Abstract

Lyrical compositions by Qin Guan (1049 - 1100), published under the title of *Huai Hai Ci* -- though limited in quantity -- epitomize the style of the "Subtle and Concise", or the *Wanyue ti*, of lyric-writing at its best. The first of the two words used here -- *wan* -- indicates "tenderness", or "delicateness", descriptive of the characteristics of the emotions delineated in his poems, while the second word *yue* refers to the manner of his approach suggestive of an "economy" of details. The purpose of this academic exercise is to attempt to define these two qualities as a way of exploring the artistic world of the poet as a lyricist.

After a brief introductory chapter, I shall summarize in chapter two the particular personality traits of the poet that may have shaped the writing of some of his lyrics. In the third chapter, I will first examine the nature of the imagery found in his lyrics which I shall characterize as "under-stated" and therefore "classically elegant"; then call attention to the poet's subjective way of looking at the world which, by merging with the things described, creates indirectness and a special kind of melancholy; and finally I shall attempt to probe the nature of his emotions as embedded in his lyrics through analogy, symbolism, and what is generally known in Chinese poetic criticism as the art of *jitu*. 

- i -