醋走进是非门。姐道：“郎呀，过子八月半，重阳蚊子口开花，我听你拆帐罢，叫化和尚口里念个耍[啥]正经？”¹⁰⁸

In this song, the female decides to break up with her lover. She makes clear that although their relationship has lasted for three or four years, her jealousy has caused them to quarrel constantly till the result of breaking up. A private relationship lasting for three or four years should be long. The perseverance of such a long relationship could be ascribed to their mutual deep affection and understanding toward each other, rather than simply physical attraction. Therefore, facing the condition of breaking up, the female presumably would feel difficult to cut off with her lover abruptly. However, from her words, we cannot observe any trace of sorrow or regret. The scene of the mosquitoes splitting their mouth describes that these mosquitoes would not sting people anymore, so it metaphorically means that she would not feel itchy caused by the mosquitoes. Therefore, her desire would not be aroused, as long as the causer of the itchiness has gone. The ingenious mentioning of the mosquitoes actually connotes her attitude toward her lover. Euphemistic as it is, we can still sense the female's decisiveness to cut off with her lover.

In the next two lines, she directly raises the term “*chai zhang* 拆帳 (breaking up)”, and scolds her lover as being a beggar-monk whose words are completely

¹⁰⁸ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 25.

unreliable. The term “念正经”, which literally means reading the correct scriptures, according to Shi Rujie, is also sarcasm for scolding the lover as a man who pretends to obey correct scriptures (假正经).¹⁰⁹ Moreover, the meaning of the term “假正经” is often extended. It means criticizing someone who pretends to speak or act in a reliable and orthodox way. Here it is the same usage. The female has seen through her lover’s change of mind. Instead of staying with him without problems, she would rather break up with him as soon as possible. She is brave and straightforward like the female character in the previous song. She is also very somber in determining their relationship, when she knows clearly that their love relationship can no longer be continued.

Although their private relationship ends, from the female’s brave decision, we can still see that she is a woman seeking genuine *qing*. If their love no longer exists, she dares to stop their private relationship. It is noticeable that private relationship and genuine feeling of *qing* are two separate things. Relationship might end somewhere, however, the feeling of *qing* is long lasting. Lovers might change, genuine *qing* toward any one of the lover is persistent. Therefore, this song not only shows a possible ending of a relationship, but it is also a complete revelation of genuine feelings.

A similar song portraying an ending relationship titled “Not till the End”, also proves this point.

Not till the end
Our private relationship did not last till the end.
I tore up the love letters and let it stop.

¹⁰⁹ Rujie Shi and Mingming Huang, *Feng Menglong Shan’ge jiaozhu* 冯梦龙《山歌》校注 (Kumamoto Gakuen Daigaku, Gungaku Gengogaku Ronshu, 2007), 19.

When the flag catches fire, it will soon reach the flagpole.
When you have a pot but no arrows, what would you use to throw?

弗到头 (03.09)
结识私情弗到头，扯破倩[情]书便罢休。百脚旗上火发竿着子，有壶
无箭[匳]来投？¹¹⁰

This song depicts a female who chooses to end her relationship with the lover without any further scruple, once she finds out their relationship meets problem. As she says, “our private relationship did not last till the end. I tore up the love letters and let it go.” However, her genuine *qing* and desire does not end, as she confesses, “When the flag catches fire, it will soon reach the flagpole. When you have a pot but no arrows, what would you use to throw?” Her firing desire could light up the flag as well as the pole, but with herself alone, she could not have arrows (male genital) to throw into the pot (female genital). Her desire to conduct private relationship still inflames, even if the lover has already gone. Again it proves that the end of a relationship does not mean that the person’s possession of *qing* or *yu* also ends. Therefore, genuine love is not necessarily equal to conducting a love affair or maintaining a love relationship. It is a natural, spontaneous, and genuine reflection of a heart-mind that carries *qing*.

The previous series of songs involve issues of the partner’s change of mind, which unfortunately causes the end of their relationships. However, not all the separations of the lovers are caused by internal factors. Many songs in this collection also depict separation by external forces. Females in these songs show their pain and distress toward the unavoidable separation with their lovers. Below are two

¹¹⁰ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 25.

representative songs on the theme of separation. They portray vividly how females face separation with reluctance and grief.

Farewell

I said farewell to my lover and walked him to the bridge.

Two streams of tears flew down like dropping pearls.

Back then I wish we could unite in a bundle (be together) like the Hangzhou paper money.

Now the yellow paper money is scattered and float separately.

别 (03.13)

别子情郎送上桥，两边眼泪落珠抛。当初指望杭州陌纸合一块，眨眼折[拆]散子黄钱各自飘。¹¹¹

In this song, the female narrative depicts the scene of her separation with her lover on a bridge. She accompanies her lover to the bridge after bidding farewell to him. Although she did not mention the reason for their farewell, her reluctance and sadness towards separation indicate that their relationship somehow ends due to some external factor instead of their own problems. She compares her two streams of tears to dropping pearls, representing the strong psychological pain this separation brings to her. The shape and size of the pearls metaphorically demonstrate that she is deep in distress. The Chinese verb “*pao 抛*” in the second line, translated as “throw, fling or toss”, vividly describes her crying scene while walking her lover to the bridge. Instead of sobbing and being reserved as an elite woman, she genuinely cries out in an explicit way. Her straightforwardness, and directness is strengthened by her complaint in the following two lines. As she says, at first she wished that they could be together, but reality denies

¹¹¹ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 26.

it. The simple and somewhat vulgar metaphor she uses in the song reveals her complicated and mixed feeling toward the man's leaving. She compares their union as the paper money strung in a bundle. Although the paper money is used in the funeral or for worshiping ancestors in the cemetery, the female does not seem to care about the nature of infelicity and auspiciousness of paper money. This reveals the female's vulgar and bawdry nature as a commoner. Alternatively, we might read her metaphor of paper money as a symbol or indication for her sadness and desperation toward separation. As the last line indicates, now like the paper money is scattered when the thread stringing them together is cut off, her relationship with her lover might be the same as these floating paper money when their relationship is cut off by the external factor. The yellow paper money scattering around typically serves as offering to the dead in the funeral, this implies that the female might view their separation as a permanent farewell. The overall tone of the song is wretched sadness. Particularly, the last verb "*piao* 飘", translated as "floating around, drifting around", on the one hand implies the woman's helplessness and solitude towards a sudden breakup; on the other hand, it also indicates the drifting and wandering nature of the female's life and fate.

This song is melancholic. The two verbs "*pao* 抛" and "*piao* 飘" lighten up the whole song. Contrasting with the overall silent scene, these two verbs are entrusted with the most intense feeling of sorrow and sadness of the female narrator. The simple and vulgar metaphors have made the whole song become a female's helplessness and groaning. Despite that, we can still feel that this song is somehow composed in a relatively reserved way. The female does not cry out in a reckless and desperate way.

The following song shows a more vigorous female narrative:

Crying (Also)

I cried badly and felt sorrowful for a whole night, “why can’t you beloved couple stay together till death? Back then you wanted to build a mansion on the mountain, build a pagoda on the mansion, erect a ladder on the pagoda and climb on it to the heaven. Now the mountain has crumbled, the mansion has destroyed, the pagoda has collapsed, the ladder has toppled down and it is all over.”

又

姐儿哭得悠悠咽咽一夜忧：“**眨**了你恩爱夫妻弗到头？当初只指望山上造楼楼上造塔塔上参梯升天同到老，如今个山进楼摊塔倒梯横便罢休。”¹¹²

In this song, the female is questioning the sudden cessation of the relationship by addressing from the first-person point of view. Puzzled as she is, she questions desperately the reason that leads to the failure of their relationship. She questions with a format of, as Shi Rujie called, “quick speed mountain song” (急口山歌).¹¹³ With the quick tempo of singing three consecutive structures -- building a mansion on mountains, building a pagoda on mansion, and building a ladder on pagoda, which are metaphors for approaching step by step to the top, the female shows her enthusiasm and passion toward developing her love affair to a marriage. However, her confidence toward a long-lasting relationship is suddenly dismantled. The quick and rash activity only results in the crumbling of all the buildings. She now suffers from the result of her own

¹¹² Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 26.

¹¹³ Rujie Shi and Mingming Huang, *Feng Menglong Shan’ge jiaozhu* 冯梦龙《山歌》校注 (Kumamoto Gakuen Daigaku, Gungaku Gengogaku Ronshu, 2007), 22.

abruptness and rashness. The contrast between the former increasing improvement of the love relationship and the latter sudden destruction of this relationship shows the female's perplexity toward the seemingly insolvable ending. It also emphasizes the female's inner strength. She is undaunted toward the ending of the love affair.

However, the reason that causes the end of the relationship is not mentioned in the song. I would guess that what most possibly causes the separation is something external. As the lines show that, the female calls the couple as "beloved couple", and she questions with a strong tone that why the couple could not be together. This interrogating tone, first of all, reveals to us that the female cannot accept the fact that the relationship cannot be long-lasting. Moreover, the actions including building the mansion, pagoda and ladder all indicate the efforts the couple have made to be together. However, the two words "*baxiu* 罢休" indicate that all the efforts have become in vain in the end. "*Baxiu* 罢休" also indicate that the female's resignation is not voluntary. Their persistence to the end shows that they do not wish to end abruptly, but the external factors are strong enough to deprive both of them the opportunity to be "a beloved couple stay together till death." The quick tempo of the song only intensifies the female's failure of understanding their abrupt end.

External factors causing the immediate ending of a relationship might be many, but one important factor that is mentioned by a series of songs here, is the female's marriage to someone else. Below I have selected two representative songs portraying female's reaction toward forced separation with her lover due to arranged marriage. In these two songs, the female's *qing* toward her lover could not be deprived even if she

is married. The female would try best to seek for her lover if she has the opportunity.

The first song is titled “Marrying”. It describes the scene of a girl getting married to another man.

Marrying

The marrying girl wept the whole way through the creek.

She left the young handsome man at the village.

Saying, “I will meet you again at the third day of my marriage and one month after the birth of my baby. I will pretend that the maternal uncle (you) will visit his nephew.”

嫁 (03.18)

嫁出囡儿哭出子个浜，掉子村中恍后生：“三朝、满月我搭你重相会，假充娘舅望外甥。”¹¹⁴

From the lyrics of the song, it is easy to tell that the girl is forced to marry someone else in the village, as the girl weeps the whole way along the creek and openly says that she wants to meet her lover when she has the opportunity. The girl’s reluctance to leave the village and urgent desire to meet her lover shows her deep and genuine affection toward the lover. The images of the creek and the village reveal that the girl is originally from a village. Moreover, her long weeping contrasts with the joyful atmosphere of a marriage. This emphasizes the cruel nature of the arranged marriage and the torture brought to the girl. Despite her reluctance, she has to leave her lover behind and marry her arranged husband. Her helplessness and resignation somehow demonstrates the unreasonable marriage system in that era.

However, the crying of the girl could also be related to the custom of bride crying

¹¹⁴ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 27.

in the southern part of China. As the local custom requires the bride to cry all the way to the husband's house, therefore the woman in the song might be following the custom instead of truly crying. However, if read it in this way, readers might think this is a sarcasm of the arranged marriage. Although the woman cries badly, in fact in her mind she is thinking about getting reunion of her lover, which is indicated in the third and fourth lines.

The third and fourth lines show that confronting the compelled separation with her lover, the girl thinks of one ingenious trick to seek reunion with her lover. As she says, on the third day of her marriage, as well as one month after the birth of her baby, she will go back home to visit her lover, pretending that “the maternal uncle (you) will visit his cousin”.¹¹⁵ According to Shi Rujie, at the third day of the marriage, as well as the day after the birth of the baby, the couple is supposed to go back to the female's home for visit as a ritual.¹¹⁶ Therefore, the female tactfully plans the trick to see her lover again on these days. This plan reflects that the female in the song is very smart and desirous. On the way of her marriage, she has already prepared to get reunion with her lover. Her long cry along the way to the husband's home contrasts with her sudden delightfulness when thinking of the tricks to meet her own lover. Marriage indeed is a big obstacle that interferes with her private relationship. Yet instead of showing compromise toward the arranged marriage, she still holds hope for escaping it

¹¹⁵ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 27.

¹¹⁶ Rujie Shi and Mingming Huang, *Feng Menglong Shan'ge jiaozhu* 冯梦龙《山歌》校注 (Kumamoto Gakuen Daigaku, Gungaku Gengogaku Ronshu, 2007), 23.

temporarily and chasing for freedom and love. In this sense, the female is very brave in maintaining a true love relationship.

I would emphasize that this song is a true representative of genuine *qing* embodied by the common people. Genuine *qing* is not necessarily shaped by the success in keeping a love relationship between the two lovers. It is related to whether they have the courage to express their feelings to each other, and whether they have the resolution to stay together with the other person even though the external factor denies it. It is this point of genuine *qing*, that is spoken highly by Feng Menglong in the preface.

The next song, “Fearing my Husband”, is a song by a female who is already married. However, she cannot leave her private lover aside, either. She says:

Fearing my Husband

If I leave behind my secret lover, it is unreasonable.

If I do not leave behind him, I am afraid of my husband.

However, I would prefer to be beaten by my husband.

How could I leave my long private relationship since childhood, suddenly become empty?

怕老公 (03.19)

丢落子私情咦弗通，弗丢落个私情咦介怕老公。宁可拨来老公打子顿，**眨**舍得从小私情一旦空？¹¹⁷

Similarly, in this song, the separation of the two lovers is caused by the female’s marriage. However, the female encounters a dilemma in her married life. She entangles upon the question of whether to leave her lover behind or not. If she wants to keep her private relationship, she says that she is afraid of her husband. However, if she does not

¹¹⁷ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 28.

keep her private lover, she emphasizes with a rhetorical question that “How could I leave my long private relationship since childhood, suddenly become empty?” This answer indicates that the woman values her lover more. As the first line of this song also implies, being with a man that she truly loves is reasonable. The rhetorical question in the end makes her tone even more resolute and determined, despite the risk she faces of being beaten up by her husband.

Therefore, the female, as her private relationship is prohibited by the arranged marriage, does not seem to be afraid of it. She makes a resolution that she would go for her lover by all means, though she is a wife. Moreover, her private relationship with the lover lasts a long time, as she says that the relationship starts since her childhood. This long-term relationship even makes her more difficult to leave her private lover behind.

However, the last line of the song should be viewed as the female’s resolution instead of real action. To a large extent, she would not take the action of looking for her lover under the awareness of her husband. Referring back to the *siqing* songs in the third chapter, where females try hard to conceal their private relationships from their husbands, we can tell that females in fact are not brave enough to disclose their private relationships because they would be heavily punished by the local community that might cost their lives. Therefore, the female in this song most likely would not look for her lover when her husband is around. However, her resolution of seeing her lover and being together with him already reveals her strong desire to pursue true love. Particularly from the last line of the song, we can see that she is a very desirous woman when deprived of love.

Therefore, from the above two representative songs portraying young women's emotions and sentiments when being separated from their lovers by arranged marriages, we find that the females are eagerly yearning for their lovers of private relationships. Unfulfilled love drives them to try their best to get reunion, however hard it is. Below is a song that depicts the male's reaction when his lover is married to someone else. The man also impatiently waits for a reunion.

Just Married

I just married to the new home yesterday.

My secret lover is anxious, so he comes to my door.

I say, "my lover, when you do Chinese *quan* please observe the situation first. Please do not make out the rice recklessly with the huller during harvest."

新嫁 (03.20)

姐儿昨夜嫁得来，情哥郎性急就忒在门前来。姐道：“郎呀，两对手打拳你且看头势，没要大熟牵砬做出来。”¹¹⁸

Although this song narrates the girl's words, the male lover's impatient action is the main theme. As the song reveals, the female is just married to a new home. On the second day, her male lover goes to the front door of the female's new home. As the lines tell, the man is very anxious in seeing his private lover. He could not stand for the predicament of waiting alone for the female. The adjective "*ji* 急" in the song is the key term of the whole song. It vividly reveals the male's eagerness and impatience. This man is very courageous to visit his lover, because he takes the risk of their relationship

¹¹⁸ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 28.

being discovered by the female's husband. This also indicates he is not reconciled to the girl's arranged marriage. He chases for his genuine love.

The man's eagerness is also shown by the woman's comments, "please do not make out the rice recklessly with the huller during harvest."¹¹⁹ This suggestion metaphorically means that he should not conduct love affairs violently, even if the time allows. It implies that although both of them are desirous in seeing each other, they should be very careful. The woman's words exactly show the male's intense desire. However, it also reveals that the woman cautions against the potential obstacles when their private relationship is found out by others. Therefore, she uses the analogy of making rice out from the huller to imply making their relationship known to the others is dangerous. The images of the rice and huller indicate their common background, and also show the song's characteristic of *su*.

Therefore, from this song we could see that despite the few songs portraying male's reaction, their intense desire to preserve their love relationships could still be observed. Both men and women, if they are separated by arranged marriages, strive hard to be together. Facing their unfulfilled love relationships, they are desperate to get reunion. Genuine *qing* is more significant and valuable for them than observing the regulations of marriages.

Apart from the theme of separation, there are also some songs featuring the theme of resuming contacts after constant quarrels, a sudden break-up or a long separation

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

between the young lovers. When it comes to resuming contacts, these songs show that the both the males and females are willing and excited to get reunion with their old lovers. Two songs below depict resuming contacts. Both songs demonstrate how the people welcome a revisit of their lovers wholeheartedly.

The first song is titled “Starting Over”.

Starting Over

Constant talk cannot solve our problem.

Why don't we close the door and sleep together?

Let us prick the brocade ball and let the air (anger) out.

We can build new roads with bricks and start over again.

重往来（03.11）

言三语四说弗开，弗如关子大门床上来。搨破子绣球放子个口气，
新砌街儿重往来。¹²⁰

In this song, the two people's relationship has gone through a difficult time, because their problem cannot be solved by constant talk. However, based on the song lyrics, it is hard to tell the gender of the narrator. It could be a female who is offering suggestions for a reunion. But it also could be a man. No matter it is a man or woman, readers could feel that this song reveals the young lovers' yearning for a reunion.

In the first two lines, although both of them try to fix their problem by communication, it does not seem effective. The narrator thus thinks that it is better to close the door and go to bed together. In this way, they could let their anger go out and everything could re-start. It is indeed a brave and vulgar suggestion when their

¹²⁰ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 26.

relationship is in difficulty. The narrator's quick decision and prompt answer demonstrate his/her decisiveness. Moreover, at the time of a tough condition, thinking of sex as a solution only reveals the narrator's endless physical desire, which could successfully save both of them from love predicaments. The narrator is honest, genuine and direct.

In the third and fourth lines, two simple analogies with common images of brocade ball and bricks vividly show how the narrator ingeniously persuades the lover to solve their problem in a simple and direct way. He/she links the process of lifting air out of the brocade ball as that of vanishing one's anger out from the heart, because the Chinese words for air and anger are the same. They are both termed “*qi* 气”. The image of brocade ball is meaningful. Usually brocade ball is used when people get married. The image in this song, I argue, plays a crucial role in implying the situation of the two lovers. There is a large possibility that the female involved in the private relationship could be a married woman. Therefore, only by pricking the brocade ball that represents the arranged marriage of the woman, could both of them start over again.

Apart from the brocade ball, the narrator also links building new roads to walk again with building new communications with the old lover. The term “*wanglai* 往来” has a double meaning. It not only means that people come and forth again, but also means that two people start over again. Therefore, the clever usage of the term euphemistically conveys the meaning of the reunion of the two lovers. Their problem could be solved. Although the solution sounds abrupt, this reveals the charm of this bawdry narrator. Although their relationship is in trouble for long, he/she is still an

erotic seducer who wants to get inner desire fulfilled.

The second song is “Old Lover.” In this song, the female recounts the story of how her private lover tries to resume contact with her after years.

Old Lover

My lover has been gone for two or three springs.

Yesterday his letter came with the message of coming to visit my house today.

As if cutting the peach stone with a knife, in a moment I will see the old kernel (old person).

○旧人（03.16）

情郎一去两三春，昨日书来约道今日上我个门。将刀劈破陈桃核，霎时间要见旧时仁。¹²¹

In the first two lines, the female explains the background of her relationship with her lover. After leaving for two or three years, her lover suddenly writes her a letter for meeting up. And the date for meeting up is one day after the woman received the letter. The immediacy of the visit is contrasted with the long time separation of the two lovers. Although the woman does not state the reason for the lover’s leave, the huge contrast of the time period implies her complaint toward the long-term leave of her lover. Also, as the song indicates, the only letter she receives is the day before the man’s visit. The woman, therefore, should be unhappy with the man’s absence in their relationship.

However, the metaphor and homophone in the next two lines explicitly reveal the female’s eagerness and excitement when hearing about her old lover’s revisit. As she sings, meeting her old lover is just like seeing the kernel when cutting the peach stone.

¹²¹ Menglong Feng, *Love-songs During 1368-1646 AD* (Taipei: The Oriental Cultural Service, 1970), 27.

The kernel of the peach (*ren* 仁) is a homophone for a person (*ren* 人). So the third and fourth lines mean that she will meet her person in a moment. The quickness and immediacy of their reunion is represented by the expression “in a moment”. Although she does not directly express her delight and surprise, we can still sense that she is positive toward the lover’s revisit. The male has left for two or three years, but when he is back, the female still shows her excitement. This implies that *qing* could be resumed. A separation sometimes would cause the permanent ending of a love relationship. As long as their *qing* toward each remains, there will be a time for them to get back again.

Therefore, the above two songs focusing on the theme of resuming contacts, along with the previous series of songs on the theme of separation by arranged marriages, all show that men and women who are rich in *qing* are not easily defeated by problems in their relationships. Although there are circumstances that men and women find it hard to restart their love relationships, many songs in this category, still show a positive outcome of private relationships. They attempt to resume their unfulfilled relationship with efforts.

Altogether, this chapter investigated the songs that depict love predicaments between men and women. We have examined relationships end due to problems such as man’s abandonment, change of mind, or constant quarrel with their lovers. But we also witness young men and women’s genuine seek for a reunion after their relationships are interrupted by external forces. Various songs with different themes are analyzed in this chapter, but we notice a common theme of upholding genuineness in

these songs. Particularly, genuine flow of emotions from the female characters are portrayed and emphasized in this category. No matter the females are scolding their faithless love partners, or complaining their forced separation from their lovers, they express freely and naturally without any scruples. The common and rustic images in these songs demonstrated their nature of *su*. The females' constant mentioning of the lovers showcases their genuine *qing*. Moreover, genuine *qing* in this chapter covers not only love between men and women, but also their various forms of emotions and sentiments, including anger, sorrow and melancholy. In other words, the songs in this chapter speak to the broad meaning of genuineness -- a natural flow of emotions from the inner mind. Moreover, these songs explicitly and successfully portray different circumstances and scenarios in romantic relationships, contrasting starkly with the songs in the previous chapter.

CONCLUSION

Altogether four chapters, with each chapter focused on representative songs of different themes, this thesis offers detailed literary analysis of the *siqing* songs in Feng Menglong's collection of mountain songs. As I stated in the introduction to this thesis, I focus on the *siqing* songs of this collection, because *siqing* is the central theme of the collection and these songs play a very crucial role in the depiction of emotions and sentiments and in the revelation of genuineness promoted by Feng Menglong. As I categorized these *siqing* songs into three groups – the first group of songs featuring the themes of yearning and longing for a lover, the second group featuring the themes of indulging in sex and private relationships between men and women, and the third group focusing on the themes of dissatisfaction, separation and reunion of private lovers, I have explored these songs' various ways of portraying and presenting people's perception of love and desire, and argued from different perspectives how these songs speak to Feng Menglong's celebration of genuineness, as well as *qing* and *su*. As I have explained earlier in the introduction part, I am fully aware that there are other songs in *Shan'ge* that might also worth attention. However, because the songs are full of complexity and richness, my categorization cannot include them all. I have selected the representative ones that are characterized by their unique rhetorical devices and interesting themes, and address to the theme of genuineness from different perspectives.

As one of the important writers of late Ming, Feng Menglong has opened up a new sphere -- where no moral concerns and no restraint on behaviors should or could be judged -- for these carriers of *qing* to go far against the restrictions of the traditional

rules. In the songs, men and women are genuine pursuers of romantic and erotic desire. Whether they are complaining their partners' absence, or praising partners' erotic desire, or speaking to the large audience about their views on sexual affairs, they can be treated as excessively direct or open toward love. Their words and behaviors, and their songs, are of utmost *qing* and *su*. Therefore, Feng Menglong highly praises these songs and uses them on the one hand, as weapons to tackle the orthodox teachings and writings, and on the other hand, as valuable materials from the mass to promote popular literature.

In conclusion, the *siqing* songs in *Shan'ge* explicitly and vividly showcase the world of genuineness with its simple and rustic language. Their significance in the late Ming could be unprecedented, so they should be given proper critical attention to. Apart from my focus of the *siqing* songs, other songs in *Shan'ge* are also worth scholarly attention, such as the "Songs of objects" (*yongwu* 咏物), as well as the "Tongcheng Popular Songs" (*tongcheng ge* 桐城歌). They are of equal importance to the collection, and therefore also deserve detailed analysis. Those songs might or might not work in the same way in revealing genuineness, so this could be another study for scholars who are also interested in this song collection. Apart from that, scholars could also examine from other perspectives about this collection, such as its language, its relationship with Late-Ming pleasant quarters, as well as its comparison and contrast with other Wu-area folk songs, with the purpose of preserving its important value in the field of popular literature.

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