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The Review of Zhu Yizun's Love Lyrics from Literary Orthodoxy Perspective

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Research method: Conceptual Research

Hypothesis

To prove that Zhu Yizun's poetry is mostly focused on love lyrics and erotic songs rather than on high-minded Chinese orthodox literature during Qing dynasty.



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Introduction to Zhu Yizun's life and writing manner

- *“Whenever people talk about song lyrics, they always hold in esteem that of the Northern Song. But only in the Southern Song did it attain perfection, and only at the end of Song did it reach the full extent of its transformations.”* (Cai, Zong-qi, 286)
- Zhu Yizun's interest in ci poetry is inspired by the works of Southern Song ci poets Jiang Kui 姜夔 (1155—1221) and Zhang Yan 张炎 (1248-1320).
- *“Because during Qing dynasty fresh and vulgar style of writing was considered improper, but attempt to refresh song lyrics was welcomed, because this special poetry form was closer to daily life and true feelings than shi 诗 genre. Zhu Yizun's case was not exception, his manner of writing song lyrics in meticulous way is something refreshing.”* (Luo Yunming, 781)
- *“Zhu Yizun's evolving style and the contrasting currents it subtly indicates run parallel to the canonization of "ineffable essence and resonance" in poetry.”* (Kang-I Sun Chang, 223)



Portrait of Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊 (1629–1709) from collection “Great Scholars of Qing Dynasty” 清代学者象传, which was written by Ye Yanlan 叶衍兰 and Ye Gongchuo 叶恭绰



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Importance of *ci* genre in Zhu Yizun's works

- The *ci* genre originated from banquet music known as 燕乐 *yanyue*. Initially, song lyrics were associated with women and entertainment districts, particularly where courtesans performed popular music.
- The *ci* genre served as an outlet for Zhu Yizun to articulate emotions that were difficult to express verbally but found expression through his poetic work.
- Zhu Yizun, as a *ci* poet, was driven by the anguish arising from political turmoil and employed diverse methods in crafting his song lyrics as a way to express and cathartically release challenging emotions.
- *“Zhu Yizun's skillful manipulation of the ci genre's subgenres and conventions to chart the emotional landscape 情 qing momentarily obscures the inherent tension between the "private" 内 and "public" 外 spheres. Reflecting on poems from various dynasties, it becomes evident that poetry served as a discursive practice in Chinese culture, predominantly perceived as social, public, and masculine. Zhu Yizun sought to encode the "private" realm, associated with the feminine, by infusing strong emotions such as desire. This approach aimed to challenge the self-representational character inherent in a discourse centered on a male subject.”* (Grace S. Fong, 440)
- Zhu Yizun employed the *shi* 诗 genre to articulate personal expressions of love, a realm more vulnerable to orthodox critique.



Literary Inquisition as literary orthodoxy perspective

- The Qing dynasty is characterized by intensive and inhumane censorship practices.
- Censorship was particularly strict due to the Manchu rulers, with different races required to adhere to rules suppressing content that posed a threat to the government.
- Literary works faced censorship and bans if they expressed dissatisfaction with the Qing government, insulted previous dynasties connected to the Qing, praised past political factions that posed a threat, contained sensitive information about frontiers or coasts aiding rebels, mentioned prominent opponents of the dynasty, or questioned established interpretations of Confucian classics.



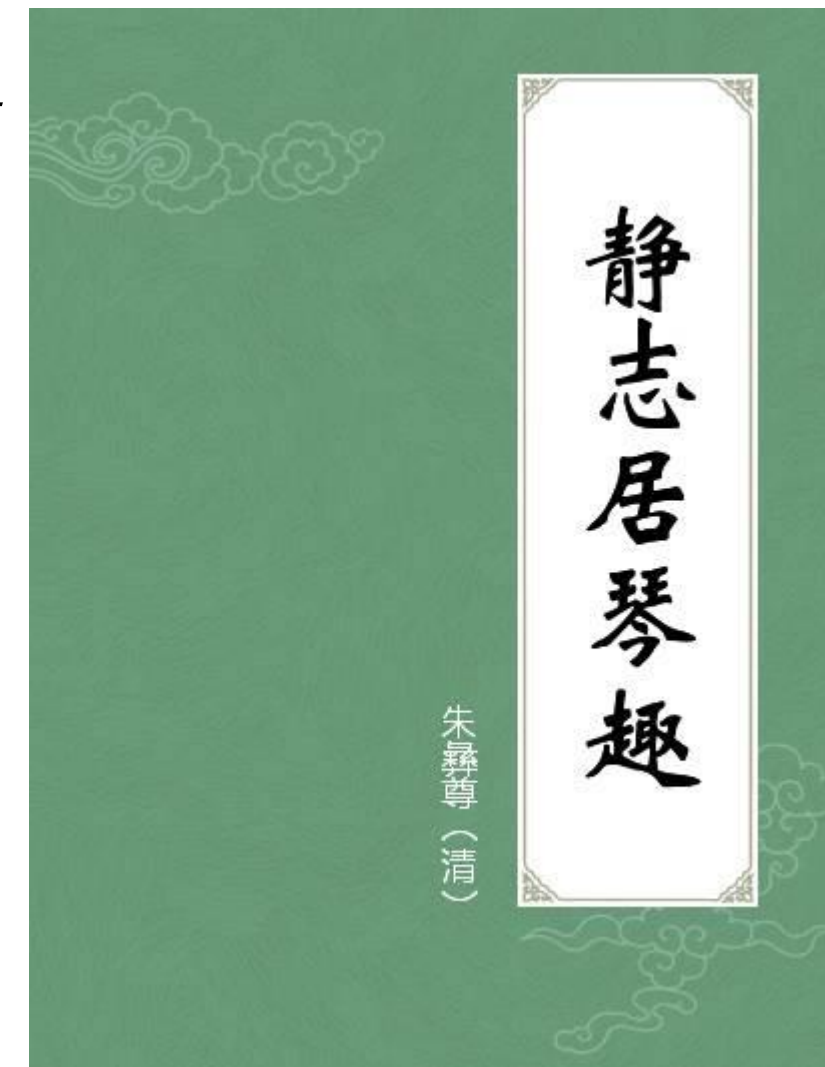
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Review of collection “Amusements on the Lute of the Jingzhi Dwelling” 静志居琴曲

- “Zhu Yizun, the author of this collection, began compiling it around the age of thirty-eight. Zhu Yizun's renowned collection, “Amusements on the Lute of the Jingzhi Dwelling” 静志居琴曲, not only revitalized the ci genre but also drew the attention of critics and scholars to the significance of qing 情. The term qing encompasses romantic love, desire, passion, and sexuality. Exploring these gendered emotions was deemed inappropriate in the Chinese literary world of that era.” (Grace S. Fong, 439)
- Zhu Yizun's love lyrics were often devoid of prefaces or subtitles. In instances where subtitles were present, they typically provided a broad context or occasion, such as an annual festival. This approach, omitting prefaces or subtitles, stood in contrast to the yongwu 永物 subgenre.
- “Zhu Yizun poured out his feelings to his hopeless passion for his wife’s sister, who died at young age. This alluring proximity of what is unattainable added more complexity to author’s song lyrics.” (Kang-I Sun, 224)



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“Amusements on the Lute of the Jingzhi Dwelling” 静志居琴曲

“Sound of betrayed flowers” 卖花声

卖花声 (雨花台)

衰柳白门湾，潮打称还。小长干接大长干。歌板酒期
零落尽，剩有渔竿。秋草六朝寒，花雨空坛。更无人
处一凭阑。燕子斜阳来又去，如此江山！

“Sound of betrayed flowers” 卖花声 from Zhang Xiaomin 张晓敏 work “Collection of Song Lyrics from Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties” 云明清词鉴赏辞典.

- Preface:
 1. 雨花台: district Yuhuatai is located in Nanjing City famous. According to history of Nanjing, the city was the capital of the Six Dynasties (220–589);
 2. 白门: Nanjing City
 3. 小长干; 大长干: a place where boat people gather together;
- Symbols:
 1. 小长干接大长干: can symbolize the change of dynasties;
 2. 秋草六朝寒: can symbolize the Six Dynasties period;
- Rhythm: 干 gàn, 竿 gān, 寒 hán, 坛 tán, 山 shān.
- Parallels: 落——剩; 秋——寒; 来——去



“The gentle touch of roe-shaped paper” 摸鱼子

摸鱼子

粉墙青、虬檐百尺，一条天色催暮。洛妃偶值无人见，相送袜尘微步。教且住。携玉手、潜行莫惹冰苔仆。芳心暗诉。认香雾鬓边，好风衣上，分付断魂语。

双栖燕，岁岁花时飞度。阿谁花底催去？十年镜里樊川雪，空袅茶烟千缕。离梦苦。浑不省、锁香金篋归何处。小池枯树。算只有当时，一丸冷月，犹照夜深路。

“The gentle touch of roe-shaped paper” 摸鱼子 from Zhang Xiaomin 张晓敏 work
“Collection of Song Lyrics from Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties” 云明清词鉴赏辞典.

- This song lyric was dedicated to his wife's sister.
- Preface:
 1. 樊川: Fanchuan refers to Du Mu 杜牧 (803-852), a poet of the late Tang Dynasty.
- Symbols:
 1. 洛妃 - the goddess of Luoshui 洛水;
 2. 且住——携手——潜行——莫惹: actions are full of twists and turns, vividly and delicately describing the characters' actions and psychology;
 3. 认香: describes the degree of intimacy;
 4. 香: hairpin, which was locked in the golden box= precious memory;
 5. 分付: means giving an order or forwarding the message
 6. 阿谁: indicates author's regret and emotion.
 7. 双栖燕: points out the two-flying and two-dwelling swallows, that are meant to be together.



Conclusions

- Notably, when depicting sexual love and desire, the song poets frequently employed a more casual language. Critics from later periods viewed this linguistic choice as vulgar and deviating from the conventional ideals of the *ci* genre. Within accepted literary perspective circles since the Song dynasty, the aesthetic standards for *ci* were grounded in expectations of reserve, delicacy, and elegance, both stylistically and thematically.
- In the orthodox tradition, poetry centered on themes of love and sexual desire was never deemed elevated unless it could be interpreted allegorically.
- Zhu Yizun despite of cleared boundaries between inner and outer, private and public, concealment and exposure, he used the potency and allure of erotic literature to defy prescribed social and sexual limits and disrupt established order.



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**Thank you for
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