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Reinterpreting “Lovesickness” in Late Chosŏn Literature

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Asian Languages and Cultures

by

Janet Yoon-sun Lee

2014

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Reinterpreting “Lovesickness” in Late Chosŏn Literature

By Janet Yoon-sun Lee

Doctor of Philosophy in Asian Languages and Cultures

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Peter H. Lee, Chair

My dissertation concerns the development of the literary motif of “lovesickness” (*sangsa pyŏng*) in late Chosŏn narratives. More specifically, it examines the correlation between the expression of feelings and the corporeal symptoms of lovesickness as represented in Chosŏn romance narratives and medical texts, respectively, of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As the convergence of literary and medical discourse, lovesickness serves as a site to define both the psychological and physical experiences of love, implying the correlation between mind and body in the non-Western tradition.

The analysis itself is re-categorized into the discussions of the feeling and the body. In the discussion of the feeling, it will be argued that the feeling of longing not only occupies an important position in literature, but also is gendered and structured in lyrics and narratives of the seventeenth century. In addressing the rubric of feelings of “longing,” this part seeks the

theoretical grounds of how the intense experience of longing is converted to language of love and to bodily symptoms to constitute the knowledge of lovesickness.

The second part concerns the representation of lovesick characters in Korean romance, particularly concerning the body politics of the Chosŏn society. So I examine both emotional and physical pains of characters who pursue the romantic goals of love and marriage and illuminate the nature of conflicts, also moved on to the medical sphere beyond the literary imagination. While this study offers readers an introduction to the diversity of conditions included under the banner of lovesickness in the seventeenth century Korea, I argue that this discourse of lovesickness serves as a site for Chosŏn period readers to conceptualize "romantic love." Within the confines of a Confucian society that limited relations between men and women, I contend that, rather than perceiving characters involved in romance as mere victims of love within an oppressive culture, these works reveal the complex negotiations between the body and the mind, gender ideals and sexual desire, and romantic love and Confucian ideology.

The dissertation of Janet Yoon-sun Lee is approved.

John B. Duncan

Jean-Claude Carron

Richard E. Strassberg

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Introduction

This dissertation explores romance, love, and lovesickness in seventeenth century Korean narratives, focusing on the representations of "love" and its varied emotional and physiological experiences as real illness or "lovesickness." In the representations of lovesickness, the experience of love is often accompanied by symptoms of discomfort and illuminates somatic, physical symptoms from the effects of love. Lovesickness engages with detectable symptoms: the palpable, visible, and tangible manifestations of an emotional and physical reality.

Lovesickness has been a powerful theme in the Western literary cannon, especially in association with its ideals of courtly culture. Yet it is not exclusively a Western experience. It assumes particular significance within different contexts and factors and functions as a key term that unravels the intersecting emotions of love, desire, and passion. Although this dissertation seeks to describe lovesickness as a universal motif in literature, it also aims to provide an alternative analysis of its representation vis-à-vis specific literary examples taken from seventeenth century Korea. My work addresses *sangsa pyŏng* 相思病 (lovesickness) within mid-to late-Chosŏn period literature. In this dissertation, I locate the language of lovesickness within this literary context and examine the relationship between the feeling of longing prominent in literary tradition and the body embodying a complex array of affectionate feelings.

My dissertation is based on my observation that although there is an increasing

interest in gender, emotion, and body within Korean area studies, lovesickness has been primarily perceived as a minor, repetitive motif in literature and consequently, has barely been given scholarly attention. However, I intend to draw on the idiosyncratic conception of lovesickness as a rich nexus of those fleeting concepts at the convergence of literary and medical discourses. Simultaneously, this study considers Confucian norms and gender politics as important components in understanding lovesickness in premodern Korea, as my work illuminates the complex web of meanings embedded in the discursive construction of lovesickness.

The presence of lovesickness has aroused general and popular recognition, but its expression as discourse raises the complex question of representation. Not only does it tie implicit, internalized feelings to visible physical symptoms, but the representations of lovesickness reveals what is intended, as well as distorted, in the processes of reconstructing in language a narrative that surpasses, even replaces everyday truth. In other words, the representations of lovesick characters are presumed to exalt love as intensely pure and naive, but, paradoxically, it also bears political and polemic implications. Lovesickness allows characters to find a way to empower themselves, not only by resisting social conventions, but also by embracing—to excess—certain official norms and canonical expressions.

While addressing the dilemma and conundrums of lovesick characters, this dissertation is divided into two different sections: the "construction" of lovesickness in late Chosŏn, and the "representation" of lovesick characters in romance narratives. Specifically, the first two chapters—the fist which concerns the birth of lovesickness in romance and the

second, the feeling of longing—explore the meanings of feeling of longing and link them to expressions of desire. The last two chapters—one on lovesick heroes and the other on deaths of lovesick heroines—reexamine the issues revolving around gendered representations of lovesick characters in romance stories.

Objective of Study

Lovesickness is not only a term for sickness born of excessive love, but belongs to the categories of the old, outdated, or feudal, as studies of "love" in modern fiction mentions that it is no longer a frequently-used trope or concept. Even though it may not be true in all cases, lovesickness, in a literal sense, involves the process in which reciprocal affection and yearning, exchanged and confirmed by two parties, encounters critical problems in consummating the relationship. Therefore, the term implies the condition in which one courts, loves, or marries with limit or measure, while a third party plays a significant role in intervening in the relationship.

Korean romance, particularly dealing with the theme of love, is said to arrive under the influences of folk narratives of local culture and Chinese stories, i.e. *chuanqi* (Tales of wonder). The distinctive feature of romance is the development of conflicts with societal conventions and norms rooted in Confucian tradition, and the Confucian context is considered important due to its significant role in the formation of past societies. Historically, the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910) underwent cultural and social transformations through the adoption of Neo-Confucianism as state ideology, and the

settlement of Confucian doctrine functions to ensconce the social system and standardize arranged marriage, gender norms, and the patriarchal family structure. The constitution of those systems is frequently considered as the major oppressor or hindrance in the onset of ideas of free courtship and love marriage.

The critical reading of the role of Confucianism was thoroughly examined by modern critics and scholars particularly during the early twentieth century. Yi Kwangsu (1892-1950), considered to be a father figure of modern Korean literature, strived to define literature as a means to help the Korean people to achieve the necessary cultural and social development to be qualified as a modern nation. To produce a great literature, he placed emphasis on individual freedom to express thoughts and emotions[1] and also promote the ideas of "love marriage" (*chayu kyŏrhon*) and "free love" (*chayu yŏnae*). As critics and writers were prompted to demand the necessity of "romantic love" in Korea, while regarding arranged marriage and Confucian tradition as abusive of human rights and an evil from the past, Yi's writing accordingly posits freedom of love, self-sacrifice, and decency, reminiscent of the western concept of love, while denouncing the Confucian principles as they are assumed to penetrate individual lives and restrain the Korean people's autonomous choice of love and marriage.

Such a view drums up hostility against Confucian culture and persists in our understanding of love and romance as a literary genre. Seemingly, it arrives at the conclusion of two extremes: the wholesale condemnation of the Confucian norms and the

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[1] Yi Kwangsu, "Munhakiran hao," in *Yi Kwangsu chŏnjip* (Samjungdang, 1963), 510.

celebration of emancipatory moments in passionate love. While Confucianism is envisioned as a curb on courtship, intimacy, and love, the romantic characters are encoded as symbols of resistance against the social or cultural norms. In other words, romance tends to fulfill one's fantasy, but it is also loaded with the overtones of subversive messages. Often romance locates an individual character's search for true love. As its progress deepens the internal and external conflicts between characters and society, the characters are torn between the value of romantic love and the Confucian value, such as loyalty or filial piety.[2] Otherwise, it seems to problematize the role of Confucianism in enforcing a marriage system that does not sanction the urge to love someone of the lover's own choice,[3] and characters are deprived of the opportunity "to wed without parental permission (不告而娶)."[4] Instead, their duty is to promote the homogeneity of marriage pattern and preservation of family line. Either with the Confucian value or marriage system, the stories appear to expose the opposition between romantic love and the Confucian norms and even prolong the notion that "the Confucian social order cannot be the power per se, but, as long as Chosŏn society was firmly built on that ideological base,

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[2] See Kim Illyŏl, *Chosŏnjo sosŏl ŭi kujo wa ŭimi* (The structure and significance in fiction of the Chosŏn dynasty) (Hyŏngsŏlch'ulp'ansa, 1984).

[3] Kim Yŏnho, "Chosŏn hugi aejŏng sosŏl e kuhyŏn toen kŭndaesŏng," (Modernity in love stories in late Chosŏn), in *Hanguk munhak ŭi yŏnsoksŏng* (Kukhak charyowŏn, 2006), 203-239.

[4] The idiom is from *Mencius* 9:2 "Wan Chang asked, saying, the poem says, how is a wife wed? Father and mother must be told. Shun, more than anyone, should have believed this saying: then why did Shun wed without telling? Mencius said, He could not have wed if he had told. The great tie among men is the house life of man and wife. If Shun has told he would have set at naught this great tie, to the reproach of his father and mother. So he did not tell." -- *Mencius*, Leonard A. Lyall, trans. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1932, 138.

all forms of power struggles are more or less rooted in the Confucian base."[5]

While a complex political, ideological, and social concept, in literary studies Confucian culture is often identified as the origin of conflicts in romance narratives, and is considered important as part of the attempt by Korean scholars to uncover progressive ideas embedded in the texts and to reveal the changing notion of love in relation to social reality.[6] As male and female characters pursue a romance and persist in maintaining the relationship within and against the conventional social system, the texts are often interpreted to imply a break with tradition and a sign or precursor of the birth of *kŭndaesŏng* (modernity). The defining of modernity in romance stories was theoretically supported by the arrival of the "Internal Development Theory" (*naejaejŏk palchŏnnon*), which enjoyed great popularity among Korean historians from the 1970s to the 1980s. In the context of debates about the modernization of Korea, Internal Development Theory resisted critiques, especially from colonial-period scholars, that the Korean people were incapable of breaking the bonds that tied them to the premodern tradition, ties that resulted in or explained Korea's lack of capability to become a modern society.[7] In opposition to this notion, Korean scholars became committed to reclaiming an original basis for their own modernity in the traditional past.

Literary scholars, especially those influenced by western theories during the time,

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[5] Chŏng Chongdae, *Yŏmgjŏng sosŏl kujo yŏngu* (A study of the structure of love stories) (Kyemyŏng munhwasa, 1990), 142. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

[6] Pak Iryong, *Chosŏn sidae ŭi aejŏng sosŏl* (Love stories during the Chosŏn period) (Chimmundang, 1993).

[7] James Palais, "A Search for Korean Uniqueness," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 55:2 (1995): 410.

welcomed the frameworks of "internal development" that provides an outlook for the possibility of autonomous modernization of Korea, agreeing on a scheme to locate late Chosŏn society as a period of dynamism for the transformation into modern nationhood.[8] Some scholars attempted to define male or female subjectivities to highlight contexts and texts of individual lives. For example, in the case of the canonical *The Tale of Ch'unhyang*, involving a love affair between a male aristocrat and a female entertainer, has been re-read as part of effort to locate the "sprouts" of modernity in the Chosŏn period. Likewise romance stories are often reconstructed to underline the autonomy of female entertainers, not simply rendered to satisfy male fantasy. It has been argued that characters have spaces to pretend to fall in love in order to produce a profit, as their sexuality served as a means to economic prosperity, or a means to achieve higher social standing through marriage with the upper class. These features are also translated into a formation of a sense of *chaŭisik* 自意識 (self-consciousness), frequently suggested as a prominent characteristic of literary modernism.[9] Conclusively, such an array of arguments is dedicated to the demand of new recognition of the modern value of Korean life and culture and identifying the features of Korean modernity in the premodern narratives.

However, recent studies have become increasingly skeptical about such a tendency in scholarship that conflates romance with anti-Confucian ideas or modern concepts.

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[8] One of the examples is Cho Tongil's *Hanguk munhak t'ongsa* (Comprehensive history of Korean literature). This five-volumn book, demonstrating that Korean literary history follows the historical changes from ancient to feudal, from feudal to modern society, has occupied a central place in the canon of Korean scholarship.

[9] See Cho Kwangguk, *Hanguk munhwa wa kinyŏ* (Korean culture and female entertainers). (Wŏrin, 2004).

Some scholars aim at providing an alternative to literary studies, positing the notion of "multiplicity" in Korea's modernity,[10] addressing the concept of "post-medieval"[11] in analyzing premodern texts, or defining the new kinds of aesthetics in conventional writings to assess the texts independently from the overarching logic of developmental modernity. This study, in a similar vein, is intended to conceptualize romantic love and lovesickness in the seventeenth century Korean romance outside the tendency to see seeds of modernity in the medieval. I also aim to recapture complexity in understanding the relationship between the individual and the official norms and conventions and deconstructing lineal history, by looking in between the layers of resistance and dominance. Especially, this study engages in interpretations of lovesick characters, while configuring lovesick characters and reexamining the normative values attached to Confucian ideology, central to understanding perceptions of gender and the reinterpretation of male and female bodies.

[10] For example, Kang Myŏnggwan, KoMisuk, and Chŏng Ch'ulhŏn are pioneering scholars, taking a critical stance against conventional literary scholarship in this period. These scholars stated that the studies of late Chosŏn literature are still haunted by the influence of the internal development theory, and therefore the new examination of such concepts of chungse (medieval) and kŭndae (modern) need to be reworked and revised. KoMisuk, *Hanguk ŭi kŭndaesŏng, kŭ kiwŏn ŭl ch'ajasŏ* (Modernity of Korea: A Search of its Origin) (Ch'aeksesang, 2001); Kang Myŏnggwan, *Kungmunhak kwa minjok kŭrigo kŭndae* (Korean Literature, Nation, and Modernity) (Somyŏngch'ulp'an, 2007); Kang Sangsun, "Hanguk kojŏn munhak yŏngu e suyong doen t'al kŭndae, t'al minjok tamnon e taehan pip'anjŏk koch'al" (Rethinking 'Post-modernism' and 'Post-nationalism' in studies of premodern Korean literature), *Minjok munhwa yŏngu* 53 (2010): 101-155.

[11] Ko Misuk, "Chosŏn hugi pip'yŏng tamnon ŭi tukaji hŭrŭm" (Two mainstreams in literary criticism and discourse of late Chosŏn), *Taedong munhwa yŏngu* 41 (2002): 1-25.

Love and Gender

One of the main discussions in what follows concerns theories of gender in relation to the topics of the feeling, illness, and the body, and explores how the Confucian orthodox view affects the ideas of "gender" in relation to heterosexual love described in romance. Conventionally, ideas of gender often entail hierarchical implication, as it sees man and woman as inherently different and opposing, as suggested by the *yin* and *yang* theory. The division and categorization of *yin*–woman and *yang*–man also suggest the sexual grid of man and woman in terms of their roles, behaviors, spaces, and bodies. While the main discussion of my study centers on gender in the Confucian framework, a close reading of romance stories will also provide new findings that point to continuities but also show divergences from the established norms of gender.

For example, in "Simhwa yot'ap" 心火繞塔 (Heart fire coiling around a pagoda), a story contained in the *Sui chŏn* 殊異傳 (Tales of the Extraordinary), Chigwi is a petty officer of the common class in Silla. One day, he becomes lovesick after seeing Queen Sŏndŏk 善德女王 (fl. 702~737). When the queen heard of Chigwi's fervor for her, she summoned him to a monastery. Chigwi was excited to meet the queen and waited for her at the foot of a pagoda but regrettably fell asleep. Finding him sleeping at the foot of the stairs, the queen removed her bracelet and placed it on his chest. When Chigwi found that the queen already left during his sleep, his anger turned him into fire, igniting from his heart where the queen's bracelet was placed. The burning fire arose from his body and coiled around the pagoda. Since then, Chigwi wandered the earth as a fire demon. To

console Chigwi's soul and protect people from fire accidents, the queen ordered a song of incantation:

> The fire in Chigwi's heart
> consumed his body, and he became a fire-ghost.
> Let him be exiled over the ocean,
> neither appearing here nor being intimate with me.[12]

The story explains the birth of a fire demon who was once a man of passionate love but became an evil character. His platonic love was appreciated by the queen, who acknowledged the man's passion with the reward of her bracelet. While Queen Sŏndŏk is ennobled by her being desired and beloved, Chigwi's anxiety and frustration leads him to be reborn as a fire demon. The image of burning fire, symbolizing Chigwi's flammable passion and desire, also reveals that emotional disturbance can be extended to physical transformation. As a lovesick man, Chigwi is reborn and re-imagined as an icon of passionate love. But, at the same time, he is a fire demon who intimidates the community with fearful power. His transformation thus symbolizes the greatness of love but also the morbidity of his overpowered passion that leads to devastation and reflects the social anxiety of wooing men.

The term "lovesickness" itself correlates between emotional trouble and physical change, but also is concerned with gendered relationship. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, lovesickness means "being overwhelmed by especially unrequited or

[12] Cho Suhak, ed. *Chaegusŏng Sui chŏn* (*Reconstruction of Sui chŏn*) (Kukak charyowŏn, 2001), 32-33. For English translation, see Frits Vos, "Tales of the Extraordinary: An Inquiry into the Contents, Nature, and Authorship of the *Sui chŏn*," *Korean Studies* 5 (1981): 11.

unfulfilled love; languishing for or with love.” Descriptively, it is a symptom resulting from or displaying evidence of being in love, which is truly omnipresent and universal. At the same time, the Korean epistemology of lovesickness is seen as different from such descriptions. The *P’yojun kugŏ taesajŏn* (Standard Korean dictionary) defines *sangsa pyŏng* as an illness of both sexes caused by intense longing.

> 상사병 (相思病)
> [명사] 남자나 여자가 마음에 둔 사람을 몹시 그리워 하는 데서 생기는 마음의 병
>
> *Sangsa pyŏng*
> [noun] an illness caused when one has someone in mind and longs for him or her.

If we dissect the word, the first syllable, *sang* (C. *xiang*) means “mutual” or “reciprocal,” and the second *sa* (C. *si*) means “to think” or “to long for,” or as a noun, “thought” or “the feeling of longing.” In sum, the literal translation of *sangsa pyŏng* means “sickness caused by intense longing taking place in reciprocal relationship, especially between man and woman.”[13]

In Korea and China, the term implies a general sense of lovesickness of universal understanding. Unlike the view that regards lovesickness as bodily symptoms or the result of unrequited or rejected love or the absence of the beloved, the term, as a derivative of the expression of *sangsa*, has been conceptualized with its weight on the feeling—

[13] As a compound noun, *sangsa* is combined into compound structures with various nouns: *sangsapyŏng* (illness), *sangsahwa* (flower of lovesickness), *sangsach'o* (cigarettes), *sangsa ma* (lovesick horse), and *sangsagok* (a song of lovesickness), for examples.

lovesickness first comes as a feeling and then transfers to the body. At the same time, it stresses heterosexual love as a precondition of lovesickness.

In the earlier collection of *Soushen ji* 搜神記 (The Stories of the Supernatural), for example, "Han Bing's Story" offers insight into the relationship that the term suggests. In the story, Han Bing is a steward to Prince Kang of the Sung. He marries a beautiful woman whom Prince Kang also covets. When Han admonishes that the prince should not seduce his wife, the prince gets angry and throws Han Bing into jail. Han's wife writes her husband a letter with an encoded message of constant longing, but the letter is intercepted by the prince, and Han Bing kills himself in despair. After Han's death, the wife hangs herself over the edge of the terrace. Before she dies, she writes the message on her sash, "The prince would benefit from my living, but I benefit from my death. Please send my body to be buried with Han Bing."[14] The angry prince refuses to respect her wish and orders the graves of Han Bing and his wife to be placed far away from each other. Between the two graves, two catalpa trees begin to grow within a day. People soon see the trees with their roots entwined and their branches inclined toward each other, and thereafter call them *xiangsi shu* 相思樹*,* literally "trees that long for each other," as evidence of mutual devotion and love that transcends even the borders of death, while carrying a subversive sense of criticism of the abusive power of the high officials as an evil that weakens the conjugal bond.

[14] Gan Bao, *In Search of the Supernatural: The Written Record*, trans. Kenneth J. De Woskin and J. I. Crump (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 137.

The significance of the marital bond between husband and wife in this story shares a similarity with "The Wife of Tomi" in the chapters of "biographies" (列傳) in the *Samguk yusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms). Set in the reign of King Kaeru (128–166) of the kingdom of Paeche, the story tells that the king hears that Tomi has a wife of extraordinary beauty and chastity. As he wanted to test Tomi's wife, the curious king summons Tomi to the court, and demands that Tomi give his wife to him. However, Tomi remonstrates with the king that "one cannot fathom another's mind, but your subject's wife will remain true even in the pain of death."[15] The outraged king detains Tomi at court and visits Tomi's wife to seduce her. The wife deceives him, saying that she cannot have sex during her menstrual period. As soon as she can, she escapes from the king. She reaches the shore, where she only has to jump into a skiff, as she finds her husband there, already blinded by the king during his torture. The couple takes a boat and flees together to the kingdom of Koguryŏ, where they live until death separates them.

In the given contexts, the term *sangsa* is employed to describe mutual longing formed on the basis of a marital relationship, as both stories depict couples resisting against the intervention of the royal power. In comparing these stories, both portray the prince or the king as an abusive character who menaces the conjugal bond. The more forceful the temptation is, the more devoted the couple becomes, but the stories alike conclude with the victory of fidelity and love of the married couple. While the connotations of the term were conveyed through the narratives of the relationship of

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[15] "Tomi's Wife," in Seo Daeseok and Peter H. Lee, trans. *Oral Literature of Korea* (Jimmundang, 2005), 208.

husband and wife, the use of *sangsa* gradually came to be detached from the original sense and was applied to other relationships. The expression is also suggested in the poem of Ki Taesŭng (1527–1572) to denote deep sorrow and regret. In farewell to Min Sŏch'o, having departed for a new post in the Hamgyŏng province, Ki wrote:

Your face was like a piece of jade. 之子面如玉
Now you are gone away to the border. 關河今遠征
You had the finest taste of the arts. 風流幕下盛
Your mind like icy snow showed clarity. 氷雪胸中淸
On your way, stations are filled with flowers competing to bloom. 驛路花爭發
Over the blue tides, the moon would be still bright. 滄波月欲明
We will exchange words, longing for each other. 相思應寄字
Still it brings me into tears, thinking of your parting. 相送一含情[16]

The expression again emphasizes the significance of mutuality as equal regard and equal condition, and employs the sacrificial moment in the text. Yet, the parting from Min, in this poem, is likened to a love poem of wooing the beloved, particularly in the lines where the poet praises the beauty of the love object.

The term captures the major tensions underlying the conventional meaning of mutual longing of man and woman when it is applied to friendship. As another example, a

[16] Ki Taesŭng, "送閔都事赴咸鏡幕恕初" (Farewell to Governor Min going to the barrack of Hamgyŏng province), *Kobong chip* 1, Institute for the Translation of Korean Classics, http://www.db.itkc.or.kr (accessed 3-29-2013).

poem of Im Ch'un (1109-1146) of Koryŏ, also revisits the expression of *sangsa* as he laments on Hwang Poyŏn's leaving for the distant land.[17]

A letter has arrived with a wild goose.	憑仗秋鴻寄一書
which displays your finest skills (of writing).	銀鉤鐵點巧縈紆
I don't grumble about getting old alone in a foreign land,	那嫌遠謫身空老
since I realize that my *sangsa pyŏng* is incurable.	已覺相思病未蘇
Maybe I am feeling melancholic from humid air.	我在瘴濱聊鬱結
When I think of you, you also have unfortunate destiny.	君言世路亦崎嶇
but do not think that you weep alone in a distance.	異鄉莫怪長垂泣
Landscape is no different from it used to be.	風景從來也不殊

This stanza shows that the expression is not only bound to the romantic relationship, but also describes friendship between Im Ch'un and Hwang Poyŏn. Here, the expression of *sangsa* is used to embellish the interpersonal male bond.

Lovesickness is also found in the context of the mother and son relationship. In a petition of Yi Towŏn, Yi appeals to King Chŏngjo (1752–1800) because Sin Ch'ŏsu, a former royal advisor, has been sent into exile and his mother is lovesick: "What a child can do for his parents is to feed and nurture them. But, it has been three years since the mother and the son have been separated from each other. The old woman, weeping night and day, is now in the grave condition of *sangsa pyŏng*. As days go by, she becomes weak and shivers with fear. Often lying sick in bed, she hopes to hear good news that she can meet

[17] Im Ch'un, "代書答皇甫淵" (My reply to Hwang Poyŏn), in *Sŏha sŏnsaeng Im Ch'un sijip* (Poetry collection of Im Ch'un), trans. Kim Chinyŏng and An Yŏnghun (Minsogwŏn, 1998), 390-391.

her son again before she dies."[18] It is suggested that the mother's intensity of longing affects her physical body so she developed lovesickness for her own son.

These examples all show that although the expression initially referred to the conjugal relationship, it has also encompassed the descriptions of an intimate relationship of friends and family members. Not only confined to the romantic relationship, therefore, the expression implies various relationships on the basis of mutual love and devotion. But, if such a concept is applied in romance in which the plot of loving and being loved adds richness and complexity, how do the ideas of lovesickness develop into an exclusive signifier of male and female relationship?

Judith Butler has rejected the monolithic pattern of regarding gender as a signifier of determined values and meanings and approaches the concept in terms of the process of construction and performance, arguing that "gender is culturally constructed; hence, gender is neither the causal result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex."[19] Inspired by this notion, this study will reveal the points of permutations of the dominant gender culture in specific individual cases in the stories. This study will thus contribute to cultural studies of gender, emotion, and body, investigating the ways in which lovesick characters in seventeenth century Korean romance found themselves bound up in conflicting ideas about love.

A gendered reading of the discourse of lovesickness also contributes to our

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[18] "肉以貽其親含餌之樂而母子相別今至三年老人日夜涕泣相思病日益衖朝夕凜凜常於床第中以未死相見爲祝聞者" from "修撰李度遠上疏" (Petition by Royal Editor, Yi Towŏn), *Konggŏmunch'ong*, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies, at http://kyujanggak.snu.ac.kr (accessed 5-12-2013).

[19] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 9.

understanding of the sexualized body. Often the philosophical distinction between feeling (mind) and body is reflected in the Cartesian notion of partition between psychical and somatic domains. It has derived from the Western cultural legacy of primacy of reason and the reviling of the body. With Descartes' (1596-1650) proclamation of rational consciousness (*cogito*) as a faculty unique to humans, the body was assigned to a subordinate position vis-à-vis the *cogito* and was thus conceived as inessential, marginal, and sexualized materiality. Against the Cartesian idea, this dissertation challenges that subordinate positioning of the body, by advancing bodily existence as "a locus of power."[20] While Foucault's conceptions of the body are focused on the body that is surveyed, normalized, disciplined, and policed, this study considers the body as a site of incessant and fierce interplay between a subject and power. The body will be conceived here as "embodying of possibilities both conditioned and circumscribed by historical convention,"[21] thereby reconstituting the body as a nexus of culture and discourse with various possibilities of interpretation.

Sources

This study is intended to focus on representations of lovesickness in literary texts, particularly seventeenth century stories. It also draws freely from diverse sources,

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[20] Michel Foucault, *Power / Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Writings 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 172.

[21] Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," in Katie Conboy, et al. eds. *Writing on the Body: Female Embodiment and Feminist Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 404.

including fictional romance, oral literature, and medical histories, to uncover lovesickness's definition, function, and symbolization.

First, I will draw on the stories of romance that most arguments are based on and that constitute major works in late sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. Included are *Chusaeng chŏn* 周生傳 (Tale of Gentleman Chu), *Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn chŏn* 韋敬天傳 (Tale of Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn), *Sangsa-dong ki* 相思洞記 (Tale of *Sangsa*-dong), and *Unyŏng chŏn* 雲英傳 (Tale of Unyŏng). Since most works of fiction are anonymous, only a few stories can be dated. Researchers have agreed that *The Tale of Gentleman Chu* and *The Tale of Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn*[22] can be attributed to Kwŏn P'il.[23] Yi Myŏngsŏn first suggested in *Chosŏn munhak sa* (The literary history of Korea, 1947) that *The Tale of Gentleman Chu* was written by Kwŏn P'il. The debates have centered on the authorship because neither

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[22] In this dissertation, the story titles and character names originally in Chinese characters are read in Korean, although the stories are set in China.

[23] Kwŏn P'il is a key figure in understanding the production of romance stories and the networks of the authors in the seventeenth century. He was also an iconoclastic figure who avoided engaging in mainstream literature and chose to become an intellectual outsider. He was born in 1569 as the fifth son of KwŏnPyŏk 權擘 (1520-1593), a high-level official at the Ministry of Rites. He was often referred to by his penname, Sŏkchu 石洲, or his courtesy name, Yŏjang 汝章. He learned classics and poetry from the famous scholar-poet ChŏngCh'ŏl 鄭澈 (1536-1593). Also, he had close acquaintances with Yi Annul 李安訥 (1571-1636), an accomplished poet; Hŏ Kyun 許筠 (1569-1618), the author of *Hong Kiltong chŏn* 洪吉童傳 (The Tale of Hong Kiltong); and Cho Wihan 趙緯韓 (1567-1649), the author of *Ch'oe Ch'ŏk chŏn* 崔陟傳 (The Tale of Ch'oe Ch'ŏk). His mastery in poetry and other written forms smoothed the way for KwŏnP'il into the ranks of the Royal Confucian Academy. He passed the civil service examination at the age of nineteen and was nominated as the top of the second examination (*poksi*). However, he failed this exam when he was found to have miswritten one sinograph. At thirty-five he held his first official post as *Tongmong kyogwan* (Instruction officer of Juvenile Education) but soon resigned the position. From that time on, he lived as a retainer until he was implicated in factionalism because of the poem, "The willows of the palace," which was indicted for its allusion to the high-handedness of Yu Hŭibun (1564-1623), a maternal relative of Prince Kwanghae (1575-1641). After being severely questioned by the prince, he ended his life on his way to his place of exile at the age of forty-three.

story marks the author, nor were they mentioned in Kwŏn P'il's collected works.[24] Some argue that Kwŏn P'il penned *The Tale of Gentleman Chu*, but not *The Tale of Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn*, as the styles of the embedded poems show striking differences.[25] However, the controversy was settled when a North Korean edition was discovered with a mention of "Kwŏn Yŏjang" (Kwŏn's courtesy name) as the author. Chŏng Min discovered that in 1593 Kwŏn P'il had contact with a Chinese convoy, assumed to be Chu in the story, according to Kwŏn's personal writings and records.[26]

The existing editions of *The Tale of Gentleman Chu* are by the Kan Hoyun edition,[27] North Korea edition,[28] Kim Kugyŏng edition,[29] and other editions from Yi Honghŏn's and Chŏng Kyŏngju's collections. This dissertation refers to the Kim Kugyŏng edition only, published in Yi Sanggu's compilation of love tales of the seventeenth century.[30] My

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[24] Kim Illyŏl, "*Chusaeng chŏn* sogo" (Analysis of *Tale of Gentleman Chu*), *Ŏmun nonch'ong* 11 (1977): 171; Pak Hŭibyŏng, *Hanguk chŏngi sosŏl ŭi mihak* (The aesthetic of Korean *chuanqi*) (Tolbegae, 1997), 20-28; Chi Yŏnsuk, "*Chusaeng chŏn* ŭi Paedo yŏngu" (A study of Paedo in *The Tale of Gentleman Chu*), *Hanguk kojŏn munhak yŏngu* 28 (2005): 319.

[25] Im Hyŏngt'aek, "Chŏngi sosŏl ŭi aejŏng chuje wa *Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn chŏn*" (Exploration of the theme of love in *chuanqi* literature and "The Story of Wei Jingtian), *Tongyang hak* 22 (1992): 25-47.

[26] Chŏng Min, *Mongnŭng mundane kwa Sŏkchu Kwŏn P'il* (The literary circle of Mongnŭng and Kwŏn P'il) (T'aehaksa, 1999), 449-452; 499-509.

[27] Kan Hoyun, trans. *Sŏnhyŏn yuŭm* (Remnants of sound of ancient sages) (Ihoe, 2003), print edition and photographic edition.

[28] Yi Ch'ŏhwa, trans. *Hwamong chip* (Collection of dream of flowers) (P'yŏngyang: Chosŏn munhak yesulga dongmaeng ch'ulp'an sa, 1963). print edition.

[29] Kim Kugyŏng, *Hwasa, Chusaeng chŏn, Sŏdaeju chŏn* (The Story of flowers, The Tale of Gentleman Chu, The Tale of Lord of rats) (T'ongingwan, 1961). print edition.

[30] Yi Sanggu, *17-segi aejŏng chŏngi sosŏl* (The seventeenth century *chuanqi* stories of love) (Wŏrin, 1999).

analysis of *The Tale of Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn* is based on the only available edition provided by Im Hyŏngt'aek.[31] In cases of *The Tale of Unyŏng* and *The Tale of Sangsa-dong,* they are anonymous, only presumed to be of the seventeenth century. They are both compiled in the collection titled *Sambang yorogi* 三芳要路記 (Record of Three Fragrant Stories at the Post Station),[32] along with *Wang Kyŏngnyong chŏn* (Tale of Wang Kyŏngnyong). The first page lists "大明天啓二十二年 (1641)," probably the date of publication (or transcription). There is evidence that these stories were written in the seventeenth century, discovered by Pak Noch'un. According to this, Kwŏn Chŏn 權佺, a nephew of Kwŏn P'il, read *The Tale of Sangsa-dong* with his grandchildren while sick in bed, and a record of this was found in his collection, *Sŏngno yugo* 釋老遺稿 (Posthumous work of Kwŏn Chŏn).[33] This study refers to the National Library editions[34] for the two stories.

Second, popular literature will be an important source of this study. The exploration of popular discourse, including *yadam* (unofficial records) and *mindam* (folk stories), represents a critical body of history and literature of ordinary lives. In addition, I plan to

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print edition.

[31] The story is originally from the collection of *Kodam yoram* (Exploration of old stories) and the modern translation is attached in the article: Im Hyŏngt'aek, "Chŏngi sosŏl ŭi aejŏng chuje wa *Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn chŏn*," *Tongyang hak* 22 (1992). print edition.

[32] Scholars agree to see that the collection becomes available as a sequel of in the seventeenth century in Yi Taehyŏng, et al., trans. *Sambangnok* (Records of three flowers) (Pogosa, 2013).

[33] Pak Noch'un, "Kojŏn munhak kwangye kirok sam-p'yŏn" (The relationship among three works), *Sungjŏn Ŏmumhak* 5 (1976), 5, also quoted in Pak Iryong, "*Unyŏng chŏn* kwa *Sangsa dong ki* ŭi pigŭkchŏk sŏnggyŏk kwa kŭ sahoejŏk ŭimi (The tragic nature and social meanings in *Tale of Unyŏng* and *Tale of Sangsa-dong*), *Kungmun hak* 98 (1987): 183.

[34] The editions are also available in Yi Sanggu's compilation of the seventeenth century romance stories.

discuss unofficial records and literati collections, including *Yongjae ch'onghwa* 慵齋叢話 (Literary miscellany of Sŏng Hyŏn, 1525), which traces folk culture and narratives from the Koryŏ era; *Ŏu yadam* 於于野譚 (Unofficial histories of Yu Mongin, circa. 1559-1613), 138 stories in Chinese depicting various classes of the Chosŏn society; and *Sŏngho sasŏl* 星湖僿說 (Literary Miscellany by Yi Ik, 1740), an encyclopedic work from a radical scholar's view.

Third, medical treatises are important building blocks for this study, particularly in defining the causes of lovesickness as a medical topic. In dealing with medical treatises published and circulated in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, this study intends to identify the association of lovesickness in the field of medical culture with the literary constructions. Among the treatises, the four major medical works will be examined: *Hyangyak chipsŏngbang* 鄕藥集成方 (Comprehensive compilation of Korean medicine, 1433), *Ŭibang yuch'wi* 醫方類聚 (Classified compilation of medical prescriptions, 1445), *Tongŭi pogam* 東醫寶鑑 (Precious mirror of eastern medicine, 1610), and *Imwŏn kyŏngje chi* 林園經濟志 (Practical essays on rural administration), by Sŏ Yugu 徐有榘 (1764-–1854). The two chapters of Sŏ Yugu's collection, "Poyang chi" 葆養志 (Essays on care and nursing) and "Inje chi" 仁濟志 (Essays on benevolent relief), with a focus on medicine and treatment, are the second largest work on traditional medicine, based on broad and

comprehensive research on medical books.[35] These sources allow us to have access to knowledge of illness, sentiments, and gender and illuminate how feelings of longing are transferred to the physical body. Thus, they allow us to explore a crux between emotional and physical faculties in the medical approach to lovesickness. In examining how traditional medicine has observed, diagnosed, and treated the symptoms of lovesickness, I show how the gendered theories of *qi* (energy) and the differing ideas of male and female bodies yield different approaches to lovesickness.

Chapter Outline

In this dissertation, the analysis is categorized into the discussions first of feeling and then of the body. In the discussion of feeling, "longing" occupies an especially important position. While seeking the theoretical grounds of how the longing was transforming into visible symptoms of love, it will be argued that the feeling of longing constituted as a structured and gendered feeling in the interaction with the temporal and historical ambience and continues to discuss body politics in Confucian culture. In a phenomenological approach, I show how the body is in the process of doing, dramatizing, and reproducing a historical situation and works as an accomplishment of repetitive acts and performances.

Chapter One explores the literary context through the investigation of the birth of

[35] Especially, this volume is highly inspired by the medical treatises of *Sanyinjiyi bingzheng fang lun* 三因極一病證方論. See Yŏm Chŏngsŏp, et al. eds. *P'ungsŏk Sŏ Yugu wa Imwŏn kyŏngje chi* (Sŏ Yugu and his work of *Practical essays on rural administration*) (Sowadang, 2011), 75.

"lovesickness" in Korean romance and extends it through seventeenth-century romance stories. Identifying the genre of "romance" developing under the influence of Tales of wonder and structured in the narrative pattern of *caizi jiaren* (talented gentleman and beautiful maiden) evinces the place of Korean romance in literary history. I also address discursive changes in the romance of the seventeenth century in relation to the temporal events of foreign invasions and enforcement of Confucian ideology: the Korean romance no longer orients toward the theme of wish-fulfillment through supernatural and miraculous elements, but toward a realistic mode of literature. This chapter defines the seventeenth-century romance as moving beyond the dualism of fantasy and reality and giving rise to the idea of lovesickness.

Chapter Two explores the feelings of longing, embodied as a language of love, recorded in sixteenth to eighteenth century medical books as the primary cause of lovesickness. The expression of longing that emerged in lyrics and romance draws a connection between feelings and language. This chapter considers the cultural standardization and organization of emotion and explores how the organization intersects with the evaluation of literary convention. Here I focus on the expression of longing, in discourse, promoted as the dominant emotion of love and identified with the intent of ennobling the experience of romantic and sexual love in the expression of a nostalgic sentiment of longing.

Chapter Three returns to the discussion of literature and offers close readings of *The Tale of Unyŏng* and *The Tale of Sangsa-dong.* My analysis focuses on the portrayal of the hero as a fragile and vulnerable scholar. In tracing the construction of traditional

masculine ideals throughout modern and premodern discourse, the emergence of the feeble and weeping hero—who forfeits male privilege by refusing to return to the patriarchal order—raises questions of the construction of masculine identities in the stories of romance. This chapter traces the dilemma of a lovesick hero who has to comply with social norms but also desires to consummate love.

Chapter Four focuses on the analysis of the death of lovesick women in *The Tale of Gentleman Chu* and *The Tale of Unyŏng*. Suicide is a cultural taboo, and "dying for love" demands a process of negotiation with Confucian ethics. In this chapter I address the issues of self-harm and suicide by locating female lovesickness as a central part of the discussion. As female suicide (after lovesickness) has often been viewed as a form of social protest, in this chapter I offer an alternative perspective: that female death over a love affair was considered a virtuous death under the ideological influence of female martyrdom.

Chapter 1.

The Birth of Lovesickness in Romance

"' Fair, fair,' cry the ospreys
On the island in the river.
Lovely is this noble lady,
Fair bride for our Lord."

"The Ospreys Cry," *Book of Songs,* 1:1[36]

Before exploring representations of *sangsa pyŏng* (lovesickness) in Korea's seventeenth century romance narratives, I first articulate the literary and historical contexts in which romance as a literary genre was established and developed. In this opening chapter, I suggest *sangsa pyŏng* became established vis-à-vis its associations with the themes of romance in premodern Korean context and the fantastical or supernatural.

First, I define romance as a thriving genre in Korea, tracing its emergence as a literary genre shaped in mid-to-late Chosŏn, and connecting notions of "romance" to local and temporal circumstances. I then explore romance's roots as a genre of fantasy and wish-fulfillment, which in turn informs the ideas of love. The gradual shifts associated with the ideas of romance—from evoking the illusive to encompassing real, daily experiences—gave rise to *sangsa pyŏng*, as it gradually became a central theme within Korean romance fiction.

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[36] Quoted from Arthur Waley, trans., in *The Book of Songs* (New York: Grove Press, 1960), 5.

The Genealogy of “Romance”

Often “romance” can bring to mind out-dated, traditional, and tragic love stories such as *Tristan and Iseult* or the courtly culture of medieval Europe, and recalls a feudal past that displayed the glamour of chivalry and heroism. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, romance is described as:

> A fictional story in verse or prose that relates improbable adventures of idealized characters in some remote or enchanted setting; or more generally, a tendency in fiction opposite to that of realism. The term now embraces many forms of fiction from the Gothic novel and the popular escapist love story (also known popularly as romances) to the 'scientific romances' of H. G. Wells, but it usually refers to the tales of King Arthur's knights written in the late Middle Ages by Chrètien de Troyes (in verse), Sir Thomas Malory (in prose), and many others. Medieval romance is distinguished from epic by its concentration on courtly love rather than warlike heroism. . . . Later prose romances differ from novels in their preference for allegory and psychological exploration rather than realistic social observation, especially in American works like Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* (1852).[37]

The description above states that the characteristics of medieval romance shifted away from magic and heroism to a “courtly love.” More importantly, the description suggests that gradually, romantic prose became a distinct from the prose of modern novels: romance as a narrative topic may be traced back the medieval times, but romance as genre became drawn from narratives of the uncanny and supernatural experiences. Romance prose once included descriptions of frequent, serendipitous coincidences or fantastic creatures,

[37] Chris Baldick, ed. *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 291.

suggesting that the supernatural was once a quintessential aspect of romance. When romance literature from this period included tensions between characters and society, uncanny elements served to help restore equilibrium: characters, governed by the natural order of the world, used the recourse of magical power to resolve tensions and remove conflicts.

Additionally, wish-fulfillment became a significant aspect of romantic prose. In *Anatomy of Criticism*, Northrop Frye contends that romance as literary genre is "the nearest of all literary forms to wish-fulfillment,"[38] although he also states that romance does not depart from reality, as "the quest-romance…will deliver it from the anxieties of reality but will still contain that reality."[39] In this respect, romance as literary genre simultaneously incorporates wish-fulfillment—dreams and desires that depart from the real or day-to-day aspects of life—*and* realist elements. Broadly, then, what is the relationship between illusion and reality in Korean romance narratives? To what extent are realism and its manner of linear storytelling reflected in Korean romance prose, which also incorporates uncanny and supernatural events? In the following discussion, I explore both questions and reframe the idiosyncratic notion of "romance" within Korean literature.

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[38] Northrop Frye, "Archetypal Criticism," *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 186.

[39] Frye, 193.

Romance and Fantasy

Korean romance arose between late Silla and early Koryŏ.[40] Oral stories such as "Ch'oe Ch'iwon chŏn" (Story of Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn), "Cho Sin chŏn" (Story of the Monk Cho Sin), "Kim Hyŏn kamho" (Kim Hyŏn and the Tigress woman) were recorded in writing as early as the tenth century and can be found in *Sui chŏn* (Tales of the Extraordinary)[41] and *Samguk yusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms).

The story "Susap Sŏngnam" (Sŏngnam with a branch stuck in his hair), included in *Tales of the Extraordinary*, introduces a male protagonist, Ch'oe Hang, who falls in love with a woman. His parents do not allow him to continue the romantic pursuit, and as a result, he dies of frustration. Ch'oe Hang's intense longing perpetuates well after his death. He soon reappears as a ghost and visits the woman, who does not realize that Ch'oe has died. One day, he brings her to his house; his family members are alarmed to see the woman and think that she is merely acting on Ch'oe's suggestion. They all understand that his spirit must have come to see her, and they open the coffin to examine the body. He lies in the coffin, and in his hair is a rhododendron branch that he and the woman had broken in

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[40] This theory of seeing the formation of *chuanqi* stories in Korea in late Silla to early Koryŏ was first addressed by Im Hyŏngt'aek and is now supported by the majority of critics and scholars. Im regards "The Story of Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn" as a precursor of local *chuanqi*. Previous studies considered fiction (*sosŏl*) as having been initiated with *Kŭmo sinhwa*. Im Hyŏngt'aek counters this theory and contends that chuanqi stories were already available in the ninth to eleventh centuries and developed to embody artistic fictionality (yesulchŏk hŏgu). See Im Hyŏngt'aek, "Namal yŏch'o ŭi chŏngi munhak" (The *chunaqi* in late Silla and early Koyrŏ), *Hanguk munhaksa ŭi sigak* (Ch'angjak kwa pip'yŏngsa, 1984).

[41] This collection is attributed to the Silla scholar Ch'oe Chiwŏn (b. 835) but is no longer extant. Some stories remain in *Taedong unbu kunok* 大東韻府群玉 (Korean rhyming dictionary-encyclopedia on Sinographs), written by Kwŏn Munhae, a Chosŏn literatus, in 1589.

half and put in each other's hair as a token of love. After learning of her beloved's death, the woman attempts to kill herself. As this emotional, climatic moment, Ch'oe Hang emerges from his coffin and returns to life, whereupon the couple lives together for another thirty years. [42] The story highlights the power of love to transcend even the terminable border that is death. Love became the driving force towards a supernatural event that empowered Ch'oe Hang to overcome mortality.

In a similar vein, "Kim Hyŏn kamho," a story from the *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*, deals with the love affair of a young couple.[43] The story begins when Kim Hyŏn encounters a girl in a temple and falls in love with her, and they exchange wedding vows. However, the girl reveals her identity to Kim, as Kim realizes that she is not a human but a tigress. She explains how this came to be and asks Kim to kill her: "that heaven has shown its displeasure at the misdeeds of my brothers, I intend to take the punishment for our family. Rather than dying at the hand of just anybody, I wish to die by your sword and thus repay your beneficence….Have no fear and follow me into the forest north of the city wall. There I will be waiting for you."[44] When she appears in town as a tigress, stressing that it is the only way to return her love and pay the karmic debts of her

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[42] Cho Suhak, ed. *Chaegusŏng Sui chŏn* (Reconstruction of "Sui chŏn") (Kukak charyowŏn, 2001), 32-33. For English translation, see Frits Vos, "Tales of the Extraordinary: An Inquiry into the Contents, Nature, and Authorship of the *Sui chŏn*," *Korean Studies* 5 (1981): 9.

[43] The story is in the thirteenth-century story collection *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*, written by the Buddhist monk Iryŏn (1206-89). The stories are oriented to the Buddhist notion of human history in the pre-Chosŏn period.

[44] Iryŏn, "Kim Hyŏn and the tigress woman," in *Samguk yusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms). The English translation is in Peter H. Lee, *Oral Literature of Korea* (Jimoondang, 2005), 219.

brothers, who had killed many villagers. Kim sees the tigress in the market and chases her into the forest the next day, but cannot bear to kill his beloved. At that moment, the girl snatches Kim's sword and thrusts it into her own throat. Kim is awarded wealth and prestige for killing a harmful tiger. The encounter between Kim and the tigress expresses the tension between the human world and the spiritual world order, but the compiler nullifies the tensions by suggesting the Buddhist karma so that the girl has to sacrifice herself, and her death also benefits the protagonist.

In these two stories, the hero's desires are exposed through encounters with female figures in the stories, encounters that reveal the impossibilities in satisfying both internal and material needs. The uncanny encounters enable characters to overcome social and cultural impediments to love, and these stories exemplify romance narratives defined by the intervention of fantasy that allows for the hero's wish-fulfillment.

The Introduction of *chuanqi*

Entailing uncanny, fantastical elements in order to make plot resolutions possible is reinforced with *chuanqi* 傳奇 (tales of wonder) in Korea. The tradition of *chuanqi* has its origin in Tang China (618-907) and is often described as a form of literature that developed within the urban elite culture.[45] The Tang period is known as the golden age of Chinese culture and literature, with the fusion of new cultures and products and the dissemination of Buddhist and Daoist ideas. Male elites, clustered in the capital to take civil service

[45] See Stephen Owen, *The End of the Chinese Middle Ages: Essays in Mid-Tang Literary Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 130.

examinations, played a central role in leading the literary flourishing. Their interest in new cultural and religious subjects[46] also contributed to the invention of the new genre called *chuanqi*.

The arrival of *chuanqi* also demonstrates the literati class's endeavors to reinterpret foreign cultures: according to Sing-Chen Lydia Chiang: "Buddhists, Daoists, martial heroes, women, animals, gods, ghosts, foreigners, and assorted Others are appropriated to affirm the universality of the Confucian Way on the one hand, and to provide alternative paths to personal fulfillment on the other."[47] In particular, the spread of Buddhism gives rise to the literary genre *bianwen* 變文 (transformation texts)[48] and reflects Indian Buddhism, which tends to be suspicious of the notion of one, ultimate reality of the universe. In addition, the concrete sense of reality was challenged by the recognition of *huan* 幻 (illusion).

Many works of *chuanqi* came to Korea during the United Silla period (668-935).[49] Ch'oe Chiwŏn 崔致遠 (b. 857),[50] a Silla scholar who studied and worked in Tang China, is

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46 Robert F. Company, "Ghosts Matter," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 13 (1991): 16-17.

47 Sing-Chen Lydia Chiang, *Collecting The Self: Body And Identity In Strange Tale Collections Of Late Imperial China* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 21.

48 Transformation texts refer to vernacular folk stories, dealing with the Buddhiest themes. Because of its wording style that interweaves prose and verse, it was adopted by monasteries and temples seeking diverse methods for propaganda.

49 According to Pak Hŭibyŏng, Korean elites seem to be already exposed to Six dynasties' *zhiguai* 志怪, anecdotes about strange events, peoples, and creatures, as "The Story of Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn" reveals intertextual proximity to Zhang Zhuo's "Youxianku" 游仙窟. See Pak Hŭibyŏng, "Naryŏ sidae ŭi chŏngi sosŏl" (Silla-Koryŏ *chuanqi*), *Hanguk chŏngi sosŏl ŭi mihak* (Tolbegae, 1997), 126.

the author of "The Story of Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn," also referred to as "Ssangnyŏbun chŏngi" 雙女墳傳記 (Biography of two women from the grave). In the story, he relates his encounter with two female ghosts.

The spread of *chuanqi* was accelerated by the development of print culture: China's commercial publishing flourished, and a large scale of Chinese books landed on the Korean peninsula. In these circumstances, copies of *Taiping guangji* (Extensive Records of the Taiping Era) arrived before 1080 during the reign of King Munjong of Koryŏ.[51] The lyrics of a Koryŏ song, *Hallim pyŏlgok* (Song of Confucian Scholars, ca. 1215-1216), affirms that this collection was part of the important texts for the educated.

> The *History of the Han*, the *History of the Tang*, the works of Zhuang Zi and Lao Zi, the literature of Han Yu and Liu Zhongyuan, the poetry of Li Bo and Du Fu, the collection the *Orchid Terrace*, the poetry of Bo Juyi, the *Book of Songs*, the *Book of Documents*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and the *Book of Rites* / Recitation of these books and notes makes a truly magnificent scene! / The *Extensive Records of the Taiping Era* in four hundred scrolls, the *Extensive Records of the Taiping Era* in four hundred chapters, / spreading these chapters makes a truly magnificent scene![52]

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[50] Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn is attributed with the writing of a collection of *chuanqi* in *Sui jŏn* (Tales of the Extraordinary), while some other scholars claim Pak Illyang (d. 1096) as the author. Although currently, the entire collection is unavailable for viewed, the abstracts of the original stories are in the encyclopedic work, *Taedong unbu kunok.*

[51] Yun Habyŏng, "*T'aep'yŏng gwanggi* ŏnhaebon ŭi ŏnhae ŭi silche wa yangsang (Reassessing the Korean Renderings of "Taiping guangji"), *Chungguk sosŏl nonch'ong* 5 (1996): 55-141.

[52] "琴學士[琴儀] 玉笋門生云云[俚語凡歌詞中以俚語不載者倣此] 唐漢書 莊老子 韓柳文集 李杜集 蘭臺集 白樂天集 毛詩 尙書 周易 春秋 周戴 禮記 云云[俚語] 太平廣記 四百餘卷 偉歷覽景何如" from *Koryŏ sa* (History of the Koryŏ Dynasty) 71:25, at http://www.krpia.co.kr (accessed 7-15-2013).

The *Extensive Records of the Taiping Era* was published during the Chosŏn period. However, the original multi-volume collection was so huge that a shorter version of the work was published. Two shorter editions, *T'aep'yŏng kwangji sangjŏl* (The Abridged version of the Extensive Records), were published during the Chosŏn period. In the abridged version, organized by categories, the selected topics revolved around themes of *caizi jiaren* 才子佳人 (talented gentleman and beautiful maiden). The preface indicates that love stories were the most popular in the local editions, so compilers prioritized the selection of love stories in all manifestations over other categories such as transcendents (*shenxian*), miscellaneous biographies (*zazhuan*), or miscellaneous records (*zalu*).[53]

When Chinese stories widely spread in Korea through *Extensive Records of the Taiping era*, *Jiandeng xinhua* 剪燈新話 (New Tales Told by Trimming Lamplight) also became popular in early Chosŏn. The collection of *New Tales Told by Trimming* was written by the Ming writer Qu You (1347-1433). Ironically, its reception suffered from censorship: Qu You was thrown into prison and had to spend seventeen years in a labor camp on account of the stories' heterodox values.[54] However, the stories gained popularity in China and also in Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. Historical records show that the collection was read by kings, even though they knew that *New Tales Told by Trimming Lamplight* had

[53] Kim Changhwan, "T'aep'yŏng gwanggi p'yŏnch'an ŭi sidaejŏk ŭimi (The historical significance of the compilation of "Taiping guangji"), *Chungguk sosŏl nonch'ong* 23 (2006): 204.

[54] Li Shimian (1374-1450), a high official at Emperor Yingzong's court, submitted a memorial to the emperor claiming that works such as *Jiandeng xinhua* would corrupt the minds of the Chinese people. See Kang-I Sun Chang, "The Circulation of Literary Knowledge between Ming China and Other Countries in East Asia: The Case of Qu You's *Jiandeng xinhua*," a paper presented at the NACS Conference (Stockholm, June 2007).

been the target for censorship at the Ming court. Prince Yŏnsan (1476-1506) asked Korean envoys to China to acquire Chinese works, including *New Tales Told by Trimming Lamplight, Jiandeng yuhua* 剪燈餘話 (The Rest of the Tales Told by Trimming Lamplight), *Xiaopin ji* 效嚬集 (Collection of imitation stories), *Jiaohong ji* 嬌紅記 (The Story of Jiahong), and *Xixiang ji* 西廂記 (Romance of the West Chamber).[55]

The king's interest triggered Confucian scholars to question the effects of reading the *New Tales Told*. King Sŏnjo was criticized by Ki Taesŭng (1527-1572), who insisted that the *New Tales* and *Extensive Records* contaminated society and would mislead people.[56] However, the *New Tales* was warranted to be published by the Bureau of Editorial Review (Kyosŏgwan) under royal order;[57] a woodblock edition was made with annotations by Yun Ch'unnyŏn 尹春年 (1514-1567) and Im Ki 林芑 during the reign of Myŏngjong;[58] and Japanese envoys who were interested in this text requested Korea to distribute the *New Tales* in Japan.[59]

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[55] "傳曰 剪燈新話 剪燈餘話 效顰集 嬌紅記 西廂記 等 令謝恩使貿來," *Yŏnsangun ilgi* (4/13/1506). All quoted texts of *Veritable Records* are available on the official website of *Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe* (Committee for Compiling National History) at http://sillok.history.go.kr (accessed 2-28-2013).

[56] "奇大升進啓曰...... 詩文詞華 尙且不關, 況剪燈新話 大平廣記 等書, 皆足以誤人心志者乎 自上知其誣而戒之 則可以切實於學問之功也," *Sŏnjo sillok* (6/20/1569).

[57] Kim Yŏngho, "*Chŏndŭng sinhwa* ŭi chŏllae wa tong asia" (The transmission of *Jiandeng xinhua* in East Asia), *Ilbon munhwa yŏngu* 36 (2011): 85-86.

[58] "又有剪燈新話二卷 明初瞿存齋宗吉所撰小說 而明宗朝判書尹春年及吏文學官林芑註 所謂滄洲卽春年也" from *Sunam sŏnsaeng munjip* 13. Please refer to the official website, *Hanguk kojŏn pŏnyŏgwŏn* (Institute for the Translation of Korean Classics) at http://www.itkc.or.kr (accessed 2-28-2013).

[59] *Injo sillok* (1/5/1639).

The Reception of *Chuanqi*

The growth romance prose in Korea was reinforced by the introduction of *chuanqi*. As it is difficult to know how each of the tales was conceived—as a sole, individual text and/or as a collection of stories within a cohesive genre—the stories can be read as legends, related episodes, biography, or individual tales of the supernatural. Often, the story is framed as biography 傳, giving details of specific people and defying the boundaries of fiction. *Chuanqi*'s form may be close to historical prose, but structurally, *chuanqi* stories embed verse throughout the prose.

Enhancing the somewhat broad genre characteristics of *chuanqi,* the term was used in and beyond Korean literary circles. The Chosŏn literati understood *chuanqi* as a narrative genre that displayed the complex interplay between historical actuality and fictional construction. Thus, even as *chuanqi* was shaped as biography, *chuanqi* was distinct from historical accounts: it lacked historical weight through its incorporation of fictional elements, as in a poem by Kim Sisŭp 金時習 (1435-1493).[60] After reading the *New Tales*, Kim points out the dominance of the fantastic, strange elements: "If the stories are concerned with secular teachings (世教), they may be weird and strange (怪異) but not harmful. When the events are concerned with affection between people, they can be untrue

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[60] Kim was famous as a prodigy favored by King Sejong. However, he chose to become a Buddhist monk at the age of twenty-one, reacting in outrage that Sejo usurped the throne from his nephew Tanjong in 1455. On his early retirement, he wrote *New Stories* while staying in Kyŏngju in a southern province. Based on Kim's history, scholars argue that his personal traits explain of the pursuit of nonconformist writings in the collection.

but enjoyable."[61] Kim acknowledged the aesthetic of the *New Tales* and defended the necessity of the strange elements. Furthermore, Kim wrote *Kŭmo sinhwa* (New Stories from Gold Turtle Mountain), a collection, with the intent to emulate Qu You's stories:[62] "Literature imitates via language" and "imitation must be artistic."[63]

However, as fictional and illusive elements increased in writing, the literati gradually assumed an ambivalent attitude toward *chuanqi*. They were obliged to adhere to the principle that the Confucian scholar does not deal with the strange, the powerful, the chaotic, or the divine (怪力亂神).[64] As a result, negative evaluations of illusion, fantasy, or mystery were persistent among the literati responsible for creating the criteria for writings, which were to function as vessels of the Way (文以載道). In the case of the *New Tales* in China, Li Shimian (1374-1450), an official under Emperor Yingzong, submitted a memorial that works such as *Jiandeng xinhua* would corrupt the minds of the people with

[61] Kim Sisŭp, "Che Chŏndŭng sinhwa hu," *Maewŏldang chip* (Collected works of Kim Sisŭp), *Hanguk munjip ch'onggan* 13: 163.

[62] In terms of the reception of Kim's stories, only a few hand-written copies were available in Korea, since, after completing the stories, Kim Sisŭp placed the collection in a stone chamber and did not want it to be circulated. Contemporary scholars seemed to know the writing motive of Kim's stories, and scholar-official Kim Allo (1481-1537) made reference to Kim Sisŭp's *Kŭmo sinhwa* to affirm that the stories imitated *Jiandeng xinhua.* "入金鰲山 著書藏石室 曰後世必有知岑者 其書大抵述異寓意 效翦燈新話等作也," in Kim Allo, *Yongch'ŏn tamjŏk ki,* http://db.itkc.or.kr (accessed 2-28-2013). See also Ch'oe Yongch'ŏl, *Kŭmo sinhwa ŭi p'anbon* (Editions of *Kŭmo sinhwa*) (Kukhak charyowŏn, 2003), 20-24.

[63] Tzvetan Todorov, "The Notion of Literature," *Genres in Discourse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 3-4.

[64] *Analects* 7:20.

"heterodox theories and agnostic premises."[65] Regarding Kim Sisŭp's *chuanqi* stories, Yi Hwang 李滉 (1501-1570) contended that the stories do not suit the spirit of Kim Sisŭp, who was commemorated as a *saengyuk sin* 生六臣 (loyal ministers who survived persecution in protest against Sejo's usurpation of the throne in 1455): "People typically do not bother with Kim Sisŭp since he became a Buddhist monk; as you mentioned, it [withdraws from the world] does not conform to the way of *Zhongyong* (Doctrine of the Mean). Nonetheless, his choice of withdrawal is rather appropriate with the time of power struggles. . . . Yet his letter to Yu Yangyang 柳襄陽 and *New Stories from Gold Turtle Mountain* do not flatter his noble insight and wide knowledge."[66] During the reign of Chungjong, Ch'ae Su 蔡壽 (1449-1515), a scholar-official at the Bureau of State Records (Ch'unch'ugwan), was also accused of writing a *chuanqi* story, "Sŏl Kongch'an chŏn" (The Story of Sŏl Kongch'an), while Pak Chiwŏn 朴趾源 (1737-1805) was penalized for writing *Yŏrha ilgi* (Rehe Diary).

These cases reflect the anxieties surrounding the fear that styles of writing incorporated demoralizing effects and reflected the lack of didactic elements. They also reflect the general assessment of stories by the literati: literary judgments could be tempered by the author's political position or reputation, as seen in the moderate comments

[65] Chang, ibid.

[66] "世人以金梅月之披緇 爲不足觀 在銍之意 以爲梅月遯世一節 固未合於中庸之道 然而身中淸 廢中權 如此看則何如 梅月別是一種異人 近於索隱行怪之徒 而所値之世適然 遂成其高節耳 觀其與柳襄陽書 金鰲新話之類 恐不可太以高見遠識許之也, " in Yi Hwang, "Tap hŏmisuk" 答許美叔 (Reply to Hŏ Mok), *T'oegye sŏnsaeng munjip* Vol. 33, http://www.itkc.or.kr (accessed 3-5-2013).

on Kim Sisŭp's stories, yet as the socio-cultural politics of the Chosŏn government dictated the elite culture and society, prescribed judgments led to censorship. However, in spite of cultural restraints, romances blossomed with the *New Stories*, culminating in the seventeenth century.

The Structure of Korean Romance

During the Chosŏn period, romance prose survived in the conservative milieu. As previously discussed, the prose explores the supernatural and becomes literary interpretations of historical reality. The seventeenth century was a crucial period in understanding the aesthetics and nature of the genre, succeeding the heritage of Kim Sisŭp, *Sŏl Kongch'an chŏn* (The Tale of Sŏl Kongch'an), and *Kijae kii* 企齋記異(Strange stories of Kijae), by Sin Kwanghan 申光漢 (1484-1555).

Although there is no shortage of love stories in folktales and oral literature, seventeenth-century Korean stories also display changes in terms of the thematic development of love. Such stories as *Chusaeng chŏn* (The Tale of Gentleman Chu), *Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn chŏn* (The Tale of Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn), *Unyŏng chŏn* (The Tale of Unyŏng), *Sangsa-dong ki* (The Tale of Sangsa-dong), and *Ch'oe Ch'ŏk chŏn* (The Tale of Ch'oe Ch'ŏk), all place love at the center within the plot of encounter, separation, and reunion of the characters, forming a homogenous group of stories known as *aejong chŏngi sosŏl* 愛情傳奇小說 (*chuanqi* stories of love) in modern studies.

Additionally, interest in the themes of romance is accompanied by a female-focused perspective in the narratives. "The Tale of Unyŏng" is a good example of showing feminine qualities. The authors were generally male, as the texts were written in literary Chinese, but in this story the main character is a palace woman. A feminized narrative style opens the possibility of the story being written by her.[67] The configuration of a feminine view, spoken by a female voice, is extended into later popular romance. Stories such as *Sukhyang chŏn* (The Tale of Sukhyang), *Yun Chigyŏng chŏn* (The Tale of Yun Chigyŏng), *Sugyŏng nangja chŏn* (The Tale of Lady Sugyŏng), and *Ch'unhyang chŏn* (The Tale of Ch'unhyang) illustrate examples of a heroine's qualities and her successful path to wish-fulfillment. These stories recount the heroine's hardship in finding a way to fulfill her love and the rewarding point where her pain and suffering are compensated by the opportunity for upward social mobility.

Earlier in this chapter, I described Korean romance prose incorporating the successful achievement of wish-fulfillment vis-à-vis the supernatural and strange, fantastical entities. This feature within the genre also applies to love stories, wherein a character realizes his or her desire, as the power of love captivates. S/he encounters a ghost; enters a dream; or encounters the supernatural world, which emancipates the character from societal and/or physical limitations. This progress of events is followed in the common structure of *caizi jiaren* (talented gentleman and beautiful maiden) in Ming

[67] *Unyŏng-jon: A Love Affair at the Royal Palace of Chosŏn Korea,* trans. Michael J. Pettid (Berkeley: University of California, 2009), 61.

chuanqi stories. Hu Wanchuan points out the following pattern as an archetypal plot of Chinese romance:

> (1) It is a love story between a handsome young scholar and a beautiful girl, both of whom display exceptional gift for poetry and prose.
> (2) Both the hero and heroine come from distinguished families. They are usually the only child of their families and amusingly enough, they are most likely orphaned, or at least one of their parents is dead.
> (3) They meet under an unexpected circumstance and fall in love with each other at first sight.
> (4) Some hindrances will occur in the way of their marriage; it is usually the girl's mother or father who is opposed to the match because of the scholar's lack of an official rank.
> (5) The beauty sometimes has a clever girl servant who helps mediate in-between the lovers and thus functions as a matchmaker.
> (6) The love story invariably ends with the happy reunion of the couple, in most cases made possible by the *caizi*'s success in the imperial examination.[68]

Likewise, accounts of happiness, glory, and success are shared in Korean romance. Chung Chonghwa, on the structure of traditional Korean romance, writes, "The main body of the Korean romance centers around the life story of the protagonist in the form of a biography, starting with his birth and ending with a certain conclusive point in his life, often in the height of his youth. The male protagonist is usually the son of an aristocratic family, extremely handsome, clever in his study, good at poetry, loyal to his parents and the king,

[68] Hu Wanchuan, *Huaben yu caizi jiaren xiaoshuo zhi yanjui* (The studies of *huaben and caizi jiaren* fiction) (Taipei: Da'an chubanshe, 1994), 20.

righteous in his social and political outlook, courageous and victorious in war. He marries a virtuous and most beautiful girl, and he is extremely happy."[69]

Scholars evince the increasing interest in structural studies in the 1970s to 1980s in the Korean literary world. They offer a similar view of romance: it has to be a story of a hero, who undergoes three key events/phases: birth, hardship, and success. As Northrop Frye states, "[T]he complete form of the romance is clearly the successful quest, and such a completed form has three main stages: the stage of the perilous journey and the preliminary minor adventures; the crucial struggles, usually some kind of battle in which either the hero or his foe, or both, must die; the exaltation of the hero.[70] This arranged pattern focuses on heroic acts and success in both marriage and examinations. In detail, a character's heroic qualities are grounded upon noble birth, magnificent looks, and literary gifts. Also, the hero's hardships are elevated to necessities in the self-identification as a true hero, as seen in Hŏ Kyun's "Hong Kiltong chŏn" (The Story of Hong Kiltong). In the story, the male protagonist is born to a maid in a *yangban* family. He agonizes over the social system that discriminates "secondary sons" 庶子 (sŏja) and the sons of concubines 孽子 (ŏlja), but exercising magical power he becomes a famous bandit and popular hero and even the leader of the state of Yulto. The story also emphasizes the protagonist's impeccable performance as a filial son, who turns himself in to the Chosŏn state to serve at

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[69] Chung Chonghwa, "Korean Classical Fiction and the Romance," *Korean Classical Literature: An Anthology* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1989), 5.

[70] Northrop Frye, "Archetypal Criticism," *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 187.

his father's funeral as soon as he hears of his father's death; ultimately Hong becomes king of the new state. The sophistication and scale of this structure is affirmed in the romance that portrays a war hero, in the *yŏngung sosŏl* (hero fiction). The romance of war heroes proliferated especially after the turbulence of wars, usually merging with the plot of the quest for love in the heroic journey.

Impracticality of Love

Anthony Giddens, addressing the notion of love and intimacy in medieval romance, argues that "passionate love is marked by the urgency which sets it apart from the routines of everyday life." [71] As he suggests, passionate love can serve to liberate one from the pressure of routine and duty, but its manifestation is only possible in the realm of literary imagination. Love as an impossible value to realize is connected to the universal concept of passionate love, not regarded as a part of ordinary life.

In "Miss Ren's Story" 任氏傳 (*Renshi zhuan*), for example, Zhang, a poor but talented man, comes across a woman surnamed Ren with magnificent beauty. Although he has been warned that there is a fox who seduces men, Zhang revisits the haunted place the following morning, because he cannot forget the woman. However, he finds only a lair of foxes. One day, when the fox lady reappears to Zhang, he proposes to take her as his concubine. The fox lady is exceptionally attractive, and as a consequence, his friends and financial benefactor attempt to rape her. Despite various temptations, Ren remains loyal

[71] Anthony Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1993), 37, 40.

and repays Zhang for his favors. The conventional image of a fox is that it is a bewitching creature of deception. The story inverts the image of the fox character into one that is even more virtuous than humans. At the same time, it reifies the uncanny existence of a fox lady, with whose help the male protagonist becomes rich. The point where fantasy and reality meet creates a miracle for this poor man to be liberated from historical reality. Yet the symbolic resolution, achieved with the presence of the supernatural, concludes with the original condition of the human world: when Ren finds herself in danger of being bitten by a hunting dog, she is frightened and reverts to her original form of a fox and disappears.

A well-known "Yingying's Story" 鶯鶯傳 (*Yingying zhuan*)[72] describes a love affair between a man named Zhang and Cui Yingying. Zhang is introduced to the Cui family when he seeks shelter during his travel to the capital. Mrs. Cui is a widow with a daughter and a son. When Zhang meets her daughter, Yingying, he immediately falls in love with her. After a brief liaison, Zhang leaves for the capital to take the examination. While remaining in the capital, he decides not to marry Yingying. In the meantime, Yingying marries another man, while Zhang takes a wife in the capital. When asked to meet by Zhang, Yingying declines to meet him again and sends a poem of farewell.[73] Although the general subjects of *chuanqi* are extraordinary and supernatural, dealing with "encounter

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[72] James Hightower argues that the story is auto-biographical, claiming that Yuan Zhen 元稹 is the author and narrator. In this reading, the presentation of Zhang is a self-defensive mode of the writer himself. See James Hightower, "Yuan Chen and 'The Story of Ying-Ying,'" *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 33 (1973): 90-123.

[73] The second poem of farewell reveals her bitter feelings as the abandoned: "Cast off and abandoned, what can I say now, / Whom you loved so briefly long ago? / Any love you had then for me / Will do for the one you have now," in Hightower, 103.

with ghost, demons, immortals, fairies, gods, or supernatural animals,"[74] Yingying's poem, revealing her bitterness as the abandoned woman, shows that the story deals with human characters with all their follies and failings.

These stories show that love and marriage serve as a natural context for increased happiness and that they are ordained never to be consummated. In "Miss Ren's Story," the relationship with the fox lady is provided as impossible. The problematic identity of Ren bewilders the male characters and threatens the realization of visions and dreams in realistic terms. On the other hand, in "Yingying's Story," the pursuit of love is mediated and controlled by a practical vision. Unlike the characters in "Miss Ren's story," who do not hesitate to love, Zhang and Yingying could not claim to be devoted to each other. That the story has no happy ending reveals the assumption that romantic relationships are alien to ordinary life.

The insoluble tension between the power of love and stark reality is also found in Kim Sisŭp's "Manboksa chŏp'ogi" (Old Bachelor Yang plays a chŏp'o game with a Buddha of Thousand Blessing Temple).[75] In this story, we see a forlorn scholar seeking a romantic encounter in his prayer to Buddha. In his dream, he meets a woman of stunning beauty and is taken to her banquet. After spending a night with her, the scholar is told to hold a bowl and stand on the road to the monastery next morning. On the promised day, Yang watches

[74] Wilt Idema and Llyod Haft, *A Guide to Chinese Literature* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1997), 135.

[75] Kim Sisŭp, "Manboksa chŏp'ogi" (Old Bachelor Yang plays a chŏp'o game with a Buddha of Thousand Blessing Temple), trans. Sim Kyŏngho, in *Kŭmo sinhwa* (New Stories from Golden Turtle Mountain) (Hongik ch'ulp'ansa, 2000), 59-97.

members of a noble family approach the temple to have a funeral for a lost daughter. The father discovers that her daughter's bowl is in Yang's hands, and Yang realizes that the woman he met was their dead daughter. She reappears as a ghost at the funeral and pays her gratitude to him and leaves for the other world. In the end, the scholar turns himself into a recluse and lives in the mountains for the remainder of his life. The discovery of his hidden desire was realized when he encountered the female ghost. The story speaks of the hidden desire of a lonely hero but does not explore the complete pursuit of love. Rather, it describes love as though a dream, an illusion.

Supposing that unthinkable events, forces of magic, disorder, and the supernatural constitute key elements of romance, these stories might be an example of *chuanqi* that does not express "the effect of commanding the imagination of the bulk of society,"[76] nor does it fully entertain the possibilities of wish-fulfillment. Romantic love, then, is rendered as something impossible to achieve in real life, although romantic encounters are presented as part of conceivable events.

The Seventeenth Century Korea

The seventeenth century romance does not adhere to the full realization of one's dream, desire. Rather, romance becomes associated with honing a more critical view of worldly experiences. Exploring strange elements yields to depictions of the dream world and ghosts, as in the emergence of *mongyurok* 夢遊錄 (dream records) in the same period. In

[76] Tsi-an Hsia, "Novel and Romance," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 2:2 (1980): 225.

mongyurok, the manifested fantasy continues to provide an outlet for the desire to escape from reality. However, *Wŏnsaeng mongyu rok* (Dream record of Scholar Wŏn), for example, revisits a historical case and criticizes the social issues of King Sejo's usurpation in a subversive way. *Kangdo mongyu rok* (Dream record on Kanghwa Island) presents anonymous soldiers and women who died in the Manchu invasions and, according to Jahyun K. Haboush, the development of romance and dream stories are intertwined with history, as the characters come to "represent the scarred political body of the Chosŏn state and the bankruptcy of patriarchy."[77]

The relationship of illusion and reality in Korean romance prose is also influenced by historical circumstances. Historically, the seventeenth century in Korea was a turbulent period, as foreign invasions disrupted Korean society on a large scale. First, the Japanese invasions (1592 to 1598) caused national crises and vicissitudes to the dynasty. The invasions caused massive destruction and deaths, which were exacerbated by the Manchu incursion in 1627. After demanding Chosŏn for a pledge to honor the Manchu state, the Manchu forces quickly invaded Korea. When the Chosŏn government refused to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Manchu emperor, they launched a second invasion in 1636. The royal family sought refuge in Kanghwa Island but fell to the Manchu, and scholars were taken as hostages and tributes to the Manchu state.

Despite its short duration and relatively small scale of destruction compared to the Japanese invasion, the confrontation with the Manchu aroused feelings of humiliation and

[77] JaHyun K. Haboush, "Dead Bodies in the Postwar Discourse of Identity in Seventeenth-Century Korea: Subversion and Literary Production in the Private Sector," *Journal of Asian Studies* 62:2 (2003), 415-442.

helped to forge a sense of national identity to maintain the feeling of cultural superiority to the Manchu. Also, Koreans came to perceive themselves as "the only bastion of Confucian civilization and the sole carrier of the civilized tradition,"[78] which they believed was lost with the decline of the Ming. In the end, these encounters with Japan and China served to advance interests in cultures outside Korea,[79] but it also stimulated a sense of unity as essential factors in overcoming national crises, and to emphasize the community over individual autonomy.

With these historical events, seventeenth century Korean literature experiences a transition before vernacular romance rises to prominence in the eighteenth century. The romance literature in this period begins to challenge the cosmology of the world built in earlier romance by changing its interest from illusion to historical reality, showing that encounters with the supernatural world may be bound to historical events. The stories are set in the historical setting and employ historical figures. In detail, the narrative of *The Story of Gentleman Chu* is based on an account the author writes after meeting a Ming soldier who has arrived on the Korean peninsula during the Ming's dispatch of reinforcement to help Korea. Likewise, the background of *The Tale of Ch'oe Ch'ŏk* is set during the Japanese invasions, which bring havoc among the characters scattered

[78] Jahyun K. Haboush, *The Confucian Kingship in Korea* (New York: Columbia University, 1988), 24.

[79] There was an increase in the exchange of goods, books, and art between Ming and Chosŏn during the Manchu invasions. Also, the circulation of literary and cultural knowledge were expedited by the presence of the Ming army in Korea, as literati such as Kwŏn P'il and Cho Wihan deal with personal encounters with Ming soldiers and intellectuals. See Chŏng Min, *Mongnŭng mundan kwa Sŏkchu Kwŏn P'il* (The literary circle of Mongnŭng and Kwŏn P'il) (T'aehaksa, 1999), 101-138.

throughout Korea, Japan, and China. In *The Tale of Unyŏng,* the narrator, Yu Yŏng, meets two ghosts in a ruined palace reminiscent of the devastated conditions following the Japanese invasions. Unyŏng served as a palace woman at the palace of Prince Anp'yŏng, born as the third son of King Sejong and exiled to Kanghwa Island where he was forced to take poison by his own brother, King Sejo, in 1453. In the *Tale of Sangsa-dong*, Prince Hoesan appears as the fifth son of King Sŏngjong.[80]

At the same time, romance is susceptible to the influences of Confucian culture, as the seventeenth century was an era in which Confucianism was reformed, reaching its highest point since the dynasty adopted Neo-Confucianism as its state ideology in 1392. In Confucianization, Cheng-Zhu learning was applied to the practical realm, including the transformation of rituals and customs, and Confucian norms were set in motion on all levels of society. As a result, in these stories, the obstacles of love are presented intangible and formidable entities of social or gender norms.

In Chosŏn society, a patriarch typically arranged the marriage between a young man and woman. Gender norms were applied, so that the strictness in the separation of the sexes in both public and private spheres deprived young people of the opportunities to meet someone. Most women, especially upper class women, stayed in inner quarters, and had limited access to the outside world. In this setting, falling in love with a stranger was almost impossible, and even in the pleasure quarters only limited courtship could take place.

[80] So Chaeyŏng, "Unyŏng chŏn yŏngu" (A study of the "Tale of Unyŏng"), *Asea yŏngu* 41(1971): 173.

The logic behind the depiction of the impossibility of wish-fulfillment in romance can also serve to criticize the presence of ideological forces informing love and marriage. As discussed in the introduction, scholars have drawn special attention to the immanence of Confucian ideology and its norms, invisible but apparent, serving as the obstacle that frustrates love and controls marriage. The placement of struggles with the social constraints also enhances the realistic approach and deepens the discovery of the internal conflicts. Pak Hŭibyŏng argues that a romantic hero, whose presence is inherent feature of *chuanqi* stories, is commonly portrayed as an isolated, lonely protagonist for introspective exploration. That character, perhaps talented and capable, does not fit well into social norms, and when he finally meets his soul mate, his love becomes unconditional, and the lovers come to create a perfect union, as in Scholar Yi and Lady Ch'oe in "Student Yi Peers Over the Wall," and Ch'oe Ch'ŏk and Ogyŏng in *The Tale of Ch'oe Chŏk*. The male protagonist rarely takes concubines or mistresses, and the story rarely creates love triangles.[81] Thus, the narrative of romance is invested with the discovery of narcissistic urges and depictions of inner life, which are then intertwined with external obstacles. This tendency becomes the norm in seventeenth century romance, which focuses on a character's emotional struggles, rather than on resolution and consummation, and does not engage the supernatural realm as a reliable solution.

[81] See Pak Hŭibyŏng, "Chŏngijŏk inganŭi mijŏk tŭkchil" (Aesthetics of human characters in *chuanqi* literature), in *Hanguk chŏngi sosŏl ŭi mihak* (The aesthetic of Korean *chuanqi*) (Tolbegae, 1997).

The Emergence of Lovesickness

In the exploration of love stories of the Chosŏn period, Kim Chiyŏng argues that the ideal of love tends to be represented as inconceivable or illusive. Rather, marriage is a means for the preservation of the family line, as can be seen in "Old Bachelor Yang plays a chŏp'o game with the Buddha of Thousand Blessing Temple." This tension reflects the restrained conditions of love and marriage in society. Paedo's death in *The Tale of Gentlemen Chu* represents the rift between *isang* 理想 (ideal conditions) and *hyŏnsil* 現實 (real life).[82]

In these texts, Korean seventeenth century romance literature does not respond to the idea of vicarious satisfaction of love, but rather, focuses on contradictory situations and the impracticality of love. By allowing romantic relationships to interfere with actual reality, these stories address the contradictory nature of love. Also, the story no longer attributes the solution to supernatural machinery, but to realistic limits. Recalling Fredric Jameson: "Romance is dependent for its emergence on the availability of the code of good and evil which formulated in a magical, rather than a purely ethical sense…This genre expresses a nostalgia for a social order in the process of being undermined and destroyed by nascent capitalism."[83] Romance appears to suggest a magical and miraculous resolution of the contradictions, but the magical solution is possible only in the literary imagination. The

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[82] Kim Chiyŏng, "Chosŏn sidae aejŏng sosŏl e nat'anan sarang kwa sŏng" (Love and sex in love tales of the Chosŏn period), *Hanguk kojŏn yŏsŏng munhak yŏngu*, 10 (2005): 333-334.

[83] Fredric Jameson, "Magical Narratives: Romance as Genre," in *New Literary History: A Journal of Theory and Interpretation* 7 (1975): 158.

arbitrary happy ending and perfection reversely manifests the real condition of human life that cannot achieve a perfect condition for wish-fulfillment.

Therefore, romance has a subversive message aimed at exposing the rigid controls of ideology. As these interpretations are based on a hostile relationship between the quest for love and the cultural norms, the conclusions swing between two extremes, the celebration of the individualized pursuit of love and the wholesale condemnation of ideological forces. The former attempts to read the significance of love as a modern idea in the premodern context; the latter focuses on rendering the characters as victims of a moral code. Both are helpful in understanding the dialect between an individual character and society in romance, yet the approaches are likely to ignore the complexity of the relationship between illusive fantasy and historical realism as well as the gender differences embedded in the expressions of love and lovesickness.

The following chapters further examine the representations of romance, and specifically, focus on the emergence of *sangsa pyŏng* (lovesickness) as a focal point of manifested conflicts in reality. While Korean seventeenth-century romance was impacted by the practical vision of the "love-quest," evident is the convergence of cultural and political values that constitute new characteristics of romance. The cultural and political values intersect through lovesickness, and we observe that there is no harmonious restoration of a world. Love-sickness also reveals the contradictions that hinder the pursuit of love. As a locus for political, physical, and psychological conditions, the conception of lovesickness reveals the dialectics between affect and body, influencing a range of burgeoning discourses, from romance to medical treatises, unofficial discourse and oral

tales. The changing trajectories of discourse of lovesickness in various literary genres define the distance between fantasy and reality in development of the idea of romantic love.

Chapter 2.

The Voice of Longing

> "In patches grows the water mallow;
> To left and right one must seek it.
> Shy was this noble lady;
> Day and night he sought her."
>
> "The Ospreys Cry," *Book of Songs,* 1:2[84]

In the previous chapter, I examined the formation of romance as a literary genre of wish fulfillment and traced how romance integrates the elements of both fantasy and reality in the seventeenth century, giving rise to the literary motif of *sangsa pyŏng* (lovesickness). Before we review the representations of lovesickness vis-à-vis protagonists in Korean romance, this chapter examines the expression of affectionate feelings, specifically, the feelings of longing that appears in the lyrics and romance narratives of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In romance narratives, male and female characters are shown to experience the state of longing, made explicit in gestures of sighing, lamenting, or weeping, and the intense experience of feelings causes physical changes of darkened eyes, sleeplessness, or weight loss, and the like. In *Chusaeng chŏn* 周生傳 (The Tale of Gentleman Chu), a female character falls ill and longs for a return of Chu, since the male protagonist

[84] Quoted from Arthur Waley, 5.

betrayed her, and she faces a sudden death afterward. *Unyŏng chŏn* (The Tale of Unyŏng) is the other story that presents a female character aching from alienation and longing for a male character out of her reach till her ceaseless yearning comes to the surface as illness. In *Sangsa-dong ki* (The Tale of Sangsa-dong), the male protagonist becomes obsessed with a young palace woman, whose incessant thinking and longing causes inexplicable insomnia combined with the loss of appetite, as the male protagonist's affection grows.

These portrayals of the lovesick characters, regardless of gender, reveal the fact that the feeling becomes a central and vibrant place in defining what is being in love. Yet, what needs further clarification is why the feelings of longing is accepted as honest expression of genuine feelings. Recent works in both the humanities and social sciences have begun to question the transparency of human feelings, reframing its "naturalness" as affect.[85] In the studies, emotional language is regarded as far more than of the authentic and transparent communication, nor does it remain in the domain of personal or psychological responses. In addition, we note that contemporary culture's promotion of certain emotive values over others is avowedly constructed and endorsed in accordance to the culture of language and that emotions are more or less bound to culturally variable features, exposing the folly of

[85] For example, Sarah Maza argues that the repetition of emotional pleadings in melodrama, for example, tends to invite the audience to play the role of an innocent victim who cries on cue. In similar vein, David Denby, in a study of "the cult of sensibility," examines the relationship between emotion and emotional expressivity. He views eighteenth-century France as preoccupied with the problem of bridging the gap between interiority and exteriority, and reveals that people tend to use hyperbolic emotional expressions—trembling, sighing, weeping, falling to one's knees—to indicate the authenticity of their feelings. See Sarah C. Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs: The Causes Célèbres of Prerevolutionary France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); David J. Denby, *Sentimental Narrative and the Social Order in France, 1760-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

the assumption that emotions are epistemic or universal. These studies of feelings prompt us to ask: What emotional language do poets or characters prefer to use to capture certain feelings in a specific context? Does the expression of emotion tend to be moderated or intensified by the language? In addition, how has the expression of certain feeling been structured in the literary and cultural tradition?

This chapter began by applying these insights about the feeling of love and treating them in close relation to its aesthetic, literary, cultural, and social values. First, I will trace how the expression of longing has been structured upon the linguistic sources of literary Chinese and vernacular Korean with a nexus of literary convention and contemporaneous culture and touch upon the question of how longing is defined as a feeling distinct from other emotional states in the various expressions. The exploration of the feelings of longing will allow us to think more critically about the process of choosing emotional expression of love among a variety of emotional affects, such as excitement, infatuation, joy, or anxiety. Second, the chapter deals with more detailed feature of a female voice of longing and provides analysis of "Song of longing," a lyrical genre that appealed to Korean literati and popular culture from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. While focusing on the gendered notion of longing, I will draw the trajectories of the expression of longing from lyrical genres to romance narratives by revealing how the gendered notion of longing engages with fictional texts manifesting fictional characters' emotional and physical need and diminishing the gap between sentimental love and sexual desire to justify their action.

The Rubrics of Feelings

To address how the human emotion has been treated and placed importantly in the Confucian culture, I look at the classics describing human nature and feelings. Before the Han period, scholars of early Confucian philosophy, including Confucius and Mencius, were somewhat reticent about the issue of emotion or sentiment, though they were aware that the good governance is possible by close observance of popular feelings. The "Great Preface" to the *Book of Songs* reads:

> The tones of a well-managed age are peaceful and full of joy; its governance is harmonious. The tones of an age of turmoil are resentful and full of anger; its governance is perverse. The tones of a ruined state are grievous and full of longing; its people are in distress.[86]

This passage suggests that music and melody does not only serve as a mirror that reflects popular sentiments but also provides useful means to gauge societal condition that people face in daily life.

Along with Confucius, Mencius refers to the significance of *qing* 情 (emotion), identifying it with *xing* 性 (human nature), while continuing to mention that the ideal leader should be open to share enjoyment with the common people and ensuring that there is no dissatisfaction among them; thus, the observation of people's feelings can show a ruler the way to govern successfully. Also, he suggests that emotion itself is regarded as

[86] Stephen Owen, "The Great Preface," *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1992), 37-49. Quoted in Arthur Waley, ed. *The Book of Songs: The Ancient Chinese Classic of Poetry* (Grove Press, 1996), 365-366.

innately neither good nor bad, but it is important to observe and govern people's emotions and to enhance the development of moral sentiments. These examples show that the Confucian philosophers conceptualize human feelings that they should be observed and governed during the ideal political process.

Confucian philosophy tends to regard emotion as one of basic instincts that could lead to excessive indulgence—emotion (情) is aroused by human desire (欲). That is, uncontrolled feelings have the potential to lead to social irresponsibility and disharmony. After the Han, the impact of emotion on society within a grid of moral sentiments was carefully reassessed by the Neo-Confucian scholars,[87] who maintained that emotions are the primary factors in the existence of evil in human action. Especially, Zhu Xi (1130-1200) revisited those concepts and re-established a rigid view of human emotion,[88] and suggested that emotion is to be delimited and made meaningful by ritual, lest one turns to an antisocial form of passion, excessive desire, or lust. Neo-Confucian learning confirmed an interest in controlling emotions by aligning the concepts of human nature (*xing*), emotion (*qing*), and desire (*yu*) in a hierarchical relationship. Human nature, thought to be compatible and identical with emotion, was deemed indeterminate but vulnerable, so that it could be transformed into volatile emotion or relentless desire. Neo-Confucians believed

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[87] Haiyan Lee, *Revolution of the Heart* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 26-28.

[88] Martin Huang discusses the meanings of *qing* from the Han to the Qing periods. He argues that Neo-Confucian scholars long have interpreted *qing* as a value system to be suppressed and censored, in fact never condemned human desire. Instead, the Neo Confucian learning contributed to late Ming writers' promotion of *qing* as a supreme human value as they struggled to legitimize it in arguing the compatibility between the heavenly principle (天理) and human desire (人欲) under the Confucian philosophical realm. See Martin W. Huang, *Desire and Fictional Narrative in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

that emotion is incurred after the mind comes into contact with objects, and that emotion can be dangerous unless controlled by moral and spiritual cultivation. Only proper education and discipline of emotion can protect people from excesses of emotion that might otherwise lead them astray or to an excess of desire.

In this progress, emotions are categorized into seven basic emotions. The *Li ji* 禮記 (Record of Rites) records the seven inherent and spontaneous human emotions—joy 喜, anger 怒, sadness 哀, fear 懼, love 愛, hate 惡, and desire 欲.[89] These emotions are described as essential and equivalent qualities of human nature; therefore, it is not that certain emotions are encouraged and others repressed. Nonetheless, the seven emotions were again theorized by Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), who asserted that active suppression of these emotions was still critical, because unchecked emotions would lead to evil. Later, the view of the seven emotional qualities was complemented and reinforced by Chen Yan 陳言 (1131-1189), a Confucian scholar as well as a medical writer, and he converged seven emotions with medical treatment of them in his essay in *Sanyin jiyi bingzheng fanglun* 三因極一病證方論, in which he referred to the seven emotions as a natural response in relation to heaven 天應感應 and expanded these ideas in his medical studies.[90]

The complexity of the sources of emotions contributed to the well-known debate between Korean Confucian scholars in the sixteenth century. Since Neo-Confucianism was

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[89] The chapter of Li Yun 2:19, in *The Book of Rites*. James Legge trans. *Li Chi: Book of Rites* (Kessinger Publishing, 2003), 379.

[90] An Sangu, "Ch'ilchŏng haksŏl ch'onsŏk" (Analysis of the theory of the seven emotions), *Che 3-ŭihak* 1 (1996): 43-44.

accepted as Chosŏn's state ideology and put into practice new social norms, the philosophical debate aroused between Yi Hwang (1501-1570) and Ki Taesŭng (1527-1572), who contested each other concerning the theory of four beginnings and seven emotions, so called as *sadan ch'ilchŏng* (四端七情論). As the debates progressed, human emotion is framed into two categories of moral sentiments and general feelings. Particularly, Yi Hwang contends that seven emotions of joy 喜, anger 怒, sorrow 哀, fear 懼, liking 愛, disliking 惡, and desire 欲 are derivative of the force of "material" (氣), while four beginnings: *ren* 仁 (benevolence, humaneness), *yi* 義 (propriety), *li* 禮 (observance of rites), and *zhi* 智 (wisdom) are the working of "principle" 理. Yi holds the view that the moral standard embodied by the four beginnings cannot become a fluid concept activated by the material force. While Yi underscores the priority of theory and emphasizes the difference of sources of emotion, Ki Taesŭng asserted that four attributes and seven emotions alike belong to the material force and emphasized an inseparable tie between principle and material force.[91]

Scholarly interest in the issue of human emotion had been not merely contained in philosophical realm, but also is directed to the significance of emotion in the body of literature. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Korean literati drew attentions to the value of emotion in literature and developed a tendency to think of emotional expressions as the finest poetic value. This trend particularly applied to the

[91] See Michael Kalton, et al. trans, *The Four-Seven Debate: An Annotated Translation of the Most Famous Controversy in Korean Neo-Confucian Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

genre of poetry, as conventionally a poem is believed as "a product of harmonizing the intellect with the propensity of things, of uniting the heart/mind with the cosmos, of fusing inner emotion with outer scene/situation."[92]

Literary Chinese poetry had been long esteemed by the Chosŏn literati as the epitome of poetry until the seventeenth century, but a new group of intellectuals appeared to advocate freedom of emotional evocation prior to subtle and suggestive descriptions. Poets such as Paek Kwanghun 白光勳 (1537-1582), Yi Tal 李達 (1539-1612), and Ch'oe Kyŏngch'ang 崔慶昌 (1539-1583) organized a literary coterie that distinguished itself by departing from the Song style and instead explored the phrases and expressions of Tang poetry. The following generation, including Kwŏn P'il 權韠, Hŏ Kyun 許筠, Yi Sugwang 李睟光 (1563-1628), and Sin Hŭm 申欽 (1566-1628), continued to appraise the aesthetics of High Tang poetry.[93] In addition, the expressivity of emotion was also stimulated by the introduction of Gongan school of late Ming.[94] The influence of Gongan school and return to Tang poetry enables the poets to deal with their emotion in both public and private literature, especially as lyrics were considered as a site for release of emotion and desire.

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[92] Haiyan Lee, 27.

[93] For details, see Jo Yoong-hee, "Poetic Criticism in the Mid-Joseon Period: Focusing on Arguments about the Tang and Song Styles in the Early 17th Century," *Korean Journal* 45 (2005): 265-287.

[94] The Gongan scholars are those who actively engaged in a reassessment of emotion (*qing*) in their poetry. Yuan Hongtao (1568-1610) had employed the concept of urgency and overflow of feeling, which was often seen as serious deviation from the orthodoxy of Neo Confucian school. Although they placed emphasis on "a return to the world of actual nature," their accentuation of emotional expression, Jonathan Chaves sees, can be labeled as the Romantic movement in China. See Jonathan Chaves, "Self in the Kung-An school," in *Expressions of Self in Chinese Literature*, Robert E. Hegel and Richard C. Hessney, eds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 125.

The popularity of Tang poetry seemingly functioned to enhance emotional expression, and a retrospective vision of human life and nostalgia for the past, which constitutes popular themes of Kwŏn P'il's poetry.

Words of Longing

The feeling of longing is seen as distinct in late Chosŏn with the promotion of emotional expressions in poetry and writings that influences on the expression and translations of various feelings into a language. The expression of longing is often converged with the sinograph 思 (pronounced *sa*). As the most common expression, the word originally carries the meaning, "to think." Also, the graph denotes thought, meditation, or speculation and as a philosophical term, means "rational reflection," which often extends to a sense of "practical concern or deliberation with a view to action,"[95] as is reiterated in the *Analects*: "The Master said, 'How who learns but does not think (思) is lost.' He who thinks (思) but does not learn is in great danger."[96] The figurative use of the sinograph transforms the rational thinking activities into an emotional process such as cherishing memories or remembering with longing, and the meaning of graph is shifted from "to speculate or to think" to "to love. "

There is evidence that in its origin the word *ssu* meant to observe outside things. A

[95] For a philosophical analysis of the term *sa*, see Alison Harley Black, *Man and Nature in the Philosophical Thought of Wang Fu-Chih* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989), 194-202.

[96] *Analects* 2:15. Arthur Waley, trans. *The Analects of Confucius* (London: Routledge, 2005), 91.

> *ssu-t'ing* was an observation-post in the market, from which the overseer could observe which stall-holders were cheating. So it came to mean to fix the attention not only on something exterior but also on a mental image, as, for example, that of a person from whom one is separated; hence 'to be in love.'[97]

According to Arthur Waley, the sinograph can be translated as "longing for" and "being in love": "The flowery branch of the mild cherry / How swiftly it flies back! / It is not that I do not love you; / But your house is far away"[98] in the *Analects,* and "You thought 思 nothing of the old marriage – found for yourself a new mate"[99] in the *Book of Songs.*

This change involving the extension of its meanings from rational thinking to the realm of emotions came to reconfigure the expression of longing in the vernacular. Since Korea came into contact with Chinese civilization, in the absence of native scripts, literary Chinese served as the writing system until *hangŭl* (Korean alphabet) was invented in 1443 and promulgated in 1446. Despite its slow standardization, the Korean language since went through significant changes. Although it is consistent to find the literati's unswerving preference for literary Chinese as the written language, a preference for the vernacular became prevalent among commoners and gradually permeates into writing practice of the elite as well, since *hangŭl* reflects the phonetic values of the vernacular that enabled Koreans to write their works in their own language. Lyrical genres such as *sijo* and *kasa*

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[97] Arthur Waley, "Introduction," to *The Analects of Confucius*, (London: Routledge, 2005), 44-45.

[98] *Analects* 9:30. Arthur Waley, 145.

[99] *The Book of Songs* 188:3. Arthur Waley, trans. *The Book of Songs* (New York: Grove Press, 1996), 161.

began to be composed, sung, and written in the vernacular, proving its efficiency and embracing commoners and women as active participants of the written culture.[100]

The incessant interactions between the universal language (lingua franca) of Chinese and the local language of vernacular Korean, on the other hand, affects the literary communication, profoundly endowing pre-existing words with new definitions. To be more specific, the vernacular expression of *sarang-hada* (사랑하다), originally carries the double meaning of "to think" and "to love" in the fifteenth century. In the sixteenth century, as the dual meanings of *sa* shifted towards "to love," the vernacular word of *sarang-hada* likewise becomes the general term for love.[101] "Sarang ka" (Song of love), a widely-known song from *Yŏllyŏ Ch'unhyang sujŏl ka* (*Song of the Faithful Wife Ch'unhyang*), reveals the explorations of the love-focused meanings of the term, settled in late Chosŏn.

> Love, love, my love,
> Love high as Mount Shaman under the moon
> Shining upon seven-hundred-tricent Grotto Court Lake,
> Love deep as water at the horizon's end,
> Deep like heaven and emerald sea,
> Love high as the top of Mount Jade under the bright moon,
> Enjoying it on myriad peaks of autumn mountain —
> Love as she has spent her years for the study of dance
> And asks for one who plays the pipe —

[100] Jahyun Kim Haboush, "Gender and the Politics of Language in Chosŏn Korea," in *Rethinking Confucianism: Past and Present in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam*, Benjamin A. Elman, John B. Duncan, and Herman Ooms, eds. (Los Angeles: UCLA Asian Pacific Monograph Series, 2002), 221.

[101] Kim Hŭnggyu, "Chosŏn hugi sijo ŭi puranhan sarang motif wa yŏnae sidae ui chŏnsa" (The motif of anxious love in late Chosŏn and the pre-history of the time of romance), *Hanguk siga yŏngu* 24 (2008): 26-27.

Love that shines like the evening sun and moon
Upon the peach and plum blossoms seen through the screen —
Love that abounds in winsome smiles and graces
With a new moon powdered white,
Love that brings us together through three lives,
Bound by the Old Man of the Moonlight —[102]

In this song the ideas of romantic and sexual love centers on the term *sarang* (love) and shows its diverse applications in tropes. The lyrics also represents a more frequent expression of *sarang* as the sentiments and actions involving "love" between man and woman, especially in the lyrical genres of *sijo* and *kasa*, while the usage of sinograph *sa* (思) at this time concretely indicates "to miss" or "to long for" in literary texts.

"Longing" in Romantic Verses

The sentiment of longing and yearning in the graph of *xi* 思 engages with various versions of lyrics, and the lyrics, called "Everlasting Longing" 長相思 (C. *chang xiangsi*) had thrived since the Han and a handful of poems survived as a version of *yuefu* 樂府. It often applied to existing melodies or being played along with the musical instrument, as it had originated among the common people as folk poetry,[103] and the lyrics of popular music

[102] "사랑 사랑 내 사랑이야, 동정칠백 월하초 (月下初)에 무산(巫山)같이 높은 사랑, 목단 무변수에 여천창해 같이 깊은 사랑, 옥산전 달 밝은데 추산천봉 완월 사랑, 증경학무하올 적 차문하소하던 사랑, 유유낙인 월렴 간에 도리화개 비친 사랑, 섬섬 초월 분백한데 함소함태 숱한 사랑, 월하 (月下)에 삼생(三生) 연분 너와 나와 만난 사랑"; "Sarang ga" (Song of Love) in Peter H. Lee's translation in "The Road to Ch'unhyang: A Reading of the *Song of the Chaste Wife Ch'unhyang*," *Azalea* 3 (2010), 308.

[103] *Yuefu* 樂府 or "Music Bureau" was a bureau of music established by the Han government with a purpose to provide music and songs for state rituals and imperial performance.

include the two following works by the Tang poets, Li Bo 李白 (701-762) and Bo Juyi 白居易 (772-846).[104]

Thoughts of you are unending, here in Changan.	長相思在長安
Crickets cry out autumn by the side of the golden well.	絡緯秋啼金井欄
Under a thin frost, mats look ice-cold.	微霜凄凄簟色寒
The lone lamp is dark, thoughts thickening,	孤燈不明思欲絶
I raise blinds and gaze at the moon. It renders my deep lament.	捲帷望月空長歎
The beloved is as lovely as a blossom born of cloud.	美人如花隔雲端
All the above is the bottomless sky in azure,	上有青冥之長天
The below is clear water running through waves.	下有綠水之波瀾
Sky is endless for a spirit in sorrowful flight.	天長路遠魂飛苦
Even in dream, my spirit never reaches hometown.	夢魂不到關山難
Thoughts of you is unending, ruining my heart.	長相思摧心肝[105]

Under the influence of *yuefu,* Li Bo's poem is in a form of *ci* 詞, typically known for its features of "filling in" and pairing to pre-existing melodies.[106] It is not clearly indicated whether the poem is read as expression of personal experiences to a certain situation, as it

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[104] The record shows that "Everlasting Longing" was also performed as a musical song during the Tang period (618-907). Often it was referred to as *guqin yin* (chant of old *qin* [zither]), since it was accompanied by playing of the zither.

[105] This translation of Li Bo's "Chang xiangxi" is based on the original text and David Hinton's translation in "Thoughts of you unending," *The Selected Poems of Li Po* (New York: New Directions Book, 1996), 48.

[106] *Ci* is known as a traditional style of Chinese poetry from the Six Dynasties (229-589), developed during the Tang and flourished during the Song. It is characterized by its fluidity -- including the use of lines of uneven length and irregular movement between lines. Also, musicality allows this form of genre to entertained by lyricists and listeners alike and provides "a better medium for the expression of mood and feeling." See Stephen Owen, ed. *An Anthology of Chinese Literature* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 559-560.

is described from the viewpoint of anonymous observer. The lyrics are in the first person voice, but at the same time, what appears to assume a voice of another person in an imagined or fictional situation. Also, the gender identity of beloved (美人), described as an object of desire, is implicit in the context.

Compared to the third person voice of Li Bo's lyrics, "Everlasting Longing" by Bo Juyi is delivered in the first-person voice seeking personal response to the situation of parting.

In the ninth month, when west winds blow,	九月西風興
when moonlight is cold and dew blossoms congeal,	月冷霜華凝
I think of you all the long autumn night ---	思君秋夜長
In one night, my spirit leaps up nine times.	一夜魂九升
In the second month, when the east wind comes,	二月東風來
when grasses sprout and the hearts of flowers unfold,	草拆花心開
I think of you through the slow spring days ---	思君春日遲
One day and my heart takes nine turnings.	一夜腸九廻
I live north of Luo[107] River bridge;	妾住洛橋北
You live south of Luo River bridge.	君住洛橋南
Since I was fifteen I've known you,	十五即相識
and this year I'll be twenty-three.	今年二十三
Like the dodder plant growing	有如女蘿草
by the side of the pine,	生在松之側
my tendrils are short, the branches much too high ---	蔓短枝苦高
twine and coil as I may, I cannot reach them.	縈廻上不得
They say when a person has a wish	人言人有願
if the wish is worthy, Heaven will surely grant it.	願至天必成

[107] The translation suggests "Lo" which I transliterated "Luo," according to pinyin pronunciation.

I wish we could be beats in some faraway place, 願作遠方獸
sauntering, sauntering shoulder to shoulder. 步步出肩行

I wish we could be trees deep in the mountains, 願作深山木
touching, twining limb around limb. 枝枝連理生[108]

The poem takes a form of ancient poetry 律詩 (*lushi*), regulated verse developed in early Tang. Despite constraints and rhymes in a form, the language itself is more colloquial and straightforward than in Li Bo's *yuefu* version. Along with the colloquial voice of the first person, the poem is endowed with a sense of "authenticity" in autobiographical description in the third stanza. The confessional voice of a young woman, addressing herself as *qie* (妾) and the beloved as *jun* (君) seems to reveal the hierarchical relationship between them; however, the last stanza presents a metaphor of mutual and equal love in the phrase of "entwined tree" (連理生).

These poems reveal in common that the feelings of longing developed as common feature and theme of lyrics in the Chinese poetic tradition and that the poets explore the emotional language of longing without any constraints of genre or forms. Rather, the notion of longing freely moves in between various forms from the folk songs of *yuefu*, classical poetry of the Tang in a strict form, to the Song lyrics of *ci* to the tune of music performance. The experiments of various forms, conveying the theme of parting and separation, continues in literary tradition of Korea, since the Chosŏn literati were exposed to Tang and Song poetry.

[108] Bo Juyi's "Chang xiangxi" (Song of Everlasting Longing). Burton Watson, trans. "Love Long-Enduring," in *Po Chü-I: Selected Poems* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 97.

Thoughts of you are unending, as I cannot see you.	長相思思不見
My heart is like a paper kite waving in the wind.	如紙鳶風中戰
If it were a mat, I would roll it up; if a stone, I would turn it over.	席可捲石可轉
My heart is choked with thoughts; when it will change?	此心鬱結何時變
The beloved is now at the sky's end.	所思遠在天之陬
Cloud in the sky and green trees are all distant;	雲天綠樹晴悠悠
Endless worries are not relieved.	悠悠不盡愁
I sat alone, plucking the harp.	獨坐彈箜篌
The harp sounds as it is speaking or weeping.	箜篌如訴復如泣
After playing, my silk sleeves are wet in tears.	彈罷不覺羅衫濕
I wish I were a bird flying together with you,	願爲雙飛鳥
turning towards my lord.	向君牕前立
I wish I were a bright moon light,	願爲明月光
passing through his curtain to sneak inside.	穿君帷箔入
Singing a sad song, I am sleepless; the night is long.	悲歌無寐夜何長
Even in dream, my soul never reaches Mountain Liao.	魂夢不渡遼山陽
Thoughts of you are unending, breaking my heart.	長相思空斷腸[109]

In this poem, "Everlasting Longing" (K. Chang sangsa), Sŏng Hyŏn (1439-1504) represents his effort to creatively allude to the canonical theme explored by the earlier poets. and attempt for the discursive change. As a *yuefu* version, the lyrics reworking the Chinese poetry and converting them into local literati tastes, while invoking reminiscence of the lyrics by Li Bo.

At the same time, the lyrics further promote a sense of desperation that the speaker speaks of her wish to become a bird and a moonlight to reach the beloved. The relationship

[109] Sŏng Hyŏn, *Hŏbaektang chip* 4 (Collected works of Sŏng Hyŏn), Im Chŏnggi, ed. (Hanguk kojŏn pŏnyŏgwŏn, 2008), 215-216.

between the speaker and the beloved is also described as vertical rather than horizontal, contrasting spatial distance between the heaven and the earth. The beloved is imagined extremely distant; the speaker is more desperate in seeking love. The lyrics also reveal that the expressions and described objects explored in Li Bo's poem recur in Sŏng Hyŏn's "Chang sangsa," which uses other poets' words and themes, but also transgresses the classical boundaries by emulating the expression of Li Bo's poem and adopting a female voice prevalent in the poem of Bo Juyi.

The Gendered Voice

The "Song of Longing" reveals dual effects of a female voice of longing. In the portrayal of an abandoned woman, the male poet can imagine and imitate emotional responses of an abandoned woman. At the same time, the male poet, when identifying himself with the female speaker, manifests himself in a longing for the king and embodies his unswerving loyalty. This duality survives in the lyrical traditions and constitutes a sub-genre of "oath of loyalty to the ruler" (戀君之詞).

A poem of Yi Chihwal (b.1456), for example, captures the feeling of longing and sorrow, using the term of "mutual longing" 相思 to express his allegiance and loyalty toward King Tanjong (1441-1457) and resentment against King Sejo, who usurped Tanjong's throne.[110] Within the established bounds of longing and sorrow, the lyric carries

[110] This poem appears in Kim Chongjin's petition to restore Yi Chihwal's reputation as a distinguished scholar and politician.

romantic sentiment involved in the lover's loneliness and heartbreak.

Every night I long for love in the dead of night,	夜夜相思到夜深
Till a waning moon in the east comes, I have two hearts for home.	東來殘月兩鄉心
I have resentment and sorrow at this time that none can resolve.	此時冤恨無人解
As I lean against the mountain pavilion, my tears are unending.[111]	孤寄山亭淚不禁

The poets' feminization of a voice of longing, in which a male poet camouflages himself as a female who woos and desires to gain power and love, makes us question what is motivation in fostering such an allegorical writing in the tradition. Conventionally, this allegorical mode was a tradition in Chinese literature after the manner of Qu Yuan (ca. 340-278 BCE), believed to have initiated political-romantic lyricism in a female voice, using traditional poetic constructions of female longing to express his feeling of sadness and his fervent love and loyalty for the state.

In the overview of the history of Chinese love poems, Arthur Waley suggests that a tendency of feminizing of voice of longing, prevalent since the Han, stating, "[L]ove-poetry addressed by a man to a woman ceases after the Han Dynasty; but a conventional type of love-poem, in which the poet speaks in the person of a deserted wife or concubine, continues to be popular. . . . the women typify the Minister, and the lover the Prince, so in those classical poems the poet in a veiled way laments the thwarting of his own public ambitions."[112] Yet, this construction of a female voice of longing has been found to exist in

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111 *Chŏngjo sillok* (24/4/12).

112 Arthur Waley, ed., *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* (New York : A. A. Knopf, 1919), 20.

diverse literatures. In Elizabethan literature male poets are feminized to employ the metaphor in which female affection implies male desire for power and authority.[113] The feminized voice is even more promoted by association with the political situations.

Such association is tied to the literary convention that shows the strong association of the voice of longing with the female speaker in the pre-Chosŏn period. The prominent feature of feminization of longing is that the pain of remembered loss tends to have more power when delivered in a voice of woman. Her longing and desire contrast sharply with realities that limit women's mobility and places restrictions on their activities. As in the poems in literary Chinese, the vernacular songs of Paekche, "Chŏngŭpsa" ("Song of Chŏngŭp"), and Koryŏ songs as "Kasiri" ("Will you go?") and "Sŏgyŏng pyŏlgok," ("Song of P'yŏngyang") demonstrate the point that unfulfilled longing and separation carries vividness and explicitness in a female voice.

> Although P'yŏngyang is my capital,
> Although I love the repaired city,
> Instead of parting I'd rather stop spinning
> If you love me I'll follow you with tears.
>
> Were the pearls to fall on the rock,
> Would the thread be broken?
> If I parted from you a thousand years,
> Would my heart be changed?[114]

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[113] Catherine Bates explains the tendency as the male courtier's conscious efforts to readjust a potentially sexual relation into a purified desire. See Catherine Bates, *The Rhetoric of Courtship in Elizabethan Language and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 25-44.

[114] Peter H. Lee, ed., *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Korean Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 43.

Here, the first and second stanzas of "Song of P'yŏngyang" deal with the abandoned one's concerns and remorse for the beloved, and the feminine speaker seems to value simple expressions of longing. The embodiment of such feelings recurs in the lyrics in literary Chinese, but it constitutes a major theme in vernacular genres including *kasa*[115], and the vernacular expression of longing is characterized by direct emotional expression.

The construction of the female voice resonates in literati poems such as "Sa miin kok" (Song of Longing for the Fair One).

> At the time I was born, I was born to follow my lord.
> Our lives were destined to be joined, as even the heavens must have known.
> When I was young, my lord loved me.
> There was nothing to compare with this heart and love.
> All that I longed for in this life was to live with him
> Now that I am older, for what reason have I been put aside?
> A few days ago, serving my lord, I entered the Moon Palace.
> How does it happen since then that I have descended to this lower world?
> Three years it has been since my hair, once combed, became tangled.
> I have powders and rouge, but for whom would I make myself lovely?
> The cares that are knotted in my heart pile up, layer upon layer.
> It is sighs that build up, tears that tumble down.
> Life has an end; cares are limitless.[116]

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[115] Chŏng Ch'ŏl is a Confucian scholar-official, a distinguished poet of *kasa*, who was expelled by the court in 1585. In the poem, the relationship between the female speaker and her lover parallels the relationship between Chŏng Ch'ŏl and King Sŏnjo. In his use of the female persona, which was viewed as a submissive artistic figure, Chŏng Ch'ŏl uses allegory to show his loyalty toward King Sŏnjo as well as his desire to return to the court.

[116] Chŏng Ch'ŏl, "Sa miin kok," in *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Korean Poetry,* trans. Peter H. Lee (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 170.

As this song's speaker is feminine in the descriptions of “uncombed hair” and “powders and rouge,” she laments being separated from her beloved. “Sok miin kok” (Continued Song for the Fair One), also composed by Chŏng Ch’ŏl (1536-1593) in vernacular Korean, shares a gendered voice of longing that laments the bitterness of love by the female speaker:

> “Lady, who goes there? You look so familiar.
> Why did you leave the White Jade Capital in the heavens,
> Whom do you seek as the sun goes down?”
> “Oh, it is you! Hear my story now.
> My face and ways do not merit my lord’s favor.
> Yet he deigns to recognize me when we meet.
> I believed in him with undivided heart.
> I flirted and displayed my charm—I might have annoyed him.
> His welcoming face has changed from the past.”[117]

The gendered voice of longing is strengthened even more, as the “Song of Longing”[118] became a popular repertoire in the pleasure quarters (*p’ungnyu bang*). With the flourishing of the courtesan culture, the vernacular version of “Song of Longing” was integrated as a part of the female entertainer's performance. Sin Kwanghan (1484-1555) notes his memory of a female entertainer singing a “Song of Longing”:

A maiden who learned to dance in the family of So	蘇小家中學舞娘
appeared at the hall to bid farewell to her beloved.	隨孃送客到橫塘

[117] Chŏng Ch’ŏl, “Sok miin kok” (Continued Song of Longing), trans. Peter H. Lee, 174.

[118] The titles of “Song of Longing” were varied as “Sangsa kok” (‘Song of Longing’), “Sangsa pyŏlgok” (‘Song of farewell and longing’), or “Sangsa wŏnga” (‘Song of regrettable love’).

In the sunset she sang a song of *sangsa* at Chin pavilion.　津亭落日相思曲
Long before dawn, the song has already broken my heart.　不待明朝已斷腸[119]

In this poem, the nostalgic sentiment of longing expressed by the song creates an empathetic bond between the singer and listeners by recapturing the experience of unconsummated love. The voice of the female speaker reiterates that the song's love affairs existed between female entertainers and literati males.[120]

Because "Song of Longing" requires singing in a high-pitched tone only well-trained female professionals could sing it successfully.[121] As a result, the "Song of Longing" often addresses a specific situations experienced by female entertainers and provides a voice to the viewpoint of a woman betrayed by a male lover. In the following poem, the female entertainer, abandoned by male patrons, colors each line of the lyrics.

I have lost laughter but gained anger.
Nobody would care even if I died now.
I have bloody coughs and tears, but what should I do?
I have no lingering affection for this life; my only wish is to die.
I cried to heaven and earth --neither of them answers.

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[119] Sin Kwanghan, *Sŏkpuk chip* (Collected works of Sin Kwanghan), 7:22a. Print edition in *Hanguk munjip ch'onggan*, vol. 231 (Minjok munhwa ch'ujinhoe, 1999), 342.

[120] The song became increasingly popular, especially in the capital; beginning in the eighteenth century, the central segment of society employing the "Song of Longing" gradually shifted from male literati culture to popular culture, even though it originated with the sophisticated yangban society. In the late nineteenth century it became a major part of the repertoire of songs known as *chappka* (popular *kasa*), which were appreciated by commoners.

[121] Kim Ŭnhŭi, "Sangsa pyŏlgok yŏngu: Yŏnghaeng hwangyŏng ŭi pyŏnhwa e chumokayŏ" (The study of 'song of *sangsa*,' focusing on the changing environment of performance), *Pangyŏ ŏmun yŏngu* 14 (2002): 295.

> Where should I unravel my restless heart?
> I think of death several times an hour.
> Sadness as intense as the pain of severing my own body.[122]

The pathos is conveyed in colloquial and direct language when she laments her physical deterioration in bloody coughs and experiences emotional turmoil in tears. We can also comprehend her continuous thoughts about death. These symptoms show that suffering occurs in both somatic and psychological spheres and, since the psyche of the singer (or speaker) is dominated by the image of the beloved until it corrupts her judgment. The feelings of longing and sorrow over separation lead the speaker to melancholy and steer the sufferer to think that it would be better to die than to survive alone.

> Among all human affairs, the most difficult and cruel is separation.
> It is too sad to stay alone in an empty room.
> I am thinking of you but cannot see you. Who would know my sincere heart?
> Whether in sleep or awake, awake or in sleep,
> That I cannot see my beloved hurts my heart.
> Your young face and beautiful voice linger in my ears and eyes.
> I want to see your face again. I want to hear your song.[123]

This song also demonstrates how the pathos of longing was aroused in the relationship between female entertainers and their male patrons, who left their wives in hometowns and

[122] *Sosurok* constitutes poems and writings by female entertainers that are extant in the forms of *sijo*, *kasa*, and also letters between female entertainers and their patrons. Recently, Chŏng Pyŏngsŏl discovered this collection and translated it into modern language. See Chŏng Pyŏngsŏl, ed., *Na nŭn kisaengida: Sosurok ilki* (I am a Kisaeng: *Sosurok* with annotations) (Munhak tongne, 2007), 247.

[123] “Sangsa pyŏlgok” in Maema Kyōsaku, ed., *Kyoju kagok chip* (A collection of songs edited with annotations) (T’aedong, 1989). Copy edition of 1979, 150-152.

often lived in the capital area for official service.[124] The affluent scholar-politicians and literati males could enjoy feminine companionship with female entertainers; in addition, conditions were usually favorable for taking a female entertainer as a secondary wife. In reverse, female entertainers who could not establish a strong liaison with a male patron had to face a doomed love.[125] This partly explains the resurgence of female poets expressing love mixed with pain and regret.

Male Voice of Longing

The lyrical tradition and the performance of female entertainers contribute the preference of a female voice of longing in Chosŏn Korea. However, there were male poets and writers who attempted a discursive change, shifting from female to male perspective in the expression of longing. Pak Illo (1561-1642), for instance, deals with the pathos of longing from a male point of view and challenges the established set of gendered expression.[126]

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[124] In Western literature figures in love often assume a feminized voice and gestures. Arguably, Western culture has developed an association between "being affectionate" and "being feminized;" as Roland Barthes states, "The only way that a lover can love is precisely in so far as he feminizes himself." Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Farar, Straus, and Giroux, 1978), 181.

[125] Of course, this does not imply that *kinyŏ* (female entertainers) were constantly harassed by their male patrons or stigmatized as social victims in a patriarchal and male-centered culture. In Chosŏn society, female entertainers had official, political, and/or religious functions at court and in the governmental bureau. Many records, including *Yongjae ch'onghwa*, reveals quasi-historical stories of female entertainers, who, using their sexual appeal, controlled male elites. Some elites sold most of their property to take a female entertainer as a wife. Some female entertainers exercised the right of rejecting of the advances of male *yangban*. For details, see Sŏng Hyŏn, *Yongjae ch'onghwa* (*Literary Miscellany of Sŏng Hyŏn*), trans. Nam Mansŏng (Taeyang sŏjŏk, 1973), 201-20; 214-215; 216.

[126] Pak Illo's "Song of Longing" was not included in his collection but was later collected by Pak's close friend, Yi Tŏksŏng's great-grandson, Yi Yunmun (1646-1717). Kim Sŏngŭn, "Nogye 'Sangsa kok' ŭi naeyongjŏk t'ŭngsŏng kwa kŭ ŭimi" (Analysis of thematic features and their significance in Pak Illo's "Song

As a male adult I harden my mind to endure this hardship,
But your image still lingers in my vision.
How can I not miss you!
A day not seeing you feels like three years.[127]

In this song of *kasa*, Pak reveals the poet's male identity, distinguishing itself from the conventional use of love poems as an “oath of loyalty to the ruler.” That is, the song represents a man who longs for his beloved without disguising himself as a female. This change also appears in “Kyusu sangsa kok” (Love song of a maiden), an anonymous popular song, identifying the male poet with the speaker who confesses his pain and agony in the course of wooing.

My body grows fragile surely because of you.
My blood thins and my hands and feet are cold.
I may still breathe today but tomorrow I won’t.
I have become ill with lovesickness.
Who can remedy my condition!
Even if Bian Que were to rise from the dead and Hua Tuo be reborn,[128]
My bone-deep sickness has no cure.[129]

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of Longing”), *Ŏmun nonch’ong* 53 (2010): 209-237.

[127] “나도 丈부로셔 모딘 마음 지어내야 이제나 닛쟈 한들 눈에 절로 발피거든 서러 아니 그릴소냐 그리고 못 보니 一日이 三秋이로다,” in Kim Sŏngŭn, 213.

[128] Bian Que 扁鵲 is a famous medical professional in ancient China during the time of the Zhou dynasty. Hua Tuo 華陀 is an ancient Chinese physician whose biography is found in the history of the Eastern Han (25-220). He also appears in *Records of the Three Kingdoms*.

[129] “Kyusu sangsa kok” in Yi Ch’anghŭi, trans,. *Chŏngsŏn chosŏn kayojip* (Taunsaem, 2002), 96.

In this lyric, a male speaker experiences illusion and melancholy, seeking the maiden's love, and complains that desire burdens the speaker. In the lines of "[T]he illusion of love has just attacked me alone. Restless melancholy minds, a hundred thousand melancholy minds. The fire in my heart is burning my five inner organs. The moon above the window in stillness troubles my sleep,"[130] the song implies the symptoms of a lovesickness the speaker is experiencing through the expression of burning senses, in which fiery passion is accompanied by the physical reaction of sweating, fever, and warmth.

This poem departs from the traditional gendering of expressions of longing, creating an acceptable space for both female and male poets to bemoan their forbidden love. A male speaker woos a female beauty and discloses his identity as "male," coming out as male lover,[131] and this shifting notion of gendered voice serves to diversify portrayals of the lonely speaker, releasing him from strict gender norms and presenting him as a young wooer with tender rather than as a decisive agent who makes advantages of male privileges or aggressiveness.

In *The Tale of Gentleman Chu,* when the male protagonist reckons that there would be no immediate solution to consummate his relationship with Sŏnhwa, he recites a song titled "Everlasting Longing," without associating himself with female persona.

The blossoms in mist and weeping willow in fog,	花滿烟柳滿烟,
They signal that spring has come.	音信初馮春色傳.

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[130] Yi Ch'anghŭi, 96.

[131] See Kil Chinsuk, "Sangsa ka ryu *kasa* e nat'anan sarang ŭi susa" (The rhetoric of love in the *kasa* 'Song of Longing'), *Hanguk kojŏn yŏsŏng munhak yŏngu*, 7 (2003): 361-370.

Deep inside the window, she was sleeping.	綠窓深處眼.
Since good fortune turned into twisted fate,	好因緣是惡因緣,
At home the silver lamp flickered till dawn;	曉院銀釭已憫然.
The sailboat lingers on the shore of misty trees.	歸帆雲樹邊.[132]

This song illuminates the male protagonist's reminiscence before he goes off to a new place. It is imagined that he is on a boat to return to his home with reluctance to leave her, seeing the gleaming light inside her window. We hear the male voice of regrets, sorrow, and nostalgia, not tethered by female persona, eventually accommodates the perspective of a male character. This capacity to contain the male voice in the expression of longing offers an important venue for artistic expression and resists the literati conventions of the ubiquity of female voice in the "Song of Longing." In what follows, we further explore the questions centering on the representation of male voice of longing, especially in romance narratives.

Crossing Boundaries of Gendered Emotion

In a reading of *The Tale of Gentleman Chu*, the male character, Chu is a merchant who tried to gain an official post but fails the civil service examination. By chance he visits his hometown, where he encounters a female entertainer, Paedo, an old friend from his past. Chu's first thought is of sexual desire for Paedo, but he restrains himself. Instead he composes a poem to praise Paedo's unchanged attractiveness in a heptasyllabic quatrain:

[132] Kwŏn P'il, *Chu saeng chŏn* (The Tale of Gentleman Chu), in *17-segi aejŏng chŏngi sosŏl* (The seventeenth century *chuanqi* stories of love), trans. Yi Sanggu (Wŏrin, 1999), 254.

Fragrant flower at sky's edge dampens her petals.	天涯芳草幾霑衣
I return from far away, and things have changed.	萬里歸來事事非
Only Du Qiuniang has cherished her reputation,	依舊杜秋聲價在
A beaded screen hangs on a tower at sunset.	小樓珠箔捲斜暉[133]

The first line refers to the nostalgic sentiments of homesickness and estrangement that endure even after his returns to his hometown. When he finds Paedo—as if meeting Du Qiuniang[134]— he regains the joy of homecoming and also sympathizes with her, who became an entertainer, by comparing her as a flower with dampening petals, which has been interpreted as a woman sobbing during the night.[135] Through the poem, Chu begins to unfold his feelings for Paedo without using a direct emotional language. In a response to the poem, Paedo, attracted to Chu, asks him to lodge at her place. At the moment that Chu is about to address Paedo, her poem is revealed on the wall:

Dear Lute, please do not play a song of *sangsa*.	琵琶莫奏相思曲
Your haunting melody makes me sad.	曲到古時更斷魂
A lonely flower obscured by the beads on the curtain.	花影滿簾人寂寂
In the spring sunset, how hard I tried to appease my sadness!	春來消却幾黃昏[136]

The feeling of loneliness is suggested by soliloquy, in which a love song resonates in her

[133] *Chusaeng chŏn*, 244.

[134] Du Qiuniang. a poet in the ninth century, was also a famous female entertainer, and her husband Yi Qi, fascinated by her talent and beauty, spent a great deal of money to take her as his wife. After her husband's death, she became a concubine of Emperor Xianzong (778-820).

[135] "生卽悅其色又見其詩 情迷意惑萬念俱灰," in *Chusaeng chŏn*, 244.

[136] *Chusaeng chŏn*, 234.

empty room. The poem emphasizes the speaker's emotional suffering and loneliness rather than the anticipatory pleasure of courtship, although it is possible to translate the strong implication of loneliness and longing into a subtle seduction. At night, Chu approaches a room where he finds Paedo immersed in composition; he asks her to allow him to help her complete the poem:

In a deep and small courtyard, my mind is troubled.	小院沉沉春意鬧
The moon hangs on a branch of blossoms.	月在花枝
An incense burner blows smoke into the sky.	寶鴨香烟裊
The beauty by the window is afraid to grow old.	窓裡玉人愁欲老
Awakened from a dream, she is drawn to the flowers and plants.	遙遙斷夢迷花草

Chu adds:

Mistakenly I enter the twelve islands in Mount Penglai.	誤入蓬萊十二島
Who would guess that Fanchuan would find a fragrant plant?	誰識樊川却得尋芳草
In an instant I wake up, as a bird sings in the tree.	睡起忽聞枝上鳥
No shadow on the blue screen when dawn reddens the terrace.	翠簾無影朱欄曉[137]

In his poem, adding onto Paedo's, Chu describes himself as a seeker of the fragrant flower in his dream, whereas Paedo's poem is presented as version of a *ci* (詞) in which the speaker tends to refer to oneself from the third-person perspective. She compares herself to a flower standing alone in a room, as if being described by a desiring other. In contrast to the female's submissive position, Chu describes himself in a first person voice as a man wooing woman. In the poem, his expression of feelings is also unabashed, comparing

[137] *Chusaeng chŏn*, 245.

himself to Fanchuan, a famous Tang Poet, Du Muzhi (803-853), at his delight in encountering a fragrant flower.

After spending the night together, Paedo laments that her life is a misery by dint of her role as a female entertainer. Upon hearing this, Chu promises to remove her name from the list of courtesans by marring her. One day Paedo is summoned to the local government minister's home, and Chu follows Paedo so as not to be separated from her. When Chu seeks Paedo sitting inside the chamber, he sees Sŏnhwa, a daughter of the minister. From that moment, Chu is captivated by Sŏnhwa and turns his attention to wooing her. Paedo, ignorant of Chu's burning passion for Sŏnhwa, willingly helps Chu become a private tutor for Kugyŏng, her younger brother, and also allows him to board at the minister's house.

While staying there, Chu longs to meet Sŏnhwa every night. He dares to climb over the wall, sneak into the inner courtyard, and knock on her window, even at the risk of his life. When he crouches by a pillar, he hears Sŏnhwa reciting "Hexinlang" 賀新郎 (Greeting a Bridegroom), Su Shi's lyrics:

Who is knocking on my window outside the screen,	簾外誰來推繡戶
Waking me up from a dream—I was in the tower.	枉敎人斷夢瑤臺
Alas, it may be wind blowing through the bamboo.	又却是風敲竹[138]

Upon hearing it, Chu replies outside the screen in classical style.

Don't say the wind passes through the bamboo.	莫言風敲竹

[138] *Chusaeng chŏn*, 249.

The beautiful one has come to you. 眞箇玉人來[139]

In this exchange, it is interesting to find the intersections of two different forms expressing the themes of loneliness and seduction. Chu composes his poem in a form of classical verse (詩), whereas Paedo's or Sŏnhwa's poems are presented in a form of *ci* (詞).

Sŏnhwa, pretending not to hear the voice, turns off the light and goes to bed. Chu enters the room. He spends the night with Sŏnhwa. In terms of social norms, love affairs were ethically treacherous, and a male advance into a woman's quarters is compared to "stealing the perfume and pilfering the pearl" (偸香盜璧). What is interesting in the story is that the characters' bemoaning the sense of loss continues brooding even while in the midst of an affectionate relationship. The feeling of longing (思) is, more often than not, incompatible with the given context. A lament on being alone is also found in the poem Sŏnhwa composes after spending a night with Chu.

After the rain, faded fog is everywhere. 漠漠輕陰雨天後
A green willow is like a picture, and plants like smoke. 綠楊如畵草如烟
Spring fever does not go away as spring departs. 春愁不逐春歸去
A nightingale sings near my bedside. 又逐曉鶯來枕邊[140]

The image of rain may suggest a passionate moment, as sky and earth meet and unite, but "fading fog" implies Sŏnhwa's foreboding of an insecure relationship with Chu. Instead of

[139] *Chusaeng chŏn*, 250.

[140] *Chusaeng chŏn*, 250.

excitement or pleasure, the song presents the loneliness and agony experienced by one who suffers from spring fever, as sadness overshadows love.[141]

Soon Paedo notices that Chu has fallen for Sŏnhwa, but she conceals her feelings of jealousy and remains faithful to Chu. She longs for Chu to return and eventually dies of love sickness. After Paedo's death, Guoying also becomes ill and suddenly dies. Having no one to rely on, Chu decides to leave Qiantang and goes to meet his wealthy uncle in Huzhou. Chu and Sŏnhwa suffer emotionally and physically for want of each other after parting. Chu's uncle becomes curious about Chu's deteriorating condition and divines the reason. After Chu explains what has happened, the uncle arranges Chu's marriage to Sŏnhwa. A month before the marriage, Japan attempts to invade China through Chosŏn, and Ming dispatches troops to the peninsula; Chu is conscripted as a scribe for the Ming army. He departs China, leaving Sŏnhwa at Qiantang, and during Chu's stay in Korea, he meets the writer, Kwŏn P'il, and shares his tragic love story.

Sexual Desire in the Veil of Longing

The story is faithful to the description of both the outer turmoil of injuring, looting, or murder, and inner conflicts in the pursuit of both morality and desire. Although sexual desire, love affairs, and love triangles might be nothing new in the tradition of short stories, the story reveal a nexus between romantic love and tragic elements such as pain, suffering, and death. This plot device is located on the descriptive level, with emotional expressions

[141] For details of the prominence of tragic love in East Asian literary tradition, see Peter H. Lee, *Celebration of Continuity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 94-143.

and gestures that include sighing, sobbing, and crying, and offers a diversity of emotional responses. Depictions of death, illness, and suffering are frequently used to disjoin relationships. Confucian ideas are another key to unlocking the popularity of the expression of longing in the rhetoric of love, since the realization that emotional dynamics in love affairs are driven by the value placed on Confucian norms. In stories, feelings of longing are suggested in illicit extramarital relationships, as male and female characters expose their interiority and the pain of being alone and feeling abandoned with all possible channels of communication blocked. In this respect, a sense of subversion is palpable in the expression of longing in the story. This enhanced expressivity, echoing the new literary fashion, endows characters with a voice capable of expressing desire and provides a vocabulary for expressing private passion.

At the same time, the rhetoric of longing betrays a sense of loss in the subject by acknowledging a strong attachment to a love object. In *The Tale of Gentleman Chu,* male and female characters face the reality that their love objects are missing, and they become obsessed with locating them. Yet, the described object is hardly placed in a defenseless or vulnerable position. Rather, the yearned-for loved one occupies the speaker's mind and causes him to imagine himself as less appreciated, meanwhile describing his beloved as worthy, even divine. He or she yearns for unity with the beloved. In the process of idealizing the love object, the poet experiences self-effacement: By rendering the object surreal and remote, he believes that his devotion will not be rewarded in the end.

Strong emotional bonds between a speaker and his love object are also found in the lyrics of courtly love stories in the West. The male courtier tends to declare himself the

vassal of the lady and addresses her as a goddess. When the male courtier exalts his lady as an ennobling, flawless, and a moral force, he releases his feelings of loneliness and emptiness while revealing his impatience for reunion. The distance between subject and object is exaggerated by the poet himself, who devalues himself as a worthless partner and envisions the consummation of his love as unattainable. The loss of the object seems to endow the bereft, would-be lovers with pleasure in idealizing the beloved and imagining about the moment of reunion. The role of fantasy is similarly found in different literatures, as William Reddy writes, "Love literatures and documents from many cultural settings report that lovers become preoccupied with and ruminate about beloveds, sometimes to the point of obsession . . . . Lovers in the grip of preoccupation and rumination consider the beloved, not in the hope of appetitive release but as a potential partner in a multi-faceted, open ended relationship."[142]

In love literatures, the rhetoric of longing reveals a sense of vulnerability, inwardness, and passivity. However, the expression of longing does not necessarily allude to renunciation of the self. Rather it urges desire to become a desired self, and the expression of longing releases a narcissistic urge. Jacques Lacan addresses the nature of love in poems and love stories, suggesting that they reveal a "mutual narcissism," the experience of lovers charged with filling each other's unfillable gap, such that each is required to restore the other's narcissism.[143] The narcissistic urge in the discourse of longing may be seen in a

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[142] William M. Reddy, *The Making of Romantic Love: Longing and Sexuality in Europe, South Asia, and Japan 900-1200 CE* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 9.

[143] Jacques Lacan, et al., *On Feminine Sexuality: The Limits of Love and Knowledge* (New York: W.W.

rhetoric characterized by ambiguity and illusions in describing the actual object of desire. The classical lyrics of Paedo and Sŏnhwa, along with the vernacular narration of "Song of Longing," do not necessarily clarify the object the speaker is longing to meet, and the veiled image of the beloved is addressed to the discourse of objectless love. That is, "longing for somebody" means an affection that amounts to altruistic love. Contrary to the general assumption, the expression of longing in stories is oriented toward the strong feeling of self-love.

In the western courtly love, the knight often places himself as the subject of love, and the lady of higher status is idealized by him as his love object.[144] The relationship is expected to be clandestine and unrealized. Customarily, the modest woman resists until later, the man increasingly suffers from anxiety. Therefore, the effect of longing is culminated when the male courtier woos and awaits the beloved, while the woman repeatedly cloaks her feelings and declines his devotion. In the story, however, the matter of chastity and physical purity does not affect the decision of the female protagonist vis-à-vis male advances. When Chu faces the danger of disclosing his illicit behavior and the possibility of rejection by his female lover, neither Paedo nor Sŏnhwa is surprised by Chu's aggressiveness. As a women's intentional or unintentional postponing or hesitation is

Norton, 1998), 4-6.

[144] Often knights are portrayed as troubled lovers, but the practice of courtly love permeated in the whole social range from lowly servant (Ventadour) secretly claiming to be in love with the unattainable Lord's wife to the Lord himself (Jauffre Rudel) in love with a unattainable faraway lady, often seen in troubadour poetry.

removed, she does not manipulate him, and instead accepts his wooing.[145]

On the other hand, male characters are often faced with the need to conceal his desire, as in the literary practice in which male poets rarely address the personal emotional expression and combine feeling and scene to infuse "their object presentation with a highly subjective expression." Particularly, expression of erotic longing is socially "forbidden" to the male literati, as it can threaten their rightful place within the social order. In the expression of longing, however, the male character's lust is possibly framed into the authentic and genuine experience of love, although it is difficult to separate erotic love from romantic sentiment. The expression of longing therefore functions as an indication of sincerity and commitment rather than the implication of lust. Also, it is frequently emphasized that affectionate relationship is thwarted by the intervention of a disruptive third elements of a moral code and social barriers so that when the feeling of longing persists because characters are prevented from consummating their love.

Similar to the *The Tale of Gentleman Chu,* unattainable love between male and female characters is a central theme in Kwŏn P'il's another romance story of *The Tale of Wi Kyongch'ŏn*. The title character, Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn, accompanies his friend Chang during his travels along the Yangzi River. At Yueyang City, they get drunk and fall asleep inside a boat. Awakened by a mysterious sound, Wi steps out of the boat and walks through the city

[145] Lower-class women and female slaves were much more vulnerable to male superior's sexual advances. Many stories and narratives during the Chosŏn period show that female slaves were often subject to sexual abuse and/or harassment by their masters; gender and social hierarchy often allowed violent sexual unions. See Ch'oe Kisuk, "Kwangesŏng ŭrosŏŭi sexuality: sŏng, sarang, kwŏllŏk" ("Rethinking sexuality in relationships in terms of sex, love, and power), *Yŏsŏng munhak yŏngu*, 10 (2003): 253-263.

gate. There he happens to see So Sukpang, a female entertainer, and feels an instant desire, "his inner desire likened to six horses galloping in the field."[146]

A passionate Wi follows So Sukpang's steps and sneaks into her house, without anyone noticing. As he enters her room and threatens her in order to make her sleep with him, So Sukpang reviles him at first. However, as Wi confesses his passion and promises to take her as his wife, she accepts him as her lover. Akin to Paedo and Sŏnhwa, So Sukpang does not challenge or refute male aggression. Rather, and in contrast to rejecting a would-be paramour in courtly love, she accepts Wi into her room.

The story shows the different outlooks of illicit liaisons with a woman. After the affair, Wi's friend, Chang, opposes Wi's obsessive pursuit. He believes it to poison Wi, saying: "You used to pursue the path to improve yourself to make your family honored and governed the nation, and pacify the world. Now, you only peek into the inner chambers of the minister's and eventually have an improper relationship with a woman like a fool."[147] Despite Chang's opposition, Wi cannot help but thinking of So Sukpang. As a result, Chang forces Wi to return home to his parents. Separated from his beloved for six months, Wi falls ill:

When the shadow of branches reaches the jade balustrade,	花枝影動玉欄干
The sound of oriole in the sunset lifts my spring feelings.	鶯引春愁漸夕陽
In my sick bed, I am still longing for you.	床上猶怜心悄悄

[146] Kwŏn P'il, *Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn chŏn* (The Tale of Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn), in *17-segi aejŏng chŏngi sosŏl* (The seventeenth century *chuanqi* stories of love), trans. Yi Sanggu (Wŏrin, 1999), 261.

[147] *Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn chŏn*, 263.

Near my pillow, I still hear your voice.	枕邊遙憶語琅琅
Just as the Yellow River never ends,	
I still keep your promise deep inside	黃河不斷盟深在
Perhaps it is too distant; a blue bird brings no message.	青鳥無傳別路長
Even I have to die now, my feelings will remain with this world,	魂入九原應有怨
I doubt myself if I could meet you again in this life.	此生何處更相逢[148]

Seeing his devastated condition, Wi's parents discover that it is caused by his desperate longing for So Sukpang, and they decide to arrange a marriage between Wi and So Sukpang. After several months of happy marriage, however, Wi's father leaves for Korea for military service, and Wi is drafted to accompany his father as a scribe. In the foreign land, Wi becomes ill and eventually dies, longing for his wife. Upon hearing of Wi's death, the wife follows him in death. In both stories, the feeling of longing substitutes for the confession of love, as the characters narrate or recall their longing for each other after the confirmation of mutual love and commitment of marriage.

The text confirms the fact that the male protagonist's initial passion was prompted by his libido. However, by re-inscribing passion to the rhetoric of longing, the distinction of carnal desire and the feeling of love is blurred in the context. In this setting, the male protagonist's primary motive of desire fades into the background of lovesickness. Therefore, male sexual motive is no longer "on the surface," but is displaced by a sickness that arises due to longing. In this sense, both stories reveal continual interest in emotional content built into the structure of feeling. Emotional expressions of frustration, bliss,

[148] *Wi Kyŏngch'ŏn chŏn*, 263.

longing, and grief in the stories illuminate the contemplative and pensive moments of love, which set it apart from relentless, passionate, or sexual love.

Ambivalence in Longing

So far this chapter has showed that certain structures of feelings came to be thought of as respectively male or female, with longing more closely associated with the female voice in middle to late Chosŏn social and literary discourse. These constructed feelings affected the way readers imagined the gendered voice, without necessarily relegating it to the poet's or writer's own identity or experience. The female voice of longing prevailed over male expressions of longing for centuries, yet some challenged the literary norm by revealing the male voice in the representation of longing for the beloved.

Female longing was closely associated with a common set of perceptions and values during late Chosŏn society, and its persistence can be attributed to the fact that its "language of love" was codified in the literary tradition. Since the classics and older narratives tend to represent dejected, passive women and cast them as helpless victims excluded from public space,[149] the idea of a woman longing for a man to return home was an established, even expected experience. However, within this context, the female speaker is likely to manipulate this voice of longing. The literary convention reinforces images of the passive and oppressed woman, and the distinct female voice of longing also reflects

[149] In the politics of sexual segregation, women belong on the "inside," engaging the domestic arena, while men work "outside" to provide the needs of the household. Though the sexual segregation of inner and outer spheres is characterized by its complementary nature, the *Book of Rites* alleges that men do not discuss inside affairs nor women discuss outside affairs.

women's life experiences in a patriarchal system. That is, the social restrictions imposed on male-female relationships also portray the failure of the patriarchal culture to satisfy its members.

The question remains whether scholars today can interpret and understand the way in which poets and writers defined feminine attributes within the expressions of longing; that is, is it possible to have an accurate awareness of Chosŏn aesthetics of longing despite our own temporal and social removal from their milieu? More importantly, can we conclude that the representation of longing in lieu of pleasure or passion engenders a discourse of passivity?

The expression of longing arising from the regret and agony that comes from the loss of the beloved can be read as a pessimistic and submissive aspect of courtship; this can be attributed to its penchant to focus on the demonstration of emotional or physical pain, as well as the unbearableness of the present moment. At the extreme end, the speaker confesses a suicidal wish to die rather than to live in agony, as suggested in Chŏng Ch'ŏl's "Song of Longing for the Fair One" and "Continued Song for the Fair One," in the anonymous "Song of Longing." In addition, the rhetoric of longing often ends in an ambiguous conclusion regarding how passion might be attained or re-attained. The Confucian cultural norm did not approve of courtship or marrying for love:[150] In order to control social mobility and family structure, marriages were arranged; individuals were

[150] I want to note that these Confucian practices were primarily for the elites, and that commoners and low-born people were not highly expected to live up to them.

strongly discouraged from freely choosing a conjugal partner.[151] In the literary works mentioned above, the prominence of expressions of longing seems to demonstrate a subversive expression of frustrated desire.

In addition, the expression of longing serves as a site of integrating erotic desire and romantic feelings. The pathos of longing is usually generated by an imbalance between one's desire and social reality, such as the outbreak of wars, conflicts with or disobedience to society's moral code, and class differentiations. In *The Tale of Gentleman Chu,* the affectionate relationship is initiated by a male character, who chooses not to resist his desire after seeing a beautiful woman and sneaks into the inner chambers to be with her. Although a male figure may resort to entering the women's quarters to satisfy his erotic desires, male sexual aggression does not necessarily end in sexual coercion. Instead, the man suffers from an array of feelings aroused by both erotic drive and emotional need, which then underline his feeling of longing. Emphasis on the emotional aspect of male love also prevents the story from focusing on sexual aggression or indulgence.

Finally, in the texts mentioned, the feeling of longing integrates subversion and the freedom of expression. The stories analyzed here intimate that male and female characters falling in love without familial or communal consent are to be considered as the realization of illusive or inconceivable forms of love. Meanwhile, the representation of longing allows

[151] In *Mencius*, "When a man is born his parents wish that he may one day find a wife, and when a woman is born they wish that she may find a husband. Every parent feels like this. But those who bore holes in the wall to peep at one another, and climb over it to meet illicitly, waiting for neither the command of parents nor the good offices of a go-between, are despised by parents and fellow-countrymen alike." *Mencius* 3B:3, trans. D.C. Lau (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 66-67.

both literati writers and readers to take the liberty of embodying the set of various emotions of sadness and despair based on the affectionate relationship. Fictional characters are seemingly deprived of any agency in consummating their relationships. However, by employing the structured feeling of longing, the embodiment of pain, frustration, and melancholy serves as an instrumental device that transforms repressed and forbidden desire into a sophisticated and refined language of love.

Chapter 3.

Dilemma of a Lovesick Hero

> My love is as a fever, longing still
> For that which longer nurseth the disease;
> Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,
> Th' uncertain sickly appetite to please.
> My reason, the physician to my love,
> Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,
> Hath left me, and I desp'rate now approve
> Desire is death, which physic did except.
>
> Shakespeare, Sonnet147[152]

Recent studies observe a feminized masculinity of Asian men that diverges from images of the traditionally strong and hardy man. Conventionally, beautiful appearance and a high sense of fashion have been perceived as feminine qualities, but in contemporary culture and mass media these qualities have been promoted as masculine property as well.[153] Reflecting current consumer trends, a "manufactured versatile masculinity" that combines

[152] Quoted from *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (Wordsworth Library Collection, 2007), 1243.

[153] Kam Louie, "Popular Culture and Masculinity Ideals in East Asia with Special Reference to China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 71 (2012): 929-943.

both sexy and feminine qualities in body image has brought about the construction of "soft, global, and postmodern masculinities."[154]

In addressing the emergence of a fragile and vulnerable scholar figure in Chosŏn romance, this chapter concerns the changing patterns of ideal masculinity in tradition and romance. Different from our understandings of traditional masculine models, the seventeenth century romance portrays weak, vulnerable, and lovesick male characters. In this chapter I discuss how the discourse changed from that of heroic man to lovesick man and seek an understanding of the vulnerable nature of male protagonists in *Sangsa-dong ki* (*The Tale of Sangsa-dong*) and *Unyŏng chŏn* (*The Tale of Unyŏng*). Chapter Three discusses the reasoning behind lovesickness in medical discourse, and this chapter addresses male lovesickness in romance fiction. The "lovesick hero" is construed as both sexually vigorous suitor and passive victim of love. In addressing configurations of the feeble and fearful male character, which defies previous images of the traditional ideal male, this chapter explores the processes in which a lovesick hero at once loses a sense of agency and recoups masculine power and love by employing the cultural significance of the male body.

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[154] Jung Sun, "K-Pop Idol Boy Bands and Manufactured Versatile Masculinity: Making *Chogukjeok* Boys," *Korean Masculinities and Transcultural Consumption* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), 163-170.

Trajectories to Traditional Ideals of Masculinity

While the soft and sexy masculine image converges as a form of hybrid culture in contemporary popular culture, modern discourse is overshadowed by images of machismo.[155] The demand for dominant and strong manhood is a distinctly twentieth-century form of nationalism and authoritarianism. Throughout history, social and political upheavals have provided an agenda for Korean men to be sturdy, strong, and tough. This was considered important especially in the 1910s when the aspiration to build a strong modern nation is heightened.[156] Even post colonization, symptoms of hyper-masculinity and the exaggerated expression of masculine power continue to be produced as post-colonial responses to the colonial past.[157] The discourse of male superiority was reinforced under the authoritarian government's militarism of the 1960s and 1970s, as strong and superior manhood was advocated by the Park Chung Hee regime. Yet such a discourse was also welcomed by intellectuals and writers protesting the regime with the idea of *chŏhang chuch'e* (the resisting subject) in opposition to official militarism.[158]

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[155] The concept of machoism is defined as an assertively virile or domineering male and derives from Spanish and Portuguese history.

[156] Kim Ŭnsil, "Hanguk kŭndaehwa project ŭi munhwa nolli wa kabujangsŏng" (Cultural logic and patriarchy in the modernization project of Korea), in Im Chihyŏng, et al., *Uri anŭi p'asijŭm* (Samin, 2000), 105-130.

[157] Jongwoo Han and L. H. M. Ling, "Authoritarianism in the hypermasculinized state: hybridity, patriarchy, and capitalism in Korea," *International Studies Quarterly* 42 (1998): 53-78.

[158] Kim Ŭnha, "1970-yŏndae sosŏl kwa chŏhang chuch'e ŭi namsŏngsŏng" (Masculine identity as the subject of resistance in the novels of the 1970s), *Feminism yŏngu* 7 (2007): 270.

The formation of the discourse of machismo in modern Korea and the latest surge of hybrid masculinity in popular culture together demonstrate the changing nature of gender images as well as norms, signifying that shifts in the masculine model occurring in conjunction with social and cultural transformations. The discourse of ideal masculinity becomes even more defined when the understanding of manliness and cultural identity are threatened. In particular, attempts to define "original" and "traditional" models become more pronounced in a rapidly changing world where the crisis of identity provides the motivation to seek and establish an "authentic" masculine standard.

Modern thinkers and scholars defining the traditional representation of ideal manhood in Korean culture often refer to two conceptual models: *kunja* 君子 (Confucian gentleman) and *taejangbu* 大丈夫 (a manly man). The concept of *kunja* has been thought to represent the essence of a Confucian man. In fact, the term appears in *The Analects* one hundred and six times, referring to an "exemplary man."[159] Arthur Waley traces the term:

> Chun (jun) is the most general term for "ruler" and a *chun-tzu* (junzi) is a "son of a ruler." The term was applied to descendants of the ruling house in any State, and so came to mean 'gentleman,' 'member of the upper classes.' But the gentleman is bound by a particular code of morals and manners; so that the word *chun-tzu* implies not merely superiority of birth but also superiority of character and behaviors.[160]

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[159] Kam Louie, "Confucius as Sage, Teacher, Businessman: Transformations of the wen Icon," *Theorising Chinese Masculinity: Society and Gender in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 44.

[160] Arthur Waley, "Introduction," in *The Analects of Confucius*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 34-35, quoted in Song Geng, *The Fragile Scholar: Power and Masculinity in Chinese Culture* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004), 89.

The model of *junzi* (kunja in Korean) was introduced as the ideal personhood, awakening Korean male elites to the significance of self-cultivation. It gave rise to the vernacular expression *sŏnbi*, a noble man who embodies the virtues and morally cultivates himself in private life and serves the state in public life, seeking to benefit the world.[161]

On the other hand, the concept of *taejangbu* was developed by Mencius to distinguish *changbu* 丈夫 (C. *zhangfu*) from *taejangbu* 大丈夫 (C. *dazhangfu*). While *changbu* indicates the general sense of "man," including boy and young man, *taejangbu* specifically refers to an adult man with a great deal of maturity, wisdom, and power. Mencius refers to *taejangbu* as follows:

> "'How can they be thought great men?' said Mencius. 'Have you never studied the rites? When a man comes of age his father gives him advice. When a girl marries, her mother gives her advice. . . A man lives in the spacious dwelling, occupies the proper position, and goes along the highway of the Empire. When he achieves his ambition he shares these with the people; when he fails to do so he practises the Way alone. He cannot be led into excesses when wealthy and honoured or deflected from his purpose when poor and obscure, nor can he be made to bow before superior force. This is what I would call a great man."[162]

In Mencian understanding, *taejangbu* transcends wealth or poverty and seeks to achieve perfect virtue but also emphasizes physical maturity.

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[161] Cho Kuho, "Munhak chakp'um e nat'anan sŏnbi sang" (The image of *sŏnbi* represented in literary works), *Sŏnbi munhwa* 16 (2009): 137.

[162] *Mencius* 3B:2. For English translation, see D. C. Lau, trans. *The Works of Mencius* (New York: Penguin.,1970), 107.

In contrast, the modern popular concept of *taejangbu* tends to further emphasize the external features, such as physical strength and manly behaviors. The expression *sanae tae jangbu,* a combination of the vernacular term *sanai* 사나이 (a man) followed by *taejangbu* of the classical expression, has come to mean one or more of the following:

> He must be physically strong.
> He must drink well.
> He must be reticent and unaffected.
> He feels responsible for social righteousness.
> It is fine to be callous about money and women.[163]

The model of *taejangbu* places less emphasis on Confucian norms of behavior and conduct but more on the display of physical power. Additionally, it reveals an encounter between tradition and modernity: A true "manly man" should be able to disassociate himself from mundane interests in money and women, an idea that stems from the Confucian virtues of frugality and chastity. On the other hand, the appraisal of physical strength and toughness parallel the modern image of a "manly man." Together, the models show that an understanding of the traditional model invites both "adoption" and "adaptation" of convention. As Eric Hobsbawm writes: "Traditions that appear or claim to be old are often recent in origin and sometimes invented."[164] The images and concepts do not only yield new understandings of the original, but seemingly the image itself is altered to

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[163] Son Pongho, "Sanai Taejangbu" (Manly man), *Sae kajŏng* 282 (1979): 44-46.

[164] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, "Inventing Traditions," *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1, 4.

manufacture the need.[165] This example shows that certain masculine models are staged as "authentic" or "traditional," while consistently producing new understandings of the past.

The Rise of Scholarly Man

It is widely acknowledged that the Confucian virtues and values were viewed as the essence of personhood. The endeavors of self-cultivation and cultural refinement were the foremost part of constructing an ideal manhood. Historical records show examples of men who cultivated a perfect balance between literary skill and martial arts. The ideal picture of masculinity could be attained from both literary and martial skills; however, in Koryŏ and Chosŏn societies, moral and cultural attainment was stressed further.

Concerning the relationship between literary and martial competence, Kam Louie writes that often gender identity, whether masculine or feminine, demands the classification of gender into the two distinct and opposite genders of male and female. However, Chinese discourse lacks the binary concepts of male versus female. Instead, it suggests a different and alternative dyad for assessing masculine ideals: *wen* 文 (civil ideals) and *wu* 武 (martial ideals).

The Chinese paradigm that serves as a prompt to further analysis of masculinity

[165] Yi Hwang 李滉 (1501-1570), for example, served as an ideal model of Confucian philosopher. He was honored as an eminent scholar as well as a model of manhood, and many versions of his portrait show different views and values imposed on the same historical figure. Premodern painters tended to characterize Yi Hwang as a man of authority and integrity, whereas modern paintings portray him as a gentle and effeminate scholar, reflecting the modernist's penchant for disassociating pre-modern Korea from its Confucian past. See Ch'oe Chaemok, "T'oegye sang ŭi pyŏnmo" (Tracing the changes in Yi Hwang's portraits), *T'oegye hakpo* 130 (2011): 205-241.

> alone is the binary opposition between *wen*, the mental or civil, and *wu*, the physical or martial. . . . *[W]en* is generally understood to refer to those genteel, refined qualities that were associated with literary and artistic pursuits of the classical scholar. . . . [while] *wu* is a concept which embodies the power of military strength but also the wisdom to know when not to deploy it.[166]

These two archetypes suggest that the gender constructions in traditional and modern China are less dependent on such concepts as *yin* and *yang*, which form complementary relationships, while the concepts of *wen* and *wu* serve as a fundamental structure for understanding Chinese manhood resilient to historical changes. The principle is that an ideal man should attain a balance between *wen* and *wu*, and therefore a sophisticated and fragile scholar can be considered to be no less masculine than a warrior. During the Tang and Song periods, as civil ministers and scholar-officials came to dominate society and occupy primary government positions, *wen* became widely recognized as a more significant aspect than *wu* in defining male identity.[167]

When the Koryŏ and Chosŏn courts implemented the civil service examinations as a system of recruiting officials for the bureaucracy, Korean male elites began devoting their time to the accumulation of scholarly skills and knowledge. As the relationship of civil and military officials is understood as hierarchical, wherein civil servants outrank military officials, the display of scholarly taste and cultural knowledge gradually came to be viewed as the most important part for male qualification in the private sphere, while

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[166] Louie,11-14.

[167] Louie, 18.

passing the examinations to become a civil official was regarded as a public goal that would help the government maintain a grip on power.

To achieve internal and external goals, an elite male would devote himself full-time to receiving literary training. From an early age, young elites received a proper education, which included reading, writing, memorization of the Confucian canon, and mastery in poetry and calligraphy. After passing the first examination, they would become candidates for the literary licentiate (*chinsa*) and classics licentiate (*saengwŏn*) degrees and finally, after passing the final examination, they would become eligible for an official appointment.[168] The dominance of scholars was fuelled by desires to achieve or maintain *yangban* status.[169] However, the frequency of examinations and gradual increase of degree holders resulted in a shortage of positions that called for diversification of the *yangban* class.[170] In addition, decades of factional struggles and literati purges contributed to tremors in the structure of Chosŏn society. A number of degree holders and *yangban* settled in rural areas and ruled the local community according to Neo-Confucian norms, providing fertile soil for factional struggles.

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[168] See James B. Palais, *Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions: Yu Hyŏngwŏn and the late Chosŏn Dynasty* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 34-41.

[169] The literal meaning of *yangban* is the two ranks (military and civilian). The title of *yangban* is endowed to those who pass the state examinations and advanced to government posts. They came to constitute the ruling elite of the Chosŏn state, as a privileged group inheriting the political power and economic and social influences.

[170] Fujiya Kawashima, "Local Gentry Association in Mid-Yi Dynasty Korea: A Preliminary Study of the *Ch'angnyŏng Hyangan*, 1600-1838," *Journal of Korean Studies* 2 (1980): 130-134.

The role of *yangban* began to be questioned in late Chosŏn, as their lack of military skills was revealed in the confrontation with foreign forces in the late sixteenth century. Since the title of *yangban* was later treated as commodity that could be bought with money, it no longer served as a meritorious and honorable title, but rather as an object of mockery and satire in some circles. Pak Chiwŏn's "Yangban chŏn" (Tale of a *Yangban*) attempts to itemize the standard etiquette and behavior of this class:[171] "You must bear hunger and cold and never say you are poor. You must tap your teeth and snap the back of your head, swallow your spittle when you cough, brush your plush cap with your sleeves, and wipe away the dust that rises like waves. But your must not rub your hands too much when you wash or rinse to excess. You should summon your slave girls with a drawn-out voice, and walk in a leisurely manners, dragging your shoes."[172] Pak Chiwŏn's satire on the hypocrisies of a *yangban* who were no longer interested in moral or social qualifications condemns those who abused the title's prestige by treating it as a commodity to buy or sell.

In a society where the male members of the upper class preferred to identify themselves as scholars, although it was important to prove the superiority of birth and/or show their intellectual attainment, it was more important to show one's moral superiority. The authority of a superior man was to be defined by supremacy of moral power maintained through self-cultivation and the maintenance of virtues. Drawing from Antonio Gramsci's ideas of cultural hegemony, the philosophical basis for claiming hegemonic

[171] Cho Kuho, 137-144.

[172] Peter H. Lee, "The Story of a *Yangban*," *Anthology of Korean Literature from Early Times to the Nineteenth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), 223.

masculinity is rooted in the practice of moral power. The legitimacy of a moral being was secured by his role in rituals as an heir of the family line.[173] Usually a man's task in ancestral rituals was to take charge of the services, while women, not allowed to participate, took on a marginal role by arranging and preparing foods and/or participating in more minor rites.[174] This shows that the manifestation of morally superior man was secured by his symbolic acts in rituals. The virtue of the filial son was emphasized in the formation of Confucian manhood.

A man's moral superiority could also be demonstrated in his relationship with his parents. Confucian principles stress family harmony and social order, and filial love for one's parents is treated as a fundamental code that can be extended to the subject-ruler relationship. The Confucian emphasis of filial piety is revealed in the *Analects*:

> It is upon the trunk that a gentleman works. When that is firmly set up, the Way grows. And surely proper behavior towards parents and elder brothers is the trunk of Goodness?(1:2)
>
> The Master said, While they [the parents] are alive, serve them according to ritual. When they die, bury them according to ritual and sacrifice to them according to ritual. (2:5)

[173] The establishment of the ritual heir (*chongja*) was a significant issue in early Chosŏn, and legal experts, including Hŏ Cho, Pyŏn Kyeryang, Yi Chik, and Hwang Hŭi, find a rational basis in *Li ji* (Book of Rites) for adopting a differentiation between the ritual heir and his brothers (*ch'aja*). See Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology* (Cambridge: Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1992), 136-139.

[174] Pak Mihae, "Yugyojŏk gender chŏngch'esŏng ŭi tach'ŭngjŏk kujo" (The complex structure of gender identity in Confucian culture), *Sahoe wa yŏksa* 79 (2008): 209-212; Martina Deuchler, 155-164.

> Meng Wu Po asked about the treatment of parents. The Master said, Behave in such a way that your father and mother have no anxiety about you, except concerning your health.(2:6)
>
> The Master said, 'Filial sons' nowadays are people who see to it that their parents get enough to eat. But even dogs and horses are cared for to that extent. If there is no feeling of respect, wherein lies the difference? (2:7)[175]

These excerpts show that the exemplary treatment of parents, alive and dead, was an important priority within Confucian principles. Although the importance and practice of filial piety applied both to men and women, because patriarchy or patrilineality operated as a fundamental system of Chosŏn society, filial piety constitutes a part of masculine virtue as a filial son. A filial son's duty included taking care of parents, behaving well for the sake of the family name, and maintaining harmony with siblings. In addition, he needed to secure the material means to support his parents. It was his responsibility to have a proper marriage and beget a son for the continuation of a family line.

Twofold Sexual Morality

Among the criteria of living a moral life, having sexual morals was one of the more important. While Confucian doctrines emphasized the control of human desires as a means of preventing chaos, social customs and legal codes focused on how to correctly channel such desires. Gender separation was designed as a measure of societal control of sexual desire. To adhere to sexual segregation, boys and girls were encouraged to maintain physical distance after their seventh birthday, an idea encapsulated in the idiom *namnyo*

[175] Arthur Waley, trans. *The Analects of Confucius* (London: Routledge, 2005), 83, 88-89.

ch'ilse pudongsŏk 男女七歲不同席 (7-year-old boys and girls do not sit next to each other) from the *Liji* 禮記 (*The Book of Rites*).

Sexual control also applied to marriage practices, and marriage and courtship were to be executed with parental supervision. In the chapter on rites in the *Chosŏn kyŏngguk chŏn* (Chosŏn National Code, 1397), Chŏng Tojŏn writes: "If there are no rules between a man and woman, it is not possible to consolidate sovereign power and govern the nation. . . . [B]oth men and women who fail to restrain their sexual desire (情慾) should be responsible for their behavior."[176] The text also delineates gender role differences, weighing in on the containment of female sexuality by providing details to regulate the travelling of wives and daughters. Young women were not allowed to visit places other than home, except for their parents, siblings, paternal uncles and aunts, and maternal uncles and aunts. It was possible to punish those who violated this rule.[177] The strictness was applied to a marginal group of monks as well:"If a monk visits a widow's house, he is to be classified as a sex offender."[178]

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[176] "君子之道, 造端夫婦, 王者之化, 始自閨門. 隱微之際, 所係甚重. 帷薄不修, 男女無別, 人道亂而王化泯矣. 其何以爲國家哉. 古昔聖王, 爲禮以節其情欲, 爲刑以制其淫邪. 所以興至治而美風俗也. 故婚姻之制, 謹之於禮典, 犯姦之令, 嚴之於憲典. 蓋出乎禮, 必入乎刑, 禮以正之, 刑以懲之. 聖人之重之也 如此後之爲紀法之宗者其可忽諸," in Chŏng Tojŏn, "*Sambong chip*" 三峰集 (*Collected Works of Chŏng Tojŏn*), vol. 14, http://db.itkc.or.kr (accessed 8-15-2013).

[177] *Sejong sillok* (1431/6/25), http://db.itkc.or.kr (accessed 8-15-2013).

[178] Yi Sugin interprets this passage as indicating that sexual control is required by women rather than men. The same discrimination is applied to Buddhist monks, while Chosŏn establishes sexual politics to enforce state power. Yi Sugin, "Chosŏn ch'ogi yuhak ŭi yŏsŏng insik" (The Confucian view of women in early Chosŏn), *Chŏngsin munhwa yŏngu* 31:2 (2008), 211.

The politics of sexuality invites misogyny. Although Confucian ethics advocates "love," as in the concept of *jen* 仁 (benevolence), which appreciates generosity and tenderness in human relationships, Confucius is often portrayed as supporting ideas of sexual segregation.[179] The *Shi jing* 詩經 (*Book of Songs*) confirms this:

> So he bears a son
> And puts him to sleep upon a bed,
> Clothes him in robes,
> Gives him a jade scepter to play with.
> The child's howling is very lusty;
> In red greaves shall he flare,
> Be lord and king of house and home.
> Then he bears a daughter,
> And puts her upon the ground,
> Clothes her in swaddling-clothes,
> Gives her a loom-whorl to play with.
> For her no decorations, no emblems;
> Her only care, the wine and food,
> And how to give no trouble to father and mother.[180]

This song offers the reasons for male privilege while containing the prescriptions on the treatment of women.

In the same vein, it was considered proper etiquette for men to also take precautions against sexual engagement with woman. Accordingly, resisting the lure of feminine charm was interpreted in the official discourse as a display of ideal masculinity.

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[179] Terry Woo, "Confucianism and Feminism," *Feminism and World Religions* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 110-147.

[180] *Book of Songs,* 257. Arthur Waley, trans., *The Book of Songs* (New York: Grove Press, 1960), 283-284.

Neo-Confucian learning especially emphasized sexual restraint and segregation for the prevention of *yin* 淫 (lewdness), particularly during the Song and Ming. This view also prevailed in Chosŏn, as in "Sasojŏl" 士小節 (*Small Manners for Scholars*) by Yi Tŏngmu 李德懋 (1741-1793). In the text, a cultured man should keep his distance from women: "When a man sees a woman in beautiful clothes in the street, he turns his head and eyes her carefully. Some even gaze sideways at the coverlet of the palace woman or the coat of a village woman. This is a vulgar habit. On these occasions, remain at a distance, do not roll your eyes; carry yourself properly."[181] That is, it is inappropriate for a man to approach a woman, and his expression should always follow the proper decorum. Although sexual politics was designed to promote sexual norms and order, it also allowed politicians to adopt institutional channels to warrant male elites' pursuit of sexual outlets. *Chunghon* 重婚 (polygamy) was practiced in the royal house during the Koryŏ period. The practice of polygamy was sometimes encouraged for economic gain, since women could be the heir of an equal share of the natal family property, but more often it was motivated by the desire to gain political advantage. In that system, no distinction was made between the primary wife and an additional wife or wives. However, with the transition to a Confucianized Chosŏn state, Korean society no longer regarded polygamy as lawful, while monogamy and arranged marriage were considered the standard.

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[181] Yi Tŏngmu, "Sasojŏl" (2:1A-7A); English translation in Yŏngho Ch'oe, et al., eds. *Sources of Korean Tradition II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 63.

The practical reason behind this decision can be found in the reiteration of patrilinealism. At the same time, taking concubines was accepted as an exception to monogamous marriage. As *ch'ukch'ŏp* 蓄妾 (concubinage) was put into practice, a number of male *yangban*— voluntarily or by familial arrangement—were allowed to take women of the commoner or lower class as concubine(s) to obtain a male heir.[182] Concubinage was, purportedly, arranged in the interest of women as a measure of providing her economic security; however, in most cases, it was established for male pleasure: Records show that male masters insisted on taking female servants who were already married to another man.[183] The sexual politics of the times established monogamy and the arranged marriage as a means of controlling sexuality, but did not prevent male elites from being able to maintain sexual privileges through concubinage. Also, the retention of the old practice of *kisaeng* (妓生) or *kinyŏ* (妓女), who were professional female entertainers, emerged from early Koryŏ and continued to Chosŏn, securing a venue for approved sex outside marriage.

Manhood and Lovesickness

In the literary world, *Kuunmong* (Nine Cloud Dream), for example, presents the heroic acts and virtues of a Confucian gentleman who exercises his capacity as a sophisticated,

[182] Although concubinage was being practiced, it had been also discouraged by cultural and economic reasons. The distinction between primary wife and concubine and the discriminations against secondary sons confined women's desire to become concubines. Also, men could not afford secondary wives without a measure of economic security.

[183] Yi Sŏngim, "Chosŏn sidae *yangban* ŭi ch'ukch'ŏp hyŏngsang kwa kyŏngjejŏk pudam," (The concubinage and economic burden of the Chosŏn society), *Ko munsŏ yŏngu* 33 (2008): 321.

cultured man and also as a martial hero, but also as one who fervently seeks affection. While the hero is close to revealing the tensions within himself between Confucian ideals on the one hand and romance and sexuality on the other,[184] the story faithfully traces the hero's seduction and success. The male protagonist, Yang Soyu, fulfills the motto of *ipsin yangmyŏng* 立身揚名 (to gain fame and position), which equates with the Confucian ideals of a perfect life. Yang is presented as a brilliant young scholar, but is also cited for gallantry in the battlefield, defeating the foreign enemy, and being appointed commander-in-chief in the campaign against the Tibetans. At the same time, he is suggested as a charismatic lover. His long journey, after leaving home to take the civil service examinations, not only provides him with opportunities for social success but also romantic affairs. As the former eight fairies of the heavenly world transmigrate to this world and turn into noble girls, a daughter of the emperor, a daughter of the dragon king, or professional dancing and singing girls, Yang meets these women and takes them as wives and concubines.

However, *The Tale of Sangsa-dong* and *The Tale of Unyŏng* contrast with *Nine Cloud Dream,* as the male characters do not resemble the charming and successful hero in romance. Rather, in these stories, attention is directed to the hero's debilitation and weakness. The image of hero deviates from that of the hegemonic masculinity of achieving

[184] Although the core message is in contiguity with the Buddhist ontological question, "what is reality," as well as the insubstantial aspects of life, the theme of the story does not converge only on issues surrounding Buddhist thought. Francisca Bantly points out that the story reveals the writer's "syncretistic outlook," which evinces the Buddhist view of the karmic life and cycle and, importantly, compounds it with Confucianism and Taoism. See Francisca Cho Bantly, *Embracing Illusion: Truth and Fiction in The Dream of the Nine Clouds* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996), 15.

sexual conquest and social victory. These stories suggest that male character's vulnerability is represented in the descriptions of physical symptoms of "love-sickness." The emergence of lovesick heroes, susceptible to emotional agitation and subsequent physical symptoms, complicates our understanding of masculine ideals. Particularly, the lovesick heroes are estranged from the patriarchal status quo in the *Nine Cloud Dream*.

According to the traditional medical treatises, lovesickness is believed to be caused by "thinking too much," as exorbitant mental and intellectual stimulation will disturb the function of the spleen and run the risk of causing physical disharmony. Specifically, if the spleen is impacted by the shortage of energy (*qi*), one can experience worries and result in fatigue, lethargy, and inability to concentrate. This diagnosis resembles western medical tradition that also tended to associate lovesickness with psychological origin, especially, in the Renaissance. According to Jacques Ferrand's treatise, lovesickness was considered a species of melancholia that takes possession of the mind. The depictions of lovesickness depart from physical domains, and orient toward a mental disorder that harms rational self-control.[185] The subsequence of ceaseless longing and brooding is the disturbance to the heart. Below is a description in *Ŭibang yuch'wi* 醫方類聚 (Classified compilation of medical prescriptions):

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[185] The 1623 edition of *De la maladie d'amour ou mélancholie érotique* defines lovesickness as an erotic melancholy that threatens both males and females, describing its cause as humoral imbalance. It was also argued that such a notion distances itself from the church-oriented view that postulates the importance of psychological aspect of lovesickness. See the details in Jacques Ferrand, Donald Beecher, and Massimo Ciavolella, *A Treatise on Lovesickness* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 64.

(Excessive) pensiveness and thinking also make the heart (*xin*) drained and create bad energy. It can idle energy (*qi*). Thereupon, it is said that pensiveness and thinking affect the heart. When they damage the heart, such symptoms as vomiting, nose bleeding, and whitening of hair will appear.[186]

This description appears also in "the book of internal canon" 內經 (*naegyŏng*) in *Tongŭi pogam* 東醫寶鑑 (Precious mirror of Eastern medicine). Excessive worries and thinking could hurt the heart (憂愁思慮則傷心). If bad energy 邪氣 invades one's psyche, one's mental condition will become unstable.

Too much worry and thinking causes damage to the heart. When the heart is damaged, one easily feels tired. The head and face will turn red. The bottom also feels numb, and pain can well up in the heart. One may also feel overburdened or have a fever. The pulse in connection to the stomach becomes less palpable.[187]

The heart was regarded as a nexus of mental and psychic activities, as described in the *Inner Canon*: "The heart is like the minister of the monarch who excels through insight and understanding."[188] This view was sustained until modern medicine represented the brain as the centric organ of mental and emotional activities. This traditional view was later challenged by Chŏng Yagyong 丁若鏞 (1762-1836), who wrote that the heart has

186 "思慮則心虛外邪從之喘而積氣在中時害於食思慮傷心爲吐衄爲髮焦," in *Ŭibang yuch'wi* 201:49a7-9 [microfilm], Jangseogak Library.

187 Hŏ Chun, *Tongŭi pogam*, trans. Cho Hŏnyŏng, et al. (Yŏgangch'ulp'ansa, 2001), 300-302.

188 IlzaVeith, 28.

autonomy within the body but it is also a muscular organ that controls blood circulation.[189] Confucian scholars of practical learning (*sirhak*) Yi Kyugyŏng 李圭景(1788-1856) and Ch'oe Hangi 崔漢綺(1803-79) also took on Chŏng's view of the heart. As the central organ where all the sensations are integrated into a unity of conscious perception, new meanings of the heart might dismantle the holistic view of the body as one organic mechanism.[190] Even though there had been a change in the perception of the heart, its dysfunction in association with emotional and psychological disorders was believed and tied to symptoms of depression and feelings of languor. As for the second major cause of lovesickness, the surplus of pensiveness is interpreted to affect the stream of *qi.* Extreme pensiveness causes vital energy to ascend, although it is supposed to go down, and, according to the *Classified Compilation of Medical Prescriptions,* this creates the energy of worries 憂氣 and causes one to think of something relentlessly, leading to congestion in the five other compounds.[191]

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[189] Chŏng Yagyŏng interpreted the heart as the subject of the body, but also noted that the heart has other functions as one of the human organs. Chŏng wrote, "According to *Shuowen jiezi* (說文解字), the heart is the ruler of the body. I also agree with this definition. However, I found that there are different layers of meaning regarding the heart. First, the heart is the intellectual mind, which is spiritual as well as mysterious. For instance, phrases such as 'The heart is for thinking,' and 'You have to rectify your heart' belong to this category of meaning. Second, the heart is where emotion and contemplation are aroused. Third, as one of the five major organs, the heart controls blood and *qi* (energy). For instance, the heart in 'the heart has seven holes' is an example of the use of the third meaning. Chŏng Yagyong, *Yŏkchu maessi sŏp'yŏng* (*Annotations of Meishi Shuping)*, Yi Chihyŏng, trans. (Munhak kwa chisŏngsa, 2002), 620-621.

[190] Yi Yŏnga, *Yukch'e ŭi t'ansaeng* (*The birth of the body*) (Miŭmsa, 2008), 54-55.

[191] "思則氣結(注) 繫心不散故氣亦停留而結也 思憂過度恐慮無時鬱 而生涎涎與氣搏升 而不降爲憂氣勞思 食五噎之病 (注:巢氏病源) 思慮則心虛外邪從之喘 而積氣在中時害於食(同上) 思慮傷心爲吐衄爲髮焦(同上) 有是理只譬如俗談 不曉事人言相思病也 與一女人情密忽

The correlation between lovesickness and vital energy persisted till the nineteenth century, as revealed in the *Imwŏn kyŏngje chi* (Treatises on rural administration). Its encyclopedic format reveals Sŏ Yugu's versatility in research and curiosity in various fields —economy, farming, engineering, architecture, landscape, mathematics, laws, cooking, and the like. His curiosity seems piqued by medicine, indicated by his review and compilation of previous medical treatises in his collection of essays. It will be instructive to examine the medical sections of his essays on lovesickness, insofar as they show that contemporaneous literati also demonstrated a keen interest in medicine, as reflected in the text. Sŏ Yugu illustrates how the seven emotions in Confucian ideology are to be related to the maintenance of one's health and emphasizes the importance of cultivating one's nature and virtues. Sŏ filed the account of excessive pensiveness and lovesickness in the chapter of protection and nurture (*Poyang chi*): "If you think (about your lover) too much, it makes vital energy stagnant, so the vital energy clusters and grapples the heart, and eventually blocks the natural flow of vital energy. As a result, you suffer from fever for a while, and the vital energy and blood become exhausted." [192] Here, Sŏ Yugu reinstates that lovesickness is triggered by emotional disorder and that it jeopardizes the free flow of vital energy.

In medical terms, a human body is a functioning nexus of the primary vitalities—

經別離念念不舍失察 忘飧便覺形容瘦瘁 不償所願竟爲沈疴" in SŏYugu, *Imwŏn kyŏngje simnyuk chi* (*Sixteen Treatises of Rural Administration*), Print edition (Kyŏngin munhwasa, 1983), 522-523.

[192] "思則氣結(注:繫心不散故氣亦停留而結也) 喉熱不散久而氣血俱. . . . 有是理只譬如俗談不曉事人言相思病也與一女人情密忽經別離念念不舍失察忘飧便覺形容瘦" in Sŏ Yugu, 523.

essence 精, energy 氣, and psyche 神. Among these three, vital energy can be interpreted as vital substance constituting the human body. Vital energy comes from two main sources. It can be inherited from one's parents at conception. It is understood that the kidney first sends the innate vital substance upwards where it combines with essences derived from the spleen. It further mixes it with the fresh air from the lungs where it forms into the energy of the body. When the lover's intense brooding and longing impedes the function of the spleen, it also affects his appetite.

> The old saying goes that lovesickness is a disease that makes a man careless of the outside world. This happens when a man harbors emotion for a woman. He seriously engages in the relationship but faces separation unexpectedly and is unable to stop himself from excessive pondering. Therefore, the man suffers from insomnia and often forgets to eat. As a result, his figure is visibly worn-out and drained. If not treated, his condition will become critical.[193]

The diagnosis of lovesickness as the abnormal flow of *qi* was treated with special interest not only in the medical field but in the cultural sense as well.

The vital energy has played various roles and acquired complex meanings over time. Prominent among these was the idea that vital energy in a close association with *jing* (semen) is essential in constructing manhood and masculine authority. The cultural weight of male *qi* is likely to stem from the Daoist notion of men's longevity. Daoist philosophy suggests that sexual practices prolong one's longevity and promotes certain types of sexual

[193] "是理只譬如俗談 不曉事人害相思病也 與一女人情密 忽經別離念念不舍 失寐忘餐便覺形容瘦悴不償所愿競爲沈疴" in *Ŭibang yuch'wi* 201:49b4-6 [microfilm], Jangseogak Library.

techniques.[194] According to this philosophy, the goal of intercourse is to obtain the essential *yin* or *yang* energy from one's partner. Although the vitalization of energy is a crucial part of maintaining one's health and constructing manhood, it does not aim to promote sexual intercourse, since it warns against excessive indulgence in sex. It is because the release of semen results in a discharge of energy (*qi)* and it could threaten men's life and longevity. The loss of vital energy occurs whenever semen is released through intercourse, masturbation, or a wet dream. Thus, the loss of energy is likened to allowing a man to break his fast in case of lovesickness. Such a notion is also shared by Daoist medical belief that excessive loss of sperm, a man's *yang* essence, is debilitating to a man's well-being. Mara Epstein argues that male anxieties over the loss of energy and obsessions with semen preservation, not to use up their good semen, served as one of the sources of the fictional stereotype of women as sexual aggressors, an image that continued to appear in the sentimental fiction of mid- and late Qing.[195]

Although there is considerable diversity between Daoist philosophy and Confucianism, vital energy was also essential in constituting male identity in Confucian culture. In the Neo-Confucian view, the vital energy was also the "spilling of seed" through sexual activity regarded as a natural and necessary function of the male body for the purposes of procreation, as semen itself is regarded as substance. The idea that men create

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[194] See Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China* II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 146-152.

[195] Maram Epstein, *Competing Discourses: Orthodoxy, Authenticity, and Engendered Meanings in Late Imperial Chinese Fiction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 136.

life and are owners and perpetuators of *qi* for their children and lineage becomes a profoundly important cultural concept that provides men with prestige as well as the responsibility of taking care of themselves.

The medical interpretation that the stagnation of vital energy, possibly fatal to male's well-being and physical condition, led to another notion that men are more prone to the seriousness of lovesickness. There are these three types of etiologies that explain what causes lovesickness in traditional medical discourse that shares the interpretations that excessive emotional activity brought on by pensiveness was the primary cause of lovesickness. Also, the symptom incorporates intensive speculation and excessive mental stimulation, and it also has a close interrelation with the heart, therefore lovesickness results in the psychic disorder. More importantly, lovesickness is injurious to the flow of vital energy when it is stagnated by the extreme of pensiveness. The fact that the vital energy was constructed as male essences in Daoist philosophy and the Confucian tradition also implies that men were more vulnerable to lovesickness that interrupts the vital energy. Therefore, male lovesickness should be more critically considered in both its physical and cultural aspects.

Lovesick Hero in *The Tale of Sangsa-dong*

In the beginning of *The Tale of Sangsa-dong,* the hero is portrayed as an impeccable, beautiful young man. Scholar Kim excels in literary skills and scholarship, enough to have passed the first examination at a young age. Many families hope to arrange a marriage

between him and one of their daughters, and everything is in order for his success and marriage. But he becomes trapped on an emotional swing between happiness and despair, fear and hope, when he falls for a woman named Yŏngyŏng in the streets of Sangsa-dong,[196] and his health deteriorates as he is unable to sleep or eat.

> From that night he felt uneasy, as if he were enchanted. He became absent-minded and then blushed with excitement. Perhaps something had possessed him. He tossed and turned all night; he could not fall asleep. Not only did he suffer from insomnia but also lost his appetite.[197]

The image of Yŏngyŏng corrupts his judgment, and he thinks of her restlessly night and day. His emotional distress and physical deterioration are noticed by a servant, Maktong, who takes pity on his situation, gathers information from the street, finds out that Yŏngyŏng is a palace woman[198] of Prince Hoesan, and arranges for the two to meet. At

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[196] Sangsa-dong (相思洞), literally meaning "lovesick village," was located east of Chongmyo (a royal ancestral shrine) and between Chŏngjin-dong and Chongno-3ga. It is also known as Sang-dong (相洞). The first name is derived from the Chosŏn government office *saboksa* (司僕寺), which was installed to supervise and manage carriages and horses for royal families. Often "sangsa ma" ("lovesick horse"), a male horse which reacts to the odor of a female horse in estrus, was taken and tamed at this place, and so the town became named after it. It used to belong to a *pang* (坊, prefecture-level). See http://kyujanggak.snu.ac.kr (accessed 8-25-2013).

[197] *Sangsadong ki* (The Tale of Sangsa-dong) in *17-segi aejŏng chŏngi sosŏl* (The seventeenth century *chuanqi* stories of love), trans. Yi Sanggu (Wŏrin, 1999), 170.

[198] During the Chosŏn period, *kungnyŏ* 宮女 (palace women) were charged with household duties for the royal palace and were given official ranks. Their role was designed to serve the royal family. The court selected girls aged around ten and taught them the *hangŭl* writing system, as well as their duties as palace women. Most palace women were not allowed to have sexual or martial relationships with men. Sometimes they were selected for sexual relations with their master. See Michael Pettid, *Unyŏng-jŏn: A Love Affair at the Royal Palace of Chosŏn Korea* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 1-25.

Yŏngyŏng's aunt's home, Kim has a chance to meet with Yŏngyŏng. He tenaciously tries to seduce her, but Yŏngyŏng is hesitant. After her refusal, he lies ill and in critical condition, but his symptoms of lovesickness brings him an opportunity to meet her at the palace, as Yŏngyŏng, touched by his passion, takes advantage of the prince's absence and invites him to the palace. Passing through a caved-in area of the wall, he finally spends a night with her in the palace. After that night, Yŏngyŏng writes him a poem with the sorrow of parting.

How long I was longing to see you today!	幾日相思此日逢
Leaning on the embroidered screen and holding your hands	綺窓綉幕接手容
I could not completely reveal my heart in the night light.	燈前不盡論心事
At the bedside I ended up hearing the morning bell.	枕上旋驚動曉鐘
Perhaps even the Milky Way cannot stop the magpie bridge from disappearing.	天漢不禁烏鵲散
When will the clouds gather at Mount Wu	巫山那復雲雨濃
Vaguely knowing no promise (of meeting again) after we part?	遙知一別無消息
Only I turned back at the gate of the palace.	回首宮門鎖幾重[199]

In the poem, she seems to decide to set herself apart from him, only wishing him to pass the examination and meet an ideal spouse; yet the scholar does not give up the hope for consummating their love in the distant future.

Inside the dark, silk window the moon slants.	燈盡紗窓落月斜
Weaver Maid and Herd Body are separated by the Milky Way.	乖離牛女隔天河
Each moment of a good night is as precious as gold	良宵一刻千金直
A pair of sad tears runs on the regretful mind.	別涙雙行百恨和
From now a meeting with you may not be distant	自是佳期容易阻

[199] *Sangsadong ki,* 189-190.

As they say that the good comes with the bad. 由來好事許多魔
If I can only meet you in the future, 他年縱使還相見
I will be pleased, no matter how old we are. 限恩情奈老何[200]

After the farewell, Kim falls seriously ill again, longing for her. To make things worse, he loses contact with her because her aunt suddenly dies. With difficulty, Kim brings himself to study again and becomes the top candidate in the second examination in three years. When the court offers a parade for the successful candidates, he joins the parade riding on his horse. When he passes by the prince's palace, he is reminded of Yŏngyŏng. He purposefully falls from his horse to see if any servants of the palace come to him. The prince's wife hears of the accident and has her servants attend him. Lying on a bed in a chamber, he feels fortunate to see Yŏngyŏng behind a screen, and upon seeing her, his passion draws him to his sickbed again. When Kim almost looks dead, one of his fellowmen, Yi Chŏngja, comes to ask the prince's wife to help Kim see Yŏngyŏng. She takes pity on him and sends Yŏngyŏng to Kim. From that moment Kim recovers his health and he and Yŏngyŏng live together.

In distinguishing *junzi* (gentleman) in official ideology from *caizi* (talented man) in Chinese romance, Song Geng presents *Xixiangji* 西廂記 (*The Western Wing*) as an example of "the dialectic interplay between subversion and containment" and explains, "the illicit love between a *caizi* (talented man) and a *jiaren* (a beauty) ends up in a legal marriage between a *junzi* (gentleman) and a *shunu* (virtuous woman), as Student Zhang happily

[200] *Sangsadong ki,* 190.

sings when he returns with office, fame, and property to marry Yingying."[201] In terms of the reunion of male and female characters, *The Tale of Sangsa-dong* can be said to offer a happy ending, following the genre features. However, it also challenges the literary convention in that the hero does not return to the world of men and politics, but instead decides to abandon his ambition of *kongmyŏng* 功名 (rank and fame) to live with a retired palace woman. Furthermore, the text indicates that he does not marry her. The denial of social career and marriage by the male protagonist is a refusal to return to the paternal order; it evinces the narrative interest in the hero's success in love and its disinterest in a heroic realization of society's expectations.

Vulnerable Man in *The Tale of Unyŏng*

The Tale of Unyŏng shares a similar theme with *The Tale of Sangsa-dong*, that of a hero's incapability of social production, but what dominates *The Tale of Unyŏng* is the male protagonist's disempowerment. His transgression and lovesickness are found in the narrative, while the plot revolves around a complicated love triangle that forms among a male scholar, a palace woman, and the Prince. The tale begins in the spring of 1601, with Yu Yŏng, a pale scholar in shabby clothes, who happens to loiter around Palace Susŏng, desolate and ruined after the Japanese invasions (1592-1598). He is intoxicated and perhaps dreaming when he encounters two ghosts, Unyŏng and Scholar Kim, who lived in the palace 200 years prior.

[201] Song Geng, 114.

The story opens as the ghost of Unyŏng starts to unravel her past when asked by Yu Yŏng about her death. She introduces herself as a palace woman from the palace of Prince Anp'yŏng.[202] The prince is described as a thoughtful but dominant man who favors ten palace women, including herself, never allowing them to go outside and forbidding any contact with outsiders.[203] At the same time, Prince Anp'yŏng patronizes them so they may learn the classics and Song and Tang poetry.[204] Often he asks each of them to compose a poem in literary Chinese. After reading Unyŏng's poem one day, he suspects that it is filled with a feeling of longing. Charan, another palace woman close to Unyŏng, also comes to wonder about Unyŏng because of the her poem and disposition.

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[202] Prince Anp'yŏng is a historical figure, the third son of King Sejong (r. 1418-1450).

[203] *Unyŏng chŏn,* 110.

[204] Literary training was not common for women in Chosŏn society, as Confucian learning and education were required courses for male elites. Also, the negative view of educating women was prevalent in Chosŏn discourse. In *Sŏngho sasŏl* (*Miscellaneous Writings of Yi Ik*), Yi Ik (1681-1763) asserts, "It is a man's duty to read and discuss ancient writings; woman's duty is to follow the order of preparing clothes and food to serve for rituals and guests at the house. It is natural that women cannot afford to read books. There are women who master the histories and discuss the rituals and decorum but this only arouses evil effects." Later scholars compromised and supported women's education: "Women should learn and read the *Book of Documents* (Shu jing), the *Records of the Grand Historian* (Shiji), Confucius's *Analects*, *Book of songs*, *Elementary Learning* (Xiaoxue), *Four Books for Women* (Nusishu) and also familiarize themselves with records of renowned families, ancestral history, dynastic periods, and the holy names of saints. However, I find no reason for woman to compose poetry or lyrics and publish them outside the house" in "Saso jŏl"(Small manners for scholars). Even though the story is read as fiction, the prince's educational support for the palace women is very unusual for that time. However, we also see outstanding Chosŏn elite women during the period. For example, Yu Hŭich'un's wife, Madame Song (1521-1578), and Hŏ Nansŏrhŏn (1563-1589), an older sister of Hŏ Kyun, were well-educated, and wrote Chinese. Especially, Hŏ's Chinese poetry gained popularity so it was published in China across boundaries of state and gender. Along with these women, the early Chosŏn text, *Naehun* (instructions for women) served promote women's role and education within the Confucian realm. Please see John Duncan, "The Naehun and the Politics of Gender in Fifteenth-Century Korea," 26-57; Kichung Kim, "Hŏ Nansŏrhŏn and 'Shakespeare's Sister," 78-95, in *Creative Women of Korea* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2004),

When Charan asks Unyŏng what might be on her mind, Unyŏng recollects and retells the following story of herself and Scholar Kim. Scholar Kim displayed such talent and cultivation in poetry that he was noticed by other scholars and ultimately the prince, who frequently asked Kim to accompany him at gatherings. Once, when Unyŏng happened to attend on the scholar as he wrote a poem, a drop of ink fell on her finger. Afterwards, Unyŏng longed for him and became lovesick; the scholar also fell ill, a coincidence noted by the prince. The scholar had no access to the palace without the prince's approval, so he sought help in delivering a letter to Unyŏng. A shaman who often entered the palace to perform rites decided to help him. The letter reveals Kim's deteriorating condition:

> Ever since I found you, my heart has been restless. Every time I look to the west side of the palace, my bowels feel as though they would sever. I was pleased to receive your letter with its beautiful writing through the wall the other day, but I was overwhelmed before I opened it and started to weep before I finished reading. Since that time I have not been able to sleep although I lie down and I cannot swallow any food although I try to eat. Illness has touched the deepest part of my chest, and no medicine will revive me. I only hope to meet you in the next life. May heaven take pity on me and spirits help me.[205]

Upon Kim's confession, Unyŏng responds with her poem, through which they confirmed their mutual love and devotion to each other.

Even after an immediate attraction, an ensuing courtship would not be possible because of the prescription of women's fidelity. Her status as a palace woman also requires her devotion and obedience to the prince, and all palace women, including Unyŏng, have taken vows of chastity. More importantly, her relationship to the prince implies a more

[205] *Unyŏng chŏn*, 131.

complex type of relationship for her than for other women. The prince is an authoritative but also patriarchal figure, managing to control the women's education and physical condition. In terms of his relationship to Unyŏng, the text does not directly suggest the possible sexual liaison between her and the prince, yet the prince's interest in a physical relationship is hinted when other palace women tease Unyŏng that the prince yearns toward her.[206]

At this point the story returns to the dialogue between Charan and Unyŏng. Charan takes pity on Unyŏng and suggests that she might have a chance to meet Scholar Kim if the palace women spend the summer at Sogyŏsŏ, a palace closer to the city gate. Accordingly, Charan summons the palace women of the Western and Southern palaces and proposes that they all move to Sogyŏsŏ. The women in the Western palace agree to Charan's idea but those of the Southern palace are suspicious and refuse to move. As they come to know that Unyŏng is seriously ill and intends to meet with the scholar, they are torn between their duty to the master and sympathy toward Unyŏng. They finally settle on moving to Sogyŏsŏ. With the assistance of some of the palace women, Unyŏng and the scholar finally meet again. They plan to flee together from the palace, asking Kim's mail servant, Tŭk, who excels at tricks and schemes, to help them escape.

During this time, however, the prince again asks each of the palace women to compose a poem and, after reading Unyŏng's poem, suspects her even more than before. The story of Unyŏng and Scholar Kim reaches the prince when attendants inform him of it,

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[206] *Unyŏng chŏn*, 116.

and the Prince summons the women from the Western palace and starts to interrogate them. After reading the palace women's petitions, the prince assuages his anger by releasing the palace women to their quarters, with the exception of Unyŏng, who is placed in a separate room. After watching her fellow palace women being punished on her behalf, Unyŏng decides to hang herself. After her death, the scholar learns of Tŭk's wickedness, including a lie Tŭk told him: Tŭk stated that he would prepare a Buddhist service for Unyŏng with the scholar's money. Tŭk is soon found dead, having fallen into a pit, and after the two deaths, the scholar retreats to a remote place and dies: "I bathed to purify myself and dressed in new clothes and lay down in a room. For four days I did not eat and deeply sighed, and finally never rose again."[207]

In her study of *The Tale of Genji*, Margaret Childs argues that in Japanese literature, the value of vulnerability is a key to understanding the dynamics of male sexual aggression, since the display of vulnerability does not hinder him from consummating his desire. Rather, male passivity operates as a strategy of seduction in which "vulnerability and lovability are explicitly linked."[208] While the longings, wooing, and becoming ill are associated with feminine qualities in the conventions,[209] the male character pining away and showing his physical deterioration shows a shift away from the rhetoric of heroic

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[207] *Unyŏng chŏn*, 165.

[208] Margaret H. Childs, "The Value of Vulnerability: Sexual Coercion and the Nature of Love in Japanese Court Literature," *Journal of Asian Studies* 18 (1999): 1061.

[209] See the details of this discussion in the second chapter of this dissertation.

qualities. The male protagonist does not refuse to portray himself as a naïve and vulnerable lover whose undying passion consequently leads him to illness.

In these stories, the male characters are not only portrayed as victims of love but also as lonely beings. Yu Yŏng aimlessly wanders about the ruins, and Scholar Kim seems to lack emotional bonds with anyone other than Unyŏng. At a young age he discusses the art of poetry with renowned scholars, and his poetic skills are appraised even by the Prince, but his literary style distinguishes itself from others. While the prince and scholars prefer Du Fu's style over Li Bo's, Scholar Kim refers to Du Fu's verses as lacking passion and originality and shows his support for the liberal expression of passion and emotions. The poems and discussions serve to reveal the scholar's failure to build emotional connections with other characters, while he finds attachment and sympathy for Unyŏng, whose poem is explicit in revealing her feelings and yearnings.

Being isolated, the male protagonist also shows his lack of mobility and capability to consummate his affection. This lack is underscored in contrast with his male servant, Tŭk, an evil character but bright in profit-making and good at finding resources to achieve his goal. His active performance contrasts with the scholar's indecisiveness, especially in terms of women and sexuality. Tŭk does not hesitate to violate a woman by force, as he himself takes a village woman[210] and also attempts to take Unyŏng for himself. From Tŭk's point of view, Kim's bemoaning and suffering are unfathomable. Tŭk and Scholar Kim, then, show contrasting images of masculine love as found in romance: Approaching

[210] *Unyŏng chŏn*, 163.

women, Tŭk is active and virile in order to satisfy his desires, while the scholar appears naive and gullible for believing Tŭk's words, as he grows increasingly subtle, even though his affection for Unyŏng grows.

However, signs of vulnerability are not without compensation in the story. The scholar's passivity serves as a means of empowerment when he turns his isolation, sensitivity, and depression to his advantage. His suffering and illness are always acknowledged by Unyŏng and others who eventually feel sympathy for him. Unyŏng, finding him languid and haggard, laments, "The longing and yearning in his heart toward me was even more serious than ever, and it might be difficult for him to hang in there by himself. Although he directly wrote a reply to send to me, there was no messenger to entrust the letter with, and he was alone in his worry and lamentation."[211] Also, his outward display of emotion in his letters and poems evokes Unyŏng's sympathy by guaranteeing its sincerity. In this respect, the portrayal of a lovesick hero complicates a simple understanding of ideal masculinity since it involves a male's decision to reject male privileges. The display of vulnerability also helps the hero to convince his object of devotion to accept his love, thus rewriting the idea of "masculinity" by transforming his weakness into a mark of superiority that sets him apart from other male characters and helps him to consummate his relationship with the beloved.

The Significance of the Male Body

[211] *Unyŏng chŏn*, 129.

Lovesickness can be an irresistible or uncontrollable physical state, but it is also viewed as "self-afflicted" pain. The enigmatic symptoms of lovesickness also enable the character to fake being in love. The symptoms are varied, although there are no headaches, fevers, or any other severe signs of bodily damage. What is visible to the naked eye is subtle: the sunken eyes shadowed by dark rings. The text, then, blurs the boundaries of whether the symptoms are natural consequences or pretended illness by which a character arouse one's sympathy. The blurriness also serves as a strategy for containing or controlling desire.

In some romances, a hero may even pretend to be lovesick to earn sympathy or parental consent. In *The Tale of Unyŏng*, the male protagonist draws the prince's attention with a gaunt countenance and restless look. When asked by the prince of the cause, the scholar explains, "I, a humble scholar, am deeply grateful for your gracious hospitality. Perhaps this good fortune brings bad one, so illness has reached my body. I was not able to eat or drink anything, and rely on others to move about."[212] Here, the expression of *sigŭm chŏnp'ye* 食飮全廢 ("refusing all food and drink") is an ambiguous term, as it also refers to the strategy of hunger strikes, which is used as a form of political protest. It also appears in the text of "Sugyŏng nangja chŏn" (*The Tale of Lady Sugyŏng*), an eighteenth-century vernacular romance, where the male protagonist falls ill and does not eat or drink when his parents oppose his relationship with Sugyŏng. The story reveals the (anonymous) writer's critical stance against parental authority and the enforcement of filial values.[213] In

[212] *Unyŏng chŏn,* 128.

[213] Kim Illyŏl reads the focal conflict of the story as aroused by the dogmatic relationship between parents and son in Confucian society. See Kim Illyŏl, 64-98.

lovesickness, the male protagonist bemoans his difficulties eating and sleeping due to his passion, but by doing so, he mortgages his body to marry Sugyŏng. As he refuses to eat and sleep, he is enabled to take Sugyŏng as wife under parental agreement.

Despite the unorthodox behavior of taking a wife as a decision of his own will, the Confucian politics of the body seems to give him the opportunity to consummate the relationship. As a form of self-immolation and a symptom of lovesickness, *sigŭm chŏnp'ye* opens the possibility of examining the fluid meanings of the body within a given context. Interestingly, the texts abound in expressions that indicate the significance of preserving the male body. In *The Tale of Sangsa-dong*, Yŏngyŏng, anticipating separation from her love, calls attention to the preservation of the male body in her last letter: "You are a manly man with a heart like iron. Why do you spoil yourself with concern for a woman like me? My wish is that you erase all memory of me after we separate and preserve your precious body. See that you rise in officialdom after passing your examination and build a reputation."[214] The significance of the body is also addressed by male characters. As the male protagonist fails to manifest masculine composure and charisma and falls ill in *The Tale of Unyŏng*, his male servant, Tŭk, intervenes to speak to him: "A brave man should die worthy of such a name. How can you languish in heartbreak, yearning for your beloved (相思 *sangsa*) like a petty woman and seek to throw away your body, as precious as a

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[214] *Sangsadong ki,* 189.

thousand gold pieces?"[215] Here, Tŭk compares Kim's surrender to passion to a feminized form of love and reminds him of the value of the male body.

Just as the preciousness of the male body is frequently referred to in these stories, the classics offer examples that highlight the significance of the male body and warn that one should not harm one's own body. In the *Book of Songs*, a human being is indebted to heaven and to his parents for his birth: "My father begot me, / My mother fed me, / Led me, bred me, / Brought me up, reared me, / At every turn aided me. / Their good deeds I would requite. / It is Heaven, not I, that is bad."[216]According to the *Xiaojing* (*The Book of Filial Piety*), "The body and the limbs, the hair and the skin, are given to one by one's parents, and to them no injury should come; this is where filial piety begins."[217] This passage signifies the importance of one's birth and body and also presents a value-judgment that equates doing no harm to one's body with virtuous and filial conduct. Furthermore, *The Book of Rites* also highlights that the body is inherited from one's parents, who must nurture and cultivate their offspring in a proper manner. Thus, one's body is regarded as an organic entity, the maintenance of which does not solely rely on the self's individual choices.[218]

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[215] *Unyŏng chŏn,* 155.

[216] "Thick Tarragon," in *The Book of Songs*, No. 202. See Arthur Waley, 185.

[217] Ch'u Chai and Winberg Chai, eds. *The Sacred Books of Confucius and other Confucian classics* (New York: University Books, 1965), 326-327.

[218] "The concept of body (t'i) also figures into divination practices as the configuration of the divining apparatus which reveals to the forecaster the most auspicious and appropriate course of action…The body of ritual actions and institutions constitutes the root which supports and sponsors the innovation and creativity

To apply this judgment to our stories, the hero becoming a prey of illness is considered a Confucian sin. The male body should be discouraged from engaging in sexual activities that are not directly connected to procreation, as sex should be used for the continuation of the family line that the male character refuses to seek. On the other hand, such texts as *Oryun Samgang haengsil to* (*Conduct of the Five Relations and Three Bonds with Illustrations*) and *Samgang haengsil to* (*Conduct of the Three Confucian Relations with Illustrations*),[219] which served as manuals for teaching the *yangban* and lower classes, demonstrate that a figure's self-immolation is a form of filial act. There are many stories in which a man cuts off his finger or slices flesh from the thigh to prepare a soup for his parents or a woman breastfeeds her mother-in-law or prostitutes herself for food. Although such performances can be interpreted as exotic and brutally violent, they also portray the significance of filial acts, revealing that bodily harm is acceptable when it serves as a strategy that embodies the reigning ideology.

Even though state politics seems to approve of and hold up as exemplary certain extreme cases in order to promote awareness of filial values, not all scholar-officials agreed with such performances, such as sacrificing one's body for medicine to save one's parents. Kim Pusik 金富軾 (1075-1151), citing *Tang shu* 唐書 (Tang History), warns against such behavior: "If that person is unfortunate enough to die from complications, his death

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of a cultural tradition," in Roger T. Ames, "The Meaning of Body in Classical Chinese Philosophy," *Self of Body in Asian Theory and Practice* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 170.

[219] Published in 1431 and 1797 by royal edict in order to demonstrate the ideals of the three Confucian bonds, or the three key relationships of society, which included the relationships between ruler and subject, father and son, and husband and wife.

corresponds to the sins of harming himself and discontinuing the family line (毁傷滅絶之罪). It is not reasonable to praise that person with honorary gates (旌表門閭)."[220] Later, Chŏng Yagyong 丁若鏞 (1762-1836), who criticized the act of cutting one's finger or flesh as a great act of filial piety, argued that its immoderation only leads to evil (過惡).[221]

From this point of view, romance characters stand aside from the principle of chastity and the importance of procreation when they feel no guilt about sexual engagement and fulfillment of desire, despite social barriers. In *The Tale of Sangsa-dong*, the scholar confesses, "Because I am young, I cannot restrain myself or suppress my sexual desire (春情), so I followed her to this house. Since then, my mind must have been enchanted by her and all night I long to see her."[222] This shows that the scholar is possessed by erotic desire, which challenges the common understanding that the male body should be committed to the duties of marriage and reproduction.

In addition, the symptoms of lovesickness symbolize characters' efforts to redefine passionate love; love integrates both erotic and romantic aspects. The most important events that change the course of their lives suggest that lovesickness is a commitment of a Confucian sin. Yet, Lovesickness "mortgages" one's body, which strives to prove love, to

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220 Kim Pusik, "Hyangdŏk" and "Sŏnggak," in *Samguksagi* (*Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms*), quoted in Cho Namuk, "Yuga hyoron kwa yuksin hyohaeng ŭi munje" (Examining the Confucian principle of filial piety and the filial act of self-harm," *Yugyo sasang yŏngu* 37 (2009): 133.

221 Chŏng Yagyong, *Kyŏngseyup'yo* (Treatise on Government). Vol. 13, quoted in Cho Namuk,135.

222 *Sangsadong ki*, 175.

obtain consent from society in its pursuit of love.[223] Yet, the cultural appreciation of the male body reflects the reconciliation of the pursuit of love with Confucian values. Thus, masculine love, exposing vulnerability and the irresistible forces of desire, shows a paradigm shift in the concept of the male body from being an indolent and passive site of suffering to a functional site for negotiation.

The masculinities inscribed in these stories also defy the Chosŏn depiction of the ideal male, such as the Confucian gentleman and the "manly" man. The constructed masculine love, as described in this chapter, shows that its discourse reflects the interest in and value of conflict on the one hand, as well as a vigorous process of reconciliation with norms on the other. The ambivalence of assessing romantic love is revealed in both stories, wherein a male protagonist's sexual love is not totally removed from the text. Rather, the male body serves as a site of struggle: that of a romantic hero living in a Confucian society. Yet the lovesick hero's helplessness and vulnerability are linked to accommodate the Confucian ideal, as the romantic hero objectifies and mortgages his body, while at the same time, allowing leniency for a man's desire and reinterpreting the Confucian view of the male body.

[223] Love stories flourishing in the eighteenth century also maintained an ambivalent attitude. "Sugyŏng nangja chŏn" (*The Tale of Lady Sugyŏng*) describes a male protagonist falling in love with a fairy of Sugyŏng. Paek passionately longs for Sugyŏng, so deeply, that he falls ill. His parents oppose his relationship with Sugyŏng and do not allow him to marry her. When his refusal to eat or sleep brings his illness to a critical point, the parents finally consent to Paek taking Sugyŏng as wife.

Chapter 4.

The Death of Lovesick Woman

> "Thick grows the cocklebur;
> But even a shallow basket I did not fill.
> Sighing for the man I love
> I laid it there on the road."
>
> "Cocklebur," *Book of Songs*, 3[224]

In probing a medieval medical treatise of the *Viaticum*, Mary F. Wack shows that lovesickness had both psychic and somatic origins in the Middle Ages; it was recognized as a physiological illness and as a disease of the brain initiated by vision. According to the *Viaticum*, lovesickness occurred when the sight of a beautiful man or woman caused the soul to overestimate the value of the perceived object. In terms of gender, lovesickness was not only conceived as a female-orientated symptom. Rather, noble males served as subjects who were more likely to suffer lovesickness.[225] This lovesickness was assumed to originate from the practice of "courtly love," whereby a male lover was frustrated by unrequited love, uncovered his oscillating emotions toward his mistress and underwent physiological change. As only aristocratic males were able to play the dominant role in courting, and it was assumed that males were more vulnerable to the shock, anxiety, and

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[224] Quoted from Arthur Waley, 7.

[225] Mary Frances Wack, *Lovesickness in the Middle Ages: The Viaticum and Its Commentaries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990).

fear caused by longing and desire; this would lead to mental instability. The treatment of male lovesickness was differentiated from female malady. Lesel Dawson contends that the English medical discourse deals with the external symptoms of lovesickness, describing it as a result of a fixation on visual images or an infectious disease, so love is imagined and represented as an infectious malady caught through the eyes, which triggers an immediate physical reaction."[226] Dawnson states that female sickness as lovesickness—"green sickness," "hysteria," and "uterine fury"—were commonly believed as an effect of the uterus' malign influence. This concept also affects the literary imagination of female love, coloring it as passive and inferior.[227]

In traditional Korean medicine, *sangsa pyŏng* is thought to be caused by a loss of balance and self-control over one's emotions. Medical discourse of certain corporal elements, such as the stabilized or disturbed *qi* (vital energy) and the excess or deficiency of blood, was important for understanding the contemporary perception and action placed on male and female bodies. The finding of differences in male and female biological bodies also yielded different interpretations of lovesickness: Male lovesickness is constructed as a form of emotional crisis, while female lovesickness is considered a sexual problem. Male lovesickness is interpreted as a result of excessive pensiveness that affects the heart and idle the flow of the vital energy, but there is a hope for a man if he can achieve a state of philosophical resignation. In this light, the male sufferer is expected to

[226] Lesel Dawson, *Lovesickness and Gender in Early Modern English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 15-16.

[227] Dawson, 46-90.

achieve moral cultivation, overcoming emotional weakness. Compared to this treatment, women are barred from such a privilege. A woman's erotic passion and experience speak to her lack of subjectivity and intellect, and her lovesickness is construed as sexual behavior. In addition, women with similar symptoms are portrayed as not having the same kind of melancholy as their male counterparts due to that women's melancholia was the result of sexual frustration. To some extent, medical writers shed light on this repressed aspect of female sexuality and attempt to affirm the given nature as a human being with emotion and desire. At the same time, they showed a tendency to associate the complexity of female suffering with sexual frustration or to configure the female body with emphasis on her reproductive function.

Here lies the difference in the representation of sophisticated, intellectual male melancholy versus pitiable, agency-less female illness. Such a paradigm of gender and illness also invites the assumption that male lovesickness is capable of converting sickness into an elevated understanding of maleness so that a lovesick male can be presented as a solitary and brooding sufferer from a melancholic disorder. Yet, medical writers reduce female lovesickness as the result of isolated women's sexual problems and their forbidden desires. As a result, medical writers did not recognize a female subject's voicing of suffering, pain, or illness.

An important feature of female lovesickness was its growing portrayal in popular and literati writings in late Chosŏn, where, in many cases, female characters end up killing themselves despite the negative social views of suicide. Although female suicide could be caused by various factors, this chapter specifically investigates the death of female

characters who are lovesick, not cured, and consequently, commit suicide. This contrasts with the occurrence of male lovesickness, which often serves to help the man to be understood, sympathized with, or cured. To probe this gender asymmetry, this chapter examines the portrayal of "lovesick women" involved in popular literature, literati writings, and romance stories. Various understandings of female lovesickness will reveal that the interpretation of lovesickness underwent evolutions in close association not only with gender but also subjectivity and the power of writing.

This chapter explores the ways that female characters decide to die for love and attempts to rethink self-harm and suicide—a practice considered the exemplification of feminine virtue in the Confucianism—in relation to the romantic portrayal of female deaths in specific texts. In search of an alternative understanding, I will show how the lovesick woman's suicide in *Tale of Gentleman Chu* and *The Tale of Unyŏng* are both framed as virtuous deaths and aligned with female martyrdom in orthodox Confucian discourse.

"Dying for Love"

The theme of "dying for love," which deals with a lovesick person who ends up dying, has been embodied in various forms of literature. Particularly, popular literature serves as a rich resource to explore peculiar notions of lovesickness. In exploring sex and love in folk narratives, Im Chaehae shows that stories concerning lovesick characters tend to generate gender asymmetry; characters come to desire someone not of equal status, and as a result of the disparity of social status, the story offers no platform for the characters' ambition or expressions. The lovesick characters fail to fulfill their desire, and as a consequence, their

sickness remains uncured. Im Chaehae's study also shows the tendency of to associate lovesick characters as women rather than me. In Korean folk medicine, the remedy of lovesickness is to have intercourse with the desired object. However, the lovesick women are usually not cured, as the desired man, more often than not, refuses her. In contrast to lovesick women, lovesick male characters are often saved by the woman, who agrees to have sex with him. This implies that women are more susceptible to giving herself sexually, even enduring the risk of losing her status as a "chaste woman."[228]

Kang Chinok shows that since the occurrence of lovesickness takes place between different classes, most victims are young girls, widows, or married women of lower classes, while the objects desired by the female characters are suggested as male elites who can exercise freedom in either accepting or rejecting a woman's advances.[229] For example, an oral story from Southern Ch'ungch'ŏng province[230] concerns a lovesick woman whose unfulfilled desire eventually costs her life. The female character is a commoner woman, attracted to a young male *yangban* who regularly passes by her house to visit his relatives. The woman's overwhelming passion brings her pain, sickness, and death. The gaunt

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[228] Im Chaehae, "Minsok munhwa e kalmuridoen sŏng kwa sarang ŭi kallaebyŏl insik" (Sex and love represented in folk culture), *Silch'ŏn minsokhak yŏngu* 8 (2006): 19.

[229] Kang Chinok, "Sangsa baem sŏrhwa ŭi mom pakkugi rŭl t'onghae pon yongmang kwa kyubŏm ŭi munje (The problem of desire and social norms in body transformations in tales of the love snake), *Kojŏn munhak yŏngu* 18 (2000): 115-146.

[230] The backdrop of the story is unknown, but it is presumed to be set in late Chosŏn. For reference, see *Kubi munhak taegye* (Collection of oral literature) vol. 4-5 (Sŏngnam: Hanguk chŏngsin munhwa yŏnguwŏn, 1980-1989), 889-891. This story is also found in "Hwabo" 花譜 (Records of stories about flowers), *Kaebyŏk* 68 (1926), at http://db.history.go.kr. Accessed 9-30-2013.

woman loses consciousness due to the extremity of her unexpressed love. When the young man hears of it, he feels pity for her, so he visits the woman, and recites a poem: “I have passed by your door in previous years; the pear blossom remains as unchanged as late Soch’unp’ung’s.”[231] As he places the poem on the woman’s chest, she rises from her sick bed; after this extraordinary event, they marry.

This story bears an intertextual relationship to the story of Soch’unp’ung 笑春風, a well-known female entertainer during the reign of King Sŏngjong (r. 1469-1495) and another by the same sobriquet in late nineteenth century Hamgyŏng province. Both figures are recalled as iconic female entertainers with feminine charm. In the nineteenth century, Soch’unp’ung became a popular name with her performance of self-immolation. When she served as a female entertainer in Hamgyŏng province, Hwang Insŏp came to the town to start his new post. While she was employed to entertain Hwang, the two of them developed a romantic relationship. As Hwang departed for Seoul, Soch’unp’ung was left behind but she decided to go to the capital despite the restraints on mobility of female entertainers. They finally meet each other, but as Hwang does not welcome her, she prepares a bundle of firewood and places it at the entrance of Hwang’s house. She burns herself to death, which created in Soch’unp’ung a symbol of ferocious passion and love that remains constant beyond death.

[231] The poem is read as “前年一度此門前 桃花依舊笑春風,” *Kubi munhak taegye* 4-5, 891. The literal meaning of Soch’unp’ung is "chuckling spring breeze."

Lovesick Snake and Female Ghost

Although the lovesick character is a rich and complex topic in literature, this archetype also is self-destructive. For example, she cuts her hair for the beloved or starves herself as a symbol of constant love. And as Soch'unp's case reveals, not all stories about lovesickness offer happy endings, but rather, concludes with the death of a lovesick character, most often a lovesick woman.

In Korean oral tradition, lovesick women commonly faced death, with no chance of being cured. Consequently, they returned as a *sangsa baem* (lovesick snake) or a ghost in order to be avenged.[232] Again, gender asymmetry seems to serve as an important factor in the stories: the death of lovesick woman is associated with her eventual reincarnation as a form of avarice.

In one story, a beautiful young woman instantly falls in love with Kang Kamch'an 姜邯瓚 (948-1031), a high ranking official who assumed field command of the military at the time of the third Khitan invasion of 1018. As a daughter of a tavern keeper, she dies of lovesickness, unable to express her feeling for him. The following day, her parents see a long snake occupying their daughter's room and soon recognize that it is none other than their daughter, returning to this world as a *sangsa baem*. As they fail to drive the snake out, the father informs Kang that their daughter harbored a secret desire for him and transformed into a snake after her death. Upon hearing the story, Kang enters into the room

[232] Due to the characteristics, the stories are labeled as *sangsa sŏhwa* (folk stories of lovesickness). Unlike romance in literary Chinese, where male and female characters are attracted to each other and fall into the prey of lovesickness, the folk stories are concentrated on the description of one-sided love, deviating from the original connotation of "mutual" or "reciprocal" reactions.

and gently strokes the snake. The snake soon changes into a human body, and the parents are able to give their dead daughter a proper burial.[233]

The stories of Yi Sunsin 李舜臣 (1545-1598) involve the lovesick woman's transformation into a ghost. Yi Sunsin was a great Korean admiral and a wartime hero, and numerous stories praise his heroic qualities and humble character. In one particular story, while on military service at an outpost, Yi Sunsin takes a bath on a hot summer day. A daughter of the local official happens upon the scene. Afterwards, she becomes fixated on his image. She grows weary, but no medicine is effective. So the girl's father asks Yi if he would generously meet his daughter. General Yi's plan to see her, however, is delayed by terrible weather. When Yi arrives at her house, she is already dead. But when he caresses her dead body, it changes into a lovesick snake[234] or a ghost[235] (depending on different versions) and expresses gratitude for his compassion for her soul. After this event, Yi delivers one of the most successful defeats in a naval battle, since the ghost calls upon the deities to protect his forces. In this case, the female ghost, who is frequently recognized as a vengeful soul, brings the male character success in battle.

When a man rejects a lovesick woman, she becomes a casualty of the man's failure or death. Stories of Sin Ip 申砬 (1546 -1592) present this contrasting picture of the lovesick woman. In official records, Sin Ip is depicted as a talented general. After he gained a

233 *Kubi munhak taegye*, 6-3: 445-446.

234 *Kubi munhak taegye,* 7-15: 364-368.

235 *Kubi munhak taegye,* 8-5: 316-318.

reputation in campaigns against the Manchu, he was soon promoted to commander-in-chief[236] and dispatched to Ch'ŏngju with the high expectation that he would defeat the Japanese forces. He prepared for a battle and thought that the open field T'angŭm Terrace would be an advantageous place for his cavalry unit. However, the field was dotted with flooded rice paddies and turned out to be disastrous for his cavalry and consequently all his units were defeated; Sin Ip ended up committing suicide.

Oral stories explain Sin Ip's fiasco from a different perspective. Prior to the battle, according to the story, Sin Ip lodges in a remote village where he meets a young widow. She asks Sin Ip if he would spend the night with her; she claims that her mother-in-law asked her to do so, as she wants her to bear a child. Sin Ip rejects their request, and the following day the young widow kills herself, ashamed of his rejection. Afterward, Sin Ip is haunted by an evil spirit believed to be the woman. As a result, his army suffers defeat.

These two opposite types of the female lovesick ghost reveal that the male figure who heeds the woman's need is able to win the battle with her spiritual support, but, the one who rejects her pays a price for his negative response. The motives of posthumous revenge stem from a woman's thwarted, obsessive love for a noble man. A heightened awareness of the lovesick woman is also found in literati writings. The story of Hwang Chunnyang (1517-1563) in *Yongjae ch'onghwa* (Literary miscellany of Sŏng Hyŏn) concerns a man's death caused by his former relationship with a lovesick woman.

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[236] Refer to "以申砬爲三道巡邊使 上親臨遣之 賜寶劍一口曰: 李鎰以下 不用命者 卿皆斷之 悉發中外精兵 盡出紫門軍器. 都人皆罷市聚觀" in *Sŏnjo sillok* (1592/4/17), http://db.itkc.or.kr (accessed on 9-30-2013).

> Hwang Chunnyang had a commanding appearance. When Hwang was serving as governor in Sŏngju province, one of his retainers had a wife who accidently saw Hwang through a crack in the door. Since then she harbored a hidden love for him and came to die of lovesickness. One day while Hwang was sitting in the office, he saw a female ghost in white dress approaching him. The ghost continuously called to him. Continuing to be harassed by the ghost night and day, he soon became sick and died. Even on his death bed, he lay with his hands folded, sometimes waving them as if trying to push someone out of the room, continually murmuring, "Confucius says that there should be a distinction between men and women." Even while in his sickbed his behavior displayed his unyielding principles.[237]

The story shows that his contact with his retainer's wife is a determining cause of his death. She appears before Hwang to satisfy her sexual hunger, and the story praises the man who does not compromise with sexual demands from a female ghost.

Another story in Sŏng Hyŏn's collection shows that a man may follow the death of his wife. Scholar An is a Seoul literatus who marries but loses his wife at a young age. The rumor has it that a minister in the East Gate has a servant girl who is only sixteen or seventeen years old, beautiful, and wealthy. Any attempts to woo her and propose marriage only receives rejections. Just as he falls ill on the pretext of lovesickness, he is accepted by her. The romance between An and the servant girl brings about a happy marriage, but soon, it is doomed when the woman kills herself.

After marriage, the master of the wife is enraged by An, who does not work and only leads a self-indulgent life with the girl. As a result, the master confines the servant girl deep inside his mansion. Even when they are separated, An bribes the guards to help her

[237] Yi Ik, "Hwang Chunnyang" 黃錦溪, in the chapter of "Insamun"人事門 (Human affairs), *Sŏngho sasŏl* 15 (Personal records of Yi Ik), http://db.itkc.or.kr (accessed 3-29-2013).

escape from the room to meet him. One day, he sees the girl toying with her new shoes, asking, “Are you going to wear them and hang out with the other man?” As he continues to tease her, the seravant girl, out of rage, commits suicide.

> The following day, the woman hung herself in the other room. An was not aware of it, and saw a young girl, saying “Lady is coming.” Student An ran to the door, putting on his shoes upside down in a hurry. Then, the girl said, “Lady is dead”. . . . He ran to the woman’s house, and saw her dead body. He covered the body with clothes and blankets, choked with emotion, and wailed bitterly. All neighbors heard him wailing and mourned so bitterly. . . . When An walked to home alone near Palace Sugang, he saw a woman dressed-up with her hair up. She walks to pass by him but also seems to wait for him. When An followed her, he noticed that her coughing and sighing are likened to his wife’s voice that frightens An to scream and run out. But, when he reached crook, he saw that woman next to her. . . . A month later, he gave a burial for the woman, he also died.[238]

Although these stories hint at the social and emotional motives of suicide, the real reasons of the woman's death remain unknown, as notes or poems about her interiority are absent in the story. The story also lacks descriptions of female pain and suffering, and the plot solely focuses on the male response to the spirits that are believed to lead him to death.

The common problem of lovesick women is her proneness to sexual temptation, which eventually leaders to death from discontent. After death, her identity is presented as a snake or ghost and can represent a benevolent force, but more often becomes a sexually

[238] "女於是夕 潛入他房 自縊而死. 生未之知也 翌日生在本家 有小艾入云 娘子來矣. 生倒屣出門. 艾遽曰娘子死於昨夜. 生笑而未知信. 不問其故. 至其店則堂中置床. 表衾覆尸. 生失聲痛哭. 枕股擣胷 四隣聞之無不嗚咽"; "生乘月向本家. 獨行信步. 至壽康宮東門. 夜已二鼓. 有女靚粉高髻. 或後或先. 生追而視之. 謦欬歎息. 一似前聞. 生大呼而走. 至一溝曲. 女又坐其傍. 生不顧而去至其家. 女又坐門外. 生大聲喚僕. 女沒身于砧竇. 寂無所見. 生心神昏�north. 若癡若狂. 月餘以禮葬之. 未幾生亦死" from http://db.itkc.or.kr (accessed 9-30-2013); Sŏng Hyŏn, *Yongjae ch’onghwa* (Literary miscellany of Sŏng Hyŏn), trans. Nam Mansŏng Taeyang sojŏk, 1973), 189-190.

addicted creature or a demon that haunts the male character.[239] Since women's lovesickness is frequently deprived of the same social venues and solutions as men have to appeal their grievances, female lovesickness is considered "different" and "outlandish" in the stories.

Although the gendered notion is closely associated with the etiologies and treatments of male and female lovesickness, the stories are also demarcated by implications of class. The symptoms of lovesickness were not exclusive to elite males. Instead, the portrayal of lovesickness appears in various social strata. Song Hyŏn (1439-1504), introduces a story that portrays a Buddhist monk who transformed into a lovesick snake.

> At the time when An, my father-in-law, was appointed as magistrate at Puyŏ Imch'ŏn, he used to invite a Buddhist monk from Pogwang monastery and had casual conversations with him. The monk said that he was in relationship with a woman and he paid secret visits every night to see her. One day, the monk suddenly died and was reborn as a lovesick snake (*sangsa paem*) because he missed her in greater degrees. The monk as a lovesick snake sneaked into the woman's chamber. He determined to remain in her room, so hid himself in a jar in daytime and came out at night, coiling around her waist and breast. His penis-like wen attached to his tail to make love as delicate and pleasant as in the past. Magistrate An heard of this weird love affair and summoned the woman to take the jar with the snake. An called out the monk's name and scolded, "I understand the reason you have become a lovesick snake. But, how can this behavior be appropriate for a monk!" The snake showed its head out of the jar and then disappeared.[240]

[239] The metamorphosis into a snake is also shared in a story of a monk in the same collection. The monk is described as a sexually vigorous man, so he continues to visit his beloved even after death, as a snake. The described objects of a lovesick woman and a Buddhist monk together signify marginal groups of society.

[240] Sŏng Hyŏn, 186-187.

In contrast to the representations of lovesickness as a romantic, non-corporeal residue of love, the story presents a Buddhist monk whose rebirth is seemingly granted by the ceaseless interests in sex. The narrative recounts a Buddhist monk who not only had illicit sex with a woman, but also was reincarnated in order to satisfy his obsessive longing for sexual reunion. Thus, the passion of the Buddhist monk, who transgressed against the law of celibacy and continued to pursue sexual relationship, shifted from romantic love to become a more inferior, marginal form of lust. More importantly, he is reborn a snake, which does not necessarily reflect karma but his sexual desire; the snake becomes a symbol of sex and his libido.

Although there are various descriptions that focus on lovesick figures, the most marginalized figures are widows, nuns, commoners, and Buddhist monks. These characters are often not given voice to issue the complexity of their feelings, pain, or experiences of lovesickness, although the symptoms are observed, witnessed, or even inscribed by male elites who focus on the roots of sexual desire as the cause of lovesickness.

Female Lovesickness

In conjunction with the lovesick characters in popular narratives and expanding the parameters of research, I delve deeper into the medical discourse that exemplifies the pattern of diagnosis and treatment of lovesickness. In the former chapter, I argue that lovesickness is basically understood as physical symptoms deriving from ceaseless yearning and brooding. The studies of female lovesickness in relation to western medicine

affirm the significance of gender in lovesickness' diagnosis and prescriptions, as the gender dichotomy reframes lovesickness etiology. Elaine Showalter, for example, shows that the orientation of lovesickness is determined by gender, since females and female organs were seen as a source of hysteria involved in the symptoms of lovesickness. Also, early modern English literature often registers lovesickness as symptoms of uterine sickness or female hysteria; the anatomy of lovesickness invites a gendered view that states that its malfunction originates from female organs or hormones.[241] In this argument, gender determines the diagnosis of the illness, as well as the understanding of its causes and symptoms.

In analyzing the oral stories, we see that female lovesickness tends to be associated with erotic desire, distinguishing it from male lovesickness. This notion reveals in the medical interpretation of erotic lovesickness, believed to be frequent with woman patients.

> The old medicine did not specifically mention widow's illness. It was only briefly addressed in the biographies of Cang gong 倉公 and Chu Cheng 褚澄**.** Because widows and nuns are not married for life, *yin* flourishes, while *yang* depletes. Even though they have erotic desire, it cannot be fulfilled. Therefore, they fall ill with widow's sickness.[242]

In this passage from *Hyangyak chipsŏngbang* (Comprehensive Compilation of Local Medicine), women who cannot fulfill their sexual needs in the bedchamber are vulnerable

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[241] Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987).

[242] *Hyangyak chipsŏngbang*, trans. Yu Hyodong (P'yŏngyang: P'yŏngyang kwahak paekkwa sajŏn ch'ulp'ansa, 1986), 4:46.

to *kwabu pyŏng* (widow's sickness). Symptoms are similar to malaria, entailing fever and shivering, a consequence of the imbalance between *yin* and *yang*.[243]

This *Comprehensive Compilation* introduces the two historical cases of identifying a widow's sickness. The first, in the biography of Prince Cang, refers to a scholar-doctor named Chunyu Yi 淳于意. According to the *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Historian), Chunyu Yi was a renowned doctor in the first century BCE in China. His title was Director of Great Granary and the Duke of Taichang. Among his cases there is an episode with Han, an attendant of King Jibei. She had a severe backache and was intermittently hot and cold. The court physicians took it as *hanre ping* 寒熱病 (heat disorder). However, Chunyu Yi examined her pulse 脈 (mai) and said that, "When I pressed on to them, it was the *mai* coming from the kidneys. It was rough and discontinuous. As to the rough and discontinuous pulse, its coming is difficult and hard. Hence I said, 'The menses do not descend.'"[244] Chunyu Yi also commented that her illness stemmed from her frustrated desire for a man.

The story of Chu Cheng 褚澄 also concerns symptoms of "a widow's sickness," appearing in Buddhist nuns and widows. Chu Cheng was a well-known medical

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[243] This notion is similar to that in the western modern discourse. According to Dawson, early modern scholars and physicians in the west associated lovesickness with physiological illness and also treated it as uterine disease, particularized in the female body. Derived from female lovesickness were hysteria, hormonal trouble, or uterine dysfunction. See Lesel Dawson, *Lovesickness and Gender in Early Modern English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[244] Translated in Elizabeth Hsu, *Pulse Diagnosis in Early Chinese Medicine: The Telling Touch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 84.

practitioner who reckoned that those women live by themselves. For that reason, they can suffer from the symptoms triggered by flourishing *yin* and lacking *yang*. He said, "[W]hen desire is germinated from their bodies, which are not to be fulfilled, they have the concomitant symptoms." Chu Cheng prepared separate therapies for widows, for he considered their illness to have different origins than married women.[245] Likewise, the physiological and ontological differences between men and women are also closely associated with the interpretation of *yin-yang*, in relation to medicine, developed in Song China. This occurred during a time when the cosmology of *yin-yang* shifted from a model of complementarity to a new order and hierarchy. In the Confucian model of social relations, it is tacitly accepted that *yang* is superior to *yin*, that action and initiation are more valued than endurance and completion. Thus the *yin* and *yang* cosmology was used to explain gender hierarchy, making male dominance a matter of nature.[246]

The emphasis on separate medical prescriptions for women was exacerbated during the Song (960-1279), providing a gendered treatment of illness and the differentiating of physical bodies. New literature on gynecology and obstetrics arrived with the department of medicine for women 婦科 (*fuke*), which contributed to the regulation of female health and fertility. Medical texts, especially in the Song, claimed to interpret the *Inner Canon*: "In women, blood is the leader" (*Furen yixue weizhu*); they differentiated the female body

[245] Charlotte Furth, *A Flourishing yin: Gender in China's Medical History, 960-1665* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 89.

[246] Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Inner Quarters: Marriage and the Lives of Chinese Women in the Sung Period*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 28.

by arguing that female blood is unclean.

> Blood and *qi* have a special relationship to generations, and hierarchies of gender are a part of this. In terms of basic cosmology as outlined in the *Book of Changes*, Blood is receptive (*kun*). In relation to bodily functions, medical men have it that "Blood follows *qi*." Unlike *qi*, blood is always paired and cannot operate independently.[247]

The movement to structure a hierarchical binary between vital energy and blood yields the establishment of unequal relations between genders. The *Precious Mirror of Eastern Medicine* also explains "widow's disease," referring to it as *sillyŏ pyŏng* 室女病 (maiden's illness) and *kwabu pyŏng* 寡婦病 (widow's illness). It states:

> When a single woman has concerns or thoughts, her heart gets damaged. As a result, blood is drained and the facial expression loses its color. It causes menstruation to stop so that she can experience temporary menopause. Also, as the *qi* of the heart is weakened, the heart cannot assist the function of the spleen, so the *qi* of the spleen is also weakened. Therefore, it becomes difficult to digest food. The lungs are vulnerable as well because of destabilized spleen. The patient can suffer from coughing. As a result, the vital energy of the kidney and liver can be drained, and the patient will feel lethargic and heavy-limbed. Being hot-tempered is another symptom. Also, her hair loses its shine and becomes dry and lusterless.[248]

The text attributes a maiden's illness or a widow's sickness to excessive pensiveness and worrying, as suggested in lovesickness. A widow's sickness can also affect the spleen, similar to the description of lovesickness in general. In this description, however, the

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[247] Ebrey, 47.

[248] Chŏng Chich'ŏn, *Chosŏn sidae wangdŭl ŭn ŏt'ŏke pyŏng ŭl koch'ossulkka?* ("How Did the Doctors Care for the Chosŏn kings?") (Chungang saenghwalsa, 2007), 47-48.

developing notion of difference between male and female appetites provides the necessary foundation for the analysis of lovesickness. Different from general medical descriptions of lovesickness, widow's sickness affects the flow of blood rather than that of vital energy. Blood is a key element of women's reproductive functions, and her body is responsible for the continuation of the family line. Therefore, avoiding the effects of illness on blood can be considered critical for women's health.

The medical texts also suggest that this illness is likely to afflict two particular groups of people: maidens and widows. Since the maidens were put into charge of the carrying out the subordinate tasks, subordinated within hierarchy and authority structure, and also restricted from male encounters or social recognition, they were susceptible to the symptom of flourishing *yin* and deficient *yang*. Widows were supposed to remain chaste for their dead husbands and restrain their sexuality.

The special interest in these neglected women reflects male anxiety, derived from the belief that a large number of frustrated women without mates could upset the cosmic harmony of *yin* and *yang*. In reality, the Chosŏn state endeavored not to isolate any female individual from the marriage-family system, thus their double-edged policy was to discourage widows from remarrying and to encourage unmarried females to wed. The necessity of women's obedience was evident for maintaining social harmony and peace, but it was also important to free women from psychic burdens, as it was also widely

believed that female revenants brought chaos and disarray to society.[249]

Here, the medical writers all pointed out that these women are continuously sexually frustrated because their sexual desires cannot be assuaged. They also affirm the view that a widow's sickness is caused by frustration of erotic desire, which is believed to be more natural to women. According to the *Precious Mirror of Eastern Medicine*, women can be more vulnerable to this kind of illness, as women have a higher sex drive:

> Women's diseases are ten times harder to cure, and married women usually have a stronger sexual desire than men do. Also, they are more prone to illness because they are easily affected by jealousy, worry, anger, aversion, or love, while dealing with child care. They frequently indulged themselves in various emotions but simultaneously they are stubborn. For these reasons, their illnesses are deep-rooted.[250]

The notion that women have a stronger sexual drive than men is different from contemporary culture's common understanding that men are more sexually driven than women, whereby virility functions as a signifier of maleness. This treatise also offers a cure for a widow's sickness or sexual obsession and prescribes "Four ingredients infusion" 四物湯 for female patients.[251] The four ingredients of *danggui* 當歸 (angelica root), *ch'ŏngung* 川芎 (cnidium), *sukchi* 熟地 (foxglove), and *chagyak* 芍藥 (peony) were known

[249] Chŏng Chiyŏng, "Chosŏn sidae honin changnyŏch'aek kwa toksin yŏsŏng: Yugyojŏk kabujangje wa chubyŏnjŏk yŏsŏng ŭi hŭnjŏk" (Marriage policy and unmarried women in the Chosŏn period: Confucian patriarchy and the vestige of marginalized women"), *Hanguk yŏsŏng hak,* 20:3 (2004): 5-37.

[250] *Tongŭi pogam*, trans. Cho Hŏnyŏng, et al. (Yŏgangch'ulp'ansa, 2001). 2510.

[251] *Tongŭipogam*, 2586.

for stabilizing and strengthening the female reproductive system. Thus, in the case of "a widow's sickness," the subject's desire is addressed vis-à-vis the public voice in medical discourse that does not demand any personal or individual expression of a woman's feelings regarding her symptoms.

On the other hand, both the *Comprehensive Compilation of Korean Medicine* and the *Precious Mirror of Eastern Medicine* introduce treatment for when a man experiences excessive erotic desire and sexual exhaustion as a consequence. For male illness caused by sexual exhaustion, it is recommended that he drink a liquid made with the ashes that remain after burning a woman's undergarment. Although it is problematic to draw conclusions from texts about clinical reality or effectiveness, the imagery of female garment, endowed with fantasy and supernatural power, must be conducible to bringing psychological relief to the patient. These treatments, irrational and bizarre to modern readers, reveal that the treatment of lovesickness became viable through appropriating female sexuality and shows love sickness' double-edged quality: that female sexuality should be contained within gender roles but can be exploited in a way of fulfilling male desire.

Lovesickness and Death

The Tale of Unyŏng apparently shares a similar plot as other folk stories that include lovesick women. The story centers on a love affair between a Confucian student and a palace woman; scholar Kim suffers from intense feelings of longing, while Unyŏng

deteriorates physically, her decline attributed to the despair of impossible love. When their relationship is revealed to the prince, the lovers are doomed to be punished for their illicit relationship. Unyŏng, who has forsaken her duty of loyalty as a palace woman, is expected to receive dire punishment. The prince, however, does not interrogate her but confines her in the room. Unyŏng is found dead with a note:

> Maybe the creator was too jealous to bless people with good fortune, so now the palace women know all about us, and the prince becomes suspicious. This tragedy will end only after my death. My only wish is that after this farewell you will forget about me and make every effort to pass the examination so you will exalt your name and your parents and family will be honored. Please sell my clothes and belongings, and with the money make an offering to the Buddha for me.[252]

Unyŏng's sickness presents the reader with a fundamental problem of interpretation, but her death also prompts us to wonder about the reasons behind her suicide: What is a worthy cause of death? Is suicide a female character's exercise of right to die or does it merely come down to an inevitable and pitiful death when there seems to be no other option? Can her death be read as a form of resistance? Does suicide place the female character in a position of power or paint her as a victim?

The Cult of Female Suicide

To be sure, self-harm or suicide itself has been a topic of interest in many studies. Sigmund Freud, identifying symptoms of insanity in nineteenth-century Europe, argues that suicide is a result of psychological problems, and mental illness causes the diabolical inspiration of

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[252] *Unyŏng chŏn*, 156.

suicide. He comments that sexual desire is key to the motives of female suicide, and that women are apt to use less lethal methods than men. This includes overdosing on sleeping pills, drinking poisons, or drowning, while men tend to employ more violent and drastic methods, such as shooting himself or jumping from a height.[253] However, others assume that suicidal motives are more concerned with external factors. Emile Durkheim argued that suicidal behaviors cannot be completely independent of social factors, and therefore an individual's suicide should be treated as society's problem. His term, *anomic suicide*, supports the idea that dramatic social and economic upheaval provides confusion and may lead to a failure to adapt, which can then lead to suicide.

Statistically, in all cultures, suicide results show that women are less likely to commit suicide than men.[254] In Korea, men show higher suicide rates than women,[255] though the reasons for death are difficult to pin down. In comparison, suicide patterns from Korean's past Confucian society show that female suicides were no fewer than male suicides. Likewise, the description of suicide in Korean literature also deals more with female suicides: the statistics show that among 112 stories portraying suicide scenes, female

[253] The original text quotes: "To poison oneself is to become pregnant; to drown is to bear a child; to throw oneself from a height is to be delivered of a child" in Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* 18, James Strachery, et al., eds. (London: Hogarth Press, 1955), 162, quoted in Margaret Higonnet, "Representations of the Feminine in the Nineteenth Century," *Poetics Today* 6 (1985): 104.

[254] As for the higher risk of suicide in men, Durkheim argues that when women are less educated and have fewer intellectual needs, their nature reduces their risk of suicide since women are good at governing their conduct by fixed beliefs. See Emile Durkheim*, Suicide: A Study in Sociology,* English edition (London: Routledge Classics, 2002), 121.

[255] Based on suicide rates from 1985-2000 in 1990 from the World Health Organization, at http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/country_reports/en/index.html.

suicides appear in 103 stories; male suicides only in 16. Also, the suicidal death ratio of male to female in Korean literature is 13 to 87 percent, showing that men's suicidal deaths are significantly less common than women's.[256] These numbers are not intended to show an accurate measure of reality, but rather, that the occurrence of female suicide in literature is frequent.

In this study, three types of female suicide in premodern Korean fiction were examined. The first category consists of women who die while resisting sexual assault. The deaths in this category frequently consist of married women or widows killing themselves to resist rape or to defy a marriage arranged by parents. The second category belongs to anxiety-ridden deaths resulting from loneliness after separation, domestic problems, or unfair treatment, and corresponds to deaths committed by the external influence of an unexpected event or condition. The third category comprises voluntary deaths for a character's own cause, wherein the character "chooses" to die for the sake of patriotic loyalty, filial piety, or fidelity. Unlike other deaths, this type of suicide can be redeemed as an honorable one.[257] Yet, Unyŏng's death, indefinable in these categories, prompts to us to seek the casualty of her death and explore the treatment of female deaths in discourse of lovesickness.

Socially speaking, self-harm can be a disturbing issue, detrimental to family

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[256] Ch'oe Kisuk, *Ch'ŏnyŏ kwisin: Chosŏn sidae yŏin ŭi han kwa poksu* (Spinster ghosts: grudge and revenge of Chosŏn women) (Munhak tongne, 2010), 102-106. These results were collected from Cho Hŭiung, *Kojŏn sosŏl chulgŏri chipsŏn* (Summary references of classical fiction) (Chimmundang, 2002).

[257] Ch'oe argues that deaths of this category are close to homicide because a woman is forced to commit suicide to preserve her virtue. See Ch'oe Kisuk, 100-101, 105.

function and the sustainability of society. In ethical terms, it has been regarded as a "sin" or "unfilial act." According to Confucian principles, it is essential for filial piety to have one's body unharmed and uninjured; even the hair, given by one's parents, should not be cut or injured.[258] As for women, the preservation of the body is important. A woman's body is considered an integral element in reproduction and motherhood, and the body carries the responsibility for maintaining the family line to support the patriarchal society.

In contrast to the cultural taboo of self-harm, a particular form of self-harm has been encoded as a virtuous action and as a means to save one's honor or as a means to resolve moral dilemmas. This, thus, requires a negotiation between two agendas: that self-harm is not recommended as a filial virtue and that self-harm is accepted for filial love. Specifically, self-harm and suicide are perceived as virtuous in cases of fulfillment of filial love and chastity. There were extreme cases such as one cutting himself to cure his sick parents or save his family, or a woman breastfeeding her parents or prostituting herself for food in order to cure them. These examples belabored the dangers of naive faith, but they provided readers with a formidable motive for self-harm.

Suicide has provided a masculine way of demonstrating righteousness and honor. Paola Zamperni argues that "[S]uicide could be seen as masculine response to trauma. . . . When men did kill themselves, they could do it through writing themselves into the

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[258] Ch'u Chai and Winberg Chai, eds., *The Sacred Books of Confucius and other Confucian Classics* (New York: University Books, 1965), 326-327.

rhetoric of Qu Yuan, the loyal subject."[259] While the commitment of suicide was constructed as a masculine demonstration of virtue, the cult of female martyrdom began to proliferate in the seventeenth century as a way of manifesting feminine virtue, so women could follow their husbands to death or choose to die resisting a sexual threat or refuting the pressure of remarriage.

The connection of feminine self-harm to the rhetoric of heroism was empowered by philosophy. In Song China, Cheng Yi (1033-1107) was known for advocating the martyrdom of chaste widows, and female chastity prospered in Chinese history, and until Qing China banned the practice, female suffering was considered valuable, and female suicide promoted in elite culture. Katherine Carlitz writes that female suicide was tied to the literati culture in Ming-Qing times, in which the male fascination with female suicide with the rise of the cult of *qing* 情 so that Ming literati contributed to the promotion of suicide through intelligent persuasion and harsh admonition on the importance of female chastity.[260] In Qing China, a widow's martyrdom was redeemed as a great performance of fidelity, a symbolic manifestation of Confucian virtues.

In Korea, growing numbers of female martyrs emerged in late Chosŏn, especially

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259 Paola Zamperni, "Eros and Suicide in Late Imperial Chinese Fiction," *Passionate Women: Female Suicide in Late Imperial China* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 100.

260 Katherine Carlitz, "The Social Uses of Female Virtue in Late Ming Editions of *Lienuzhuan,*" *Late Imperial China* 12 (1991): 117-52.

in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[261] The stress on female chastity was related to the importance attached to men's loyalty to the state and the monarch. While loyalty held social value for men, female chastity was officially sanctioned as the paramount feminine virtue. The practice of chastity in women was understood as two concepts: *chŏl* 節 (purity) and *yŏl* 烈 (martyrdom). To promote a code of female conduct, the Chosŏn state published illustrated conducts and morality books. Campaigns to collect exemplary cases of virtuous deeds were planned, and monumental arches of chastity (烈女門) were constructed. While the cult of female martyrdom gradually spread to lower levels of society, motivated by the examples of literati and government officials, not all male elites had a favorable idea of martyrdom:

> One of the important government affairs is to seek and commemorate filial sons and chaste woman. . . . If a chaste woman is confronted by a burglar and has to kill herself to keep her integrity, it is appropriate to commemorate her heroic death. But if a woman cuts, kills, or poisons herself because her husband dies, it cannot be promoted as commendable. How much less for a widow who is narrow-minded and kills herself out of embarrassment; and how could we reward all of them, there are so many![262]

Chŏng Yagyong was critical of female suicide, arguing that it is an unnecessary and irrational act of self-sacrifice. While this practice of female martyrdom raised criticism by

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[261] Despite the increasing numbers of suicides, the Chosŏn government seemed relatively apathetic about this issue. See Jungwon Kim, "Negotiating Virtue and the Lives of Women in Late Chosŏn Korea," (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2007), 108-114.

[262] Chŏng Yagyong, "Kyomin chibŏp" (Rules for the education of commoners), *Kyŏngse yup'yo* 13, at http://db.itkc.or.kr (accessed 9-30-2013).

those calling it brutal and cruel, Confucian womanhood tolerated a wide range of behaviors of self-injury and suicide as symbols of virtuous morality.

The posthumous commemoration of dead women contributed to the propagation of this practice. On the official level, the state exercised power to promulgate its models of behavior among the people, but the discourse that often staged a woman's suicide as the epitome of wifely virtue also helped that practice permeate into society. A dead woman could posthumously be praised and awarded, as Confucius stated, "When proper respect towards the dead is shown at the End and continued after they are far away the moral force of a people has reached its highest point."[263] In this light, burials performed with proper decorum and treatment of the soul constituted an important part of Confucian culture, and commemorative gestures and words reinforced the bond between female suicide and the rhetoric of martyrdom, which will be elaborated in the analysis of two stories.

Performing the Virtuous Woman in *The Tale of Gentleman Chu*

Female suicidal behavior could officially be heroicized and appraised as leading to passionate acts of self-sacrifice, but the representations of female suicide in stories prompt a series of questions. The female characters are involved in illicit love and their sexuality functions as a narrative strategy in stories. Their deaths are considered disturbing and a challenge to cultural norms, as seen in oral stories portraying lovesick women posthumously turning into ominous signs or symbols that sometimes cause male deaths. At

[263] *Analects* 1:9. Arthur Waley, 85.

the same time, the stories barely render lovesick characters as objects of fear or erotic desire, nor do they blame them for their unbridled sexual urges that become the cause of their death.

In *The Tale of Gentleman Chu*, the characters in the three pairs of relationships — between Chu and Paedo, Chu and Sŏnhwa, and Sŏnhwa and Paedo— fall into the trap of a love triangle and face an inevitable conflict. Paedo is a female entertainer with distinguished talent and beauty (才色). Her old friend, Chu, returns to his hometown, and soon romance blooms between Paedo and Chu. She takes bold action in addressing the male character rather than waiting for his advance; she asks Chu to stay with her, and because he is attracted to her appearance,[264] he readily moves in with her. After spending a night together, she wishes to free herself from the chains of female entertainer and remove the stain from her family's honor by marrying Chu.

> I was originally from a renowned clan. My grandfather worked at a merchant shipping office (市舶司) in the prefecture of Quan (泉). After he was implicated in a case, however, my family was downgraded to the lower social status of commoners. Since then, we suffered poverty and could not regain our status. What is worse, my parents died when I was young, and I was raised by relatives. I wished to preserve my chastity, but I eventually found my name already on the registry of female entertainers (妓籍). From that time, I had to accompany customers at banquets. When I took rest alone at my place, I shed tears when I looked at flowers and faced the moon. But now I have met you. You not only have a noble presence and kind attitude but also possess talent and wit. Although I know I am of an obscure status, I wish to spend this night with you and serve you as my husband in life. My only wish is to see you establish yourself someday by holding a government post. Also, I hope you would remove my name from the registry and

[264] "生既悅其色," in *Chusaeng chŏn*, 244.

not bring disgrace upon my family.[265]

She describes herself as a woman who values the preservation of chastity, but who had no choice but to become a "fallen woman," because of family misfortune and poverty. Her former background as a member of a noble family is also counted important in her self-narration. The female protagonist verbally exposing her personal history and background is also found in other stories.

This story shows the tendency to describe female characters as sexually attractive and charming, all the while attempting to morally sanction them as "good" women. In the love triangle among Paedo, Sŏnhwa, and Chu, feelings of jealousy, hatred, or anxiety typically come to the fore in due course. However, when Paedo realizes that Chu is infatuated with Sŏnhwa, the rivalry between Paedo and Sŏnhwa does not develop into serious conflict. Paedo and Sŏnhwa represent themselves as mature women who tolerate Chu having an affair with another woman and even conceal their feelings of jealousy. So Paedo allows Chu to stay at Sŏnhwa's residence on the pretext of tutoring her younger brother when Chu expresses his desire to stay close to Sŏnhwa. Sŏnhwa is also patient and calm, even after seeing a Paedo's love poem in Chu's pocket. Alone, she erases it in a rage, but in the presence of Chu, she barely shows her true feelings.

The story positions Chu as the prey of his own desire, while moments of conflict promote feminine ideals. Chu's lust vis-à-vis Paedo discloses the self-consuming nature of his passion. He seeks his own immediate gratification, but quickly grows weary of Paedo.

[265] *Chusaeng chŏn*, 41.

Compared to Chu, female characters prove their value and affection by embodying the virtues of tolerance and fidelity to the male character.

For the female characters, marriage is an enabling key: it would allow Paedo to restore her family honor, while for Sŏnhwa, marriage would solidify her bond with Chu. Thus, as suggested, marriage becomes an important threshold for female characters. Their fixation on marriage reveals the dual function of romance (as a genre) in maintaining and interrogating social structure. By placing marriage as the most satisfying goal of a woman's love life, this narrative of love serves to perpetuate patriarchal models of gender. In this context, Paedo's sudden death is interpreted as reestablishing the love equation between two parties and the restoration of social order by eliminating the third character at stake. This story displays women's complicity in the patriarchal family system. Their loneliness and frustration are combined with patience and tolerance to construct the image of self-sacrificial woman. In the story, Paedo soon passes away. While Chu is sick in bed for the love of Sŏnhwa, he hears that Paedo has been sick for several months and is in critical condition. Even on her deathbed, she expresses no jealousy to Chu, only yearning for his success and his marriage with Sŏnhwa.

> Since I became an abandoned branch of a tree, I always counted on you, as a bird takes rest under the shade of a pine tree. Yet I did not know that the oriole would sing even though my flower is still fragrant. I have to bid farewell to you. The silk garments and the zither melodies are all gone. My wish to grow old with you is distant. After you marry Sŏnhwa, please bury my body near the roadside you frequent. That is my last wish. If you could do that for me, it would be like living even after I am dead.[266]

[266] *Chusaeng chŏn*, 58-59.

The traditional feminine ideals of self-effacement and sacrifice are reflected in her voice. Paedo conceals her emotions of jealousy, anger, and obsession and demonstrates her concern for Chu's welfare. The story also reveals how Chu responds to Paedo's death. His dirge on Paedo's death intervenes in the narration: "Even though your name was on the roll of female entertainers, your spirit had integrity and chastity."[267] Chu's valediction, in which Paedo is recalled as a model of feminine virtues, serves to remove her reputation as a female entertainer and reconstruct her as a chaste woman.

Beyond Death in *The Tale of Unyŏng*

In the previous chapter, *The Tale of Unyŏng* is discussed in relation to the construction of fragile masculinities that portray lovesick male characters. This section focuses instead on the configuration of the female character and her death, starting with a brief summary of the story. The title character, Unyŏng, happens to fall in love with a scholar even though she is a favorite palace attendant of the prince. Although they are hopelessly distanced from each other, Unyŏng and the scholar persistently carry on their clandestine tryst, and rewarding moments come when other palace women arrange for them to meet at the palace. When the prince is informed of their plans by the scholar's servant Maktong, Unyŏng senses an impending doom. The prince interrogates her and the other palace women, and that night Unyŏng hangs herself.

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267 *Chusaeng chŏn*, 59.

Unyŏng's death is tinged with sadness and tragedy, but it also reflects different nuances. Her suicide remains a conundrum for many readers. Is it that she dies of frustration as she realizes there is no way to break her bond with the prince her relationship or that her relationship with the scholar will inevitably be fruitless? It could be also read that she commits suicide due to her guilt and that the other palace women involved are tortured.[268] She may also feel confused, as the prince passes over the controversy in silence, even though he could react jealously;[269] or that her suicide saves the scholar's life in exchange for her own.[270] A recent study suggests that the mental illness stemming from depression, which resulted from her severe isolation, led her to commit suicide.[271]

Unyŏng's suicide is also problematic in terms of ritual customs for the dead, as it disturbs the popular belief that female revenants, not given any consolation or settlement, return to the earth as evil spirits. Thus, death without heirs was a sensitive issue. In the Canton Delta of China, for example, a form of spirit marriage—a posthumous marriage in

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[268] Michael Pettid argues that Unyŏng's suicide is related more to the feminine bonds among palace women than to her romantic relationship with Scholar Kim. Pettid shows that Unyŏng may be considering the risk of the palace women who condone their relationship when she commits suicide since her death signifies her gaining autonomous power in the questions of life and death. Rather than seeing Unyŏng's death as an action taken to subsume her agency, this study explores how her death is inscribed in the text as a virtuous act. See Pettid, 51.

[269] An Ch'angsu, "'Unyŏng chŏn' e nat'anan kyubŏm kwa ilt'al ŭi pyŏnjŭngpŏp" (Dialectics of social norms and deviation in the "Tale of Unyŏng"), *Hanminjok ŏmunhak* 59 (2011): 317-320.

[270] Kim Misŏn, "'Unyŏng chŏn' e tŭngjanghanŭn yŏsŏng inmul ŭi naemyŏn ŭisik koch'al" (Exploring the interiority of female characters in the "Tale of Unyŏng"), *Uri munhak yŏngu* 27 (2009): 17.

[271] Kim Suyŏn, "Unyŏng ŭi chasal simni wa 'Unyŏng chŏn' ŭi ch'iyujŏk text rosŏŭi kanŭngsŏng e taehan siron" (The poetics of the suicidal urge and the possibilities of healing in the "Tale of Unyŏng"), *Hanguk kojŏn yŏngu* 21 (2010): 238-239.

which one or both parties are deceased—gained popularity as a way to acquire a host for the spirit and a tablet of the deceased with no heirs.[272] Likewise, that women should marry was a major concern for the Chosŏn state, which responded to the cases of women without heirs. The state collected data about spinsters who had passed marriageable age but were not yet married. The state campaign also encouraged the local officials to arrange marriages for these women, providing funds and goods for marriage preparation.[273] The support of marriage was also stipulated in the *Kyŏngguk taejŏn* (National Code): "Any daughters of the literati over thirty years old who cannot marry because of poverty should report to the Ministry of Rites so that they may be granted grain and cloth for a dowry. If one's household is affluent enough, but the parents intentionally did not marry a daughter off, the head of the house will be severely punished."[274] In this light, Unyŏng's death with no heirs or family makes her a "remaining soul," or ghostly presence.

The death of the scholar follows that of Unyŏng. The literary representation of male lovesickness and consequent death is focused on prevention by removal of any dangerous factors that may lead the character to death. Typically a hero's lovesick moaning and suffering is rewarded by way of fulfilling his true desires. However, this story reveals a scholar who tries to cope with his harsh reality but is abandoned and faces death alone. In

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[272] Spirit marriage was an alternative marriage pattern suitable for unmarried girls who wished to delay marriage. See Janice Stockard, *Daughters of the Canton Delta: Marriage Patterns and Economic Strategies in South China, 1860-1930* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1992), 90-101.

[273] Chŏng Chiyŏng, "Chosŏn sidae honin changnyŏch'aek kwa toksin yŏsŏng" (Chosŏn marriage politics and unmarried women), *Hanguk yŏsŏnghak* 20:3 (2004): 7.

[274] *T'aejong sillok* (7/7/2), cited in Chŏng Chiyŏng, 9.

a comparative approach to male and female protagonists' deaths, Unyŏng's death is clearly suicide, while the scholar's death is suggested to be natural and passive, as if he were "waiting for death to come to him."[275] The contrast between natural and suicidal deaths is suggested in the text, which also reveals the characters' attitudes toward their own deaths. In the beginning, Yu Yŏng, the narrator, meets the ghosts of Unyŏng and the scholar. When Yu Yŏng asks their names, the scholar addresses himself, not revealing his given name.

> My family name is Kim. When I was ten years old, I was good at poetry and writing so my name was widely known in the academia. I passed the second examinations at the age of fourteen. Since then, people have referred to me as Student Kim. With my youth and bright mind, I could not restrain myself and happened to meet this woman. Because of that, my body bequeathed by my parents became unfilial. What good would it be to know a sinner's name?[276]

In his voice, the reader senses his feelings of guilt for his romantic venture with Unyŏng, as he identifies himself as a sinner who does not deserve a name. His sense of guilt comes from his failure to meet social expectations of a male elite, so he categorizes himself as an "unfilial child" and a "sinner." Here, he subsumes his individuality into a collective sense of identity as a mere scholar. Unlike the scholar's obscure profile, throughout the story Unyŏng is at liberty to express herself and reveal her name, her family, and her rosy memories of her hometown:

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275 Pettid, 55.

276 *Unyŏng chŏn*, 106.

> I am from the southern province. I was the most favored daughter among my siblings. My parents trusted me even when I played outside on my own. I ran through forests and streams and played in the shades of plum, bamboo, mandarin and yuzu trees. Every morning and evening I saw men fishing in the river and heard cowherds singing with the reed pipes of their pastime. The scenes of mountains, fields, and the bustle of farming villages are as numerous as the hairs in my head, so that I cannot describe them all. I was also taught the conduct of the three Confucian relations and Tang poetry from my parents. At thirteen, the Prince summoned me to the palace, separating me from my parents and siblings. At first, I could not suppress my heart and wished to return home. . . .Yet the prince's wife treated me as her own daughter, and the prince also adored me. . . . Since I have known about moral righteousness and learned tones and rhymes of literary Chinese, the palace women admired me.[277]

In this sense, the text's openness to Unyŏng and its concealment of the scholar's identity is different from the naming practices of the time. Men were allowed to have more than one name, a practice from the classical allusions to seek elegance.[278] However, it is difficult to obtain the personal records of women, and it was uncommon to refer to a woman by her given name. Women are absent in written records, and even in official writings or petitions they are identified by their family names. In practice, a married woman frequently identified herself by her relationship to her husband and her hometown, following the name of her natal descent group.

The disparity between the obscurity of the male protagonist, whose full name is not disclosed, and the visibility of the women suggest that the female characters are

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[277] *Unyŏng chŏn,* 143.

[278] Rubie Watson, "The Named and the Nameless: Gender and Person in Chinese Society," *American Ethnologist* 13:4 (1986): 619.

strategically placed at the center of the story. Also, Unyŏng's choice of death does not subsume her as a victim of the patriarchal system. Simultaneously, her death does not undermine her role of a dramatic heroine: Rather, female visibility that uncovers her private experience and death suggests a new category of virtuous woman in the stories.

Death as Resistance?

Jocelyn Hollander points out that "resistance" is most readily thought to refer to social movements or the even broader categories of "protest" and "contentious politics," so many activities traditionally associated with these phenomena, such as marches, picketing, and the formation of organizations. Also individual acts, including behaviors as dramatic as violence or as subtle as "feigning sickness; wearing particular types of clothing; or stealing from one's employer," can also can be considered gestures of resistance.[279] This shows that acts of resistance can encompass personal autonomy and complex issues deep-rooted with customs and social pressures. In this aspect, visible performance of self-injury, suicide, and invisible sickness in daily life can be decoded as a symptom or act of resistance. Even subtle nuances of posture, gesture, gait, and gaze, then, create powerful meanings of resistance.

Arguably, a woman's self-injury is more likely to create a "natural" link to the rhetoric of resistance, as the female body becomes a container bearing "testimony of their

[279] Jocelyn Hollander and Rachel Einwohner, "Conceptualizing Resistance," *Sociological Forum* 19 (2004): 535-536.

story and history."[280] This link also makes the body the arena of political struggle so that the death of a female character is read as a symbolic act to defy social custom or taking the autonomy of her body. In this view, the cult of *shinjū* (心中) and *jōshi* (情死) can be seen as the double-edged metaphors of the female body. These forms of self-harm and love suicides were widely accepted in early twentieth century Japan and Korea. In Japan, *shinjū* was a decisive act of swearing one's love, which involved performances such as self-mutilation, cutting off one's hair, or tearing off a fingernail to show one's seriousness of love for another. According to Lawrence Rogers,[281] the popularity of *shinjū* is specific to the pleasure quarters, wherein courtesans resorted to the act of cutting off a finger, performing the ultimate *shinjū* as a solemn display of devotion and love. In consideration of the social setting wherein love affairs are forbidden, those performances are symbolically translated as "pledge[s] or commitment of love."[282]

The interpretations of the female characters' suicides in these stories are two-fold, since Unyŏng's death also appears to echo "a woman's defiance against social coercion that controls the free agency of a human being,"[283] and the "expression of autonomy and

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[280] Paola Zamperni, 100.

[281] Lawrence Rogers, "She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not: *Shinjū* and *Shikido Okagami*," *Monumenta Nipponica* 49:1 (1994): 31-60.

[282] Ōhara Kenshirō, *Nihon no jisatsu: Kodoku to fuan no kaimei* (Suicide in Japan: An interpretation of loneliness and anxiety) (Tokyo: Seishin Shobō, 1965), 186-187; quoted in Jennifer Robertson, "Dying to Tell: Sexuality and Suicide in Imperial Japan," *Signs* 25 (1999): 14.

[283] Chŏng Ch'urhŏn, "'Unyŏng chŏn' ŭi chungch'ŭngjok aejong kaltung kwa kŭ pigŭkchŏk sŏnggyŏk" (The conflict of the romantic relationship and its tragic nature in "The Tale of Unyŏng"), in *Kojŏn munhak kwa yŏsŏng chuŭijŏk sigak* (Somyŏng, 2003), 148. Quoted in Kim Suyŏn, 239.

self-definition."[284] In treating suicide as the ultimate psychological breakdown or as a cultural obsession with Confucian morality, death or attempted death may be equated as an expression of virtue or martyrdom. At the same time, self-injury or "dying" for the sake of love or female chastity and fidelity does not constitute a virtuous death. Rather, both acts are often read as bodily protests against social restraints on male and female relationships and the ideological control of the body and love.

Among different interpretations of bodily performances, I read the stories in a mode of "demystifying" the rhetoric of resistance. In the study of *Samhan sŭbyu* (Remains from the Three Hans), Chang Hyohyŏn argues that female death often functions as a tool to promote the cult of female martyrdom, but *Remains from the Three Hans* offers the female character's death as a representation of woman's love.[285] Chang shows that female death can be reinterpreted as a demonstration of passionate love: A female character's death is rendered as a good and honorable death, female martyrdom. In my reading, the deaths of Paedo and Unyŏng are not symbolic acts of self-sacrifice or deaths for the common good, but rather, the fallen female characters are restored as virtuous women after their deaths. The deaths of Paedo and Unyŏng are not retreats from shame or dishonor, but rather the

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[284] Janet Thiess also problematizes the interpretations that relate female suicide with the notion of resistance and autonomy or that explain it as an internalization of the ethics imposed on women, and also questions the possibilities of defining women's subjectivity in the discourse of martyrdom, and that often women's suicide was the only way a woman can choose to prove her innocence or an act of revenge for the one who caused a death. Janet M. Theiss, *Disgraceful Matters: The Politics of Chastity in Eighteenth-Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

[285] Chang Hyohyŏn, "*Samhan sŭbyu* e nat'anan yŏllyŏ ŭi hyŏngsang" (The configuration of a faithful woman in *Samham sŭbyu*), *Hanguk kojŏn yŏsŏng munhak yŏngu* 2 (2001): 163-88.

cultural commemoration of virtuous women.

Conclusion:
Lovesickness in the Shadow of Modernity

The term, *sangsa pyŏng*, the disease of afflicted heart, is said to produce mysterious representations as it operates on the untouched route from the heart to the body, and often it arouses skeptical ideas about its legitimacy as an illness. Yet, lovesickness had been considered to be an important concept constituting Korean romance and also recognized as a curable disease in Chosŏn Korea. However, in the twenty-first century, it turns into a nostalgic concept belonging to the past, as it underwent significant historical changes in terms of modernization. Though the ideas of forbidden love still permeate contemporary popular culture, it seems that the increasing call for modernity significantly diminishes the role of lovesickness as the official *raison d'etre* for romance and literature. As a result, the topic of lovesickness becomes a part of lost illusions, and the theme of love brought about a shift toward weighing the role of individual agency and interiority in dealing with romantic relationships in various discourses.

Furthermore, the terminology itself has been replaced by neologisms, including *yŏnae*. According to Kim Chiyoung, the romantic relationships were often described by Chinese characters: 愛 (affection), 樂 (joy), 情 (emotional ties), 色 (lust), 寵 (favor), 思 (think), and 好 (like); and by words like 愛樂 (love and joy), 愛顧 (care with love), 相思 (mutual affection), 戀慕 (affection), and 愛情 (love); but these terms were not able to develop as independent concepts indicating feelings arising in male-female relationships.

The term *yŏnae* was first introduced in Korea in late nineteenth century and became a generalized concept in late 1910s, and began to serve to enable young intellectuals to differentiate themselves from the older generation, and to position themselves as leaders ushering in a new civilization, a divine virtue with an image of lofty culture.[286] Concerning the emergence of free love, it was taken for granted that the influence of western cultures functioned as a stimulus for this movement, as Kwŏn Podŭrae states, "It was not until modern times that the concept of *yŏnae* 戀愛 (J. *renai*, romance), which refers to romantic love between men and women appeared. . . . Romantic relationships outside of marriage were only socially approved after the concept of *yŏnae* appeared."[287] In this perspective, the term comes to symbolize the birth of new love of foreign and heterogeneous origin from the West, and romantic love began to be marked as a cultural totem of modern man and woman, although some condemned it for its implication of eroticism and the offense to public decency.[288]

In the midst of these changes, lovesickness was coined as a metaphor to criticize the existence of traditional customs such as early betrothal and arranged marriage. For example, a heartbreaking story was published in *Tonga ilbo* (East Asia Daily) in March 14, 1928. The story entitled "Sipsamse e changga tŭlgo sibose e sangsa pyŏng" (Married at

[286] Kim Chiyoung, "The Conceptual History of *Yŏnae* (Love) in the Korean Colonial Period), *Acta Koreana* 16:1 (2013): 116-117, 120.

[287] Kwŏn Podŭrae, "The Paradoxical Structure of 'Modern' Love in Korea: Yeonae and its possibilities," *Korea Journal* 45 (2005): 186.

[288] See Kwŏn Podŭrae, *Yŏnae sidae* (Era of Romance) (Hyŏnsil munhwa yŏngu, 2003).

thirteen and love-sick at fifteen) concerns the death of a young man in the southern Hamgyŏng province. According to this recounting, Kim Yonggi, a father of the lovesick boy, had no children but in his later years bore a son. He loved his son as a precious treasure and arranged a marriage with a family of reputation when the son reaches his thirteenth birthday. Yet, the son was so precocious that he already experienced a sexual awakening at an early age. He was attracted to a girl who often stayed at a neighboring house. After a successful tryst, the girl returned to her own home, leaving the man behind. After the parting, a wave of depression, regret, and despair resulted in sickness and came to cost him his life.[289] A similar account is found again in November 25, 1930. According to the story, Yun Inje, once a promising man, now becomes obsessed with a girl in the neighborhood. When the girl's parents realize their daughter having a secret affair with Yun and decide to marry her off to a remote town, Yun becomes sick with longing for the girl, experiences psychological problems, and eventually faces a mysterious death.[290]

In these cases, lovesickness does not specifically address a feature of modern space and time, suggesting rather a remnant of traditional norms of love or marriage. Thus, these stories present the seed of tragedy originating from outmoded custom and tradition, by turning the attention from individual experiences of untamable passion to condemnation of early betrothal. As such, lovesickness, re-emerging in modern discourse serves to support

[289] "Sipsamse e changga tŭlgo sibose e sangsa pyŏng" (Married at thirteen and love-sicken at fifteen). *Tonga ilbo,* March 14, 1928.

[290] "Han tongni e aeintugo sangsa pyŏng tŭro pulgwihon" (A man becomes lovesick and dead, leaving his beloved behind in the village).*Tonga ilbo,* November 25, 1930.

the stereotypes of forbidden love in Korea's past Neo-Confucian society, rather than underlining the dynamics inherent to male-female relationship.

In consideration of both its conventional status as an object of literary history and its transformation under the pressures of modernization, this dissertation attempted to challenge our assumptions of lovesickness, the context of which lies in the complex net of meanings among gender, sexuality, and love. In exploring the discourse of lovesickness in late Chosŏn, this study revealed that lovesickness is not merely reduced to a form of subversion; rather, lovesickness could work within the Confucian framework to meet character's own ends and require a subtle art of negotiations between individual characters and orthodox norms. Without overtly contradicting or refusing the behavioral parameters dictated by the conventional norm, lovesick characters still worked to advance a personal agenda that included profound implications for their relationship with Confucianism.

To prove these points, in the beginning of the study, I began to outline the literary history of lovesickness to show what enabled its formation as a genre of romance in Korean literary history. The trajectory showed that *chuanqi* (Tales of wonder) had a significant influence in the construction of Korean romance and the birth of lovesickness as a literary motif. Yet, due to genre characteristics, the plot of the romance tends to rely on the device of supernatural power. For example, the fantastic element intervenes in the plot by helping a character overcome obstacles and restores his or her heroic qualities in war or in courtship. However, Korean romance displays a major shift in the seventeenth century from stories of the "supernatural" or the "strange" to "reality-based" narratives. I demonstrated that at the root of this shift was the changing perception of reality itself,

shaped by the historical upheavals of foreign invasions and the consequent ideological reinforcement of Confucianism, and showed that portrayals of lovesickness became a relevant issue in the realistic perspective of seventeenth century romance.

In a general sense, lovesickness means bodily disorder or symptoms that result from unrequited love or separation in association with courtly love. Yet *sangsa pyŏng,* in this context, is distinct from the typical definition of the term. Literally, it means an illness in a state of mutual longing and loving, and carries subversive connotations that the strong bond of affection are broken by the powers of a suitor, parents, or society. The definition also means that feeling of longing are a dominant cause of lovesickness. In the second chapter, I showed how the feeling of longing is structured as one of the major emotions in discourse and such a tendency is reflected in seventeenth century stories. Conventionally, the voice of longing had been regarded as feminine and submissive. But, in seventeenth century verses and narratives, the male character articulates his gender identity in bemoaning and wooing, recognizing himself as both subject and object of love. My reading reverses the understanding of the longing voice as flat and passive and focuses on how the nostalgic and melancholic voice enables the characters to speak of desire and love in a sophisticated language guarded by literary tradition.

In the pathological aspect, lovesickness has been viewed as an illness of emotion, but the medical treatises treat it as a disorder caused by excessive pensiveness (多思). In traditional medicine, the overpowering of pensiveness breaks the balance among the five-nominated emotions and harms the flow of energy. Thus, lovesickness can be critical to men, whose energy is considered the most important element for maintaining health. This

study has also shown that the medical sources show different approaches to female patients suffering from lovesickness by connecting its origin to a sexual problem. The gendered reading of lovesickness was prolonged by male scholar-doctors who diagnosed it from a male-centered perspective as a sickness of interiority, while objectifying female bodies and lovesickness in the periphery.

The medical interpretations of lovesickness reveal that gender plays an important role in the discourse of medicine, but it is also essential in literary representations of lovesickness. A lovesick hero, in romance, presents a provocative image in terms of Confucian manhood, since the image of hero, indulged in erotic motive and illicit sexual activities, deviates from the image of traditional masculinity. In addition, the hero does not take advantage of male privileges in the patriarchal system, and ends up grappling with lovesickness. Since medical interpretations provide the reasoning that lovesickness is critical to male energy, and the politics of male bodies contributed to the treatment of male lovesickness, I examined how the hero, once blinded by impractical love, recoups masculinity and showed that vulnerability and passivity function to empower the fragile scholar figure to consummate love.

While the lovesick hero is cured, lovesick women are more likely to die or kill themselves in romance. To unravel the intriguing patterns of male and female deaths, I analyzed descriptions of lovesick women in folk narratives. The transformation of the lovesick woman into a snake or ghost after death, in oral stories, reveals a tendency to marginalize woman's agony in love; but the stories represent female characters ending up with death and suicide. My argument, however, is not oriented to the victimization of

females, but centers on the virtuous representation of the characters. The main discussion dealt with the rise of the cult of female martyrdom in Chosŏn Korea and linked it to the literary construction of lovesick women in romance whose deaths are reconstructed as virtuous deaths, distancing this construction of lovesickness from the cultural taboos on female suicide. The form of posthumous commemoration shows how the romance seeks negotiation with the ideals of Confucian womanhood while subverting the link of the female body with the rhetoric of resistance.

To conclude, the dissertation illuminates the points by which we might rethink the practical and metaphoric functions of lovesickness in these texts. It reveals that lovesickness serves to expose the depressed life under moral strictures on the one hand; and that it is willingly employed as a language and a strategy in devising a way to express desire and to consummate the relationship on the other. At the same time, the questions that I have raised in this dissertation are open-ended and modular. Though the scope of study in this dissertation is focused on the intersection of romance and seventeenth century Korea, these questions can be carried forward to an analysis of popular culture and medicine in late Chosŏn. Specifically, future work should cover the vernacular romance, including *Sugyŏng nangja chŏn* (The tale of Sugyŏng) and *Puyong sangsa kok* (Puyong's song of longing) of the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries. The close reading of these texts, not yet introduced to Western readers, emerging out of the rapidly changing circumstances of eighteenth and nineteenth century Korea, concerns the motif of lovesickness which will illuminate how iconographic representations have changed with socio-political shifts in understanding the world and social order.

Also, extending in a more inter-disciplinary direction, future research might examine the conceptualization of lovesickness in the history of medicine, particularly concentrating on *Imwŏn kyŏngje chi* 林園經濟志 (Practical essays on rural administration). The two chapters of this collection, "Poyang chi" 葆養志 (Essays on care and nursing) and "Inje chi" 仁濟志 (Essays on benevolent relief), with their focus on medicine and treatment, comprise the second largest work on traditional medicine and will shed light on eighteenth-century literati observations of the origins and symptoms of lovesickness.

Lastly, with this dissertation I have aimed to contribute to fields of Korean studies and gender studies in East Asia. In literary studies, the seventeenth and eighteenth century Korean romance has not yet been researched extensively, especially by western scholars. My research inserts the discourse on seventeenth and eighteenth century love tales into the broader discourse on the development of fiction to examine the continuities, rather than breaks, throughout the various periods often considered separately in the literary history of Korea, and in particular bridging periods from the emergence of early romance in *Kŭmo sinhwa* (New Stories from Golden Turtle Mountain) to the development of vernacular popular romances such as *Ch'unhyang chŏn* (Tale of Ch'unhyang) in late Chosŏn.

The exploration of the discourse of lovesickness is a journey of discovering new definitions of love, the body, and gender that are interwoven into the fabric of motivations, thus demonstrating the point that love is a relationship between mind and body that exists throughout premodern and modern discourse. In addition, I have found that lovesickness is a key to unraveling the strands of the debate surrounding the relationship between

traditional and modern ideas of love. In this light, I hope that future inquiry will be able to draw the trajectory of this concept from traditional to modern history and contest the tendency to concentrate on reproducing the rupture of premodern and modern history.

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English translation of *The Tale of Gentleman Chu*

Gentleman Chu's name is Hoe 檜(C. Gui), his courtesy name is Chikkyŏng 直卿 (C. Zhiqing), and his pen name is Maech'ŏn 梅川(C. Meichuan). Chu's family had lived in Chŏndang 錢塘(C. Qiantang) for generations, but since Chu's father served as Transport Officer in the prefecture of Ch'ok 蜀(C. Chu) where his family settled in. Chu was young, intelligent, and also composed verse well. At the age of eighteen, he entered into the National Academy. Because he was respected among his colleagues, he believed he would succeed. However, as he failed the civil service examination several times, one day he sighed and said, "A human being in the world is just like a speck of dust on a feeble and tender leaf. Why should I be fettered by achievement and reputation? It is meaningless to spend my whole life seeking mundane pleasure." From that time he decided not to take the examination, but he collected all of his fortune – hundreds of coins – and set off for a business venture. With half of the collected money, he bought a boat and travelled to rivers and lakes, and with the other half, he bought goods in the local market and sold them in the distant prefecture. By doing so, he made himself a merchant, but he was an aimless, lonely wanderer. He went to the O 吳 (C. Wu) in the morning and to the Ch'o 楚 (C. Chu) in the evening, only

One day, he anchored his boat at a dock near the Agyang Tower 岳陽(C. Yueyang) and entered the gate of the town where he met his friend, Luo, a well-known in town. Luo, delighted to see Chu, offered him a drink. After they exchanged cups together, Chu got so drunk that he lost his sense of time. When he returned to the boat, it was already dark, and the moon rose. Chu let his boat drift in the water, and he himself leaned on the oar and fell

asleep. Powered by the wind, the boat traveled as swift as a flying arrow. Suddenly Chu was awakened by the sound of a bell from a temple far off in the fog. The moon was setting in the west. When he looked up the grassy riverbank, he saw green trees dim in the distance and lamp light emanating from a red balustrade and a blue beaded screen. He asked a passerby where he was and learned that it was Chŏndang. Feeling nostalgic, he composed a poem:

Leaving Agyang, I leaned on the oar of a magnolia tree	岳陽樓外倚蘭獎
The wind brought me home drunk in a single night.	半夜風吹入醉鄉
An oriole twitters and the spring moon wanes at dawn,	杜宇數聲春月曉
Surprised, I was awakened to find myself in Chŏndang.	忽驚身已在錢塘

In the morning, Chu climbed up the bank and looked down for his old friends, but most of them had passed away or left town. But, he hesitated to leave the town, only humming a verse and wandering here and there. There was a female entertainer, Paedo 俳桃 (C.Paitao), with whom Chu used to play in his childhood. Paedo was widely known in Qiantang as an outstanding female entertainer with talent and beauty, and many called her "Young Lady Pai." As Paedo took Chu to her house and gave him a warm reception, he presented her with a poem out of gratitude.

Fragrant flowers at the sky edge dampens her cloth	天涯芳草幾沾衣
As I return from far away, things have changed.	萬里歸來事事非
Only Du Qiu[292] has cherished her reputation,	依舊杜秋聲價在

[292] Du Qiu niang was a concubine of Yi Qi in the Tang. After Yi Qi died, she became a concubine favored by Jing Ling.

A beaded screen hangs on the tower in the sunset. 小樓珠箔捲斜暉

Deeply impressed by the lyric, Paedo said, “You have such literary flair. You are qualified for a high position, but why don’t you seek office by bending your back but loiter like a floating weed in the river?” She also asked, “Did you marry?” Chu answered, “Not yet.” Then Paedo smiled and said, “I beg you not to return to the boat. You can stay in my place with me. On your behalf, I will be able to find you a perfect match.” She implied that she harbored affection for Chu. Fascinated by her beauty, Chu looked at Paedo, smiled, and thanked her. “How dare I ask you to do that for me!” The sun was setting, and they were still talking. Paedo arranged for a young servant girl to escort Chu to the guest room to rest.

When Chu entered into the room, he found a heptasyllabic quatrain hanging on the wall. He was struck by the originality of the poem. When he asked the servant girl about the poet, she replied, “Our lady composed it.”

Lute, please do not play a song of longing.	琵琶莫奏相思曲
Your haunting melody wrings my heart.	曲到古時更斷魂
Shadows of flowers on the curtain, how lonely I am!	花影滿簾人寂寂
How many dusks have I spent in spring?	春來銷却幾黃昏

Chu was already attracted by Paedo’s charm but her poem fascinated him even more. All kinds of thoughts went through his head. Chu wanted to test whether or not Paedo was interested in him by capping her poem. He struggled to think of a line to impress her, but

failed to complete the poem till the midnight hour.

The bright moon shed light on the ground, strewing blossom shadows here and there. When he walked around the house, he heard the sound of human voices and the whinny of a horse, but they soon stopped. Chu was curious about the noise, but there was no way to figure it out. He found Paedo's room, which was not far away. In the distance, he could see Paedo's shadow through the gauze window from the red lamp light illuminating the room. To steal a glance, Chu approached closer to the room where Paedo was sitting alone. She was spreading a piece of colorful paper perhaps to write a poem, and then began to recite the first lines of "A butterfly envying the flower." When he saw her grappling with the last lines, Chu opened her window and abruptly asked, "Do you mind if I add some lines to your lyric?" She pretended to be angry at the interruption. "which mad guest managed to come here?" Chu answered, "I used to be normal, but it was you who made me a crazy man." With a smile Paedo allowed Chu to complete the lyric:

In a deep and small courtyard, my mind is troubled.	小院沉沉春意鬧
The moon hangs the branch of a blossom.	月在花枝
An incense burner blows smoke into the sky.	寶鴨香烟裊
The beautiful one inside the window is afraid to grow old.	窓裡玉人愁欲老
Awaken from dream, she is drawn to the flowers and plants.	遙遙斷夢迷花草
Mistakenly I enter the twelve islands in Sea mount Penglai.[293]	誤入蓬萊十二島
Fanchuan[294] did not know that he'd find a fragrant plant	誰識樊川却得尋芳草

[293] Mount Penglai is a mystical land in Chinese mythology. According to *Shan Hai jing* (Classics of Mountain and Sea), this mountain is in the middle of the sea where immortals live. See Anne Birrell, trans. *The Classics of Mountains and Seas* (London: Penguin Books, 1999). 143-148. Also see Richard E. Strassberg, ed. *A Chinese Bestiary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). 204-205.

In an instant I wake up, as a bird sings in the tree. 睡起忽聞枝上鳥
No shadow on the blue screen when dawn reddens the terrace. 翠簾無影朱欄曉

When Chu finished the last line, Paedo arouse from her seat and prepared a special wine in a jade cup for him. Chu's mind turned to other thoughts, so he declined the drink. Paedo observed a glimpse of sadness in Chu's face and said: "I was originally from a renowned clan. My grandfather worked at the merchant shipping office in the prefecture of Ch'ŏn 泉 (C. Quan). After he was implicated in a case, however, my family was downgraded to the lower social status of commoners. Since then, we suffered poverty and could not regain our status. What is worse, my parents died when I was young, and I was raised by relatives. I wished to preserve my chastity, but I found my name already on the registry of female entertainers. From that time, I had to accompany customers at banquets. When I took rest alone at my place, I shed tears when I look looking at flowers and facing the moon. But now I have met you. You not only have a noble presence and kind attitude but also possess talent and wit. Although I know I am of an obscure birth, I wish to spend this night with you and serve you as my husband in life. My only wish is to see you establish yourself someday by holding a government post. Also, I hope you would take my name out of the registry and do not bring disgrace upon my family. That is what I wish for. Even if you abandon me afterwards and do not have time to see me, I would thank you for your favor. How could I blame you?" Paedo shed a shower of tears after these words.

Touched by Paedo's story, Chu, putting his arm around her waist and wiping her

[294] Fanchuan is the penname of a famous Tang Poet, Du Muzhi (803~853), who had a love affair with a female entertainer who was compared to a "fragrant plant."

tears with his sleeve, replied to her. "This is what a man is supposed to deal with. Even if you had said nothing about this, how I could be heartless to you!" Upon hearing this, Paedo wiped her tears and changed her expression. "According to *the Book of Songs*, women are not at fault, but men have altered their ways.[295] Also, you know the story between Li Yi and Huo Xiaoyu.[296] If you promise that you won't abandon me, please write me your vow." As Paedo gave him a breadth of fine silk from the state of No 魯 (C. Lu), Chu took a brush and wrote a poem in one stroke:

Blue mountains never get old;	青山不老
Green water stays long.	綠水長存
You may not believe my words,	子不我信
But the bright moon is in the sky.	明月在天

Paedo sealed this poem and put it inside the waist of her skirt. That night, they spent the night together, reciting the "rhyme prose on Gaotang." They shared love and their pleasure was comparable to that between Student Jin and Cuicui in "Tale of Cuicui" 翠翠傳, and between Gentleman Wei and Pingping in "A record of Jia Yunhua's spirit's returning from the grave" 賈雲華還魂記.

The following day, Chu asked Paedo about the voices and whinnying of horse.

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[295] This line is from "A Simple Peasant" in "The Airs of Wei" in *The Book of Songs* 58:4. For English translation, see Arthur Waley, *The Book of Songs* (New York: Grove Press, 1996), 50.

[296] Li Yi and Huo Xiaoyu refer to a hero and a heroin in "A tale of Huo Xiaoyu" written by Jiang Fang (fl.785), one of the Tales of wonders (*chuanqi)*. The story describes a tragic love affair between a female entertainer and a Confucian scholar.

Paedo replied, “Not far from here, there is a manor with a red gate across the brook. It is the house of a certain minister Lu, who was once a prime minister. The minister passed away, and since then his wife has been living in the house with a son and a daughter, both are not married yet. They pass time singing and dancing and have often asked me to join. She sent me a horse last night, but I made an excuse that I was sick in bed because of you.” Chu did not think of other meetings or business and stayed on with her, playing instruments and drinking.

One day, someone knocked on Paedo’s door at noon. Paedo had a servant see who was at the door. It was a servant girl from the minister’s house, who delivered a note on behalf of the madam: “I am planning to hold a banquet. It would not be complete without you. If it is not too much trouble, please come and join us.” Paedo spoke to Chu: “Again I have been asked by the noble woman to join her party. I cannot decline her offer this time.” Then she combed her hair and dressed up to leave for the minister’s house. When she departed for the minister’s, Chu sent her off at the door. He asked her several times to make sure not to spend the night. Then, Paedo rode on a horse and vanished from his sight. She looked like a slender sparrow; her horse looked like a flying dragon that stirred up the flowers and willow leaves.

Chu could not quiet his mind after seeing her off. Following her footsteps, he reached the Gate of Yonggŭm 湧金 (C. Yongjin). Then he turned left to the Bridge of Suhong Bridge 垂虹橋 (C. Chuihong). Indeed, as Paedo described, there was a tall house with a red gate fronting the water, and it had curved terraces. Half of the façade was hidden

among green willows and pink cherry blossoms, so that the house seemed to be floating in the clouds. Music was playing inside, and he could hear laughing voices above the music.

Chu wandered around the bridge. Leaning against a pillar of the bridge, he began to compose a poem in the old style.

In the willows across quiet water, the tower rises high	柳外平湖湖上樓
Blue roof tiles on the red roof display the color of spring.	翠甍碧瓦照靑春
A refreshing breeze sends laughter and voices.	靑風吹送笑語聲
Flowers block my view, I cannot see people in the tower.	隔花不見樓中人
How envious I am of a pair of swallows in flowers,	却羨花間雙燕子
Now flying into the red-beaded hanging screen.	任情飛入朱簾裡
Wandering aimlessly, I could not bear to head home.	徘徊未忍踏歸路
The golden waves in the sunset deepen this traveler's sorrow.	落照纖波添客愁

While Chu loitered, the sky was colored by the sunset, and dusk fell as the darkness gathered. Soon after, he saw a group of maidens coming out of the house, all mounted on horses with golden saddles and embroidered bridles that almost dazzled the eyes. He thought one of the maidens must be Paedo, and hid himself in an empty store on the market street and waited for Paedo. More than ten maidens passed but not Paedo. It was strange. So he approached the entrance of the bridge again.

It became so dark that he could no longer distinguish between horse and cow. Chu went through the red gate and approached the tower but still found no one. In the moonlight he could see a pond north of the tower encircled by various kinds of flowers. A small curved path was visible behind the flowers. He walked on tiptoe, following the path. There he found a great hall. When he took ten steps toward the west of the hall, he found a

separate hall covered with a grapevine. The hall was small but beautiful with its window half open. The window was bright with candle light, and inside the window maidens in red skirts and indigo jackets were walking around. It was like a picturesque sight.

Chu hid behind the window and peeped inside. A golden folding screen and colorful blankets caught his eye. There was an old woman in a red silk jacket, sitting on a white cushion. She looked to be in her fifties but when she turned her head and winked, Chu could tell that she must have been gorgeous in her youth. Also, there was a fourteen- or fifteen- year-old girl sitting next to the old woman. She was so beautiful, with cloud-like hair with a blue tint and rosy cheeks. When she glanced sideways, her enchanting eyes reminded him of sunshine in autumn, and her smile of early morning dew in spring. Paedo, who was sitting next to the girl, was by comparison merely a raven or owl sitting next to a phoenix, or grit or pebbles next to jade beads. Chu was mesmerized by her beauty at the moment he looked at her. His mind was so enthralled, he felt a strong desire to shout like a mad man and rush into the room.

After wine cups were passed around several times, Paedo declined the drinks and tried to return home. The lady was obstinate and held Paedo. As Paedo still wished to go, the madam became curious about it. “You used to stay with us long; why do you want to leave so early? Do you have an appointment with your beloved?” Paedo, adjusting her dress, replied, “Because you ask like this I cannot hide the truth any longer.” Paedo spoke in detail to the madam about her relationship with Chu. Before the lady said anything, the girl smiled and looked askance at Paedo. “Why didn’t you tell us? We nearly ruined your fortunate meeting tonight!” The madam also laughed and agreed to send Paedo home.

Chu rushed home and pretended to be in a deep sleep, snoring and pulling the bedclothes. As Paedo arrived home, she saw him in a deep sleep. She tried to wake him up, saying, "What kind of dream are you dreaming now?" In reply, Chu recited a poem.

> In my dream I entered a Jasper Terrace in the colorful clouds. 夢入瑤臺彩雲裡
> And within the nine flowered draping I met a Daoist fairy. 九華帳裡夢仙娥[297]

Hearing this, Paedo felt upset so she asked, "Whom are you referring to as a 'Daoist fairy'?" Then, Chu was embarrassed to answer and came up with another poem.

> Awakened from sleep, I delight to see the Daoist fairy by my side. 覺來却喜仙娥在
> What would I do with a courtyard filled with flowers and moonlight! 奈此滿堂花月何

In an attempt to caress Paedo, Chu said, "You are my fairy lady, aren't you?" Paedo replied, "If so, then you should be my fairy lad." From that moment, they called each other "fairy lady" and "fairy lad." Chu also asked Paedo why she came home so late. She replied, "After the banquet, the lady had other female entertainers return home but asked me to stay longer at the chamber of her daughter, Sŏnhwa. There we held a small party, and that is why I was late." Chu asked for every detail of it. Paedo answered:

"Her name is Sŏnhwa 仙花 (C. Xianhua), and her courtesy name is Panggyŏng 芳卿 (C. Fangqing). She is fifteen years old. She is so elegant and beautiful. She does not seem to belong to this world. She is also well versed in poetry and embroidery. I am not even

[297] The phrase is from Bai Ju-yi's "Song of Everlasting Sorrow" (*Changhen ge*). See Paul Kroll, "Po Chu-i's 'Song of Lasting Regret,' a New Translation," *Tang Studies* 8-9 (1990-91): 97-105.

qualified to envy her. Last night, we composed a lyric called ‘Song of Wind Through Pines’ 風入松 (C. Feng rusong). The song is usually accompanied by a zither. So they liked me to play the instrument because I learned its melody.” As Chu asked, Paedo recited the poem to him.

Outside the window, flowers bloom and spring days are slow. 玉窓花爛日遲遲
The house is silent with the beaded screen drawn. 院靜簾垂
A duck on the sandbank warms itself alone in the sunlight, 沙頭彩鴨倚斜照
envying a pair of ducks playing in the pond. 羨一雙對浴春池
It is foggy by the willow trees, 柳外輕烟漠漠
In the fog the branches are still subtle and green. 烟中細柳綠綠
The beauty awakened from a dream and leaned upon the balustrade,
美人睡起倚欄時
Sadness welling in the corners of her eyes. 翠臉愁眉
The swallow sings and the nightingale warbles in their season. 燕雛細語鶯聲老
How regretful it is to waste the dream of youth. 恨韶華夢裡都衰
Carelessly I play my lute and flirt. 却把瑤琴輕弄
Who could know of the deep regret embedded in the song? 曲中幽怨誰知

As Paedo recited line by line, Chu came to praise the remarkable talents of the poet. However, he concealed his thoughts and lied to Paedo:

“This lyric seems to manifest the affectionate feelings in the women’s quarters. If she did not possess the literary talent of Su Ruolan (蘇若蘭),[298] she could not compose a poem like this. However, her talent cannot be as good as that of my fairy lady.”

[298] Su Ruolan was the courtesy name of Su Hui (fl. 4th century). She was known as a gifted female scholar and poet who composed a poem, *Xuanji tu*, in a palindromic pattern to expresses her love for her husband, having been exiled with his concubine to Central Asia.

Since Chu saw Sŏnhwa, his feeling for Paedo was already gone. Even when they exchanged cups of wine and laughed together, his mind was filled with Sŏnhwa.

One day, the lady called in her son Guoying and said, “Now you are turning twelve but still you have not learned the classics. You will be a grown-up someday. If you do not build your scholarship, you won’t be able to behave as a man should. Recently I heard that Paedo’s fiancé, Chu, is a man of erudition. How about asking him for instruction?”

The lady was strict with her son, so Guoying dared not go against her wish. The next morning, Guoying left home with his book under his arm to visit Chu. Upon hearing Guoying’s petition, Chu laughed up his sleeves. He mumbled to himself, “This is what I had wished for.” However, Chu declined it several times in order to demonstrate his modesty. Only after Guoying asked repreatedly did he accept the offer.

One day when Chu had a lesson with Guoying, he came up with a great idea. As Paedo was not home, Chu talked to Guoying about moving in with him.

“It must be bothersome for you to come and go to my place every day. I fear that the commute will wear you out. I heard that your family has a separate guest house. I think it would lighten your burden if I move into your house. Then you won’t get exhausted by travelling back and forth, and also I can concentrate all my efforts on teaching.” Guoying kowtowed and thanked Chu. “I could not dare to ask you, but it is what I longed for.” So Guoying returned home and spoke to the lady about Chu’s offer. She was also glad to hear of it so she readily sent the invitation to Chu. Soon Paedo came home and saw the lady’s invitation to the scholar. It came as a complete surprise.

“You must have another lover. Otherwise, how can you abandon me and move into

another place?"

"There are over thirty thousand books in the mansion, as the minister bequeathed those books to his family. The madam cherishes them and does not like to lend them to anyone. I heard that they are all rare books that no one can find in other places. I just wished I had a chance to see them." Paedo said, "If you want to devote yourself to your studies that much, it is my good fortune." Chu replied.

Thereupon, Chu moved in to the minister's house. From that time, he spent his days tutoring Guoying. When night fell, he tried but could not unlatch the door to sneak into the inner quarters. The door was firmly bolted. For ten nights he could not sleep but there was no way. He spoke to himself. "I came here with one purpose: to meet with Sŏnhwa. It is almost the end of spring but still I haven't even see her once. I cannot just wait till the Yellow River become clear. No one has limitless life. Tonight I will scale the wall. If fortune is mine, I will face a favorable situation. I would rather be severely punished and die here than do nothing"

One night when the moon was not out, Chu crept over layers of wall and arrived at Sŏnhwa's chamber. Every pillar and corridor was partitioned by beaded screens and curtains. For a while, he looked around and found no vestige of human beings. He only saw Sŏnhwa lighting the candle and playing the lute. Crouching by a pillar, Chu listened to the tune Sŏnhwa was playing. After finishing the song, she recited "Greeting for Bridegroom" 賀新郎 (C. Hexinlang)," one of Su Shi's lyrics.[299]

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[299] Su Shi (1037-1101) was a Chinese poet during the Song period. He was often referred to by his pseudonym, Su Dongpo.

Who is knocking on my window outside the screen, 簾外誰來推繡戶
Waking me up from a dream – I was in the divine tower. 枉敎人斷夢瑤臺
Alas, it may be wind that blows through bamboo. 又却是風敲竹

Instantly, Chu replied outside the screen.

Don't say the wind passes through bamboo. 莫言風敲竹
The beautiful one has come to you. 眞箇玉人來

Sŏnhwa, pretending not to hear the voice, tuned off the light and went to bed. Then Chu entered into the room. He spent the night with Sŏnhwa. She was so young and feeble that she barely endured the pain during intercourse. But light rain fell through light clouds; the willow branch seduced the flower. She sometimes whispered. Then she gently smiled and soon made a grimace with her face. As a bee looks for honey and a butterfly finds the flower, Chu was so obsessed with her he did not even recognize that day was breaking. Suddenly, he heard an oriole singing outside the balustrade and ran out of the room. The pond and courtyard were all quiet, shrouded in the mist. Sŏnhwa sent him off at the door. Then she closed the door and spoke in the room.

"You should never come back. If anyone finds out about this, we will be in great danger." Chu felt at a loss for words. He was struck dumb with shock.

"I thought I had finally found my mate. How can you turn me down like this?"

"I was just joking. Don't be mad. I would like you to come back to see me late tonight."

As Sŏnhwa replied and smiled, Chu was so glad, he shouted to himself, "yes, yes!" in excitement. Then she composed a poem, "An oriole singing at summer dawn," and hung it on the door.

After the rain, light fog is everywhere.	漠漠輕烟雨天後
The green willow looks like a painting and smoke.	綠楊如畵草如筵
Spring sorrow does not go away when spring is gone.	春愁不共春歸去
An oriole followed the dawn and sings near my pillow.	又逐曉鶯來枕邊

That night, Chu tried to sneak into the courtyard. When he was about to cross over the ivy-covered wall, he heard the scuffing of shoes. Fearing someone had found him, Chu tried to run away. At that moment, a person dragging her shoes suddenly threw a plum and it hit his back. He was perplexed but had no way to run away, so he crouched down below some bamboo. The one with the shoes walked close and spoke to him.

"Don't fear. It's me, Yingying."[300] Chu realized that Sŏnhwa had deceived him. He stood up and encircled her waist with his arms.

"Why did you surprise me?"

Then, Sŏnhwa said with smile, "How could I surprise you? How could you are surprised by your shadow? "

"I've stolen the perfume and pilfered the pearl.[301] How can I not be intimidated?"

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[300] Yingying is a heroin in "Yingying zhuan" (Tale of Yingying), which was transformed into a famous Chinese drama, *Xixiang ji* (Record of the Western Chamber).

[301] This phrase refers to fornication, especially an unmarried man having an illicit liaison with an unmarried

Chu held Sŏnhwa's hands and drew her into the room. He found a poem hanging on the window. He became curious about the last couplet.

"It says 'a beautiful one has deep sorrow.' Why did you write this?"

"A woman is always concerned about such things. Before she meets her mate, she feels anxious to meet the one. After she meets him, she again feels anxious for fear of separating from him. A woman lives her life with anxiety. Even though it was fortunate for us to meet each other, now you have become a thief who climbs over the wall and breaks the hardwood,[302] and I have become a woman of disgrace on the paths drenched with dew.[303] If this is revealed, it will be a great shame to my family. In addition, we will be disdained and derided by our neighbors. My own wish is to be with you and grow old together, but it is unlikely to happen. Our destiny can be likened to a rising moon among the clouds and a flower among fallen leaves. Although we are taking great pleasure, it will not last. I don't know what to do."

As Sŏnhwa failed to suppress her emotion and shed tears, Chu wiped her tears and spoke to her.

"Born as a man, I can take any woman that I wish as my wife. I promise that soon I will send the matchmaker and then propose that you be my wife in a suitable manner. You don't need to worry about it."

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woman.

[302] This line is from "I Beg You, Zhong Zi" in "The Airs of Zheng" in *The Book of Songs* 76:3; Waley, 65.

[303] This line is from "Path with Dew" in "The Air of the South of Shao" in *The Books of Songs* 17:1; Waley, 16.

Sŏnhwa stopped weeping and thanked him.

"If you would do so, I Taoyao (桃夭)[304] will be greatly pleased. I may lack in virtue as a woman to bring harmony to your family, but if you marry me, I will gather wild herbs and serve the family shrine."

Then she took a small mirror out of a fragrant box and split it into two pieces. She kept one piece herself and gave the other to Chu.

"Please keep this piece until our wedding day and promise me that the day when we unite these pieces together will come."

She also gave a silk fan to the scholar, saying, "These are two very small gifts. But they represent my heart. I wish you not to abandon me as a summer fan in an autumn breeze, and to cherish me as bright moonlight, even when I have lost my appearance like the moon goddess."

From that time on, they met every night and parted at dawn. Chu realized that he had not seen Paedo for a while and was afraid this might let her doubts grow. He visited Paedo's place and stayed there for a night. That night, Sŏnhwa sneaked into Chu's room and investigated his bag. In the bag, she found poems written by Paedo. Sŏnhwa became green with envy. Out of jealousy, Sŏnhwa took a brush and ink from the desk and covered the poem in black. She then wrote her own lyric, called *Yanermei* (Between eyes and eyebrows) on blue silk piece and put it into the bag. Her lyric goes:

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[304] Sŏnhwa is referring to herself as Taoyao (peach blossom). Taoyao appears in "Peach-Tree" in "The Airs of the South of Chu" in the *Book of Songs* 6:1-3. See Waley, 8.

Outside the window, when the glow of a firefly comes and goes,	窓外疎螢滅復流
The waning moon hangs on the high tower.	斜月在高樓
The bamboo near the steps makes a sound;	一階竹韻
The shadow of paulownia trees is on the beaded screen.	滿簾梧影
As the night is quiet, my mind grows anxious.	夜靜人愁
No news of the prodigal man yet.	此時蕩子無消息
Where could he be, seeking pleasures?	何處得閑遊
You are not thinking of me.	也應不戀
The feelings of separation weigh heavy on my heart.	離情脉脉
I sit alone and my thoughts are endless.	坐數更籌

The next day, Chu returned to the mansion, and Sŏnhwa tried not to reveal her feelings of jealousy and grievance. Also, she did not speak about the poems in Chu's bag because she wanted him to feel ashamed of himself. However, Chu did not notice her intention. He was nonchalant about his behavior.

One day, the lady offered a banquet for Paedo in order to express thanks to her for introducing Chu to Guoying. She also had Paedo accompany Chu and serve wine and food to him. Chu got drunk and lost consciousness, but Paedo could not sleep. By chance she looked inside Chu's bag, wondering if her poems were still there. She found them blackened out; she felt suspicious but found lyric, "Between eyes and eyebrows." She soon figured out that it was Sŏnhwa's doing. Paedo was so angry but put the lyric into her sleeve, returned the bag as it was, and waited until for daybreak. When the scholar woke up, she talked to him slowly, asking, "You have stayed at this mansion quite a while. Why do you not come back to my place?"

"It is because of Guoying. He has not finished his studies yet."

"You must be devoted to your job because you are teaching your future wife's younger brother."

Embarrassed by her words, Chu asked, "What did you say?" As Paedo stopped talking and took a seat without a word, Chu lowered his head and looked down at the floor. Then, Paedo tossed Sŏnhwa's lyric and said, "A gentleman does not jump over walls or peep into holes in windows,[305] but you did. I will go see the lady and report everything."

As Paedo was about to stomp out of the room, Chu seized her by the waist and told her the truth. Then he bowed down to the ground and begged, "You and I already promised to marry. How could you drive me into a corner!" Paedo softened her voice and said "If this is true, let's return to my place together. Otherwise, I take it that you want to break our vows. Why should I remain faithful?"

Thereupon, Chu made an excuse to the lady and returned to Paedo's house. Paedo no longer called Chu a fairy lad, since learning of the relationship between Chu and Xinahua. While Paedo harbored resentment against him, Chu, thinking of Sŏnhwa too much, grew thin and pined away. For twenty days, pretending to be ill, he did not rise from his bed.

Around that time, they heard that Guoying died of a sudden illness. Chu prepared himself to go to the funeral. At the mansion, he bowed to Guoying's coffin and prayed for him. Because of Chu, Sŏnhwa has been seriously ill and could not stand on her feet. Upon

[305] See *Mencius* 3B:3. "When a man is born his parents wish that he may one day find a wife, and when a woman is born they wish that she may find a husband. Every parent feels like this. But those who bore holes in the wall to peep at one another, and climb over it to meet illicitly, waiting for neither the command of parents nor the good offices of a go-between, are despised by parents and fellow-countrymen alike." in D.C. Lau, trans., *Mencius* (London: Penguin Books, 2003). 66-67.

hearing that Chu has come, Sŏnhwa sat in white mourning clothes behind a beaded screen. Chu finished his prayer and wanted to exchange glances, but he did not dare look at her. While a couple of months passed, Paedo also fell ill and realized that she would not be able to get well. On her death bed, she rested her head on Chu's lap and whispered her last words.

"Although I became an abandoned branch of a tree, I always counted on you, as a bird takes rest under the shade of a pine tree. Yet I did not know that the oriole would sing even though my flower is still fragrant. I bid farewell to you. The silk garment and the zither melodies are all gone. Also, my wish to grow old with you is gone. After you get married to Sŏnhwa, please bury my body near the roadside you frequent. That is my last wish. If you could do that for me, it would be like living even after I am dead."

She fainted after these words. When she regained her consciousness, she called Chu's name. "Gentleman Chu, Gentleman Chu, please be good to yourself." Paedo spoke a few more words and finally died. Chu wailed and buried her near the roadside that skirts the lake and hills, following her wish. He composed a prayer for Paedo:

> On a certain day of a certain month, I, a retired gentleman, Maich'uan offer a sacrifice to your spirit with *jiahuang* and *lidan*.[306] Alas, your spirit! You had a flower-like spirit and a refined manner like the moon. You danced like a willow tree streaming in the wind, as light as a roll of silk. Your appearance was better than an orchid in the quiet valley – indeed you were a dew drenched pink blossom. Even Su Ruolan cannot match your literary talent in palindrome verse, and even Jia

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[306] *Jiahuang* and *lidan* each refers to banana and lychee, exotic fruits from southern China.

Yunhua's complexion[307] cannot compare with yours. Even though your name was on the roll of female entertainers, your spirit had integrity and chastity. Contrary to you, I was a lonely wanderer, a catkin in the wind and a floating weed in the river. I was fortunate to meet a match like you, as if "I were going to gather dodder in the village of Mei."[308] I promised to be with you "when we meet by the willows of the eastern gate."[309]

In the bright moon, we vowed to each other. The night was quiet and the courtyard was awash in spring color. We played the flute and shared good drinks, but didn't know our pleasure would turn into deep sorrow. Before we covered ourselves with a jade-colored silk blanket like cloud.[310] The dream of a pair of mandarin ducks[311] broke. Our love was gone and affection scattered like rain. I lift my eyes, but your silk skirt is faded. I cannot hear the tinkle of your jewels. The Luo silk still smells like your fragrance but the red zither with twelve strings is alone on your bed. The old house near the Lan Bridge will be managed by your servant, Hong Girl.

My goodness, I long to see you again. Your voice is unforgettable. Your presence is still around me. I cannot see you anymore, and cannot forget but your virtuous voice. Your jade-like presence and flower-like features are clear. Because I lost my beloved in a different place I have no one to turn to. I row my old boat, go over the roaring waves of sea, and enter into the rugged world, as a lonely, dismasted vessel travelling thousands of *li*. On whom can I rely? Next year I wish to weep bitterly for you, but I cannot promise in a vast world. The clouds on the mountains come around, and the tide flows again, but once gone you do not know to return.

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[307] Jia Yunhua is the given name of Pingping, a heroin in *A record of Jia Yunhua's spirit returning from the grave*. (賈雲華還魂記).

[308] This indicates that a man attracts a woman. Please find the poem "She was to wait" in "The Airs of Yong" in *The Book of Songs* 48:1; Waley (40).

[309] The phrase appears in "By the Willows of the Eastern Gate" in "The Airs of Chen" in *The Book of Songs* 140:1; Waley (109).

[310] *Bich'wigûm* (翡翠衾) literally refers to silk blankets of a jade color. Traditionally, a newly married couple is provided with a luxurious blanket as a wedding gift and a token of a wish for harmony.

[311] A pair of mandarin ducks is suggestive of conjugal fidelity and affection in the literary history of Korea and China.

I hold a rite for you with a cup of wine. I pour out my feelings in this piece of writing. Please take my cup that I offer facing the wind, flowery soul! May this offering be acceptable to you.

Chu bid farewell to two female servants and said, “Please take care of the household. I will be back after I achieve my goal, and fetch you.” The servant girls all wept and said, “We served our lady like our mother. She also loved us like her own daughters. We are unfortunate to see her dying this early. You are the only one we can depend on. But, you too have to leave. On whom should we lean?” They shed the tears.

Chu consoled them and got on the boat but could not row away. That night his boat crossed under the Chuihong Bridge. He sat up all night and looked up at Sŏnhwa’s mansion wherein candles in the blue silk-cover blinked. The lights gradually disappeared in the shadow of the town. He also thought his promise with Sŏnhwa must have ended. Grieving over his misfortune, he recited “A song of everlasting sorrow” (*Chang xiangsi*).

Flowers and willows are deep in the spring mist.	花滿烟柳滿烟
I thought good news would come soon.	音信初馮春色傳
A beauty was in inner chamber with bead curtains drawn;	綠窓深處眼
Were it good ties or bad?	好因緣是惡因緣,
Silver light illuminating the hall wanes.	曉院銀釭已憫然
I return to the boat to follow the shore with clouds.	歸帆雲樹邊

Chu was lost in thought until dawn. If he left town, he wouldn’t be able to see Sŏnhwa. Because Paedo and Guoying were dead, he had no place to stay. So he couldn’t help but row his boat. Sŏnhwa’s mansion and Paedo’s grave gradually receded from his sight. The

boat passed by the mountains and went around the bend of the river. Everything was in darkness.

A relative on Chu's maternal side, named Zhang, was a rich man in the HouChu. He was known to get along well with his relatives. The senior Zhang decided to do Chu a favor, and treated him well, so Chu became comfortable with where he was. However, his longing for Sŏnhwa became deeper. During this time he suffered from insomnia but soon it was spring.

It was the imjin year (1592). Zhang thought it strange that Chu's face was getting pale, so he asked Chu the reason. Chu could not conceal his love for Sŏnhwa and told him the story. Zhang replied, "Why didn't you share this with me? My wife and the minister Lu share the same surname and two families are intermarried. I will make your wish come true."

The next day, Zhang had his wife write a letter to the minister's house in Quantang to arrange a marriage. After being separated from Chu, Sŏnhwa spent her time feeling lonely and weak. The lady noticed that Sŏnhwa was lovesick for Chu and tried to arrange a marriage but Chu was already gone. When Zhang sent her a letter to promote the marriage, she and all her family were glad to hear the news. Under pressure, Sŏnhwa got out of her bed, combed her hair, and dressed herself. Zhang and the lady agreed to arrange a marriage for Chu and Sŏnhwa in the ninth month of the same year.

Chu was waiting for news from Sŏnhwa, sitting at the dock. Less than ten days later, Zhang's servant came back with the betrothal date and Sŏnhwa's letter, written in her own handwriting. When Chu spread the letter, it exuded her perfume and showed teardrops

that had left streaks on the paper, which revealed that Sŏnhwa also had suffered a great deal.

> An ill-fated girl, Sŏnhwa, is writing a letter to you, after cleansing my body and mind, Gentleman Chu. I was born with a delicate constitution and grew up in the women's quarters. Even after I harbored affection for you, I was too shy to express it. Whenever I saw a green willow on a roadside hill, I thought of my beloved. Whenever I heard an oriole, I saw my beloved in my dream at dawn. Then one morning a beautiful butterfly brought news, a mountain bird led the way, and the moon was in the east. You were upon my doorstep. When you crossed the wall, how could I value my body and chastity?
>
> But good things are always accompanied by bad, and I could not keep faithful appointments. My heart loves you always, but my body got thin. After you left, the spring came again, but fishes hid in the deep, the geese flew away, and rain drops beat the pear blossoms. When it became dark, I closed my door and immersed in all thoughts. I could not sleep and tossed and turned. It is because of you that my body became gaunt.
>
> During the day, inside the silk folding screen is empty; and at night, the candle light in the silver lantern was out. In a single day I injured my body and came to love you with all my life. Every time flowers fell, my longing for you piled up and when I saw a waning moon, I shed tears. My three spirits[312] were gone and my eight wings[313] were folded. Have I known this, it would have been better to die.
>
> Now the matchmaker came and I can wait for my wedding day. By living alone, I got sick and could not rise from my bed. My flowery face lost its luster and my cloudy hair is no longer sleek. I am afraid you might be surprised to see me or turn me down because my appearance has changed. What if I die likes a morning dew drop before our day comes? My grievance is endless. But, if I could appeal my sad heart to you then even when I am buried in a grave, I will have no regret. Because you are myriad miles away beyond cloud-capped mountains, I cannot send my news to you, so I stretch my neck to glance at you and that makes my bones

[312] Three spirits indicate Taeghuang (台光), Samjŏng (爽靈) and Yujŏng (幽精). These are types of souls in Daoist philosophy.

[313] This phrase appears in the "Tale of Cuicui" in the collection *Jiandeng Xinhua* (New stories for trimming the lampwick) by Qu You (1341-1427). According to the tale, Taokan (259－334) dreamed that wings grew in his armpits and he soared to the sky.

break and my soul flies away.

HouChu is isolated and the humid air might do harm to your health. Please take care of yourself. I cannot express fully my heart but send my message with the help of a wild goose.

On a certain day of a certain month,
From Sŏnhwa

When Chu finished reading this letter, he felt as if he was awakened from dream and sobered up from inebriation. He felt sad and happy all at once. He counted down how many days remained until the ninth month came. It felt like he had to wait too long. He wanted to move up the date so he went and asked Zhang to send a servant and deliver his letter to Sŏnhwa.

My beloved! Our ties through three lives are heavy. I was touched by your letter, which travelled more than a thousand *li*. I appreciated the hospitality your family offered to a wretch like me. At your courtyard in the flowerbed, we made vows under the moonlight. I cannot thank you enough for your grace and kindness. Yet, the fashioner of things gets jealous of human beings having too many good things. Who would foresee that one night of separation means not seeing each other for a year! While being separated by layered mountains and meandering rivers, I shed so many tears thinking of you in a foreign land. The wild geese cry in the clouds in the Wu and monkeys make noise in the Chu, but I sat lonely in a relative's house. Anyone with emotions would feel the same.

Ah, my beloved! You too know the sorrow of separation. An old saying has it that each day I do not see my love feels like three years. By my calculation, one month comes to ninety years. If we carry out the plan to marry in late autumn, you would find me in the midst of weeds in a desolate mountain.[314] I am so frustrated that I cannot express my feelings in words. When I face the paper, I am choked with tears. What more can I say?

[314] This implies that Chu might die of lovesickness and would be in his grave.

Chu wrote this letter but could not deliver it to Sŏnhwa because war broke out: the Japanese army invaded Korea and the Chosŏn government sought the reinforcements from of the Ming. The Ming emperor viewed Chosŏn as a close neighbor, which served China with sincerity, so he dispatched a relief army. If Chosŏn were defeated, the people west of the Yalu would be threatened. He also considered it the emperor's duty to help Koreans and reinforce their trusted relationship. Thus, he ordered General Li Rusong (1549-98) to lead the Ming army and repulse the Japanese outlaws.

Xue Fan came back from spying out the situation in Chosŏn and reported to the Ming emperor, "the soldiers of the northern region are defending against the Manchu army, while the southern people battled against the Japanese outlaws. It would be best to send the southern army to Korea." Accordingly, soldiers were conscripted in the prefecture of Zhehu. A bureaucrat, who served as an official messenger, was well aware of Chu and recruited him to employ him as a clerk. Chu declined the offer but could not avoid the duty. Before he left town, he went up to the Baixiang Tower and wrote a heptasyllabic poem. Quoted is the concluding part of the poem:

A lone traveler mounts the high tower by the river. 愁來獨登江上樓
Beyond the tower, how many are the layers of mountains! 樓外青山多幾許
They might block my eyes to glance my hometown. 也能遮我望鄉眼
They won't be able to cut off my heart yearning for my homeland. 不肯隔斷愁來路

Next spring in the year of *kyesa* (1593), the Ming army advanced quickly into Kyŏngsang

province in the south. Chu kept thinking of Sŏnhwa and got sick. He could not join the military forces and stayed in Songdo. I had business to take care of in Songdo and by chance met Chu in an inn. Because we could not communicate in each other's language but communicate by writing sinographs.

Chu seemed to be glad to find that I understood literary Chinese and treated me well. I asked him why and how he had gotten sick. He did not reply, but sadness filled his face. It was raining that night and I and Chu talked all night long. Then, Chu gave me one poem:

The lonely shadow is helpless.	雙影無憑
The sorrow of parting is hard to express.	離懷難吐
The homesick soul reaches the trees near the river.	歸魂暗暗連江樹
I am restless by the dim light reflecting in the inn.	旅窓殘燈已驚心
I cannot bear to hear the rain in the sunset.	可堪更聽黃昏雨.
The clouds of a fairy land are far away.	閬苑雲徹
The YingChu is blocked by the sea.	瀛州海阻
Where is the beaded screen by the jade tower?	玉樓珠箔今何許
As a floating weed, I let myself drift in the water,	孤蹤願作水上萍,
Wishing to sail to the Wu river in a single night.	一夜流向吳江去.

I became curious about this lyric and its unusual longing, so I asked him about the details. Chu shared his story from beginning to end. He also took out of his pocket a paperback entitled "Among the flowers" 花間集 (C. Huajian ji), which contained approximately one hundred poems, including the poems between Chu and Sŏnhwa, and between him and Paedo, along with ten other poems exchanged among friends. He shed tears and asked me to write a poem, so I could not refuse. I used the rhymes of the poems of Yuan Chen (779-831) and attached my poem to the postface of the collection. As words of consolation, I

wrote: “A man is only concerned about his name and fame. How could there be no beauty to be matched in the world? Soon when the three Han (Korea) is pacified, the Ming army will return and you will be able to go home. The east wind is already with you to return home. Miss Jia said, please do not worry about being confined in another’s garden.”

The next morning, we bid farewell with tears. Chu showed his gratitude several times and said, “This is just a trivial and banal story, so just keep it to your self.” At that time, Chu was only twenty-seven years old, and his face reminded me of a beautiful painting. I Kwŏn Yŏjang have written this story in the fifth month of the *kyesa* year.