

Paolo Santangelo

Emotions, a Social and Historical Phenomenon: Some Notes on the Chinese Case

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Paolo Santangelo

Emotions, a Social and Historical Phenomenon: Some Notes on the Chinese Case

Some general questions on cross-cultural research

Comparison is the implicit approach of the historians who deal with European Middle Ages or Antiquity, and evidently comparison is the method that should be used by scholars who do research on “other” cultures. Whenever languages and concepts, categories and symbologies of the researcher and of the world that is object of his or her research are not the same, it is necessary to resort to a mediation and comparative process.

After a short discussion of some preliminary questions, I will present some characteristics of the emotional imagery representation of late imperial Chinese culture on the basis of my experience, in the hope it can be useful for further interdisciplinary dialogue.

It is now more than two decades that my research focus shifted from my previous studies on social and intellectual history to the more impalpable field of values, beliefs, perceptions and their representation in writing.¹ This field of research aims at rediscovering and reconstructing the so called *mental structure* in Ming and Qing China and its rich capital of lexicon, concepts and symbols to represent internal and external reality, by collecting and combining fragments of the sources of the period and resorting to an interdisciplinary approach.

Everybody is aware of the risk of the use of generic terms, such as “mentality”, “emotions”, “passions”, “feeling”, as any of these definitions is partly intuitive and tautological, but can easily be criticised. Some naive attempts at psychoanalytic biographies and the ideological application of psychoanalysis to historiography have caused reasonable cautiousness and diffidence regarding any “psychohistory”. Moreover we are aware of the implications that the word “emotion” has, and why this term has prevailed on other “synonyms” such as “passions” or “sentiments”. Emotion indicates complex, contradictory, ambiguous and diffused experiences. It lacks a clearly established, *intra-* or *inter-*disciplinary definition, even if practically and intuitively most scholars agree on its meaning.² Wallace and Carson (1973) have shown that there is considerable variation in the content and structure of the vocabularies concerning emotions even among psychiatrists. Moreover this issue is even more problematic when we deal with cross-cultural inquiries.³ The word “emotion” is not a lexical universal, as it

¹ See Paolo SANTANGELO, *Sentimental Education in Chinese History. An Interdisciplinary Textual Research in Ming and Qing Sources*, Leiden: Brill, 2003. Further developments of this project are published in the introductions to the glossaries that have appeared in the Series of Brill, [Emotions and States of Mind in East Asia](#).

² This demonstrates concretely how interdisciplinary and cross-cultural studies are still in their infancy.

³ See my volume (quoted in footnote 1, Leiden, 1993) dedicated to the complexity of any work concerning this phenomenon and its representation. There I was indebted also to Wierzbicka's theories and findings. In

is culture-bound, rooted in the modern Anglo-Saxon culture; its meaning and range of uses do not match exactly with similar apparent “equivalents” even in some other European languages. Moreover, in our perspective, emotions are also a social phenomenon, interpretable only within a specific culture's language, with cognitive elements.⁴ This is the reason why states of mind such as “love” in its various meanings, or “hate” are taken into consideration, while they are not emotions *stricto sensu*, as they are sentiments of long duration or emotional complexes, according to naturalist scholars.⁵ Yet the term “emotion” is now used worldwide in a broader sense, and historians can accept it. Even the term “mentality,” notwithstanding its misuses and different interpretations, can be a useful tool to express the complex of notions, beliefs, prejudices and images which are shared by most members of a certain society and belong to a structured system of signifiers whose internal networks of relationships are used to “map” the structure of other sets of relationships. Employed in this way, this term may be a useful container, which includes “emotions”, imagery, collective memory, all kinds of cultural elements, which are interdependent and often are beyond conscious elaborations and philosophical systems.⁶

Thus any effort to clarify the tools and concepts we use is necessary, but at the same time we should avoid engaging in endless theoretical debates. We are aware that the historian's work is intrinsically “anachronistic” and yet we go on writing history. The empirical results of our researches can demonstrate the correct or incorrect direction of our methods and aims: analysing sources, and keeping in mind the specific meanings that terms and symbols have in a specific society. Methods and categories are not necessarily universal,

the field of ethno-anthropological studies, see also Lutz's caveat (Catherine LUTZ and Geoffrey WHITE, “The Anthropology of Emotions”, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 15, 1986, p. 405-436) against the unwitting importation of Western concepts and cultural assumptions into analyses of other cultures, warning that they do not share Western dichotomies such as mind/body and reason/emotion, nor the Western bias towards individual autonomy and private experience. Anthony WALLACE and Margaret CARSON, “Sharing and Diversity in Emotion Terminology”, *Ethos*, 1, 1973, p. 1-29. On the question of universalism versus relativism see Carmella C. MOORE, A. Kimball ROMNEY, Ti-Lien HSIA and Craig D. RUSCH, “The Universality of the Semantic Structure of Emotion Terms: Methods for the Study of Inter- and Intra-Cultural Variability”, *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 101, No. 3, 1999, p. 529-546.

⁴ Within the huge literature on the subject see the classic Peter BERGER and Thomas LUCKMANN, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, Garden City, NY, Anchor, 1966, and for crosscultural surveys Rom HARRÉ, (ed.), *The Social Construction of Emotions*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1986; Roger AMES & Joel MARKS (eds.), *Emotions in Asian Thought: A Dialogue in Comparative Philosophy*, With a Discussion by Robert C. Solomon, Albany, SUNY, 1995; Athanasiadou ANGELIKI, Elżbieta TABAKOWSKA, (eds.), *Speaking of Emotions: Conceptualisation and Expression*, Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1998; Anna WIERZBICKA, *Emotions Across. Languages and Cultures: Diversity and Universals*, Paris, Cambridge University Press, Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. 1999.

⁵ For a naturalist and universalist approach and the concept of “basic emotions” see Paul EKMAN, “All Emotions Are Basic”, in P. EKMAN and R. J. DAVIDSON (eds.), *The Nature of Emotion. Fundamental Questions*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 1994. For balanced reflections on various approaches see Robert C. SOLOMON, “Some Notes on Emotion, ‘East and West’”, *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 45, No. 2, 1995, p. 171-202, and James RUSSELL, “[Culture and the categorization of emotion](#)”, *Psychological Bulletin*, 110, 1991, p. 426-450.

⁶ In this field the importance of the founders of *Annales* is evident, and the innovative contribution of French scholarship in calling attention to emotional and religious attitudes, collective memory and reconstruction of the past, and “currents of the deep” and collective sensibility.

but they are tools created for specific purposes, provided they are coherent and consistent. For instance in my experience, emotions and the whole affective sphere, states of mind and physical perceptions occupy a relevant but not exclusive role in this analysis. An historical research that focuses on the emotional sphere needs to create a lexicon of emotion and para-emotion terms (that is, containing the conceptual component “feel” or “feeling”) of the specific society under examination. As the aim is not purely linguistic, this lexicon should be useful for collecting information not only on modes of representation, evaluation and perception of emotional phenomena, but also on moods, states of mind, and imagery, in order to put together the fragments of mental representations of inner and outer reality. Thus *states of mind* seem more fruitful than “emotions”, as they include also those inner cognitive or behavioral modalities, such as propositional attitudes related to intentionality (accepting, consent-resignation, believing-trusting, hope, indifference-apathy), and attitudes (patience, intolerance, alertness-cautiousness). Sensorial or bodily feelings should not be ignored either because, although they are usually distinguished from emotions as they concern physical perception and specific parts of the body, they all share the idea of “feeling” and are often psychophysically linked with emotions.⁷ Piroska Nagy and Damien Boquet, in “Pour une histoire des émotions : l’historien face aux questions contemporaines”⁸ have presented various theoretical concepts and practical perspectives concerning “emotions” and their inclusiveness of cognitive, evaluative and moral dimensions; this essay evidences their importance for the historian and yet our difficulty in “decoding” the textual information, “en confrontant nos outils conceptuels et langagiers avec ceux employés par les acteurs du passé pour envisager leurs propres ressentis” (p. 44). Some articles included in this volume demonstrate how the analysis of the emotional behaviors that are incorporated in the sources “confèrent une identité historiquement déterminée” (p. 37). The contributions of this book also show how the analysis of emotions should be extended to a broader field, the whole emotional process (which includes non-emotion terms and contexts, such as *script*, motivations, manifestations and emotion markers, symbolic expressions), and to other phenomena, such as habits and behaviours, temperaments, attitudes, affects, psychosomatic reactions and transformations, identity and concept of self, beliefs, visions and dreams.⁹ Thus I prefer to consider the “mental structure”, which includes the representation of emotions, collective memory and imagery. I understand by this term the system of various cognitive and practical aspects of the “world of mind and body” in a

⁷ In Chinese traditional medicine the five organs correspond to the classical seven emotions: liver-anger 肝=怒, heart-joy 心=喜, spleen-worry 脾=思, kidney-fear and fright 腎=恐驚, lung-grief and sorrow 肺=憂悲. Studies on the symptomatology of Chinese patients demonstrate a culture-specific conceptualization of body for emotions. For bibliography on this topic and on emotions versus sensations, see Paolo SANTANGELO, in cooperation with Beiwen YAN, Zibuyu, “What the Master Would Not Discuss”, according to Yuan Mei (1716-1798): A Collection of Supernatural Stories, Leiden, Brill, 2013, footnote 11 p. 1227.

⁸ Piroska NAGY et Damien BOQUET, « Pour une histoire des émotions: l’historien face aux questions contemporaines », in Piroska NAGY et Damien BOQUET (eds.), *Le Sujet des émotions au Moyen Âge*, Paris, Beauchesne, 2009.

⁹ For instance Annie PIOLAT and Rachid BANNOUR, « Émotions et affects : contribution de la psychologie cognitive » states “qu’il est difficile d’isoler les émotions des différents états affectifs”, in Piroska NAGY et Damien BOQUET (eds.), 2009, p. 63.

certain civilisation, which are reflected in the common manner of classifying and judging, beyond the rational and conscious theories of the time:¹⁰ the perception of the self, the sense of responsibility,¹¹ health and illness concepts,¹² belief systems,¹³ and the ladder of values.¹⁴ This analysis may appear too broad, but it is possible if we start by building a glossary and partial studies, and if the work is done with the cooperation of experts of the specific sources.¹⁵

It is evident that every society creates its own culture with values, taboos, and systems of control over drives and passions, in order to make life inside its community more efficient and harmonious. Chinese society has developed its own tools and codes in order to cope with the affective sphere, encouraging some moral sentiments and discouraging various other excessive emotions. Every field of society, from politics to economy, is deeply influenced by emotions and even the scientific world is not exempt from them. Not only does each society have its own system of representation and of ritualization of emotions, but this system is modified over time. Changes and continuity in such fields are reflected in the perception of emotions itself and in the emphasis of some emotions over others.¹⁶

Human beings bear elementary drives and specific interests as aspects of their original nature, and above these they re-elaborate various normative structures from society, which are internalized as models and expectations. This means that the root of behaviour is in these drives, but consciousness, conscience, decisions, justifications, and representations of self and emotions, evaluations and beliefs all depend on the intellectual and symbolic tools supplied by the given society and its culture. The emotional dimension is partially “constructed” on the symbolic, rational and ethical elements, which are supplied by each cultural environment.¹⁷

¹⁰ See the survey of anthropological studies concerning the body by Margaret LOCK, “Cultivating the Body: Anthropology and Epistemologies of Bodily Practice and Knowledge”, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 1993, 22, p. 133-55.

¹¹ See for instance Christoph VON FURER-HAIMENDORF, “The Sense of Sin in Cross-Cultural Perspective”, *Man* 9, 4, 1974, p. 539-556.

¹² See bibliographical references in SANTANGELO, 2013, Introduction, p. 62, footnote 229 and p. 1225, footnote 4.

¹³ On sociological studies see bibliographical references in SANTANGELO, 2013, p. 1225, footnote 5.

¹⁴ We can recall Verese’s definition, “the sensibilities, feelings, metaphors, and memories upon which human culture rests.” cit. in SANTANGELO, 2013, footnote 6, p. 1225.

¹⁵ For instance Oki Yasushi’s contribution has been fundamental for the work of analysis of the *Shan’ge*. In addition to the work done by Chinese specialists in the last twenty years. I must thank Tan Tian Yuan of the SOAS for his cooperation for the Glossary on *Mudan ting* which will be published next year, and Yan Beiwen of the CASS for her contribution in the translation and analysis of *Zibuyu* and *Liaozhai zhiyi*.

¹⁶ For the West some studies have already be done on the diachronic evolution of the representation of some emotions, such as the evolution of the ancient term *accidia*. On this and emotive language changes see SANTANGELO, “Reconstructing Fragments of Emotions: Textual Analysis for Research of the Representation of States of Mind in East Asia”, in Nina PAWLAK (ed.), *Codes and Rituals of Emotions in Asia and African Cultures*, Warsaw, Elipsa, 2009, p. 20-21.

¹⁷ SANTANGELO 2003, p. 17-28.

Therefore the manifestation and representation of emotions, as well as the forms of myths and symbols, although belonging to the realm of inner consciousness, are also a “social phenomenon” – they are embedded in larger social processes and both reflect and influence society and civilisations: they are themselves at the foundation of a system of interpersonal communication, through a language with a relatively coherent organization of concepts at the cognitive level. Thus, the subjective, unique and unrepeatable experience (*Erlebnis*) of emotion,¹⁸ in its representation and communication – the so called “social sharing” which is a powerful mean of self-reorganization after the emotional destabilisation¹⁹ – is itself a kind of “language”, one that transmits a series of affective codes, allowing for interaction with the external world, and at the same time a re-negotiation of reciprocal positions in interpersonal relations. The analysis and understanding of this process entails tracing the deep structures of a certain culture and society.²⁰

As a “lived experience”, emotion is a complex phenomenon that includes eliciting conditions, cognitive evaluation, psychological activation, changes of action readiness, physiological activity, bodily expression and behaviour. This flux is a dynamic process, but the defining of a certain emotion means its *fragmentation* and its *abstraction* from the complex flux of consciousness through the attachment of a more or less generic “label”. This operation not only simplifies the complex essence of the original phenomenon, but can consciously or unconsciously modify some elements and generate misunderstandings in its transmission, reception and perception by other subjects. Thus, as a “lived experience”, emotion is a segment of the stream of consciousness in which our ego is always flowing, which is defined and singled out by labels. “Labels” use words of a specific language, from a lexicon that does not necessarily coherently cover all possible affective experiences in their nuances and combinations, but expresses only some aspects of this experience. This depends on the tools that a certain language offers, besides the expressive ability of the subject. Moreover, in a cross-cultural perspective, we do not find exact equivalents in different languages. If an emotion concept from another culture is interpreted through *categories that exist in our own language*, we are biased by the values and preconceptions entrenched in these categories, owing to the disparity between

¹⁸ On the concept of “lived experience” (*Erlebnis*), see: W. DILTHEY, *Ermeneutica e religione (Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik)*, 1900), Milano, Rusconi, 1992, p. 14-20, 75-100.

¹⁹ Rimé has stressed two processes of elaboration of emotive experiences: “social sharing” and “mental rumination”. Although there are different kinds of social sharing, from the most primitive to the most complex, all of them are outward-oriented forms of elaboration of emotive data, while mental rumination is inward-oriented. Re-elaborating emotional experiences, rethinking their standard processes and retelling them to a real or imaginary listener in a logical structure and a specific kind of language correspond to those means formulated by Rimé. They allow a person to label his feelings and organize them in a sequence of logical events, and to compare them with the opinions and points of view of others. Thus, manifestations of emotions have not only a purely adaptive function, linked with spontaneous communication, but also a symbolic function. In this re-appropriation of one’s personal experience and its translation into an interpersonal message – which can be described as a revised self-image and a new reconstruction of interpersonal relations – some elements are stressed and other elements are forgotten or ignored. (Bernard RIMÉ, Pierre PHILIPPOT, Stefano BOCA, Batja MESQUITA, “Long-Lasting Cognitive and Social Consequences of Emotion: Social Sharing and Rumination”, *European Review of Social Psychology*, 3, 1992, p. 175-83).

²⁰ SANTANGELO 2003, p. 50-69.

concepts across cultures. Anna Wierzbicka's studies are fundamental in this respect.²¹ Thus, we must be conscious of the *discrepancies* resulting from 1) the incomplete correspondence between concrete emotional experiences and typical emotion terms, i.e. the limited semantic field of a lexicon; and 2) the incomplete correspondence of the semantic fields of the "equivalent" terms of two languages.²² More generally using anachronistic taxonomies is clearly dangerous.

On other occasions I have already presented some themes that form the basis of my long-term project on emotions and imagery in late imperial China. These include such questions as: how the different religious and moral backgrounds of the west and of China do influence the perception of emotions and of self? A further question at the first stage of the research project was then: Given the different religious and moral backgrounds of Europe and China, can we nevertheless assume that there was a concept of "sin" in China? Another related question concerned the role of human responsibility, and the different ways this issue was dealt with: in China by focusing on the bounds between the subject's roles and his/her social groups, in Europe also by the debates on free will in the Christian tradition.²³ In Confucianism, in particular, the inner sanction for transgressions is "shame" related to the family and social interaction rather than to any relation with a personal god who is believed to be absolutely good.²⁴ Moreover, this different approach influenced the relation between the ladder of values and emotions, their justifications and moral roles. This also affected the perception of the relation between the subject and society. If emotional arousal was considered in China as the key point in the formation of human responsibility, it was promising for the research to consider some Neo-Confucian debates on emotions and desires since the time of the Song dynasty (960-1279).²⁵ How

²¹ For references to Anna Wierzbicka, see SANTANGELO, 2009, p. 15-59, footnote 2, p. 18. On the medieval lexicons of emotions, see the very interesting contribution by Barbara H. ROSENWEIN, "Emotion words", Piroška NAGY et Damien BOQUET (eds.), 2009, p. 93-106.

²² On purposes and methods, see SANTANGELO, 2003, p. 28-49 and SANTANGELO, 2013, p. 1226-49.

²³ See for instance Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613-1682), focusing on the causes for the collapse of the Ming dynasty, and dealing with the moral commitment on the sense of shame and dignity (*youchi* 有耻) as well as the importance of the humblest subjects' behaviour for the development of civilization: *Bao tianxia zhe, pifu zhi jian* 保天下者，匹夫之賤. The concept of *youchi* is taken from *Lunyu*, 2.3, 13.20.

²⁴ Cf. the well-known proposition "*si Deus bonus est, unde malum?*" (if God is good, where does evil come from?) can be summarized as the basis of the debate on the individual freedom in moral decisions.

²⁵ See the Neo-Confucian reflections on the following formula concerning the moment before and after emotional arousal: 未發 < 幾 < 已發 (善 < 惡), originated from a Confucian Classic book, *Zhongyong* 中庸 (*Liji* 禮記). The key point, in Neo-Confucian elaboration, was summarized by the above formula that defines two moments of human responsibility: the quiet before emotional arousal and, thereafter, human involvement and moral choice. (See P. SANTANGELO, 2003, p. 151). Cf. also JIAN Huizhen 簡慧貞, "Shilun Zhu Xi 'zhong he shuo' sixiang yu dangdai quanjie" 試論朱熹「中和說」思想與當代詮解, in *Disanjie Zhongguo wen zhe zhi dangdai quanshixueshu yantaohui huiqian lunwenji* 《第三屆中國文哲之當代詮釋學術研討會會前論文集》, Taipei, Taipei daxue, 2007, 10, pp. 349-360 (<http://www.ntpu.edu.tw/dcl/96102728PDF/033.pdf>). This process may recall the psychological-moral processes elaborated in Europe with the "Christianisation of Stoicism". Augustine, in *De sermone Domini in monte secundum Matthaeum* 1.12, states that desire leads to action through suggestion, pleasure, and consent (*suggestio, delectatio, consentio*), and develops his analysis of sinful willing. Significant differences are soon evident, as in the European debates free will and original and actual sin are the key

could social evolution influence the evaluation of the manifestations of emotions? Did the negotiating process between the rigid ethical codes and the dynamic social changes influence the cognitive elements of emotions, restraining personal passions and promoting “virtuous sentiments”? Such contradictions between officially promoted ethical values, on the one hand, and practical compromises between individual appetitive energies and the personal yearning for wealth and the gratification of desires, on the other hand, were the focus of many debates, especially in periods of great change, like the late Ming dynasty. It is clear that in this kind of study it is always necessary to move from our categories – which influence our arguments and questions – to those of the other society, and this involves not only the different language and lexicon, meanings and values, but the whole system of the representation of inner and outer reality, self, and so on.

Neo-Confucian scholars’ positions on this subject were rather complex, since they were aware that emotions could neither be berated as ontologically evil nor totally suppressed. Emotions were considered dangerous, but even more so were desires that could not be completely repressed. Moreover, the Platonic intuition of the objective importance of “passions” versus reason, as represented in the allegory of the driver with the two steeds, had in some way a counterpart in the recognition by many Chinese scholars of the individual and social relevance of “passions”. Thus, on the one hand, emotions were considered morally perilous and needed to be controlled; but on the other hand, they had to be tamed for social purposes. Desires had to be strictly controlled, but a moderate position prevailed, aiming to liberate men from the excessive and illicit emotions but accept those that were considered “natural”, as “needed” for life and procreation.

Literary works witness such conflicts more than philosophical and moral debates,²⁶ as literary works of the late Ming dynasty, while dealing with the same moral tension, also reflected the social changes, the worries and hopes of everyday life, thus rendering a different representation of life.²⁷ Moreover it is well known that literature may include emotions, which were considered as perturbations and for this reason, were ignored by other written materials as they were not recognized by official cultural models, and were often omitted in non-artistic language. Thus literary materials become an important

points, framed by the concepts of sin and *gratia*, while in the Chinese case the perspective was centered on equilibrium and harmony. There is a huge literature on the medieval debate and concepts of emotions and love. I mention only Simo KNUUTTILA, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004, Danien BOQUET et Piroška NAGY eds., *op. cit.*, 2009, Charles BALADIER, *Eros au Moyen Âge, désir et ‘delectatio morosa’*, Paris, Cerf, 1999, and, for the “pre-emotions”, Damien BOQUET « Des racines de l’émotion : les préaffects et le tournant anthropologique du XII^e siècle », in Danien BOQUET et Piroška NAGY, eds., 2009, p. 163-186. Further studies can throw new light on the moral implications of emotions and their meaning for personal responsibility by comparing the above-mentioned formula in Neo-Confucian thought with the process elaborated by Christian thinkers in European Middle Age.

²⁶ See the already quoted *Sentimental Education in Chinese History*, 2003.

²⁷ See Paolo SANTANGELO, *Gelosia nella Cina imperiale*, Palermo, Novecento, 1996; Paolo SANTANGELO, *Le Passioni nella Cina imperiale*, Venezia, Marsilio, 1997; Paolo SANTANGELO, *L’amore in Cina, attraverso alcune opere letterarie negli ultimi secoli dell’impero*, Napoli, Liguori, 1999, translated into Chinese *Zhongguo de aiqing. Dui zhonghua diguo shubainianlai wenxue zuopinzhong aiqing wenti de yanjiu* 中国之爱情——对中华帝国数百年来文学作品中爱情问题的研究, Beijing, Zhongguo shehuikexue chubanshe, 2012; Paolo SANTANGELO, *La Seduzione nel Celeste Impero*, Palermo, Sellerio 2002.

historical source for understanding the hidden aspects of a period, to broaden our knowledge of the cognitive frontiers of consciousness.

The new Brill series *Emotions and States of Mind in East Asia* has been established in order to analyse and present some significant literary materials: its aim is to gradually build a picture of the mental structures in China, and East Asia.²⁸ All volumes analyse instances of affective experiences over a wide variety of Chinese or other East Asian texts from the same underlying database. A multi-disciplinary approach guarantees new and unexpected insights into the representation of the “mental structures” of Chinese and other East Asian societies, from the angles of cultural anthropology, linguistics, psycholinguistics, literary criticism, history, and sociology. The final aim is to offer a glossary of terms related to emotions both in the synchronic (historical, literary, philosophical, religious sources) and in the diachronic perspectives (covering a period from the 15th to the 19th centuries), with an important comparative cross-cultural dimension. In what follows, I shall sketch two topics that result from the recent analysis of some sources.

Some representations of love

The “Mountain Songs” (*Shan’ge* 山歌), a collection of folk songs edited by the famous writer Feng Menglong 馮夢龍 (1574-1646), is undoubtedly an emblematic document that provides a rich source of information on the evaluation and representation of emotions in late-Ming Jiangnan society. Through this innovative work, mainly written in the Suzhou dialect, Feng Menglong aimed at revitalizing the poetry of his time through the power of popular songs. This collection is very significant for understanding the mobility of Jiangnan society and the vitality of its intellectual world. The songs deal with the lives of common people: women (often prostitutes), boatmen, peasants, hunters, fishermen and paddlers. Their mentality is far from the moral orthodoxy that Zhu Xi, who promoted the allegorisation of poems with erotic contents included in the Classic of Odes, and their language is often vulgar and full of crude expressions as well as salacious *double sens* that contain allusions to sexual and erotic matters.

Allusive comparisons and symbolic allusions are shaped on the most common experiences of everyday life, inspired by working tools, game and leisure items, animals, and things in nature. However, human feelings and sensations appear just under the surface of these everyday objects: love passions, attraction and loneliness, hatred and jealousy, fear of rumours and social sanctions, happiness and sorrow. The “subversive”

²⁸ A new series with Brill Publishers, *Emotions and States of Mind in East Asia*, has opened the way to international publications concerning the topic of the research project (<http://www.brill.com/publications/emotions-and-states-mind-east-asia>). Debates have been organized in yearly international conferences in order to compare different opinions and get new ideas. Proceedings of such meetings held in these years, or volumes inspired by them have been published: *The Expression of States of Mind in Asian. Proceedings of the INALCO-UNO Workshop Held in Naples, 27 May 2000*, Napoli, IUO, 2004 (2005); *Love, Hatred, and Other Passions: Questions and Themes on Emotions in Chinese Civilization*, Leiden, Brill, 2006; *From Skin to Heart. Perceptions of Bodily Sensations and Emotions in Traditional Chinese Culture*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2006; *Passioni d'Oriente. Eros ed emozioni nelle civiltà asiatiche*. Sezione Asia Orientale. Atti del Convegno, Roma, La Sapienza, 29-31 maggio 2003. in Suppl. n. 4, *Rivista di Studi Orientali*, LXXVIII, Roma, 2007 [2008]; finally *Laughing in Chinese. Emotions behind smiles and laughter: from facial expression to literary descriptions*, Roma, Aracne, 2011.

element of the lyrics is clear both in their content and their expository language. It offers a picture of the world and humanity that is often turned on its head and goes against common knowledge. It reveals the banality of certain clichés, and it forces the reader to re-evaluate uncontested beliefs regarding gender differences and family. The songs challenge the readers: is it really true that a woman can have only one husband, as there is only one sky? That a man can have more than one concubine and not the other way around? Or even that the foundation of marriage is procreation? Although women are often the main protagonists of the songs, little room is given to traditional female virtues like chastity and obedience: instead, women's wishes, needs and hopes find a means of expression. The representation of passions and desires here offers an unusual perspective, if compared with the image coming from most other official and private sources: the minimalist interpretation of love could be summed up in the statement "*love is like food*", but also "*love is like fire*", and its ephemeral and light nature emerges through "*the beloved is like a flower*". One may object that the "Mountain Songs" is a literary manifesto concerning the language of poetry. However, as in the case of "courtly love",²⁹ the poetical language creates a new ideal of love; the songs uncover a new rhetoric of love and a representation of this feeling which corresponds neither to the orthodox rules nor to other literary paragons: illicit love and immediate satisfaction of desire seem the main topics.

This is, of course, one facet of love perception, and other Chinese sources present a variety of categories concerning love which in some way is parallel with, and in some others divergent from the perception of love in Europe. Other representations are presented in the idyllic and optimistic love, of the conventional mould of the "talent and beauty" genre (*caizi jiaren*才子佳人),³⁰ in which the love between the couple prevails

²⁹ There have been various opinions about the concept of "courtly love" since it was introduced by Gaston Paris in 1883. Denis de Rougemont considers it to have been influenced by Cathar doctrines, which rejected the pleasures of the flesh, and as the birth of a cult of passion (*amour fatal* de Tristan et Iseut) as opposed to the *fides coniugalis*. Anders Nygren condemns it as the "funest synthesis" between *eros* and *agape*. Charles BALADIER, in *Éros au Moyen Âge*, Paris 1999, emphasises the theologians' elaboration of the two opposite notions of *eros* and *agape*, and then of the third category of *delectatio morosa* (sin in imagination or memory). Its transposition to the poetic field in some aristocratic circles may have generated courtly love as a new art of love, based on the cultivation of an ascetic adulterous desire. According to Ch. LUCKEN (« L'amour au Moyen Âge. Autour du livre de Charles Baladier, *Éros au Moyen Âge*. Amour, désir et 'delectatio morosa' », *Médiévales*, 2001, Vol. 20, n° 40, p. 147-8), it offers not a new concept of love, but just *amour poétique* : "La distance qui fonde la relation de l'amant et de sa dame est en effet la condition même de la parole poétique qui s'en nourrit.... Éros est là, dans la langue". However it is well known that even a literary fashion can influence the representation of emotions, at least in certain circles. Vallé writes that "Joies, douleurs, amours, vengeances, nos sanglots, nos rires, les passions, les crimes, tout est copié. Pas un des nos émotions est franche, le Livre est là" (cit. in Jérôme-Antoine RONY, *Les Passions*, Paris 1980, p. 47). Again significant is La Rochefoucauld's paradoxical statement, "Il y a des gens qui n'auraient jamais été amoureux s'ils n'avaient entendu parler de l'amour" (LA ROCHEFOUCAULD, *Réflexions ou sentences et maximes morales*, n. 136, *Œuvres complètes*, Paris 1964 [1678], p. 421). For the debate, see Charles BALADIER, Monique DAVID-MENARD, Dominique IOGNA-PRAT, LUCKEN Christopher, « L'amour au Moyen Âge. Autour du livre de Charles Baladier, *Éros au Moyen Âge*. Amour, désir et 'delectatio morosa' », *Médiévales*, n°40, 2001, p. 133-157. (http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/medi_0751-2708_2001_num_20_40_1517).

³⁰ Cf. Richard HESSNY, *Beautiful, Talented, and Brave: Seventeenth Century Chinese Scholar-Beauty Romance*, Ph. D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1979. Christina Yao's dissertation (Christina YAO, *Cai-zi jia-ren: Love Drama During the Yuan, Ming and Qing Periods*, Ph. D. Dissertation, Stanford University,

over all other considerations as it is matched by destiny – emotion and virtue go hand in hand. Man and woman achieve perfect symmetry living in harmony to old age. Here, the subjective and affective attitude of the main characters does not derive from an overriding individualistic and anarchic will: they are – in K. McMahon’s words – only tactically or *expediently* rebellious.³¹ The love, if illicit in the case of elopement, is finally straightened out by the marriage which anyway is based on the love of the couple.³² A certain turn in the attitude of love is evident in the so-called Cult of Passions, which developed around the 16-17th centuries and was parallel with new trends in thought with the spread of the Wang Yangming schools. Against orthodoxy, Feng Menglong in his *Anatomy of Love* contrasts the intellectual superiority and sensitivity of a courtesan with the pedantry and moralism of the very father of neo-Confucianism, Zhu Xi 朱熹,³³ and displays great admiration for Xie Ximeng 謝希孟, a disciple of a celebrated neo-Confucian thinker, praising him for his free and spontaneous albeit dissolute behaviour.³⁴ Xie Ximeng’s reply to his master: “The extraordinary and splendid energy of the universe is always concentrated in the woman and not in the man” 天地英靈之氣,不鍾於男子,而鍾於婦人 was a kind of sacrilegious and subversive statement, as it referred to the neo-Confucian cosmological conception and subverted its universal nature. The orthodox hierarchy of status reflected the hierarchy of morality, that placed principle before desires and feared the subversive potential of passion.³⁵ Xie Ximeng’s “paradoxical” reply was, however, contained in an edifying story that ended

1982) examines the *zaju* and *chuanqi* plays, pointing out the ambiguity at the base of their plot, where “beauty-talent” means a mixture of fascination in idealised love and the myth of success, as well as alarm about moral transgression.

³¹ Keith McMAHON, *Misers, shrews and polygamists: sexuality and male-female relations in eighteenth-century China*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1995, p. 123. I mention here two examples of the “allegorisation” and the “cult” of love. The allegorisation of love poems – comparable with the symbolic interpretation of the *Song of Songs* (*Canticles*) – was practiced by the Neo-Confucian interpretation of the *Classic of Odes* (*Shijing*). Both processes have impact on the elaboration of love concept: the promotion of *agape-caritas* in Europe, and of moral tension in China.

³² HUANG Zhongshen 黃忠慎, *Zhuzi ‘shijing’ xue chutan* 朱子《詩經》學初探, Taipei, Wunan tushu chubanshe 五南圖書出版公司, 2002; HUANG Zhongshen 黃忠慎, *Zhuzi ‘shijing’ xue xintan* 朱子《詩經》學新探, Taipei, Wunan tushu chubanshe 五南圖書出版公司, 2003; Pauline R. YU “Allegory, Allegoresis, and The Classic of Poetry”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (Dec., 1983), p. 377-412. See also on the representation of desire in the “Classic of Poetry”, Tamara CHIN, “Orienting Mimesis: Marriage and the Book of Songs”, *Representations*, Vol. 94, No. 1 (Spring 2006), p. 53-79.

³³ *Qingshi*, 4:111-12.

³⁴ *Qingshi*, *Qinghao* 情豪 (Magnanimity), 5:154, 161.

³⁵ For the sake of example, in *Jinsilu* 近思錄 it is asserted that: “Between a man and a woman there is a difference in value and between husband and wife an order of priority. This is a constant principle. If we pursue our passion, we give free rein to our desires and are conditioned by pleasure; man, as he is at the mercy of his desires, will lose his strength of character and the woman, giving herself over to pleasure, will forget her subordinate position. There misfortune will reign and there will be no advantage”. And the very difference between *yin* and *yang* could be interpreted as a contrast between the splendour of virtue and the impureness of desire (Cf. Ethan KASOFF, *An Analysis of the Thought of Chang Tsai (1020-1077)*, Ph. D. Princeton University, Princeton, 1982, p. 81-82).

with the ultimate conversion of the hero. Feng Menglong and other contemporary authors, such as Tang Xianzu 湯顯祖 (1550-1616) in “The Peony Pavillion”, in some extreme cases contrasted individuals’ desires and social conventions. Tang Xianzu extolled the power of passion that wins even death. But generally speaking, if we compare the “cult of passions” in China with the so-called “courtly love” in medieval Europe,³⁶ we may single out some basic differences. André Le Chapelain (Andreas Capellanus, 1150-1220) in his *De amore* emphasises the contrast between individual-*inner forum*-sincerity and society-*outer forum*-formality, and in order to extol the value of love, clearly contrasts it with social rules, marriage and institutions; while Feng Menglong in his “Anatomy of Love” reconciles it with marriage and society and justifies it with Confucian virtues within the framework of harmony between man and society.³⁷ In any case we should consider that for the Chinese reader of the time, the idea of a conflict between a pure feeling and social conventions was not so evident, and instead we must observe that the exploitation of the emotional world was not opposed to social concerns.³⁸ Returning to the “Mountain Songs” or *Shan’ge*, if it is a “marginal” work in the complex framework of Chinese literature, it cannot be considered marginal in *its effort to express the codes of emotions in a new way, and to transmit them to its readers with great immediacy*. However, its marginality itself – expressed in attitudes which did not conform to the social conventions and orthodox moral rules of the time – is significant in that it helps us understand the developments of the society that produced it, which was very mobile and variegated. Paradoxically this work belongs to the same movement as the “cult of passions”, although the ideas about love which emerge from this collection of songs are often antagonistic to the values and idealizations that prevail in other literary works of the period, in its extreme search for a genuine love and language of love. The “Mountain Songs” aims at describing and expressing this essential, mundane and *trivial* element in the phenomenon of love with a *trivial*, direct and genuine language. What is surprising is that the search for a new language to express true and essential feelings leads to an apparent simplification of the phenomenon, an “anti-Romantic Romanticism”: purposely avoiding any sublimation reduces love to an everyday need but at the same time offers a gallery of both heroic and cynical, engaged and ephemeral cases. Love becomes a universal need beyond moral and social rules.

³⁶ On the notion of “romantic love” there are different opinions. William M. REDDY, *The Making of Romantic Love Longing and Sexuality in Europe, South Asia, and Japan, 900-1200 CE.*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012) stresses the dualism between a sublime love and a restrained desire. For a diachronic and sociological definition, see for instance Herman R. LANTZ, “Romantic Love in the Pre-Modern Period: A Sociological Commentary”, *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 15, No. 3, Special Issue on the History of Love (Spring, 1982), p. 349-370; Melvin L. WILKINSON, “Romantic Love and Sexual Expression”, *The Family Coordinator*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Apr., 1978), p. 141-148. For a universal and biological based concept of passionate love based on cross-cultural contemporary anthropological researches, see William R. JANKOWIAK and Thomas PALATINO, “Desiring Sex, Longing for Love: A Tripartite Conundrum” in William R. JANKOWIAK (ed.), *Intimacies: Love and Sex Across Cultures*, New York, Columbia UP, 2008, p. 1-36.

³⁷ Paolo SANTANGELO, “Two key treatises on love and their different approaches to the concept of love: *Qingshi leilüe* 情史類略 and *De amore*”, *MingQing yanjiu* 2007 [2008], p. 117-151.

³⁸ SANTANGELO, 2003, p. 186-206.

The dark side of consciousness

The other literary source that has been analysed and translated is in *Zibuyu* 子不語, “What the Master Would Not Discuss”, by Yuan Mei 袁枚 (1716-1798).³⁹ *Zibuyu* is full of abnormal events, ghosts, the dark world of death, that reflect Yuan Mei’s image of the dark side of reality. These phenomena are often combined with pathological states, hallucinations, loss of consciousness, and, under less exceptional conditions, dreams. Dreams, madness, and delusions are all extreme cognitive and affective conditions: another reality, a frenzied atmosphere, beyond the reality commonly accepted. These phenomena interact with beliefs in magicians, superstitions, gods and spirits that are other forms of secondary realities built to defend and console the self. Yuan Mei resorts to these elements not only as a creation of fantasy or to follow the *zhiguai* 志怪 genre, but also because they are able to express his complex perception of reality and truth. The above-mentioned extreme cognitive and affective conditions are not so extraneous to actual everyday life: “common” human beings experience dreams every day and night, and everyone in certain situations is struck by the temporary blindness of rage, by the magical power of love, and by temporarily overwhelming emotions when faced with dramatic events – whether good or bad. The boundary demarcating what is normal from what is abnormal is in fact rather fuzzy, for people in a dreamlike state or under the influence of a strong passion experience – a world that differs greatly from the world perceived by a person who is awake or in a serene state of mind: such is the paradox of the multiplicity of perceptions of reality. The stories portray extreme conditions, with the vision of gods, ghosts and spirits, and their effects on human beings, which the reader is tempted to merely put down to naïve beliefs in magicians, superstitions, hallucinations, madness, delusions or delirium. However, Yuan Mei toys with this ambiguity between dream and reality, between hallucination and possession. This may be out of narrative necessity, but it is also a means to display a hidden reality, which is often forgotten or ignored: our nightmares and fears about something terrible happening. Is this dark atmosphere teeming with fearful monsters simply a product of the author’s wild imagination or a symbol for the hidden recesses of the human soul? Although Yuan Mei did not leave behind any comments that could support the second hypothesis, it is a fair assumption to make an overall analysis of the *Zibuyu*.

Monsters and nightmares symbolise our deepest fears and obsessions, for human beings are constantly plagued by their own weaknesses and threatened by the instability of life, with its disasters, sickness, old age and decline. Therefore, it is natural that people seek assistance to try to avoid death and its symbols, thwart physical and mental illness, and dodge the emissaries of the underworld, that fetid and icy realm which can so easily contaminate us. The search for solace and protection comes in the form of various beliefs. The author shares with other *literati* scepticism about popular beliefs, religions and superstitions, and sometimes he says such things directly, placing the blame on gullible folk who end up bringing trouble upon themselves. It is ironic that such beliefs end up

³⁹ The full annotated and commented translation of the *Zibuyu* by Paolo SANTANGELO in cooperation with YAN Beiwen has just been published by Brill in the new Series on emotions and states of mind (<http://www.brill.com/zibuyu-what-master-would-not-discuss-according-yuan-mei-1716-1798-collection-supernatural-stories-2>).

multiplying people's fears and weaknesses, pushing them into extreme cognitive and affective states, with hallucinations and possessions, and forcing them to experience a much more dramatic reality beyond what is commonly accepted. Thus, delirium is an alienation from reality, a regression, but it is also a heretical attempt to affirm an uneasy truth, a scandalous uncovering of something that is too inconvenient to be acknowledged,⁴⁰ or – in *Foucaultian* terms – a subversive form of freedom. In the *Zibuyu* delirium is not intended as the irrational opposite to the rational, but it is still an abnormal condition of suffering, a pathological state that is incomprehensible to most of the surrounding people. Yuan Mei implicitly deals with extraordinary and invisible powers and popular beliefs in them from this perspective, and his resort to hallucination, deliria, dreams and beliefs is more than a narrative device, for he is well aware that this is the dark zone that is not a usual field of enquiry: the things that human beings try to ignore and forget – death, sickness, desires and passions – that destroy the social-centered Confucian orthodox perception.⁴¹ Extreme cognitive conditions cope with the wounds of the soul and respond to universal problems and questions that humanity has to face: those relating to death, evil, love, mystery and retribution. People look for security in a superior order through the mediation of Daoist and Buddhist monks, magicians with their spells, exorcisms and sacrifices, in order to appease the spirits and the ghosts, or obtain help in life. *Literati* too look for analogous safety through their adherence to the Confucian system.

Strange phenomena, miracles, spirits and invisible powers (*yinwei* 陰威) break into ordinary existence,⁴² making us feel that such human passions and everyday experiences are often interwoven with obscure forces acting in the background of our human reality. Such interactions give a continuous tension to the stories, whose unpredictable unravelling provides the reader with a sense of surprise, horror or humour.⁴³ Most of the abnormal events, spirits, and the dark world of the death that fill the *Zibuyu* represent the absurd, what cannot be understood and accepted, such as sickness, violence and death. Evil pervades the world, as greed and snobbism reign even in the netherworld,⁴⁴ and the difficulty in obtaining justice and avenging oneself is widespread. All strange phenomena are also warnings that reality itself is truly ambiguous; they are metaphors of the dark side of consciousness, glimpses of that absurdity human beings discover when they find themselves before something they cannot understand but are forced to accept. Their

⁴⁰ Remo BODEI, *Le Logiche del delirio. Ragione, affetti, follia*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2000, p. 24-52.

⁴¹ For the concepts of Apollinean and Dionysian, see Friedrich NIETZSCHE's *The Birth of Tragedy*, in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Francis Golffing, New York, Anchor Doubleday, 1956, p.1, 23. when speaking of Confucianism, we should keep in mind that there are various Confucianisms, as various schools have developed in history. For Confucianism here, I mean above all the orthodox doctrine officially adopted by the Qing authorities.

⁴² Cf. Anne GERROTSSEN, "From Demon to Deity. Kang Wang in Thirteenth-Century Jizhou and Beyond", *T'oung Pao*, 90, 1, 2004, p. 15. See also "Die Dämonen im Alltag" in Monika MOTSCH, *Die chinesische Erzählung - Vom Altertum bis zur Neuzeit*, in *Geschichte der chinesischen Literatur*- Bd 3, München, KG Saur, 2003, p. 230-234.

⁴³ On the humorous figures of speech used in *Zibuyu*, see CHENG Jing 程敬 "Yuan Mei 'Zibuyu' de youmo yishu" 袁枚《子不语》的幽默艺术, *Xiusui xuexi* 修碎学习, 2000, 2, 98, 2, 98, p. 47.

⁴⁴ See for instance the story "An Audience With Bodhisattva Dizang" 地藏王接客, 9.

endless desires continually reveal themselves as ultimately an insufficient means to ward off the anguish experienced in the face of death and decadence.⁴⁵ These reversals of perspective and blackouts of consciousness are not only signs of human fragility, but also an indicator that the reality we take for granted can be cracked or shattered at any time. Therefore, madness and loss of consciousness are not to be seen merely as regression, sickness, or impairment of intellectual abilities, and the fear of supernatural powers is not just “superstition”. The obscure forces acting in the background of our human reality are often connected with moral evil, violence, corruption, injustice. It seems that physical evil is in fact attracted by moral evil. However, the connection is not internalised in a personal sense of guilt, or externalised in the fair providence of a higher justice. Even the netherworld and its system of justice are tainted by the vices and flaws of this world. Emblematic is the coexistence of two contrasting subjective states: on the one hand, the wronged soul’s indignation over a wrong committed against it and a sense of justice inspiring its revenge; on the other hand, the fear and tension experienced by the persecuted human being in the effort to avoid such punishment, which is often felt as unjust persecution because he does not feel guilty. This dual portrayal of the victim of injustice who becomes the persecutor of innocents makes the reader question the concepts of responsibility and retribution, which are at the base of the notion of destiny both in personal existence and in history. These situations which seem to present the additional difficulty of the realisation of retribution and justice, raise doubts regarding the possibility of ever achieving a satisfactory understanding of reality. Moreover, they create an epistemological challenge that affects even our ability to reconstruct the past and to make sense of life and death.

Another exploration of the dark recesses of the human subconscious emerges in the erotic stories and games, or sexual haunting of ghosts, where the frequent references to the impurity of sexuality seem to contradict the free and defiant life of the author. The recurrent role of purity in Yuan Mei’s discourse, the horror that often accompany sexuality, in contradiction to his broad and tolerant practice of sexuality, shows his dismay of death as well as the fear of unclean sex and polluting women: death and sickness are manifestations of a kind of hidden evil in everyone, which may rear its ugly head at any time. *Zibuyu* is a seductive invitation to the reader to join the author on an adventure into an unknown land. The adventure, however, is not merely a creation of fantasy, but also a journey into the dangerous recesses of the self, a journey that conveys the “anxiety of existence”.⁴⁶ It is a sort of allegorical reflection on the relative and polyphonic essence of human beings, the multiplicity of selves from a psychological perspective, and a challenge to the traditional biographical and historical perspective of the unreliability of a floating destiny.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Cf. Remo BODEI, 2000, p. 83-86.

⁴⁶ See Marcel SCHNEIDER, *La Littérature fantastique en France*. Paris, Fayard, 1964.

⁴⁷ Besides the above cases, textual analysis has been useful in other thematic researches that cannot be discussed here: 1) the concept of self and personality; 2) notions of purity and impurity; 3) impulses of rage and aggression; 4) bodily sensations. Anthropological studies in Chinese history and culture are progressing well. Now maybe the times are mature for a further step for a comparative program between historians of China and of Europe: groups of experts may select precise questions, in parallel, on China and Europe in a structurally comparable time, or diachronically, for one or more specific themes; the two sides then work separately, at the same time sharing information and problems that may appear during the research. Finally

Référence électronique

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they should compare the results in order to try to uniform data, evaluate them, and to elaborate common conclusions.

Yuan Mei (Éd. avec Yan Beiwen), 2013; *Passion, Romance and Qing. The World of Emotions and States of Mind in Peony Pavilion* (Éd. avec Tian Yuan Tan), 2014, vols. 3.

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Abstract

The article begins with some comments on the comparative method necessary for any research concerning a different culture, owing to the intrinsic ‘anachronism’ and ‘non-equivalence’ of notions and lexicon. In particular, it is explained what the author means for *mental structure* and the use of categories such as ‘emotions’ and collective imagery. It is shortly explained why the analysis of emotions in fact should be extended to the whole emotional process (which includes nonemotion-terms, such as *script*, motivations, manifestations and emotion markers, symbolic expressions), and to other phenomena, such as habits and behaviours, temperaments, psychosomatic reactions, beliefs, visions and dreams. Then it is stressed how the manifestations of emotions are ‘social phenomena’ and thus they reflect the deep strata of the cultural environment, and contain information on such elements. The second part of the article presents some characteristics of the emotional imagery representation on the basis of a long-term project on emotions and imagery in late imperial China. Concrete examples are given on the concept of love and on the normal-abnormal feelings in extreme cognitive and affective conditions.

Résumé

L'article commence par une série d'observations sur la méthode comparative, nécessaire pour toute recherche concernant une culture différente en raison de l'anachronisme et de la non-équivalence intrinsèque de notions et du lexique. En particulier, il est expliqué ce que l'auteur entend par « structure mentale » et par l'utilisation des catégories comme celles d'« émotion » et d'« imaginaire social », ainsi que la raison pour laquelle l'analyse des émotions devrait être étendue à l'ensemble du processus émotionnel (qui comprend aussi des termes non-émotifs, tels que le *script*, les motivations, les manifestations de l'émotion, les expressions symboliques), et à d'autres phénomènes, tels que les habitudes et les comportements, les tempéraments, les réactions psychosomatiques, les croyances, les visions et les rêves. Par la suite, l'on examine les manifestations d'émotions en tant que phénomènes sociaux, et donc la manière dont elles reflètent les couches profondes de l'environnement culturel, et contiennent des informations sur ces éléments. La deuxième partie de l'article présente certaines caractéristiques de la représentation de l'imaginaire émotionnel de la Chine impériale sur la base de notre projet à long terme concernant les émotions. Des exemples concrets

sont donnés sur le concept d'amour et sur les sentiments anormales-normales dans les conditions cognitives et affectives extrêmes.

Entrées d'index

Mots-clés : émotions, culture, Chine, littérature, amour, croyances

Keywords : emotions, culture, China, literature, love, beliefs