



Literature, Sexual Violence, and Female Bonding: How does *Fang Siqu's Paradise of First Love* Explore the Possibility of Women's Writing Through Its Language?

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Abstract: This essay provides a new way of understanding *Fang Siqu's Paradise of First Love* (房思琪的初恋乐园), a novel that recently sparked heated discussion on Chinese social media. Highlighting this piece as an ingenious example of women's writing, this interpretation focuses on the connection between literature and sexual violence: literature manipulated by male discourse serves as a form of seduction and control and undermines female subjectivity, but women's writing can still construct bonds among the female characters and potentially help them to resist the dominant discourse. In this light, Lin's novel can be regarded as a meaningful reflection provided by a Taiwanese woman on the whole East-Asian literary tradition and society from a feminist perspective.

Keywords: Chinese contemporary literature, taiwanese literature, sexual violence, feminist theory, women's writing

1. Introduction

According to Lin Yihan, author of *Fang Siqu's Paradise of First Love* in an interview, the book is about “女孩子爱上了诱奸犯” (“a girl falling in love with a seducer”) (00:00:20-00:00:27). Indeed, the book mainly tells a story about Fang Siqu's illicit affair with her middle-aged teacher and neighbor, Li Guohua. As a beautiful and precocious girl obsessed with literature, Siqu is seduced by Li Guohua, an erudite Chinese teacher, and gets involved in a long-term “relationship” with him until she finally loses her reason.

The book explores a sensitive topic that has scarcely been discussed in Chinese literary history through its characteristic and exquisite language, and hence has drawn much attention from the general public since its publication. In 2017, as the prototype of Fang Siqu who also suffered from sexual violence and mental disorders, Lin's suicide sparked heated discussions about the novel on Chinese social media.

In the academic circles, there is also much research on this book. However, it usually only focuses on one specific perspective or theme. For example, in the essay 反差下的语言及意象譬喻——从修辞角度解读《房思琪的初恋乐园》 (“Language and metaphors on imagery under the contrast — interpreting *Fang Siqu's Paradise of First Love* from a rhetorical perspective”) by Yu Saiqiong at Nanjing Normal University, the author focuses on the book's literary quality to show how the metaphors and images are used (9-10); in another article written by Cai Yiwen, 任何关于性的暴力，都是整个社会一起完成的 (“All Sexual Violence is Done by Society as a whole”), the author mainly talks about the dilemma for females living in the patriarchy from a sociological perspective (241-247). However, they ignore that there is a closer or even inseparable connection between the literary form and the theme of sexual violence in the book. According to Hélène Cixous in “The Laugh of the Medusa”, males repress females through language, or what she calls “discourse,” and the latter must write and speak for themselves and find their own voice (1938-1959). Just as the author questioned in the interview whether “literature is just a kind of smooth talk,” in the book, she emphasizes literature as a representation of male discourse and tries to find a way out (00:08:16-00:08:23). In this paper, I will provide a new interpretation of the novel to explain the affinity between the two significant components in order to better understand this great piece of women's writing.

Firstly, we will pay attention to the role of literature in the book: how literature connects the female characters together, and how it is manipulated by male discourse as a seduction. Then, we will focus on the author's language that portrays Siqu's mental status in chronological order until she finally loses her sanity to further understand the female character's torment and deliverance. Finally, we will examine how women's writing provides an alternative for females in the patriarchal system. Overall, through this new approach, we will see how Lin's novel explores the repression and brutality of the patriarchal system to find more possibilities of women's writing that resists the dominant discourse led by males.

2. Section 1: The role of literature

Fang Siqi's Paradise of First Love, as a ground-breaking example of women's writing, discloses how male discourse subjugates females systematically in a patriarchal society. In the book, the violence of male discourse is mainly presented through the recurring theme of literature. Tracing how literature is represented in this novel, we can see how Siqi's bondings with other female characters are cut off, and how she is seduced, controlled, and finally loses her reason.

To begin with, the most apparent role of literature is on the level of characterization. More specifically, literature allows major characters to know and make connections with each other: Siqi and Yiting are talented students who are obsessed with literature; Xu Yiwen has been a Ph.D. candidate in comparative literature and always dreams about teaching literature in college. The three female characters maintain their friendship through reading and discussing novels together weekly. Moreover, Li Guohua, the seducer, is a well-known Chinese teacher who stands for the authority of literary knowledge.

At the beginning of the book, there is an important turning point in the three main female characters' relationship caused by the interference of Li Guohua. This interruption stands for the start of Li Guohua's invasion of Siqi's newly established literary world, and the first rape scene happens soon after.

In this scene, Siqi and Yiwen go to Yiwen's home after school as usual. They watch a movie together, *To Live*, about the tragic lives of powerless people during the Cultural Revolution. After several scenes, Yiwen starts to cry, as the plot reminds her about suffering domestic violence from her husband and mother-in-law. The sudden emotional outburst affects Siqi and Yiting so that they cannot focus on the movie anymore.

As it is the first time Yiwen has revealed her misery, and she says before playing the movie:

“可不要只旁观他人之痛苦，好吗？” (Lin 50; Don't just watch the suffering of other people, ok?) Yiwen's expression of her innermost pain might be a chance for the three females to form solidarity with each other. However, because of Li Guohua's intrusion, the potential connection does not emerge. Li Guohua rings the bell three times and Yiwen “惊醒” (Lin 51; “suddenly wakes up”) from her crying to open the door:

李老师背着一身的光，只看得见他的头发边沿和衣服的毛絮被灯光照成铂金的轮廓，还有腋下金沙的电风扇风，他的面目被埋在阴影里看不清楚，轮廓茸茸走过来。

With the light from his back and the wind of the electric fan like gold dust, only the edges of Li Guohua's hair and the fluff of his clothes can be seen as a silhouette with a platinum border. His face is buried in the shadows and cannot be seen clearly. He comes over fluffily. (Lin 52, Translation Mine)

Through this dramatic free indirect discourse from Siqi and Yiting's perspective, Li Guohua's appearance is similar to the shadow puppet scene they watch in the movie, and he can be imagined as a great hero from the movie to save the two girls from their embarrassment, a typical male savior narrative. Ironically, Li Guohua is a villain in the story instead of a hero. A strong comparison is constructed between Li Guohua and Xu Yiwen, two literature tutors for the girls, further highlighting Li Guohua as a powerful and dependable teacher. In contrast, the author uses a misogynistic simile to materialize Yiwen's imperfection:

眼泪流下来，就像是伊纹脸上拉开了拉链，让她们看见金玉里的败絮。

With tears streaming down, it is like a zipper opens on Yiwen's face and lets them see the worn batt inside. (Lin 52, Translation Mine)

In the sentence, through the elements of “zipper” and “batt, Yiwen is objectified into a non-human doll, which shows her weakness and powerlessness unconcealed. Interestingly, at this moment, the audience learns that Yiwen suffers from domestic violence in her new family from her husband and mother-in-law. In contrast, because of Li Guohua's break-in, the two girls cannot interpret the meaning behind Yiwen's tear but only feel Yiwen's status as their admired sister — “美丽、坚强、勇敢” (Lin 52; “beautiful, strong and brave”) — is destroyed. Therefore, in the next scene, when Li Guohua proposes to provide composition classes for the two girls, they agree without hesitation.

Finally, the scene ends allegorically, suggesting the fate of Siqi: “后来，刘怡婷一直没有办法把《活着》看完。” (Lin 53; Afterward, Liu Yiting is unable to finish watching *To Live* at all.) In this sentence, the tense of “afterward” refers to years later, after Yiting is aware of the desperation Siqi has experienced. Linking back to the moment, the pausing of the movie stands for the fall of Siqi. In other words, Liu Yiting's inability to finish watching the movie signifies Siqi's cruelly

eliminated life.

After the scene, by teaching Siqi and Yiting, Li Guohua enters the three female characters' relationships as a knowledgeable male who has the right to judge Siqi and Yiting's homework and the first sexual assault happens soon in one of his one-to-one classes with Siqi. Li Guohua, as a veteran seducer, knows precisely how to use his language to seduce and control Siqi. Therefore, by paying attention to the dialogues between Siqi and Li Guohua, especially before and after the sex scenes, we can further explore the unequal power dynamics between them.

In the incipient stage of their sexual relationship, Siqi walks through the rain to go to a hotel with Li Guohua. Before getting in the taxi, Siqi is all wet. In the taxi, Li Guohua talks to Siqi happily:

记得我跟你们讲过的中国人物画历史吧，你现在是曹衣带水，我就是吴带当风。

Remember the history of Chinese figure painting that I told you about before? You are now Cao Yi Dai Shui, and I am Wu Dai Dang Feng. (Lin 65, Translation Mine)

“Cao Yi Dai Shui” and “Wu Dai Dang Feng” are literary expressions used to describe the ways of depicting cloth folds in ancient Chinese figure paintings. The former is used to portray clothes that have just come from water, and the latter is used for clothes in wind is an intriguing use of citation, as it is not only an antithetical couplet but also makes Li Guohua and Fang Siqi as a comparable couple, beautifying Siqi's indecent rain-soaked clothes (Dai Yijun and Huang Kai). As a knowledgeable Chinese teacher that indisputably stands for the male-centric literary tradition, Li Guohua attracts Siqi by the seemingly exalting dialogue. Therefore, Siqi replies to his words “快乐地” (Lin 65; “happily”). However, when Siqi looks ahead, the expression in the driver's eyes is depicted as “钝钝的刀” (Lin 65; “a blunt knife”), endowing Siqi's tone “happily” with an ironic and disconcerting significance. Through the eye of an outsider, the violence and sickness of the unbalanced relationship are partially exposed.

In fact, Siqi is aware that Li Guohua uses his language as a powerful instrument to seduce and control her, as later she writes in her diary: “我已经知道，联想、象征、隐喻，是世界上最危险的东西。” (Lin 76; I already know that associations, symbolism, and metaphors are the most dangerous things in the world.) In Siqi's language system, the basic techniques used in literature are distorted and parceled with precariousness. However, as Li Guohua and Siqi's unbalanced relationship is socially unacceptable and Siqi can't escape from the patriarchal system, Li Guohua's words of high literariness allow her to rationalize and even romanticize their relationship as a comfort: “自尊早已舍弃，如果再不为自己留情，她就真活不下去了。” (Lin 75-76; Self-esteem has long been abandoned. If she doesn't show any mercy for herself, she really can't survive anymore.) Ironically, as a female struggling in the patriarchal system, Siqi is offered by the dominating male discourse both great pain and comfort.

Nevertheless, later in the story, there is a brutal moment of revelation for Siqi, which finally smashes her fantasy about the magnificent love between her and Li Guohua. The scene happens after Siqi and Li Guohua have sex in an apartment:

大起胆子问他，“做的时候你最喜欢我什么？”他只答了四个字：“娇喘微微。”思琪很惊诧。知道是《红楼梦》里形容林黛玉登场的句子。她几乎要哭了，问他：“《红楼梦》对老师来说就是这样吗？”他毫不迟疑：“《红楼梦》《楚辞》《史记》《庄子》，一切对我来说都是这四个字。”

[Siqi] boldly asks him, "What do you like about me the most when we are having sex?" He only answers four words: "Jiao Chuan Wei Wei." Siqi is surprised. She knows it is the sentence in *Dream of the Red Chamber* describing Lin Daiyu's debut. She is nearly crying, and asks him, "Is that what you think about *Dream of the Red Chamber*?" He answers without hesitation: "*Dream of the Red Chamber*, *Songs of the Chu*, *Shi Ji* and *the Book of Chuang Tzu*, everything is the four words to me." (Lin 149, Translation Mine)

Literally, the phrase “Jiao Chuan Wei Wei” is used to describe the delicate and gentle appearance of females, which can be translated as “her breath is soft and faint.” However, in this dialogue, Li Guohua reveals a highly eroticized understanding of this quotation. Moreover, *Dream of the Red Chamber*, *Songs of the Chu*, *Shi Ji*, and *the Book of Chuang Tzu* are all Chinese traditional works of literature and philosophy. However, in Li Guohua's perception, these great productions are all subject to his male gaze, serving his sexual desire. The romanticized image of this illicit affair finally reveals its brutality, and Siqi becomes disillusioned.

As Li Guohua no longer attempts to disguise his desire in the last scene before Siqi loses her mind, the climax at the end

of chapter two directly exposes the hypocrisy of his language system through intertextuality. At the moment, Guohua ties Siqi with rope like a crab to take a humiliating picture. The author cites the five virtues of Confucius as a gentleman from *The Analects* and interprets them as sexual elements:

温良恭俭让。温暖的是体液，良莠的是体力，恭喜的是初血，俭省的是保险套，让步的是人生。

Warmth, Kindness, Courtesy, Temperance, Humility. Warmth is the body fluid. Excellence is physical strength. Virginal blood is to be congratulated, condoms are to be spared, and her life is to be yielded. (Lin 203, Translation Mine)

In fact, this literary quotation appears many times when Li Guohua seduces and rapes other girls, but without the extended sexual comments. Through this series of shocking juxtapositions, the author reveals that Chinese traditional discourse is only used to discipline females and lurks in patriarchal desire and dominance. More ironically, Siqi is the person who actually obeys all the virtues rigorously: warmth, kindness, courtesy, temperance, humility; on the other hand, Li Guohua, as a male who plays the role of a Chinese gentleman, has abandoned them long ago.

3. Section 2: The mind-body problem

Experiencing sexual assaults and alienation from female friends, Fang Siqi incontestably endures both physical and mental suffering. In this section, through paying attention to the author's language that dramatizes the moments in and after the rapes in chronological order, we can see how Siqi's self is gradually destroyed and segregated from her body to better understand the incongruence between the female's mind and body in the patriarchy.

The first significant moment in the novel that highlights Siqi's mind-body problem takes place immediately after Li Guohua's first sexual assault. Deliberately skipping any direct description of the bodily violence, the author focuses instead on Siqi's psychological state under an unusual circumstance:

思琪当天晚上在离家不远的大马路上醒了过来。正下着滂沱大雨，她的制服湿透，薄布料紧抱身体，长头发服了脸颊。站在马路中央，车头灯来回答杖她。可是她不知道自己什么时候出的门，去了哪里，又做了什么……那是房思琪第一次失去片段记忆。

Siqi wakes up that night on a road not far from home. It is raining heavily, and her uniform is drenched. The thin cloth hugs her body, and her long hair covers her cheeks. Standing in the middle of the road, Siqi is flogged by the headlights back and forth. However, she doesn't know when she went out, where she has been, and what she has done…… That is the first time Fang Siqi lost her memory. (Lin 59, Translation Mine)

Notably, at the beginning of this passage, the author briefly shifts from Siqi's mental experience to a typical male-gaze depiction: drenched by the heavy rain, Siqi's body is wrapped in a semi-transparent uniform. As at the moment, Siqi is released from Li Guohua's actual physical aggression, this highly sexualized insertion suggests how the patriarchal judgment is constantly at play. What makes this misogynistic judgment all the more oppressing is Siqi's internalization of it. In the next sentence, the author compares Siqi's experience of being exposed to the car's headlights to an imagined flogging. In ancient China's cultural context, flogging is a public punishment that is usually imposed by the court on a guilty subject. In this sense, the car's headlights, which exemplify the act of gazing, emerge as a symbol of patriarchal discipline. In other words, Siqi's pain does not originate from the violent assault per se, but is largely caused by the societal judgment that deems women who are sexually violated "guilty."

In fact, with the progress of the dominating relationship, Siqi internalizes the patriarchal judgment even deeper as her coherent self is constantly disrupting and becomes unstable with other pathological symptoms besides memory loss and suicide attempts.

Later, Siqi is forced to have sex with Li Guohua in a traditionally decorated hotel. Suddenly, different from the previous scenes that involve a male-gaze perspective, Siqi's perspective shifts:

突然，思琪的视角切换，也突然感觉不到身体，她发现自己站在大红帐子外头，看着老师被压在红帐子下面，而她自己又被压在老师下面。看着自己的肉体哭，她的灵魂也流泪了。

Suddenly, Siqi's perspective switches, and cannot feel her body. She finds herself standing outside the big red canopy,

watching the teacher being pressed under the canopy, and she is pressed under the teacher. Watching her body crying, her soul also sheds tears. (Lin 116, Translation Mine)

In this passage, Siqi provides a special upper perspective through free indirect discourse as both she and Li Guohua are “being pressed.” Through this transformation, the truth of their relationship is exposed: Li Guohua is lightly pressed under the red canopy that stands for joy and romance in Chinese culture; on the other hand, Siqi bears the repression from Li Guohua who brings her both sexual violence and guilt.

If it can be said that the first depiction of Siqi's depersonalization has a male-gaze insertion that insinuates her acceptance of the patriarchal judgment, the scene further expresses her pain with the direct use of “crying” and “tears.” Moreover, as Siqi has thoroughly lost the sovereignty of her own body, there is a clearer detachment between her body and soul. In other words, in order to protect her ego from Li Guohua's invasion, Siqi has to segregate her consciousness from her highly sexualized body.

Finally, at the end of chapter two, Li Guohua ties Siqi with a rope to take humiliating pictures. The pathological separation between Siqi's body and soul happens again and for the last time; she never recovers from it and loses her mind:

“不要，不。”房思琪的呼叫声蜂拥出脏腑，在喉头塞车了。没错，就是这个感觉。就是这个感觉，盯着架上的书，开始看不懂上面的中文字。渐渐听不到老师说的话，只看见口型在拉扯，像怡婷和我从小做的那样，像岩石从泉水间喷出来。

"No, no." Fang Siqi's call rushes out of her organs and has a traffic jam in her throat. That is right, that is how it feels. It is this feeling. Staring at the books on the shelf and being unable to read the Chinese characters on it; Cannot hear what the teacher says and only see the mouth shape pulling, like Yiting and I have done since childhood, like rocks spurting out of the spring water. (Lin 203, Translation Mine)

Ingeniously, in this condition, the third-person narrative is changed into the first-person since “that is right, that is how it feels” as the author uses free indirect discourse to imitate the tone of Siqi and provides two abstract similes: “like Yiting and I have done since childhood” and “like rocks spouting from a spring.” Earlier in the story, the author has mentioned a special way of communication between Siqi and Yiting called “lip-reading.” More explicitly, this is a special way of communication belonging to the two female characters incomprehensible to other people. At that moment, Li Guohua's words are compared to a private language that other people cannot understand. Through this simile, the power of Li Guohua's dominating male discourse is deprived. In other words, he cannot use it to seduce and control Siqi anymore. Then, after rejecting the male discourse, Siqi presents her own language system through a novel analogy: “like rocks spouting from a spring.” Intentionally switching the position of “rocks” and “a spring”, an illogical and grotesque sense is constructed to describe Li Guohua's word, and the male discourse doesn't stand for reason and authority anymore in Siqi's consciousness. However, as the patriarchal language system has deeply affected her when she drags herself out of the system, she loses her language ability as well. The release and derangement tangle and happen at the same time.

After the scene, Siqi is sent to a sanatorium by her family. As a female suffering in a patriarchal society, and finally rejecting it silently, Siqi's only way out seems to be madness and isolation.

4. Sections 3: Constructing female solidarity through writing

In the two former sections, I discussed how the female characters are isolated from each other, and how Siqi's subjectivity is gradually undermined by male discourse. Nevertheless, in *Fang Siqi's Paradise of First Love*, the author still attempts to show potential ways of constructing female bonding under the repressive system, especially in the form of writing. To be more specific, Lin Yihan intends to show the power of women's writing both through its influence on the book's structure and the female characters.

Structurally speaking, the book tells the same story twice in Chapter One and Chapter Two, but in quite different ways. The narrative in Chapter One mostly comes from an incomplete third-person perspective. For this reason, when Yiting first knows about Siqi's affair with Li Guohua, she judges Siqi as disguising and slutty. Then, at the end of Chapter One, when Yiting finds the diary chapter one and realizes that “故事必须重新讲过” (Lin 25; “the story has to be retold”), a transition happens in Chapter Two as it includes free indirect discourse from different perspectives. Through this intentional variation, the author emphasizes that the usual version perceived by the audience is not complete, and always needs an additional female perspective.

In the meantime, although Siqi's diary has a great influence on the plot and marks the significance of the female perspective, the diary itself is not independent and complete, but a production that keeps being edited. To be more specific, Siqi writes the diary with two different colored pens, blue for recording the events and red for making comments. The content in red is more rational and rebellious than that in blue. This writing process shows the audience that, firstly, in the patriarchal system, it is difficult for females to provide a justified evaluation of themselves. Therefore, they have to keep reflecting and doubting; secondly, it is a possible and meaningful way for females to record and renew their thoughts in the form of writing, quoting from Siqi in the book: “书写，就是找回主导权。” (Lin 16; Writing is to find the sovereignty back).

Women's writing is not only meaningful for the writer but also affects its readers deeply: while Siqi sustains her self-consciousness through writing, Yiting, as the first reader of Siqi's diary, drastically changes her attitude toward Siqi's affair with Li Guohua:

怡婷看完了日记，她不是过去的怡婷了。她灵魂的双胞胎在她楼下、在她旁边，被污染，被涂鸦，被当成厨余。日记就像月球从不能看见的背面，她才知道这个世界的烂疮比世界本身还大。她的灵魂双胞胎。

Yiting has finished reading the diary. She is not the Yiting in the past. Her soul twin is downstairs, next to her, been contaminated, scrawled, and treated as leftover. The diary was like the backside of the moon that can never be seen. She finally knows that the sores of the world can be bigger than the world itself. Her soul twin. (Lin 213, Translation Mine)

In this light, through two analogies that compare the diary to “the dark side of the moon” and the whole story into “sores”, the oppression of male discourses and the power of female writing are highlighted. Moreover, with the repeat appearance of “soul twin”, Yiting seems to make a connection with Siqi again. Indeed, in the next paragraph, when Yiting reminisces about the moments she has spent with Siqi, the lip language, as their private mode of communication, is mentioned again:

小时候两家人去赏荷，荷早已凋尽，叶子焦蜷起来，像茶叶萎缩在梗上，一池荷剩一枝枝梗挺着，异常赤裸，你用唇语对我说：荷茎已无擎雨盖，好笨，像人类一样。我一直知道我们与众不同。

Our two families went to see lotus flowers when we were young. The flowers have already withered, and the leaves were scorched upon the stem-like tea leaves. A pond of lotus flowers only left with stems standing upright, unusually naked. You talked to me in lip language: Lotus leaves have withered hence they can not keep off the rain. It's so stupid. Just like a human being. I always know that we are unique. (Lin 214, Translation Mine)

Interestingly, in this passage, Yiting recalls a moment that happened in the past but makes a comment on it now: “It's so stupid. Just like a human being.” Indeed, when they were children years ago, they recited poetry written by other males to depict the world; now, as females who touch the “dark side” of the world, the “unusually naked” flowers are given further meanings and the naive recitation is no longer applicable.

Besides Yiting who recovers her bonding with Siqi, Yiwen, as a female who also reads the diary, becomes a literature tutor again and encourages Yiting to make Siqi's diary a continuous production:

你可以变成思琪，然后，替她活下去，连思琪的那份一起好好地活下去.....怡婷，你可以写一本生气的书，你想想，看到你的书的人是多么幸运，他们不用接触，就可以看到世界的背面。”

You can become Siqi, and then, live for her, live well together with Siqi.....Yiting, you can write an angry book, think how lucky the people who read your book are, they can see the backside of the world without touching it. (Lin 221-222, Translation Mine)

Through Yiwen's words, the intention of creating *Fang Siqi's Paradise of First Love* itself as an “angry book” is revealed. More significantly, it also delivers the readers who “see the backside of the world without touching it” an appealing message to speak out as a sequel to female discourse, as Siqi's diary in the plot mirrors the book itself in reality to some extent.

Through seeing the two remaining female characters' attempt in finding a possible way out, the readers seem to receive an optimistic message from the author. However, at the very end of the novel, neighbors living in the same residential building still hold their unshakeable unity, continuing the typical middle-class way of living. In fact, *Fang Siqi's Paradise*

of *First Love* both starts and ends with a dinner among the neighbors, and the only apparent difference is the absence of Siqi's family and Yiting. At the end of the last chapter, the neighbors attribute Siqi's mental breakdown to her obsession with literature and are as delighted as they have been in the beginning:

每个人高声调笑时舌头一伸一伸像吐钞机，笑出眼泪时的那个晶莹像望进一池金币，金币的倒影映在黑眼珠里。

When everyone laughs loudly, their tongues stretch in and out, like a money dispenser. The sparkliness when they laugh out of tears looks like a pool of gold coins, and the reflection of the gold coins is reflected in the black eyeballs. (Lin 229, Translation Mine)

In this scene, through the vehicles “cash dispenser” and “gold coin”, the author dramatizes the facial expressions of the people to highlight their ignorance and corruption, constructing a sharp and even terrifying contrast to Siqi's circumstance. Moreover, from a more holistic perspective, the description also reveals the author's mild criticism towards the social structure to some extent. As in her imagination, it seems impossible for the privileged group to empathize with the oppressed ones and form solidarity with them at all.

5. Conclusion

One could argue that, as the author herself is part of the middle class, it is practically impossible for her to get rid of the male discourse and fight for all females. Indeed, in *Fang Siqi's Paradise of First Love*, the tone is often dolorous and even suicidal. The ending of the book that reflects the author's perspective on the social environment is pessimistic as well. However, as mentioned in the three sections above, the author still makes many bold attempts in the book to express females' pain in the patriarchy and find a way out.

In this paper, I provide a new way of understanding *Fang Siqi's Paradise of First Love* as an ingenious example of women's writing through constructing the relationship between the literary form and sexual violence. Through this revelation, we can find that the oppression of females in the patriarchal system is not only superficially physical and intense but also omnipresent in the whole culture and language system dominated by males. It is a meaningful reflection provided by a Taiwanese woman on the whole East-Asian literary tradition from a feminist perspective.

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