Classical Poetry, Photography, and the Social Life of Emotions in 1910s China

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This paper investigates the relationship between image and text, specifically in the case of photographic images vis-à-vis classical-style poetry. Making use of archival materials, it depicts an innovative artistic practice, namely that of inscribing photographs with poems or composing poems about photographic images. More importantly, this paper analyzes critically the evocation and transmission of emotions in communal life that the propagation of photographs and images between literati enacted, as well as the route this practice adopted as it expanded. Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai suggests that studying these "things-in-motion" affords us insights into dynamic human action and emotion in a given cultural or historical moment.[1] In that light, the issue of how photographs and poems were circulated and exchanged as gifts may provide us a vantage point to tackle the meanings of emotions in a momentous era. Here one major discourse of emotion, *qing* 情 (desire or love), is a significant point of contention. Although the topic of *qing* has been extensively explored and enriched in recent decades,[2] the critical attention has focused on its relationship to subjectivity, interiority, or personhood. Situated in the revived cult of *qing* at the end of the late Qing, this study focuses on the sociality and reciprocity of emotion, especially when it enters the realms of affective response and social networking. In other words, this study will treat *qing* less as a personal state of feeling and more as a social and culturally-constructed practice. Emotion will be mainly understood to be "socially responsive," "socially shared and regulated," and "socially constituted."[3] Some specific questions include: How is *qing* evoked in interactions between literati? What is the role that language and other symbolic practices play in soliciting and responding to emotion? How does *qing* travel? What function does heterosexual desire play in male bonding, as well as the political or revolutionary discourse of the time?[4] Addressing emotion mainly from a social perspective, this paper focuses on two primary

examples of the internal dynamics of a pair of overlapping literati groups: Su Manshu 蘇曼殊 (1884-1918) and his interactions with Japanese courtesans and his circle of friends; and Liu Yazi 柳亞子 (1887-1958) and the members of the Southern Society (Nanshe 南社). The latter case study examines the members' enthusiastic promotion of Feng Chunhang 馮春航 (1888-1941) and Lu Zimei 陸子美 (1893-1915)—two Beijing Opera *dan* 旦 actors—with a focus on their poetic compositions about the photograph images.[5] By tracing the circulation and consumption of "female" photographic images by male intellectuals and revolutionaries roughly from 1909 to 1915, this paper will illuminate the function of heterosexual desire in cementing male friendship, as well as reveal social and cultural aspects of Chinese emotional life at the dawn of the technological era.

I.

Su Manshu, an esteemed poet-monk, painter, scholar, and translator in the early twentieth century, was described by a friend as someone with "an unusual fascination with the beauties in his life" 奇癖平生爱美人.[6] As various anecdotes suggest, Su had a pronounced penchant for the visually pleasing. Throughout his life, he loved to be photographed, leaving us a good number of stylish portraits of himself in Western suits, traditional Chinese outfits, and monks' robes. He also enjoyed collecting photographic portraits of women and female accouterments, such as sachets and hairpins. He would even distribute photographs from his collection to his friends, claiming that the women pictured were his girlfriends. Su also drew portraits of women and spent time studying various styles of the chignon, a popular hairstyle among women at the time. Three of these portraits are of the same woman, a distant relative (a cousin, perhaps) named Jingzi, who is allegedly the literary prototype for the protagonist of Su's sensational novel *Duanhong lingyan ji* 斷鴻零雁記 (The lonely swan); these photographs were in the possession of Liu Yazi, Deng Yizhi 鄧以蜇 (1892-1973) and Deng Shi 鄧實 (1877-1951). Su asked Liu Yazi to publish one of these photographs in the *Pacific Newspaper* 太平洋報 (Taiping yang bao).[7] Without knowing who she was, Liu titled the picture "The Woman Poet of the Eastern Sea" 東海女詩人 and posted it alongside a picture of Su Manshu with the title, "The Poet of the Eastern Sea" 東海詩人.[8]

In March of 1909, Su acquired the copies of the photographs of a famous Japanese geisha, Harumoto Manryū 春本萬龍 (1894-1973), in Tokyo. He promptly sent them to his friends Deng Shi and Cai Zhefu 蔡哲夫 (1879-1941),[9] further evidence of his infatuation with the female image and his appetite for it. According to the account provided by those who lived with him, "The Master [Su Manshu] loved women and loved to watch them, especially women in brothels, so nine days out of ten he would while

Figure 1. Postcard of Ms. Momosuke with Su Manshu's inscription to Bao Tianxiao. From Su Manshu, *Manshu yiji* 曼殊遺集, ed. Zhou Shoujuan (Shanghai: Dongfang xuehui, 1930).

away his time between the luster of pearls and the shadow of hairpins. But looking is all he would do, almost as if these were beautiful flowers rather than women. If a comely courtesan caught his eye, the Master would beckon her, then direct her to stand in front of him. He would then carefully look her over, and when done looking, would send her away."[10] Not once would he allow the courtesan to touch him or even be close with him, let alone permit her to sit next to him on the bed. This vivid anecdote suggests that Su's interest in the women was more aesthetic than salacious, and it is hard to surmise how deep his emotional involvement with these women was. In Shanghai in 1912, Su wrote to his good friend Liu San 劉三 (1878-1938), describing a clever quid pro quo arrangement he had devised to deal with women who would besiege him to paint their portraits: whenever he painted a picture for a lady, she would have to repay him with a photograph of herself. Men coming with the same request would be summarily rejected. At the end of the letter, Su asked Liu, "Don't you think I'm crazy?"[11] This is perhaps how Su was able to obtain a good number of photographic portraits of women.

In the spring of 1909 in Tokyo, Su Manshu met Ms. Momosuke 百助, a

Figure 2. Front of the Postcard of Ms. Momosuke with Su Manshu's inscription to Zhang Shizhao (private collection of Wang Jinsheng).

koto (Japanese zither) player. At the time Su composed a poem titled "Inscribed on a Picture of a Gentle Girl Playing Her Zither" 靜女調箏圖 and wrote the poem onto a photograph postcard of Momosuke, which was mailed to his friend Bao Tianxiao 包天笑 (1876-1973) (figure 1). This ten by fifteen centimeter postcard was later published in *Banyue zazhi* 半月雜誌 (Half moon, edited by Zhou Shoujuan 周瘦鵑, 1895-1968) and *Tianhuang huabao* 天荒畫報 (Pictorial Magazine of the Eternal, edited by Cai Zhefu and others). These issues proved to be popular,[12] indicating how easily a personal image reached the public domain, and how desire or fantasy was created by reproducing and disseminating that image in quantity for public consumption. Zhang Shizhao 章士釗 (1881-1973), who was studying in London around that time, also received a copy of the same photograph sent from Su via Siberia, with very similar inscriptions and style. On the back of that card to Zhang, Su playfully wrote a line in pen "Momosuke from Japan is my hometown friend" 蓬瀛百助是同鄉, making the shape of the line look like a seal (figure 2 and 3).[13]

On the photographs to Bao Tianxiao and Zhang Shizhao, Su inscribed the same poem respectively, using a pen (instead of a brush) with black ink. It reads:

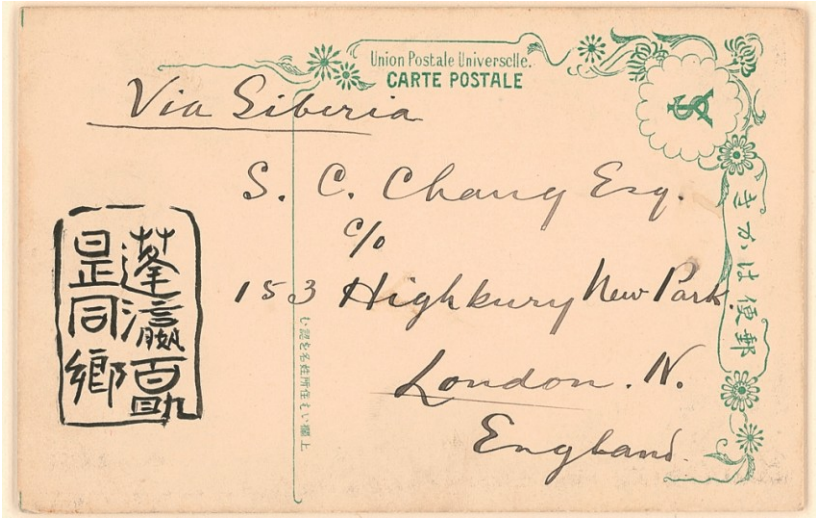

Figure 3. Back of the Postcard of Ms. Momosuke with Zhang Shizhao's London address (private collection of Wang Jinsheng).

Inscribed on a Picture of a Gentle Girl Playing Her Zither	靜女調箏圖
Endless spring sorrows, endless grief,	無限春愁無限恨
All at once reverberate from her fingertips.	一時都向指間鳴
My robe is already soaked through,	我已袈裟全濕透
How can I continue to listen to this heart-rending zither?![14]	那堪更聽割雞箏

On the photographs, this poem was followed immediately by Ni Zan's 倪瓚 (1301 or 1306-1374) song lyric (*ci* 詞) "To the tune *Liu shao qing*" 柳梢青 without spaces or a title to indicate the start of a new poem. Ni Zan's poem was written as a song to the courtesan Xiao Qiongying 小瓊英, expressing nostalgia about love and heartbreak. The *ci* poem by Ni Zan foreshadows the emptiness that is surely the inevitable outcome of such intense *qing*. The temporal movement of the two poems from the right to the left indicates an emotive shift from an articulation of love in the present, frozen in time, to a self-conscious forecast of the ultimate futility and emptiness of the world of *qing*. The quotation further produces an echo through the shared connective cultural space of *qing*. The inscription ends with a short passage to Bao and Zhang respectively in the expository style, a signature of his personal style name, and his seal.

By placing Su Manshu's poem in its original context of composition and presentation, it is possible to address the question of what makes this portrait photo, with its colophons, unique. Su's identity as a monk-lover and his physical experience as instigated by music is captured in line 3: "My robe is already soaked through." As I have discussed elsewhere with regard to this poem, Su Manshu's most conspicuous lyrical achievement is in his powerful handling of the first-person male lover's voice and the introduction of lyrical intimacy. True to the elliptical nature of Chinese poetic language, the grammatical subject is usually either omitted or used to represent a universalized, omnipresent subject. The majority of love poems by Chinese literati feature a belated expression of love (as is the case in the death or departure of the courtesan-lover or wife), with the lover being spoken of in absentia.[15] In the visual space of the photograph above, Su Manshu brings the "I" into being as the subject of utterance and as a participant in a dialogue, thereby achieving a dynamic interactive relationship that is both visually economical and emotionally effective. It is as if the power of the beautiful image of Momosuke and her music evokes the direct presence of the subject. In other words, the power of the image incites the viewer/listener/poet into a direct speech act. This first-person masculine voice of the lover and the confessional style of the poem intimately relate and respond to the verisimilitude and immediacy of the visual image.

Situating Su's practice in the long-lasting dynamics of word/image will help us to appreciate his originality and creativity. As is well known, "poems inscribed on paintings" (*tihua shi* 題畫詩) is an esteemed subgenre in Chinese poetry.[16] In particular, writing about a beauty in a given painting developed into a formula or convention in the Song dynasty, in which the female image was treated as a thing in representation, without much emotive interaction between the viewing subject and the object.[17] Rarely was there an individual voice articulated. In comparison, Su Manshu not only documents an individual experience of love but also turns the visual space into a place of intimacy, initiating a reciprocal experience with a distinctive personal voice.

Given this written tradition, when photography was first introduced into China in the 1850s,[18] people started to write poems about the new medium, which was not an unusual practice, leaving us a good number of such poems in various anthologies and collections. Inscribing such poems onto photographs was, however, much less common. One of the earliest examples of the admixture of writing and photography comes from 1863, when Yi Xuan 奕譞 (1840-1891) wrote a poem about his self-portrait and then mounted the calligraphy on the photograph itself.[19] The most well-known example of this admixture is that of Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936), who in Japan wrote a poem on the back of a photographic self-portrait and sent it

to his friend Xu Shouchang 許壽裳 (1883-1948) around 1903.[20] In Yi Xuan's practice, the photograph was mounted onto the paper scroll; thus, the photographic image was treated like traditional painting. Lu Xun allegedly wrote the poem on the back of the photograph. The relationship between writing and photography as separate entities, and the writing of a poem as a traditional practice, remains intact. Su Manshu, with his creative and artistic skill, inaugurated a new practice when he began to inscribe poems in the visual space of the photograph, incorporating the immediacy and efficacy of photography in a new form of communication. For Su, who was also an accomplished painter, inscribing poems onto photographs may have been a way of extending the traditional practice of writing poems on paintings. As photographs were soon to be pervasive in modern culture, a question arises of the effect and significance of Su's inscriptions, a seemingly natural extension of the colophon culture and seal marking on traditional painting.

Stylistically speaking, the style of the inscriptions on the photographs to Zhang Shizhao and Bao Tianxiao is similar, indicating a freely flowing spirit and personal style. Inscriptions, which were usually at the margins of the two-dimensional pictorial space in the painting, were written over the three-dimensional photographical image. The large space that the inscriptions occupy in the composition also make them visually striking, creating two contradictory visual effects: the superimposition of the handwritten words seems to purposefully flatten the three dimensional image, echoing the flatness in the visual sensibilities prominently pronounced in the practices of the time;[21] meanwhile, the characters, as the two-dimensional pictorial signs employed here, also gain additional visual depth and appear particularly energetic. Further, the inscriptions with their cursive and willful style, surrounding the female subject in the compositional space, seem to mimic the outpouring emotions of the speaker. The surprising visual effect, due to conscious manipulation, results in the stylistic combination of individualized inscriptions and mechanically reproduced images.[22] Few others adopted this practice (especially when the ability to write classical-style poetry dramatically decreased), and there are only a handful of available examples of this combination of word/image, all of which makes this series of photographs created by Su Manshu unique.

In his famous 1927 essay "Photography," Siegfried Kracauer provides some valuable insights into the visual abstraction of the photographic image. A witness to the arrival of this new technology and its impact on modern life in Weimar, Kracauer suggests that photography is a visual abstraction, presenting a mass technical reproduction of the "spatial continuum" of an object in a temporal instant. It freezes a moment in time, while emptying out its historical content and specificity. Kracauer proposes that the

"memory image" is a contrasting model to photography, because it is personally significant to the individuals who retain the memory, even though those individuals may not necessarily know the meaning of the image.[23] Su Manshu inscribed two poems, along with the date, the name of the recipient, and his personal message and signature onto the surface of the paper photograph. Seen in the light of Kracauer's idea of a memory image, Su Manshu's inscriptions added both historical and personal significance to the photograph. By bracketing the spatial continuum with diegetic details,

Figure 4. Photograph of Ms. Momosuke sent to Deng Qiumei (image provided by Chen Shiqiang).

Su invests a photographic representation with depth and context and limns subjective personal emotion and memory onto a flat object-image. In the artist's individual practice, Su re-inscribes an aura (in Walter Benjamin's sense) to the mass reproduced copy,[24] turning the visual image of a *koto* player into a personal memory image. Further, the issue of signature is another point of interest. In the modern context, both in China and the West, it became a common practice to sign the photograph with a person's name and give it to a friend as a gift. This act of authentication adds affective or economic value to the object. Su Manshu obviously goes much further by inscribing the images with poems, a message, signature, and seal, together with a personalized handwritten style. These "deep," authentic, stylistic works, produced by Su, also serve as memory images for his friends (e.g. Bao Tianxiao and Zhang Shizhao) and to readers like us across time. Aided

by these written additions, I, as a reader and researcher, have attempted to retrieve the past, piecing together the fragments to form a coherent story of Su Manshu.

At least six different photographs of Momosuke along with an inscription by Su Manshu exist. In addition to the photographs sent to Bao Tianxiao and Zhang Shizhao, there was one more sent to Deng Qiumei 鄧秋枚 (1877-1951) (figure 4), which consists of the same photograph with a similar inscription of two poems. Photographs sent to Cai Zhefu, Zhu Zongyuan 諸宗元 (1874-1932), and Huang Jie 黃節 (1873-1935) involve different images of Momosuke but have an inscription of the same two poems (figures 5 and 6).[25] The photographic image of Momosuke was described as enchanting, here in Zhou Shoujuan's words: "Divine glamour, separated and united, cannot be seen from up close. The jade moon and immortal flowers are not enough to describe her charms."[26] The interaction between literati and courtesans or female entertainers, and writing about such liaisons, was not new, but the circulation of *qing* beyond the confines of a relatively circumscribed realm to a public, masculine space in such a readily reproducible format was very much new. The reproducibility and accessibility of photographs facilitated different ways in which Su's male friends could relate to each other. The photograph being an "object-in-motion," so to speak, reveals human relationships through its essence, trajectory, and contour of transmission. In the process of sending inscribed photographs of Momosuke to his friends, Su transformed his personal feelings (or imagined personal feelings) toward Momosuke into a social articulation of the self. It is noteworthy that the validation of his emotive experience comes not from Momosuke, but from his friends as the recipients of these photographs. Although Su did write at the end of the inscription that the poem was intended to "win a smile from the beauty" (*bo meiren yican* 博美人一粲), in fact the audience was his friends. Toward the end of his inscriptions to Bao Tianxiao and Zhang Shizhao respectively, Su wrote in an epistolary style, saying that on a windy and snowy day, he was missing his old friend and was therefore sending the personalized card. Many years later in 1962 in Hong Kong, Bao Tianxiao composed a poem to commemorate Su Manshu that recalls Su's own words: "I am missing my friend terribly on this cold day of snow and wind" 風雪天寒念故人.[27] Years later, Zhang Shizhao mentioned the photograph in conjunction with Su numerous times in his poetry, for example in the line, "[the image] has made me miss him for forty years" 累我懷人四十年.[28]

In the process of the circulation and transmission of these photographs, the issue arises of the function of mediated heterosexual desire. Su Manshu wrote a series of ten "Biographical Poems" 本事詩 that are generally believed to describe his relationship with the *koto* player. Although this

Figure 5. Photograph of Ms. Momosuke sent to Cai Zhefu (image provided by Chen Shiqiang).

Figure 6. Photograph of Ms. Momosuke sent to Zhu Zongyuan (image provided by Chen Shiqiang).

series of poems is well known among literary scholars, the circumstances in which the poems were composed and how they were circulated have mostly been forgotten. Su's poems were written simultaneously with Chen Duxiu's 陳獨秀 (1879-1942) ten poems in a hotel in Tokyo.[29] Chen Duxiu, who later became a major player in the New Culture Movement, taught Su Manshu how to write classical-style poetry in Japan, where they were close friends and briefly roommates. The poem cited above was originally listed as the first of the "biographical poems," but Su later made some changes in the second couplet to avoid repetition.[30] After Su Manshu completed his ten poems, he sent them to his friends, including Cai Zhefu, Deng Qiumei, Liu San, Huang Jie, Zhu Zongyuan and Li Xiaotun 李曉暾 (1879-1919) enclosing each with Momosuke's photo, to elicit a response. He received ten corresponding poems each from Liu Yazi, Gao Xu 高旭 (1877-1925) and Cai Zhefu.[31]

His friends' poems (forty in all) are written employing *ciyun* 次韻 (matching rhymes). This is like inviting an audience to comment on Su's protracted vacillation between romantic emotion and spiritual transcendence. A sympathetic group of friends commiserated with him and inserted empathetic echoes in their writing. The form of *ciyun* they used also ensures such unanimity or resonance, as the respondents would use the same end rhymes as in Su's poem, following in the same order and even employing a similar stock of vocabulary. The circulation of these poems and photographs created a new platform for sympathetic conversation and collaboration among poets. The writing and reading of Su's poems provided a channel to transmute erotic desire by expressing it to an empathetic audience, while promoting a strong social bond within the group. On the one hand, as I argue elsewhere, Su Manshu's exposure to Western literature (Romanticism in particular), coupled with the sensory experience that he enjoyed through the means of modern technology, as well as the presence of his erudite literary friend Chen Duxiu, allowed him to develop an individualized poetic voice, extending his capacity for articulating his emotions as a lover.[32] On the other hand, as we can perceive in this context, the self in his poetry, enmeshed within an interpersonal relationship, is a social and intertextual subject. A useful example is the fifth poem in the series:

Biographical Poems (no. 5)	本事詩
Peach-cheeked and red-lipped she sits playing the pipe,	桃腮檀口坐吹笙
Hard to measure old abounding sorrows with springtime waters,	春水難量舊恨盈

The Huayan Temple waterfall is a thousand *chi* high,	華嚴瀑布高千尺
But not as high as my sweetheart's loving feelings.	未及卿卿愛我情

—by Su Manshu

Alone in a quiet spot playing the pipe	少人行處獨吹笙
Thinking of the past her tears abound.	思量往事淚盈盈
If only regret were easily mended	缺憾若非容易補
As she patched the sky I would repay the Goddess's feeling.	報答媧皇煉石情

—by Chen Duxiu

Treasuring and tuning up the goose-keyed zither	珍重親調雁柱箏
In this pair of eyes waves of tears abound.	淚波雙眼自盈盈
The talented one says carelessly that a Zen escape is good	才人浪說逃禪好
But in this Zen escape one cannot help but still have feeling.	爭奈逃禪尚有情

—by Liu Yazi

Leaning on the jade banisters playing the pipe,	碧欄十二倚吹笙
In layers of elaborate garments, autumn thoughts abound,	疊疊霓裳秋思盈
A goddess holds a flower, the Buddha smiles,	天女拈花迦葉笑
What in the human world is the use for this passionate feeling?	人間安用是痴情

—by Gao Xu

Under the lamp, shoulder to shoulder, listening to water piping in the pitcher,	憑肩燈下聽瓶笙
A wisp of tea smoke fills up the cramped room.	一縷茶煙斗室盈
Heads together, reflected in the teacups,	照見並頭杯茗裡
Wordless, they set down the cups, overcome by feeling.[33]	停杯無語不勝情

—by Cai Zhefu

In this series of poems, the character *qing* (feeling) is used prominently as the final rhyme word. The poems are cliché-ridden, but form and familiar diction enable the poets to engage in Su's emotional life in a compelling way, vicariously sharing his pain. Evoking such empathy requires rhetorical exchange and communication on a deep emotional level. The formulaic conventions and literary tropes serve to teach, to instigate, or to enhance empathetic resonance in social settings.[34] As beholders of Momosuke's image, these poets wrote about the lady with her musical instrument (in this series, a reed pipe) in an intimate moment and thereby became sympathetic spectators of Su's emotional entanglements. Their responses indicate that they either enjoyed imaginative role-playing or served as a supporting chorus, creating an inter-subjective route of emotional transmission. Feeling could be initiated by others or derived from the text or the image, while being further transferred and mediated through literary convention, trope, and empathetic imagination of others' experience. This series of poems perfectly captures the process of converting "an intertextual relationship into an interpersonal one."[35] What is highlighted here is both the social life of *qing* and the role that literary convention played in the process of articulation and circulation of *qing*. In common understanding of emotion, one of the basic assumptions is that emotion, predicated upon the bourgeoisie subject, is a purely physiological reaction or inner state, disconnected from social and political life.[36] The cultural life and activities surrounding Su Manshu's circle contests this privileged view, showing that emotion also has its social origins and is "*preeminently* cultural" in Catherine Lutz's words.[37] Relying upon clichéd vocabulary and imagining the emotion of the Other, the male poets not only fashioned their own subjectivity as men of sentiment but also contributed to the conversation and bonding experience revolving around expressions of *qing*.

Su Manshu's life was cut short in 1917 when he was only thirty-five. A collage was assembled by his fans and published in the book *Manshu shiyun chouji* 曼殊詩韻酬集 (Collection of poems matching Manshu's rhymes) in the 1930s (figure 7).[38] Juxtaposing two portraits of Su in the lower left corner with one of him in monk's robes in the upper right, the collage seems to suggest that Su had been reincarnated as a Buddha who had attained spiritual transcendence and risen to paradise. On the top of the page is inscribed the line "In a thousand years, there is only one Manshu to have as a bosom friend" 千古知音獨曼殊, followed by Su's famous couplet dedicated to Lord Byron: "You, poet, and I are wanderers, fluttering like reeds in the storm / May I beckon to your soul from across a strange land" 詞客飄蓬君與我 / 可能異域為招魂. Along the right and left margins and on the bottom are either poems composed by his fans or quotes from Su's own poetry, the latter a poetic subgenre called *jiju* 集句 ("gathering

Figure 7. A Collage of Su Manshu. From *Manshu shiyun chouji* (1930s).

poetic lines" or verbatim quotations). The collage, featuring a powerful mixture of photographic image and text, of literary friendship and resonance, extended across historical time and space. In effect, Su and his friends' poems formed a kind of echo chamber, in which ideas, emotions, and tropes reverberated. Writing poems about images turned this overflow of feeling into a literary production and shared experience, while ensuring the afterlife of feeling in generations of readers.

II.

The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed drastic changes in dramatic performance, an increased commercialization of the theater, as well as the advent of a new breed of patrons and benefactors. The patronage

culture took advantage of publication venues and public forums to promote actors, moving from the private to the public domain. Depicting Mei Lanfang's 梅蘭芳 (1894-1961) and Feng Chunhang's rise to stardom, Catherine Yeh analyzes the historical moment when the role of female impersonator rose from that of a plaything or privately owned property, to become a symbol of an idealized femininity and a newly modern national culture. Yeh points out that after the collapse of the Qing, the literati came to occupy the vacant center left by the Qing court and asserted their influence in drama and public aesthetic taste through modern media and commercialism.[39] Among them, two members of the Southern Society, Liu Yazi and Chen Qubing 陳去病 (1874-1933), played an important role in pioneering "new drama" (*xinju* 新劇) by assuming the editorship of newspapers that they then used to promote this new form.[40] In 1909, the Southern Society held its first meeting in Suzhou. While there, Liu Yazi, together with his friend and fellow member of the Southern Society, Yu Jianhua 俞劍華 (1895-1979), happened to watch a performance by Feng Chunhang of *Xuelei bei* 血淚碑 (The stele of bloody tears). Awestruck by the exquisite performance, Liu observed that Feng seemed to "share the feeling of being an unfortunate victim of the world" 輒有天涯淪落之感. After that, Liu developed an obsession with Feng, getting drunk each day and going to cheer Feng on. In an effort to garner support for Feng's subsequent shows in Suzhou, Liu engaged in activities that would "enthuse actors" (*pengjue* 捧角), influencing his fellow friends' opinions in the Southern Society.[41] Other members of the society, such as Lin Baiju 林百舉 (1880-1951), Chen Bulei 陳布雷 (1890-1948), Yu Jianhua, Yao Guang 姚光 (1891-1945), Pang Shubo 龐樹柏 (1884-1916), Ye Chuchuang 葉楚傖 (1887-1946), Zhu Shaoping 朱少屏 (1882-1942), and Shen Li 沈礪 (1879-1946), came to share Liu's enthusiasm and formed a clique known as the "Feng faction" (Fengdang 馮黨). Later in 1912, Liu Yazi took advantage of his editorship of *Minsheng ba* 民聲報 (Minsheng Newspaper), and started a column to publicly promote Feng.[42] After he became the editor of the *Pacific Newspaper*, Liu urged his friends to submit poems or essays, especially those that were flattering to Feng, thus helping to popularize Feng.[43] Following Liu's lead, Ye Chuchuang started a public forum in 1913 in the *Minli ba* 民立報 (Minli Newspaper), and Guan Yihua 管義華 (1892-1975) also launched one in the *Zhonghua minbao* 中華民報 (Chinese People's Newspaper), both of which were used to laud and publicize Feng's performances.

In 1913, an issue of *Xiaoshuo shibao* 小說時報 (Fiction Times) prominently featured Jia Biyun 賈碧雲 (1890-1941), a leading performer in Beijing. On June 19, Liu Yazi posted a note in *Mingli Newspaper*, urging people to submit photographs of Feng Chunhang and poems about him to

the newspaper.[44] Sure enough, Liu Yazi also responded within a few weeks with a beautifully produced book devoted to Feng Chunhang, countering the rivalry of Jia Biyun. The book, titled *Chunhang ji* 春航集 (The Chunhang collection), contained photographs, poetry, and criticism about Feng and his performances. The forty-three essays included are selections from numerous newspapers and magazines, including *Tianduo bao* 天鐸報 (Tianduo Newspaper), *Shibao* 時報 (The Times), *Minxin bao* 民信報 (Minxin Newspaper), *Zhonghua minbao*, *Tuhua ju bao* 圖畫劇報 (Drama Pictorial), among others. One of the Southern Society's members, Yao Yuanchu, alluded to "the rising price of paper in Luoyang," to suggest the popularity of the collection.[45] In 1914, Liu Yazi made another special effort to edit and publish a book for Lu Zimei, titled *Zimei ji* 子美集 (The Zimei collection).[46] The collection published twelve photographs, including one of Zimei with Liu Yazi, eighteen prefaces (*xu* 序) and eleven endorsement verse (*tici* 題辭) by friends congratulating Liu's successfully bringing out this book.

While compiling *The Chunhang Collection*, Liu, along with his friends Pang Shubo, Yu Jianhua, Zhu Shaopin, Chen Feishi 陈匪石 (1884-1959), Wang Yunzhang 王蘊章 (1884-1942), and Jiang Kesheng 姜可生 (1893-1959) paid a visit to Feng Chunhang, meeting him in person for the first time. On that occasion, Feng gave Liu more than twenty photographs of himself.[47] In Yao Yuanchu's description, Liu Yazi secretly concealed the photographs in his breast pockets and sleeves. Yao commented that "In the book there is beautiful Cui Hui, whom he faces at leisure day after day. Oh, he's so pleased!" 卷中有崔徽; 日日閑相對, 好不滿意也.[48] Yao went on to write a moving *zaju* drama titled *Juyingji chuanji* 菊影記傳奇 (The romance of the chrysanthemum) to capture Liu's excitement and fervent appreciation, with obvious exaggeration and fabrication. Hu Jichen 胡寄塵 (1886-1938) wrote that in the eyes of Liu's colleagues, "Liu's appreciation of Chunhang is lasting and not to be forgotten. His sincere feeling is heart-wrenching."[49] At that time, Liu sent letters, which were mostly about Feng, to Hu Jichen in Shanghai almost on a daily basis.[50]

The two collections that were devoted to Feng and Lu respectively included a dozen photographs of the two actors shot in studios, showing them in different attire and sporting different gestures in settings that appeared Western (figures 8, 9, 10 and 11).[51] The costumes include a Western-style wedding gown, a traditional Victorian dress, a princess's costume from the late Qing era, chic Chinese clothing, and theater costumes. There is only one photograph of Feng in a male suit. "She" is mostly seen either holding and sniffing a flower and smiling, or holding a book and looking contemplative or self-indulgent. In quite a few photographs, despite wearing modern, Western clothing, the actors sport traditional stances and gestures representing stereotypical behavior of a Chinese female, suggesting

Figure 8. Photograph of Feng Chunhang. From Liu Yazi, ed., *Chunhang ji* (Shanghai: Shanghai guangyi shuju, 1913).

Figure 9. Photograph of Feng Chunhang. From Liu Yazi, *Chunhang ji*.

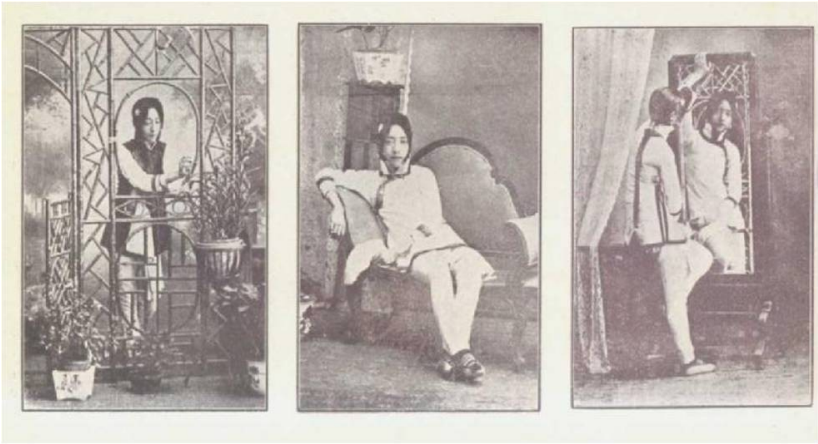

Figure 10. Photographs of Lu Zimei. From *Mei Lu ji*, ed. Wang Langao (Shanghai: Zhonghua shiye congbao she, 1914).

Figure 11. Photograph of Lu Zimei performing *Henhai* 恨海 (The Sea of Regret). From *Youxi zazhi* 遊戲雜誌 3 (1914).

decorum and refinement. While the composition of the photographs appears formulaic, these photographs reveal more dynamic "female" subjectivities and gestures than most of the earlier photographic portraits, in which the subjects always appeared stiff and emotionless. In some pictures, the impersonated female would stray to a limited extent from the traditional female body language and deportment, at times looking directly into the camera or confidently returning the viewer's gaze. After browsing these photographs, the impression contemporary viewers are likely to get is that Feng and Lu were delighted to assume different roles and personae, turning the photography studio into a stage. Needless to say, the new media enabled these actors to represent multiple facets of themselves and performed roles, as well as project cross-gender representations with creative license. Cross-dressing for photograph shoots not only allowed Feng and Lu to generate new kinds of gendered images but also created an idealized modern "new woman."[52] Their cross-dressing as portrayed in theatrical performance and in photographs served to create malleable visuals that were ambiguous enough to engender layers of interpretations and meanings, which in effect brought into question hitherto accepted gender roles and representations. Taking advantage of photography to experiment with multiple representations of themselves, these actors who were pioneers in "new drama" helped to blur the boundaries between truth and artifice, fantasy and reality.

Despite the possibility of multiple subject positions revealed in Feng and Lu's photo shooting, all the poems written about these photographs by the members of the Southern Society, however, deny or undermine this possibility. The poems all address a "her" in conventional gender terms. "She" is held up as no less than the ideal, the apotheosis of feminine charm and allure, as seen through the subjective lens of a man projecting his fantasy onto a female other. Under the guise of promoting an actor, some poets repeatedly expressed and reinforced their erotic desire. The photograph thereby became the perfect stand-in for a woman as a desirable object, as well as a catalyst for male desire. It is interesting to note that in almost all the poems on Feng and Lu's photographs in *Nanshe congke* 南社叢刻 (The collection of the Southern Society), the poets deliberately obfuscate the boundary between performance and reality, taking the actors' "femininity" as a given, although the poets were well aware that the actors were men.[53] Liu Yazi and his colleagues understood the rules of the game, so to speak, and accordingly treated the images of Feng and Lu as embodiments of the ideal woman, a newly envisioned combination of traditional type and modernity. Writing about photographs of Feng served to reinforce the tendency to foster fantasies centered upon women's images; it was also a perpetuation of the codified image of the beautiful woman objectified in painting. I provide an example below to demonstrate how the male imagina-

tion is articulated.

Six Poems on Zimei's Photographs, Quoting Yishan's [Li Shangyin] Lines	题子美小影六首集义山句
She understands the bitterness of lovesickness,	解有相思苦
Distraught at the Songs of Midnight.	心酸子夜歌
Ripples reflect in vain on her stockings,	波痕空映襪
She receives silken missives in Shanghai.	海上得綃多
Leaning on a book-box she pretends to sleep,	假寐憑書篋
Loosening her blouse as though drunk.	依稀解醉羅
A heart broken for so long,	回腸九回后
She can do nothing about it this time.[54]	不奈寸腸何

—*by Ye Yusen* 葉玉森 *(1880-1933)*

Ye wrote six poems to describe six photographs of Lu Zimei, portraying "her" as a conventional lonely lady in the throes of lovesickness. The note to the poem, "No. 6: Zimei, dressed up as a Western lady, dreamily reclines on a chaise longue" 第六幅子美饰西裝女子倚睡椅上作朦朧態. Zimei is dressed as a modern Western woman and looks enticing, similar to the image of Feng Chunhang in figure 9.[55] The Western style dress, representing modern values and new fashion, was a popular costume used in photo shoots to fantasize about the Western beauty (*xifang meiren* 西方美人).[56] Ye's poem is used here as an example to illustrate the tension between the photographic image and the image as represented in the poem. In the photo, the slightly lower angled shot conveys a mild fetishization of the woman, while her gesture suggests some degree of self-indulgence. The poem fully conforms to male author's conventional preference in the choice of erotic connotation and poetic convention. Line 6, "Loosening her blouse as though drunk," is quoted from Li Shangyin's well-known poem "Mirror Banister" 镜槛, which contains this couplet: "I imagine her spreading fragrant bedding, / her blouse loosening as though she were drunk" 想像鋪芳褥, 依稀解醉羅.[57] Li Shangyin's long poem describes a love affair between a literatus and a dancing girl, moving from a description of her dancing to his memories of her and a detailed documentation of their love affair, including sexual encounters. The poetic form of *jiju* (verbatim quotations) involves quoting lines written by renowned poets to compose a new poem, and the form therefore often suffers from an accumulation of conventional imagery.[58] Ye quotes from Li's couplet describing the tantalizing act of disrobing, while visually encountering an image of a modern woman leaning on a Western-style couch. In resorting to the familiar, the

poet recycles erotic feeling through literary convention, the masculine gaze, and imagination. The poet not only concurs with the camera's initiation of the process of objectification, but also explicitly articulates the desire and further negates any other new elements or interpretations that are present in the photograph. Evoking the stock image of the lovesick lady, the poet transplants an "old" feeling into a "new" context, perpetuating an erotic subtext that may be only suggested in the photographic image.

In his discussion on the functions of text with regard to image, Roland Barthes famously proposes two types of relationships between the two: anchorage and relay. In his view, all images are by nature polysemous. Therefore, the addition of a linguistic message to an image is one technique to "*fix* the floating chain of signified" and to pin a certain proliferating image and its connoted meanings to a specific interpretation.[59] The visual image, considered as a mute object by Bill Nichols, "though rich, may be profoundly imprecise, ambiguous, even deceiving."[60] Seen in this light, the different messages rendered in these photographs, which are saturated with ideological, cultural and gendered connotations, may be confined by the poetic text to a fixed and unvarying reading of the image. A verbal text associated with the visual would have a great influence on, if not control over, how that image was interpreted. The poems discussed above impose distinct messages about the meaning of the photographic image, which, I have suggested, has much to do with writing conventions and reading habits. In their critiques published in newspapers, the poets stressed that Feng's performance showed "clear spirit and lingering profundity" (*shen qing yi yuan* 神清意遠), endowing it with lofty social and cultural meaning.[61] The poems on the photographs, however, reveal a different kind of imagination and tone. One explanation for this difference is that, as a genre with a rich history, poetry was inevitably conditioned by cultural and literary traditions, inheriting a particular way of writing about "a beautiful woman in a painting" (*meiren hua* 美人畫). The poetic conventions became a regulatory force that these poets could not seem to break away from in their response to the new medium. They relied on form and convention to stabilize the meaning of visuals that they encountered.

Evidently, these poems written by the members of the Southern Society are in complicity with, rather than revolt against, traditional gendered ideology. In comparison to his colleagues' more explicit expression of erotic desire, Liu Yazi has a distinctive approach to writing about these photographic images.

Visiting Chunhang in Shanghai: Composing a Poem and Inscribing It on a Photograph He Kindly Gave Me	海上訪春航奉贈一律即題其見惠小影
How can I express how I've missed you these past ten years,	相思十載從何說
Unexpectedly meeting you today.	今日居然一遇君
Discussing swordplay and flute-playing arouses my emotions,	說劍吹簫余感慨
Picking orchids to adorn you, I cherish their fragrance.	搴蘭紉蕙惜芳芬
I know it is hard to look at a river having seen the great seas,	懸知滄海難為水
I fear only that the hearts of the immortal will turn into clouds.	只恐仙心或化雲
Thank you for giving me the scroll of autumn hills,	一幅秋山勞汝贈
I will worship it with incense after returning to the rivers and lakes.[62]	江湖歸去定香薰
Two Quatrains in Response to Pingzi [Zhu Baokang] Who Sent Me Two Photographs of Chunhang in Makeup	屏子以春航化妝小影寄贈奉酬兩絕
How can the records of green sleeves and silver flutes be real?	翠袖銀簫事豈真
Even these few beautiful dreams have already turned to dust.	無多綺夢已成塵
In the end, the picture is left in Wu Garden,	圖畫至竟留吳苑
The woman with a jade pendant, who asked her to go to the riverbank?	環佩誰教去漢濱
One who has forgotten emotion may not necessarily be the true Supreme;	未必忘情真太上
While many scholars in autumn know the lament for spring.	儘多秋士解傷春
The old house by the desolate river is drenched with cold sadness,	荒江老屋淒寒甚
Where is that exceptional beauty, picking her flowers? [63]	何處拈花絕代人

Here, the desire is more sublimated or idealized. Liu distances himself from erotic diction and imagination and represents his enchantment with Feng as lofty romantic sentiment. He identifies the lover in the sense of the ideal ego, projecting his feeling onto the "female" other. In line 4 of "Visiting Chunhang in Shanghai," by evoking a phrase from *Chuci* 楚辭 (Songs of Chu), the speaker's pursuit of the woman is meant to be understood allegorically. Liu employs a refined, literary diction that not only shows a good measure of propriety in language but more importantly imbues the term *qing* with sublimated meaning, emphasizing its illusory nature. Liu also wrote long lyrics dedicated to Feng and Lu, which were filled with sensuality and intense sentiments. In these poems, Liu emphatically refers to them as *nüer* 女兒, *e'mei* 蛾眉, *meidai* 眉黛, *nülangshen* 女郎身, and *meiren* 美人, all terms or clichés meaning to woman or beautiful woman.[64] He even expresses a romantic fantasy of withdrawing from the world to be with a beloved, as is seen in couplets such as: "If one day we could retire to the five lakes together, / I would willingly become Chiyi, not envious of the immortals" 五湖他日能偕隱 / 願作鴟夷不羨仙.[65] Liu's extraordinary passion as expressed in his poems allowed him to successfully portray himself as a person "full of feeling" (*duoqing* 多情).[66] Liu obviously enjoyed this persona, as shown in the fact that Feng Chunhang, Lu Zimei, and related topics populated his poetry and diaries from 1909 to 1915. Literati consumption of female images and the related gendered dynamics, aided by the evocation of conventions and tropes as well as cultural practices (e.g. promoting the actors), charged male subjectivity with extraordinary feeling.

Present-day readers may wonder whether these poems, under the disguise of heterosexuality, express homoerotic desire, given that the sexual identity of these two actors was known to the poets. Such a possibility cannot be immediately ruled out. Liu Yazi and his colleagues were young, modern intellectuals who adopted the modern "progressive" view, and they were indeed self-conscious in censoring their expression of homoerotic desire, which had been stigmatized in the context of the beginning of the twentieth century. Several incidents indicate that Liu was extremely sensitive to innuendo on that front.[67] In her influential analysis of English literature, Eve Sedgwick coined the word "homosocial" to describe "social bonds between persons of the same sex," arguing that desire is "the affective or social force, the glue" that can shape socially important relationships, in both positive and negative ways.[68] She argues that there has been a recurring theme of the "erotic triangle" of male homosocial desire in English literature since the seventeenth century. That is to say, the expression of two males' love is frequently framed as their heterosexual love of a woman. Sedgwick's arguments concerning male to male

relationships and how they are mediated by women serve as a critical starting point for my study of male literati dominated communities at the beginning of the twentieth century.[69] However, this paper details the ramifications of emotions different from those that existed in the Victorian society that Sedgewick studies. Individual psychology and sexual orientation are not points of inquiry here, but rather the social life of emotions and the exchange and consumption of the images of "women." In the two cases examined, the collective articulation of heterosexual desire or other related feelings was ultimately a channel for literati friendships to blossom within communities. Photographic images at most serve as a medium or an inspiration for the poets' familiar refrain on love or sensual gratification, and the authenticity or attractiveness of the photographed subject itself, or even its gender, was barely an issue. Writing about a photograph that is a supposedly concrete crystallization of such desire has more to do with the discourse of *qing* and with generic conventions than with the gender identity of the photographed subject per se.[70]

When Feng Chunhang and Lu Zimei gave the poets the numerous photographs of themselves, each poet wrote a poem dedicated to one of the photographs or composed a poem in conjunction with the other poets. Liu Yazi often solicited poems on the photographs from his fellow poets, thus swaying them to follow suit. This conscious evocation of emotion, in which the group participated, involves creating a fantasy world through casting a meta-language of *qing*. Feng and Lu, or rather their images, and the poetry based on these images, became a catalyst for strong social bonding and the flow of aesthetic fellowship among the members of the group. Liu Yazi's enduring enthrallment with Feng, along with his constant promotion of Feng and Lu, helped to rally the group together, while strengthening their alliance with the acting community. It is interesting to note that passionate poems were always found circulating in tandem with the photographs themselves as part of a ritual or game played exclusively by the male members of the Southern Society.[71]

The literati's collective writing about the painting of beauties was a practice fairly common in late imperial China. There exist numerous examples of this during the Ming and Qing dynasties, when such paintings were circulated among the literati groups, and these examples offer a parallel to the modern case. Xu Ziyun 徐紫雲, a seventeenth-century female impersonator, was privately owned by one Mao Xiang 冒襄 (1611-1693). He was later given as a gift to Chen Weisong 陳維崧 (1625-1682), one of the most famed lyricists and eminent scholars of the early Qing. Chen's love affair with Xu lasted a decade, with Chen and his friends writing numerous poems complimenting paintings of Xu. One of them, titled "Jiuqing Coming Out of the Bath" 九青出浴圖, featured seventy-six poets

who wrote 153 poems over several decades.[72] In her insightful discussion of this case and the circulation of actors in the seventeenth century, Sophie Volpp argues that writing such a poem is an "instantiation of sociality," which "became a channel of emotional connection among the men of this coterie."[73] In Volpp's view, writing the poems functioned to some degree as social currency, enabling literary men with humble origins to elevate themselves in the hierarchy and enter Chen's elite circle, while expressing one kind of *qing*, that is, empathy.[74] Xu Ziyun (as Chen Weisong's chattel) and the paintings of him comprised unique personal possessions. This is in contrast to the public owning and viewing of the images of Feng and Lu: every poet involved got a chance to employ "her" as his own sensual object. The reproducibility and easy accessibility of the photograph, facilitated by the new technology and print media, made it possible for a large audience to consume and share an image "equally." Further, the collegiality among the members of the Southern Society is different from that of Chen Weisong's circle in that there was no analogous hierarchical social structure, even though Liu tried to influence his friends to adore Feng and Lu as he did. However, the commonality lies in that writing poetry on the "beautiful woman" for both Chen's and Liu's circles, and referencing a whole repertoire of literati culture, became an important means of consolidating the social bonds within male communities.

Further, the main critical concern, engaged from a gender perspective, is—what was the function of the writing and circulation of these seemingly frivolous poems on and images of the impersonated females in a male-dominated literary group? Anthropologist Marcel Mauss's masterwork on gift exchange in primitive societies provides some understanding of the significance of giving, receiving, and reciprocating gifts in social intercourse.[75] Gayle Rubin writes: "Mauss proposed that the significance of gift giving is that it expresses, affirms, or creates a social link between the partners of an exchange. Gift giving confers upon its participants a special relationship of trust, solidarity, and mutual aid. One can solicit a friendly relationship in the offer of a gift; acceptance implies a willingness to return a gift and a confirmation of the relationship. Gift exchange may also be the idiom of competition and rivalry."[76] In her influential essay, "The Traffic in Women," Rubin builds on Mauss's theory on gifting, as well as on Claude Levi-Strauss's insights into the maintenance of kinship by exchanging women: "It is the men who give and take them who are linked, the woman being a conduit of a relationship rather than a partner to it."[77] Her insights help us understand the vital function played by the transaction of the gendered image and how it affected social bonding within communities in the patriarchal society. Anthropologists further remind us that personal agency and words for communication, intrinsically tied to things, construct

the objects and make them travel through different spheres of exchange and culture.[78]

The circulation of photographic images in the two cases discussed here serves to introduce a range of mixed feelings relating to but not exclusive to the female figure, perpetuating the exchange system by which literati culture operated. The poetry of Liu Yazi's colleagues was sometimes based on the "female" image as a reification of their individual expressions of eroticism. At other times, this poetry expressed empathy for Liu's enthrallment. Both modes required rhetorical exchange and intimate emotional communication. The commodity value of the photographs is downplayed, while their social and emotive values are accentuated. Yao Yuanchu 姚鵷雛 (1892-1954), who did not initially share Liu Yazi's high regard for Feng and Lu, was moved by Liu's intense reaction to the actors and went on to write a play about it.[79] Published in *Xiaoshuo congbao* 小說叢報 (Fiction Series) in 1914, the play also featured other members of the Southern Society such as Wang Langao 汪蘭皋 (1869-1925). Another member, Wang Dezhong 王德鐘 (1897-1927), wrote ten quatrains for the play and said of Liu that "he himself did not know why his *qing* has been so devoted and profound."[80] Romantic or sensual feelings became socially shared and validated, shaping the dynamics of relationship within and between intellectual groups. The impressive literati network, demonstrated in the two collections put together for Feng and Lu, further affirms the formation of an affective community through the poets' shared appreciation of the actors.[81] This interpretation also can be applied to Su Manshu's interaction with Momosuke and his friends' writing poems about her. Writing about heterosexual *qing* was meant to self-fashion as well as to strengthen these writers' aesthetic fellowship. It was related to the Japanese *koto* player only on a surface level. *Qing*, expressed on these occasions, is not a privileged, private matter that would seldom breach the entrenched boundaries between private and public life, as is commonly assumed. Rather, it is an evocation of emotion in the public domain as well as an indication of social connections. Cultural practices and intertextuality, together with the ease of reproduction and dissemination of texts and images in a new era, wove themselves into the complex tapestry of the world of *qing*.

A poetic community is not just a place for pure literary taste and friendship, but also a place of exhilarating contradiction, a site of meaningful or leisure activities, affinities, and rivalries. While previous scholarship has shown that the Southern Society was a mixture of new institutional forms, modern media, and traditional social practices,[82] I would like to emphasize Liu Yazi's individual efforts to bring the members together in a variety of social settings that contributed to the thriving of the Society. Promotion of

the actors and advocacy of "new drama" were among Liu's chief means. The cultivation and circulation of fellow-feeling and empathy influenced the Society's group psychology as well as helped to cement their collective identity. Feng Chunhang and Lu Zimei's performances, the subsequent circulation of their photographs, and the writing and sharing of poems about the photographs, all worked to form a chain of imaginative engagement with the self and other's emotional life, making all those involved feel emotionally invested and interpersonally connected. In her study of Chinese popular literature in the 1910s, Haiyan Lee cogently argues that sentimentalism, represented by Mandarin and Butterfly literature, "helped create an affective community within the literary public sphere whereby bourgeois individuals exchanged private experiences and fashioned themselves as men and women of sentiment."[83] In the same vein, Su Manshu and Liu Yazi were not only fashioned as literati "full of feelings," but they also came to play an instrumental role in the formation of the community and literary public sphere, participated in by writers, publishers, editors, actors, and audiences.

The 1910s was a sentimental era, pervaded by a general frustration and disillusionment with the volatile political situation.[84] The enchantment of the members of the Southern Society with *qing* was intertwined with the pressures of this weighty moment in history, raising questions of the relationship between romantic love, sexual desire, and political fervor. These disenfranchised young intellectuals struggled to take advantage of the cult of *qing* to vent their frustration and sentiment over an unsettled political climate. Many members of the Southern Society were also members of the political Alliance Party (Tongmen hui 同盟會) and were fervently revolutionary and politically active. In a poem on *Juyingji chuanqi*, Lin Baiju writes, "Do not take the story of Gao Tang as a dream, / Hearing the songs, my feelings are like those of Huan Yi" 莫當高唐是夢思 / 聞歌情緒似桓伊.[85] The story in the first line refers to an erotic dream by the King Chu; the second line alludes to Huan Yi, a general of the Jin dynasty who was famous for his flute music, a reference that points to the political ambitions of the Southern Society. By juxtaposing erotic desire with the political ambition in the couplet, Lin offers his take on Liu Yazi's obsessions with the actors, imbuing eroticism with political significance. Wang Dezhong also interpreted Liu's behavior as "especially having profound feelings, which he entrusts to the dance hall", and further claimed, "A man of ambition at the end of the road, with nowhere to shed even a few drops of blood and tears. He can only make a home among dancing skirts and singing fans!"[86] Wang's pronouncement vividly suggests the linkage between sensual private passion and the prevailing nationalist/revolutionary discourse. These members of the Southern Society established a mutually

influential relationship between romantic love, sexual desire, patriotic fever, and political realities. Each aspect powerfully and autonomously, if uncomfortably, coexisted with the others. This in turn suggests that the cascading expressions of extravagant sentimental feeling in the last few years of the Qing Empire and the initial years of the Republican era were conducive to and interacted with other discourses. As we have seen in the case of Su Manshu, Liu Yazi, and their male-dominated circles, the discourse of *qing* is malleable and contagious, blurring the boundaries between sexual desire, fantasy, personal ambition, and revolutionary sentiment. In such an atmosphere, revolutionary and political ideas were charged with potency and affective power. In effect, the young poets fashioned a new sentimental modern subject, capable of engaging in old literati activities (liaisons with courtesans and actors, poetic writing, and promoting actors), as well as new cultural enterprises (acting, editing, and publishing) and state affairs simultaneously.

To sum up, this paper first considered the question of the complex relationship between image and text. In the case of Su Manshu, his poetry written about or inscribed on photographic images of a Japanese courtesan extends the ambiguous meanings that the images represent, endowing them with personal significance. In so doing, he created a unique artistic method to publicize his personal emotion. With regard to the practices of the Southern Society members in general, their lyrics stabilize or limit the range of meanings a given image might offer, creating more or less erotically charged messages. Put succinctly, one should consider the dynamics of relay and closure in terms of the relationship between image and text. More importantly, this paper delineates the circuitous path adopted by the exchange of photographs and the poems attached to them, as well as the resulting cultural practices. From this anthropological viewpoint, the social role of *qing*, as well as its mobility across different discursive domains during the momentous first decade of the 1900s, stands out in clear relief. Heterosexual *qing,* circulated through textual and social practices, was transferred to other types of emotions (self-fashioning, empathy, and friendship) and political mobilizations. Expressions of individual emotions in an aestheticized manner thus served as a glue to cement male friendship and facilitate exchange—social, political, and otherwise—among the male-dominated communities, forming a compelling force for cultural transformation at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Endnotes

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1. Arjun Appadurai, "Commodities and the Politics of Value," in Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3-63. Appadurai reminds us that "Even though, from a theoretical point of view, human actors encode things with significance, from a methodological point of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context" (p.5).
2. To name a few, Wai-yee Li, *Enchantment and Disenchantment: Love and Illusion in Chinese Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Martin Huang, *Desire and Fictional Narrative in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001); Haiyan Lee, *Revolution of the Heart: A Genealogy of Love in China, 1900-1950* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007); Haiyan Lee, "Taking It to Heart: Emotion, Modernity, Asia," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 16.2 (2008): 263-484.

3. Larissa Z. Tiedens and Colin Wayne Leach, eds., *The Social Life of Emotions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 1-13. The title of this paper is partially indebted to their collection. I want to acknowledge two works in particular, from which this paper has significantly benefited: Sophie Volpp, "The Literary Circulation of Actors in Seventeenth-Century China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 61.3 (2002): 949-984; and Ling Hon Lam, "Emotional Indifference: Exploring Exteriority in Late Imperial Chinese Drama and Fiction," (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2006). Volpp's paper uses anthropological literature on gift exchanges to study the circulation of actors with a focus on the social currency and empathy involved in the process. Lam's dissertation pushes the study of *qing* into a new direction by taking exteriority as a vantage point to complicate the apparatus of emotional interiorization in Ming and Qing drama and fiction.
4. Susan Mann reminded us more than a decade ago that there existed strong and lasting ties of patronage, protection, friendship, and male homosociality among upwardly mobile Chinese literati, and these relationships should be examined from a gendered perspective. This paper attempts to respond to that call by examining the peculiar role that heterosexual desire has played in male friendship and how this desire found expression across different textual and social practices. Susan Mann, "The Male Bond in Chinese History and Culture," *American Historical Review* 105.5 (2000): 1600-1614.
5. In contemporary scholarship, the interaction of Feng Chunhang and Lu Zimei with the members of the Southern Society is often dismissed as trivial or frivolous. Lu Wenyun paints a more positive picture of the Southern Society's interaction with Feng and Lu. Lu Wenyun 盧文芸, *Zhongguo jindai wenhua biange yu nanshe* 中國近代文化變革與南社 (Cultural transformation in modern China and the Southern Society) (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2008), 272-299. For the studies on Feng Chunhang, see in Chinese, Ye Kaidi 葉凱蒂 [Catherine Yeh], "Cong huhuaren dao zhiyin: Qingmo Minchu Beijing wenren de wenhua huodong yu danjiao de mingxinghua" 從護花人到知音: 清末民初北京文人的文化活動與旦角的明星化, in Chen Pingyuan 陳平原 and Wang Dewei 王德威, eds., *Beijing: Doushi xiangxiang yu wenhua jiyi* 北京: 都市想像與文化記憶 (Beijing: the imagination and cultural memory of the city) (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2005), esp.129-130; in English, Catherine Yeh, "A Public Love Affair or a Nasty Game? The Chinese Tabloid Newspaper and

the Rise of the Opera Singer as Star," *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 2.1 (2003): 13-51; in Japanese, Naoko Fujino 藤野真子, "Ryū Ashi to 'Shunkō shū'" 柳亜子と《春航集》, *Journal of the Japan Association for Chinese Urban Performing Arts* 中國城市戲曲研究 7 (2008): 4-24.

6. Chen Xiaodie 陳小蝶, "Ti Manshu shangren yihua" 題曼殊上人遺畫, in *Manshu quanji* 曼殊全集 (The complete work of Su Manshu), ed. Liu Yazi, 5 vols. (1929; reprint, Shanghai: Beixin shuju, 1934), 5:460.
7. Chen Shiqiang 陳世強, *Su Manshu tuxiang: hujia, shiren, sengtu, qinglü de yisheng* 蘇曼殊圖像: 畫家詩人僧徒情侶的一生 (Images of Su Manshu: A life of a painter, a poet, a monk, and a lover) (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 2008), 207-214. According to Chen Shiqiang, *Manshu yuji* 曼殊餘集 (The remaining works of Su Manshu), edited by Liu Yazi, includes a few of these women's photos. *Manshu yuji*, which is at the National Library of China in Beijing, remains inaccessible. Catherine Yeh's study reveals that the courtesans of the time played an important role in popularizing photography in the late Qing era and in fact helped spearhead the promotion and use of this new technology. By the late 1890s, photographs of courtesans had become desired collectibles. Catherine Yeh, *Shanghai Love: Courtesans, Intellectuals, and Entertainment Culture, 1850-1910* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2006), 84-95.
8. See *Taipingyang bao*, March 17, 1912. See Liu Yazi, "Su Heshang zatan" 蘇和尚雜談, in *Manshu quanji*, 5:183. See also pp. 62-70 of the same volume.
9. Chen Shiqiang, *Su Manshu tuxiang*, 319. It is difficult to tell whether Su met her in person. She was a very famous courtesan and her photos were widely available for purchase during that time.
10. Wen Tao 文濤, "Manshu de guanxing" 蘇曼殊的怪性, in Liu Yazi, *Manshu yuji*, vol. 5, cited in Chen Shiqiang, *Su Manshu tuxiang*, 461-462. For more biographical information on Su Manshu in English, see Wu-Chi Liu, *Su Man-shu* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972); Leo Ou-fan Lee, *The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 58-78.
11. Su's letter to Liu San, dated June 6, 1912 in Su Manshu, *Su Manshu wenji* 蘇曼殊文集 (The writings of Su Manshu), ed. Ma Yijun 馬以君 (Guangzhou: Huacheng chubanshe, 1991), 544.
12. Liu Wuji, "Manshu jiqi youren" 曼殊及其友人, in *Manshu quanji*, 5:1-82; esp. 65-66. Rumor had it that female students, who were typically to be found "viewing themselves in mirrors by day and

reading love poems by night" (白天照鏡子, 晚上讀情詩), would hang this picture of Momosuke inside their mosquito nets and spend hours gazing at it.

13. This photo postcard sent to Zhang Shizhao is in the private collection of Wang Jinsheng, a contemporary collector in Shanghai. I am grateful to him for allowing me to reproduce this beautifully preserved photo here. Unfortunately, the original photo sent to Bao Tianxiao does not survive.
14. Su Manshu, *Yanzikan shi jianzhu* 燕子龕詩箋注 (Annotated work of Yanzikan), annotated by Ma Yijun 馬以君 (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1983), 30.
15. See my discussion of Su Manshu's translation practice in Shengqing Wu, *Modern Archaics: Continuity and Innovation in the Chinese Lyric Tradition 1900-1937* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013), 354-364.
16. These poems, such as the ones by Su Shi 蘇軾 (1036-1101) and Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105), pay little attention to the composition of the painting or the content represented in the painting. See Ronald Egan's discussion of Su Shi and Huang Tingjian's poems. Ronald Egan, "Poems on Painting: Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43 (1983): 413-451.
17. Yi Ruofen 衣若芬 [I Lo-fen], *Guankan Xushu Shenmei*: *Tang Song tihua wenxue junji* 觀看敘述審美: 唐宋題畫文學論集 (Viewing, narrative, and aesthetics: essays on inscriptions on paintings in the Tang and Song) (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan, 2004), 194-261, esp. 253.
18. See for instance, Edwin K. Lai, "The History of the Camera Obscura and Early Photography in China," in Jeffrey W. Cody and Frances Terpak, eds., *Brush and Shutter: Early Photography in China* (Los Angeles, CA; Getty Publications, 2011), 19-32.
19. Wu Qun 吳群, *Zhongguo sheying fazhan licheng* 中國攝影發展歷程 (The history of Chinese photography) (Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe, 1986), 107-108. For the image, see Liu Beisi 劉北汜 and Xu Qixian 徐啟憲, *Gugong zhencang renwuzhaopian huicui* 故宮珍藏人物照片薈萃 (The collection of portrait photos in the forbidden palace) (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 1995), 53.
20. Lu Xun, *Jiwaiji shiyi* 集外集拾遺, in *Lu Xun quanji* 魯迅全集 (The complete works of Lu Xun), 16 vols. (Beijing: Remin wenxue chubanshe, 1981), 7: 423. The poem is originally "untitled" (*wuti* 无題). This title was given by Xu Shoushang. For a translation of the

poem and annotations, see Jon Eugene von Kowallis, *The Lyrical Lu Xun: A Study of His Classical-Style Verse* (Honolulu, Hawai'i: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 102-107. This is the commonly believed story, though a few details remain controversial. Xu Shoushang gave different versions of the story throughout his life, and vying theories about the date (1902, 1903, or 1904) have circulated. The photo that accompanied the poem has not survived, but a photo of a young Lu Xun in the same uniform (4 by 2.5 inches) does survive. Zhou Zuoren 周作人 also received a print of this photo of Lu Xun from a friend returning from Japan, but not the poem. The photograph with the poem has been reconstructed by the Lu Xun Museum and is available for purchase as a souvenir. Lu Xun rewrote the poem in calligraphy in 1931. For a detailed description of the events and an explication of the poem, see Eva Shan Chou, *Memory, Violence, Queues: Lu Xun Interprets China* (Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Asian Studies, Inc., 2012), 57-61; 233-238. For factual issues involving the origin of this poem, see Matsuoka Toshihiro 松岡俊裕 "Lu Xun 'Ziti xiaoxiang' shengcheng kao" 魯迅自題小像生成考, trans. Zhang Tierong and Song Jingjin, *Lu Xun yanjiu yuekan* 魯迅研究月刊 5 (2012): 4-14; 7 (2012): 4-10.

21. In her discussion of Hong Kong photographer Lai Afong's portrait practices, Wue asserts that the minimization of space and volume and the arrangement of light and props, etc., give an impression of flatness and "anti-naturalism" to the Chinese portrait. Roberta Wue, "Essentially Chinese: The Chinese Portrait Subject in Nineteenth-Century Photography," in Wu Hung and Katherine R. Tsiang, eds., *Body and Face in Chinese Visual Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), 257-280 and see 267-268.
22. The interpretation of the combination of image/text here is indebted to insightful comments offered by Jeffrey Moser and Grace Fong at my Hsiang lecture, which propelled me to think in new ways and to develop a greater appreciation of the artistic innovation of Su's practice.
23. Kracauer writes: "No matter what scenes an individual remembers, it carries a meaning relevant to that person, though he and she may not necessarily know what that meaning is. An individual retains memories because they are personally significant" (p. 50). Siegfried Kracauer, "Photography," in *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, trans. and ed. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 47-63.

24. In his widely influential essay on "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin identifies the aura and originality essential to the viewing experience of traditional art and its crisis or even loss thanks to the advancement of modern reproductive technologies. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968), 219-253.
25. See Chen Shiqiang's discussion, *Su Manshu tuxiang*, 319-324. I am grateful to Chen Shiqiang, who has generously provided copies of the images and allowed me to reproduce them here. The image quality of the photo sent to Huang Jie is too poor to be included here. For this image, see Chen Shiqiang, *Su Manshu tuxiang*, 327.
26. Liu Wuji, "Manshu jiqi youren," 66.
27. Bao Tianxiao, "Ti Manshu shangren yimoce" 題曼殊上人遺墨冊, in *Yanzikan shi* 燕子龕詩 (Poems of Yanzikan), ed. Shi Zhecun 施蟄存 (Nanchang: Baihuazhou wenyi chubanshe, 1993), 94.
28. Cited in Xing Hua 星樺, "Zhang Shizhao yu Su Manshu de youyi" 章士釗與蘇曼殊的友誼, in *Nanfang doushi bao* 南方都市報 (Southern Metropolitan News), section B15, September 2, 2010.
29. See Ma Yijun's discussion of authorship in Su, *Yanzikan shi jianzhu*, 32-33.
30. According to the manuscript available now, some scholars suggest that Chen Duxiu may have written a poem first, and Su may have written one in response. The authorship of several poems also remains undetermined. Wen Zhi 文芷, "Manshu shangren shice" 曼殊上人詩冊, in *Yilin conglu* 藝林叢錄 (The series of arts), 8 vols. (Hong Kong: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1964), 5:73-84.
31. All cited in Su, *Yanzikan shi jianzhu*, 31-46.
32. Shengqing Wu, *Modern Archaics*, 363.
33. All the poems cited in Su, *Yanzikan shi jianzhu*, 38.
34. Suzanne Keen makes this point in her discussion of the Western narrative forms of the thriller and the romance novel. I suggest that the poets' use of generic and formal conventions in this case also facilitates readers' empathetic response. Suzanne Keen, *Empathy and the Novel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), xiii.
35. In her discussion of Wordsworth's poem, Adela Pinch claims that "Wordsworth uses his period's sentimental investment in women's emotional life to effect a conversion of an intertextual relationship into an interpersonal one." She also points out that a body of shared convention becomes "animated in affective exchange." Adela Pinch,

Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 81.

36. See Haiyan Lee's critique, "Taking It to Heart," 64.
37. Catherine A. Lutz, *Unnatural Emotions: Everyday Sentiments on a Micronesian Atoll and Their Challenge to Western Theory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 5. Italics original.
38. *Manshu shiyun chouji* (1930s). Copy at the Shanghai Library.
39. Catherine Vance Yeh, "Politics, Art, and Eroticism: The Female Impersonator as the National Cultural Symbol of Republican China," in Doris Croissant, Catherine Vance Yeh and Joshua S. Mostow, eds., *Performing "Nation": Gender Politics in Literature, Theater, and the Visual Arts of China and Japan, 1880-1940* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 205-239; esp. 211. See also, Catherine Vance Yeh, "Where is the Center of Cultural Production?: The Rise of the Actor to National Stardom and the Beijing/Shanghai Challenge (1860s-1910s)," *Late Imperial China* 25.2 (2004): 74-118. Ye [Catherine Yeh], "Cong huhuaren dao zhiyin," 121-134.
40. Feng Chunhang and Lu Zimei were both *dan* actors (male performers who played female roles) in the Beijing Opera. Feng started playing the roles of the *huadan* 花旦 and *qingyi* 青衣 (the virtuous, young woman) when he was twelve and became a local celebrity in the Jiangnan area. Feng wrote and performed what was known as "new drama," including plays such as *Xuelei bei*, as well as other productions characterized by a refreshingly new style and content, based on contemporary political events. Feng is credited as being one of the first actors to write and perform costume drama and foreign drama, introducing these innovative styles into the Beijing Opera. Onstage, Feng would speak and sing in English, play the piano, and use Western orchestral music, along with a new lighting system as backdrop. See Yang Tianshi 楊天石 and Wang Xuezhuang 王學莊, eds., *Nanshe shi changbian* 南社史長編 (The chronicle of the Southern Society) (Beijing: Zhongguo renming daxue chubanshe, 1995), 294.
41. Cited in Yang and Wang, *Nanshe shi changbian*, 139. See also Liu Yazi, *Nanshe jilue* 南社紀略 (A brief history of the Southern Society) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1983), 1-144.
42. See Yang and Wang, *Nanshe shi changbian*, 285. For the debate on Jia and Feng, see 286-287.
43. Hu Jichen 胡寄塵, "Chunhang ji jishi" 春航集紀事, in Liu Yazi ed., *Chunhang ji* 春航集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guangyi shuju, 1913), 56.

For more detailed discussion on this rivalry, see Catherine Yeh, "A Public Love Affair," 36-42.

44. Cited in Yang and Wang, *Nanshe shi changbian*, 332.
45. See Yao Yuanchu, *Juyingji chuanqi* 菊影記傳奇, in *Yao Yuanchu shengmo* 姚鴛鴦剩墨 (The remaining works of Yao Yuanchu) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue wenxian, 1994), 162-177; originally published in *Xiaoshuo congbao* 小說叢報, no. 4-7 (1914).
46. Liu Yazi, ed., *Zimei ji* (Shanghai: Guangyi shuju, 1914). The other collections that contain poems and photos include Wang Langao 汪蘭皋, ed., *Mei Lu ji* 梅陸集 (The collection of Mei and Lu) (Shanghai: Zhonghua shiye congbao she, 1914), and Xu Muyun 徐慕雲, ed., *Liyuan yingshi* 梨園影事 (Photos of actors) (Shanghai: Shanghai donghua gongsi, 1922).
47. Hu, "Chunhang ji jishi" in *Nanshe shi changbian*, 333; *Chunhang ji*, 56.
48. Cui Hui is a Tang dynasty singing girl, here standing for a beautiful and talented woman. Yao, *Juyingji chuanqi*, 165.
49. Hu, "Chunhang ji jishi" in *Nanshe shi changbian*, 333; *Chunhang ji*, 54-56.
50. Du Xiao 獨笑, "Bianji yushen" 編輯餘審, *Minxin bao*. Cited in Liu, *Chunhang ji*, 4. The author writes that Feng Chunhang came to visit when he was not there, and thus Feng left him a photograph, which reminded him of Liu Yazi's infatuation with Feng.
51. The image quality of the photos in the existing copy of *Zimei ji* is unfortunately quite poor. Instead, two figures from other sources are included here.
52. For more discussion of the performative aspect of photography in China's early reception of photography, see Laikwan Pang, *The Distorting Mirror: Visual Modernity in China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 69-101.
53. See various entries in Liu Yazi et al., *Nanshe congke* 南社叢刻, 8 vols. (Yangzhou: Jiangsu guangling guji keyinshe, 1996).
54. Ye Yusen, "Ti Zimei xiaoying liushou," in Liu, *Nanshe congke*, 4:3144. Ziye (Midnight) in the line 2 is the name of a singing girl in the Six Dynasties period. A repertory of love poems in quatrain form are named after her.
55. The photo of Lu lying on the couch was included in *Zimei ji*, but the image quality is too poor to be reproduced here.
56. For instance, in Xu Zhenya's 徐枕亞 popular novel *Yu li hun* 玉梨魂 (Jade pear spirit), the female protagonist Liniang has a photo of herself

in Victorian style dress, which she uses to stir the feelings of the male character. Xu Zhenya, *Yu li hun* (Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 1986).

57. Li Shangyin, *Li Shangyin shige jijie* 李商隱詩歌集解 (An annotation of Li Shangyin's poetry), ed. Liu Xuekai 劉學鍇 and Yu Shucheng 余恕誠, 5 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988), 2:401.
58. This famous Tang poet Li Shangyin was popular among late Qing poets. *Jiju*, which demonstrates the poet's ability to harness the poetic reservoir, is a respected poetic subgenre. For a discussion of *Nanshe* poets' practice of *jiju*, see Lin Xiangling 林香伶 [Lin Hsiang-Ling], *Nanshe wenxue zhonglun* 南社文學綜論 (An overview of the Southern Society) (Taipei: Liren shuju, 2009), 382-405.
59. Roland Barthes, *Image-Music-Text* (London: Fontana 1997), 39. Italics in the original.
60. Bill Nichols, *Ideology and the Image: Social Representation in Cinema and Other Media* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 57.
61. Liu, *Chunhang ji*, 47.
62. Liu, *Nanshe congke*, 2:1481.
63. Liu, *Nanshe congke*, 2:1481; Liu Yazi, *Mojianshi shici ji* 磨劍室詩詞集 (Poems of Mojianshi), 2 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1985), 1:158. Other examples include "Zimei suoti zuizhong heying, shuaicheng yijue" 子美索題醉中合影, 率成一絕, 191; "Bie Zimei yizai, oujian qieyan, de jiushi heshe xiaoying yifu, ganti liangjue" 別子美一載, 偶儉篋衍, 得舊時合攝小影一幅, 感題兩絕, 205; "Ti Zimei xiaoying" 題子美小影, 206; "Ti Henghai beiju zhong Zimei shi Zhang Dihua huazhuang xiaoying" 題恨海悲劇中子美飾張棣華化妝小影, 207.
64. See the poems in Liu, *Mojianshi shici ji*: "Zeng Chunhang" 贈春航, 222; "Bie Zimei yizai, oujian qieyan, de jiushi heshe xiaoying yifu, ganti liangjue," 205; "De Zimei haishangshu queji" 得子美海上書卻寄, 201; "Zimei suoti zuizhong heying, suaicheng yijue," 191.
65. The couplet alludes to Fan Li's 范蠡 story and his reclusive life with the beautiful girl Xishi 西施 in the legend. See also another poem in Liu, *Mojianshi shici ji*, 197: "Jiangqu haishang liubie Chunhang, Jianxie Chen Feishi, Yu Jianhua, Pang Bozi, Jiang Kesheng, Shen Daofei, Wang Chunnong, Lian Yatang zhuzi, jibu xishang lianjuyun" 將去海上留別春航, 兼謝陳匪石, 俞劍華, 龐檗子, 姜可生, 沈道非, 王蕈農, 連雅堂諸子, 即步席上聯句韻.
66. *Taipingyang bao*, July 12, 1912.
67. See for instance, Liu Yazi's counter attack on Zhu Xi 朱璽, in Yang

and Wang, *Nanshe shi changbian*, 496-498. See also Liu Yazi, "Wo yu Zhu Yuanchu de gongan" 我與朱鴛鶵的公案, *Nanshe jilue*, 149-154.

68. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 1-2. Sedgwick points out that "homosocial desire" is "potentially erotic," and paradoxically can "be characterized by intense homophobia, fear and hatred of homosexuality" (p. 1-2).
69. Sedgwick's theories have been contested. For example, while evoking Sedgwick's ideas, Sophie Volpp also argues against her. In Volpp's case study, the homoerotic desire expressed in the Ziyun poems is not suppressed; rather, she argues that both "the flouting of conventional boundaries of status" and "the transgression of heteroerotic norms" work to fashion homosocial bonds (p. 973). Sophie Volpp, "The Literary Circulation of Actors in Seventeenth-Century China;" see also Sophie Volpp, "Classifying Lust: The Seventeenth-Century Vogue for Male Love," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 61.1 (2001): 77-117.
70. In her insightful discussion of *The Peony Pavilion* (Mudan ting 牡丹亭), Wai-yee Li makes an interesting point in suggesting that Du Liniang's passion was not determined by the character of the scholar literati, Liu Mengmei. Whether Liu is worthy of love or not is beside the point. Such detachment from the object of desire even while celebrating a passionate feeling for it is characteristic of the discourse of *qing* in the late Ming era. Wai-yee Li, *Enchantment and Disenchantment*, 47-88; esp. 52.
71. There were female poets in the Southern Society, but they were either excluded or refused to participate. It is interesting to note that Xu Zihua 徐自華 (1873-1935), a female poet, wrote a poem compliment-ing Liu Yazi's fascination with Feng and in it alluded to the male friendship of Li Bai and Wang Lun, refusing to write in an erotically charged tone. See Xu Zihua, "Ti lumei ji" 題陸梅集, in Liu, *Nanshe congke*, 3:2172.
72. See "Yunlang xiaoshi" 雲郎小史 and "Jiuqing tuyong" 九青圖詠, in Zhang Cixi 張次溪, ed., *Qingdai Yandu liyuan shiliao: Zhengxu bian* 清代燕都梨園史料: 正續編 (Historical materials of the theater in the Qing dynasty) (Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 1991), 2:955-1001.
73. Sophie Volpp, "The Literary Circulation of Actors in Seventeen-Century China," 952. For an insightful discussion of the theory of gifts in anthropology and its application in Chinese studies, see Yunxiang Yan, *The Flow of Gifts: Reciprocity and Social Networks in a Chinese Village* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 1996), 1-21. For a detailed

discussion of Chen Weisong's circle and their literati cultivations, see Mao Wenfang 毛文芳, *Tucheng xingle: Ming Qing wenren huaxiang tiyong xilun* 圖成行樂: 明清文人畫像題詠析論 (The painting of leisure: On the inscriptions on paintings by Ming and Qing literati) (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 2008), 341-460.

74. Sophie Volpp, "The Literary Circulation of Actors in Seventeen-Century China," esp. 963-972.
75. See Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*: *The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies* (1954; repr. New York: Routledge, 1990).
76. Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," in Rayna R. Reiter, ed., *Toward an Anthology of Women* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), 157-210; esp.172.
77. Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women," 174.
78. Appadurai, "Commodities and the Politics of Value," 4. See also Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process," in Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things*, 64-94.
79. See Yao, *Juyingji chuanqi*, 162-177.
80. Cited in Yao, *Yao Yuanchu shengmo*, 162.
81. Another example occurred in late spring of 1915, when Feng Chunhang played the passionate role of Feng Xiaoqing in the opera *Feng Xiaoqing* 馮小青 (whose plot is based on a legendary female talent who died young). Liu Yazi, Gao Xie 高燮 (1878-1958), Yao Shizi 姚石子 (1891-1945) and about ten other members spent more than twenty days in Hangzhou, where they watched Feng's performances, drank, went sight-seeing at the West Lake, and held a formal gathering of the Southern Society. They even set up a commemorative stone in honor of Feng Chunhang's performance beside the tomb of Feng Xiaoqing at Gushan mountain, composing poems to commemorate this event, as well as shedding tears over the tragic fate of a talented girl and her modern day incarnation. In *Sanzi youcao* 三子游草 (Travel notes of three literati), a collection written by Liu, Gao Xie and Yao Shizi, more than thirty poems on Feng Chunhang's performance of Feng Xiaojing are included. See Yang and Wang, *Nanshe shi changbian*, 391; Gao Xie et al., *Sanzi youcao* (1915).
82. Michel Hockx, *Questions of Style: Literary Societies and Literary Journals in Modern China, 1911-1937* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 33-46.
83. Haiyan Lee, "All the Feelings That Are Fit to Print: The Community of Sentiment and the Literary Public Sphere in China, 1900-1918," *Modern China* 27.3 (2001): 291-327; and see 321.
84. See Liu Na's discussion of this sentimental era. Liu Na 劉納, *Shanbian:*

Xinhai geming shiqi zhi Wusi shiqi de Zhongguo wenxue 嬗變: 辛亥革命時期至五四時期的中國文學 (Transformation: Chinese literature from the Xinhai Revolution to the May Fourth) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue, 1998), esp. 110-142.

85. Liu, *Nanshe congke*, 4:2763.

86. Wang Dezhong, "Yu Liu Yazi shu" 與柳亞子書, in Hu Pu'an 胡樸安, ed., *Nanshe congxuan* 南社叢選 (Selected works of the Southern Society) (Beijing: Jiefangjun wenyi chubanshe, 2000), 1:377.