

Love Anchored in Unique Ways --Translation and Interpretation of Tujia Minority Ballads “Fourth Sister Huang” and “A Seven-inch-long White Copper Pipe”

Yu Xueying^{1, 2, 3}, Xu Zhanghong^{1, 2, *}

¹School of English for International Business, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China

²Institute of Hermeneutics, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China

³School of Foreign Languages and Culture, Guangdong University of Finance, China

Email address:

tracy0109@126.com (Yu Xueying), francisxzh@yahoo.com.cn (Xu Zhanghong)

*Corresponding author

To cite this article:

Yu Xueying, Xu Zhanghong. Love Anchored in Unique Ways --Translation and Interpretation of Tujia Minority Ballads “Fourth Sister Huang” and “A Seven-inch-long White Copper Pipe”. *International Journal of Literature and Arts*. Special Issue: *Translation and Interpretation of 28 Chinese Tujia Minority Ballads*. Vol. 9, No. 6, 2021, pp. 312-319. doi: 10.11648/j.ijla.20210906.19

Received: October 1, 2021; **Accepted:** November 11, 2021; **Published:** November 23, 2021

Abstract: Tujia Minority, a significant ethnic group in Enshi, Hubei province, P. R. China, has created numerous ballads with artistic and cultural connotations. This paper will concentrate on the outstanding representatives of Tujia minority ballads: *Fourth Sister Huang* --a love story between a noble girl and a mountain vendor, and *A Seven-inch-long White Copper Pipe*, which describes an ordinary life scene of a couple. After reviewing the research on the translation of China's minority ballads, this paper translates the two ballads and interprets them from the perspectives of cultural study, exploring their temporal-geographical features, characters' identities, cultural philosophical connotation, Enshi's pipe and tobacco culture and affections between couples. “*Fourth Sister Huang*” reflects the material and spiritual situation in the embryonic stage of the commodity economy. With the provision of relatively abundant commodities, the young people at that time could pursue their true love tactfully as well as boldly. The couple in the “*A Seven-inch-long White Copper Pipe*” expressed their deep love by sharing the pipe, which shows the importance of tobacco and pipe in Tujia people's daily life. Both ballads extol the beauty of love between man and woman and apply the technique of “transmitting emotions by objects”. The stories and characters portrayed in the ballads, as well as their acquaintanceship and expressions, typically represent local customs, historical evolution and traditional Confucian creeds.

Keywords: Translation and Interpretation of Tujia Minority Ballads, Temporal-geographical Background, Identity, Tobacco Culture, Confucianism

1. Introduction

Enshi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture is located at the southwest part of Hubei Province (108°23'-110°38' E, 29°07'-31°24' W), with the land area of 2.4×10^3 km, total population of 3.95 million, of which 28 minorities such as Tujia, Miao and Dong account for 52.6% [6]. As a form of folk songs, minority ballads in this area are regarded to be precious cultural heritage of China.

Folk Songs, which appeared in the primitive society of collective fishing and hunting, are the source of the rhyme style in folk literature and one of the earliest styles of folk

literature. Wu Chao pointed out in “Chinese Folk Songs”: “Chinese folk songs, in general, refer to all the verse works in the people's oral creation. In a narrow sense, they mainly refer to ballads, folk songs, and minor tunes such as short, lyrical verse works, excluding long epics and narrative poems [14].”

Due to various cultural and geographical constraints--inconvenient transportation and information blockade of one mountain after another, Tujia people have no other media to convey their own thoughts. They are used to demonstrating their affection by singing out their feelings and emotions to demonstrate their affection [8]. Enshi minority ballads refer to the short and lyric works which can be sung or chanted in this region. A large numbers of different ballads are

created by the local working people, preserved for their profound contents and aesthetic value. The different forms and contents of love songs, children's songs, laboring lyrics, songs about current politics and conventions all manage to reflect the different aspects of the natives' life. Enshi minority ballads own unique artistic features. There are some local characteristics about the language arts of dialect and word. The Enshi people, residing in Wuling mountain area, also keep an ecological view that values nature and harmony with nature. Colorful folk performances have the function of enlightenment exhortation. As the folk cultural treasure, Enshi minority ballads need to explore the academic study and save the inheritance.

This research, concentrating on "Fourth Sister Huang" and "A Seven-inch-long White Copper Pipe", will translate and interpret the two ballads from the perspective of cultural study.

2. Related Study of the Translation of Chinese Minority Ballads

2.1. Uniqueness of Chinese Minority Ballads

The uniqueness of Chinese minority ballads is self-evident: firstly, they are born in different regions, rooted at diversified regional cultures of China, which boasts a vast territory, varied terrain types, so people's living and production are greatly affected by the different regional features. Secondly, they are produced spontaneously. But they would be refined by people constantly until the final versions are easy to sing and pleasant to hear. Thirdly, they describe people's lives and emotions vividly. Finally, they have multifold functions, such as entertainment, imparting knowledge and conveying feelings.

2.2. Translation of Chinese Minority Ballads

Translation of Chinese minority ballads should serve cultural exchange and transmission, convey cultural information as much as possible to target readers and guide them to appreciate the unique artistic value of Chinese minority ballads. Minority ballads translation is a hybrid subject that explores the special musical literature and demands expertise and professional skills [3]. The specialty of folk song lies in the close connection between music and dialects. Besides, the music is based-on the deep-seated national identity and value, as well as unique regional features. Therefore, the purpose of minority ballads translation rests with translating song's lyrics into other languages, fulfilling all the functions which the source text fulfilled for its original target audience, and finally expecting the same performance effect [9]. The ultimate goals, more specifically, are not only overcoming the differences and obstacles of two language and cultures, but setting the translated lyrics into music, so that the translation should be easy to understand, pleasant to hear and well-received to perform. As a form of musical literature, the translation of minority ballads should adopt general rules, principles and strategies like opera or other musical texts [13]. Moreover, it should accord with rules with musicology, which

is a defining character, identifying it from others. Music would post constraints during the whole translating process and affect the final result. As Gutts put it, "the effectiveness on stage" is a practical necessity, and must be given top priority [7]. Besides, the other specialty of the translation is reproducing the style of original through performance, rather than a reproduction of a "stand-alone" text.

Ballads translation has been developed for many years. Internationally, in order to promote religious reform, Martin Luther (1483-1546) has translated an anthem *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* from Latin to German, which has been honored as "La Marseillaise" of the 16th century by Friedrich Engels. In 1882, Engels once translated and introduced *The Minister of Boumet*, an English folk song, into German, so as to satirize the then-government under Bismarck's control [3].

In China, the minority ballads are mainly translated from the perspective of literature. Among them, four aspects are mainly emphasized, namely, rhetoric and aesthetics, English translation of Chinese minority ballads, reviewing of these translations and their translation strategies. Few researchers focus on other aspects, for instance, the subject orientation, history and present condition and text corpus of folk song translation. So far, six books of the songs translation have been published--*A New Collection of China's Folk Song (I, II)*, which was collected and translated by Nankai University in 1959; *Folk Songs and Dances of Shanxi—Love of the Yellow River's Sons and Daughters*, which was translated and set to the original music by Deng Yingyi in 1989; *Selection of Chinese Folk Songs*, which was singable translations of folk songs made by Bing He in 2003; *Voice from the Northern West, Chinese Folk Songs and Their Translations*, translated by Wang Hongyin in 2009 and 2014 respectively; and *Translation of Selected Folk Songs from Yao Nationality*, which was translated by Yan Jiansheng in 2104 [5].

2.3. Research Gap Identified

Based on the analysis above, we can summarize that there are not many translation studies and monographs especially on Enshi Tujia minority ballads. At the same time, it is still too early to establish an independent subject for minority ballads translation, since it fails to form a rigorous and logical knowledge system and it doesn't have a clear methodology and mature research findings.

3. Translation and Interpretation of Fourth Sister Huang

The ballad "Fourth Sister Huang" is mainly for entertainment in folk activities. The ingenious combination of several forms of music in Jianshi county has instantly turned it into a classic folk love song. The beautiful rhythm, the performance form of singing and dancing, and the flexible use of Tujia characteristic function words have deified the incomparable and unique artistic value of this ballad. It has been sung for more than 150 years and revised many times.

3.1. Translation

Huàngsì Jiě (Fourth Sister Huang) [16].

Chinese version

nán huóláng wóbǎgǔyáowèi
(男) 货郎 我把鼓摇喂

nǚ sījìè wóbǎshòuzhāowèi yàomáisīxiànxiùhébāoluó
(女) 四姐 我把手招喂 要买丝线绣荷包罗

nán niyào de gē dōng xī mawōzhīyō dāoluó
(男) 你要的个东西嘛我知哟道罗

hé āiyōyīéryāéryōnǐ wō yào de gē dōng xī mawō nǐ zhīyō dāoluó
(合) 哎哟依儿呀儿哟你(我)要的个东西嘛我(你)知哟道罗

nán huáng ā sījìè r ā i
(男) 黄啊四姐儿哎

nǚ nǐ hǎnsházima
(女) 你喊啥子嘛

nán wōgěisòngyīgēnsīpàzǐéryā
(男) 我给送一根丝帕子呀

nǚ wōyào nǐ yīgēnsīpàzǐ gānsházima
(女) 我要你一根丝帕子干啥子嘛

nán dàizáimèi è r tóushàngnà
(男) 戴在妹儿头上那

nǚ ò
(女) 哦

nán xínglù yòuhǎokànluó
(男) 行路又好看罗

nǚ shì de ma
(女) 是的嘛

nán zuòzheyǒurénqiāosāi wō de gē è r
(男) 坐着有人瞧哩 我的个娇娇儿

hé yīéryāéryōyāéryōyīéryō zuòzheyǒurénqiāosāi wō de gē è r
(合) 依儿呀儿哟呀儿依儿哟坐着有人瞧哩, 我的个娇娇儿

nán huáng ā sījìè r ā i
(男) 黄啊四姐儿哎

nǚ nǐ hǎnsházima
(女) 你喊啥子嘛

nán wōgěi nǐ sòng yī duì yù zhuō zǐ è r yā
(男) 我给你送一对玉镯子儿呀

nǚ wōyào nǐ yī duì yù zhuō zǐ è r gānsházima
(女) 我要你一对玉镯子儿干啥子嘛

nán dàizáimèi è r shòushàngluó
(男) 戴在妹儿手上罗

nǚ ā
(女) 啊

nán xínglù yòuhǎokàn nà
(男) 行路又好看那

nǚ hǎowā
(女) 好哇

nán zuòzheyǒurénqiāosāi wō de gē è r
(男) 坐着有人瞧哩我的个娇娇儿

hé yīéryāéryōyāéryōyīéryō zuòzheyǒurénqiāosāi wō de gē è r jiāojiāo è r
(合) 依儿呀儿哟呀儿依儿哟坐着有人瞧啥我的个娇娇儿

nán huáng ā sījìè r ā i
(男) 黄啊四姐儿哎

nǚ nǐ hǎnsházima
(女) 你喊啥子嘛

nán wōgěi nǐ sòng yī shuāng sī guāng wǎ zǐ yā
(男) 我给你送一双丝光袜子呀

nǚ wōyào nǐ yī shuāng sī guāng wǎ zǐ è r gānsházima
(女) 我要你一双丝光袜子干啥子嘛

nán chuānzáimèi è r jiǎoshàngnà
(男) 穿在妹儿脚上那

nǚ ò
(女) 哦

nán xínglù yòuhǎokànluó
(男) 行路又好看罗

nǚ yào de ma
(女) 要得嘛

nán zuòzheyǒurénqiāosāi wō de gē è r jiāojiāo è r
(男) 坐着有人瞧哩我的个娇娇儿

hé yīéryāéryōyāéryōyīéryō zuòzheyǒurénqiāosāi wō de gē è r jiāojiāo è r
(合) 依儿呀儿哟呀儿依儿哟坐着有人瞧啥我的个娇娇儿

nǚ āiyōwō de gē lāi
(女) 哎哟我的哥来

English Translation

Man: *Hem*, I, a hill vendor, shaking my rattle

Women: *Hem*, I, Fourth Sister, waving hand for velvet to sew (lo)!

Man: I (ya) know the stuff you would like (lo).

M&W: (ai-yo-yi-er-ya-er-yo) I (you) (ya) know the stuff I (you) owe (lo).

Man: Fourth Sister Huang (ya)

Woman: why crying out my name (ya)

Man: A silk scarf as a gift for you (ya)

Woman: What is the scarf for (ma)?

Man: Be put on your head there (na)

Woman: Oh

Man: It looks good during th' walk (lo)

Women: Really (a)?

Man: Honey, you're pretty when you are sitting there.

M&W:(yi-er-ya-er-yo-ya-er-yi-er-yo) Honey, you're pretty when you are sitting there.

Man: Fourth Sister Huang (ya)

Woman: Why crying out my name (ya)?

Man: A pair of jade bracelets as a gift for you (ya).

Woman: What are jade bracelets for (ma)?

Man: Be put on your wrists (lo)

Woman: Ah

Man: It looks good during th' walk (na)

Woman: Aha!

Man: Honey, you're pretty when you're sitting there

M&W:(yi-er-ya-er-yo-ya-er-yi-er-yo) Honey, you're also pretty when you're sitting there.

Man: Fourth Sister Huang (ya)

Woman: why crying out my name (a)?

Man: A pair of nylon socks as a gift for you (ya).

Woman: What are nylon socks for (ma)?

Man: Be put on your feet (a)

Woman: Oh

Man: It looks good during th' walk (lo).

Woman: *Good! Aha!*

Man: Honey, you are also pretty when you're sitting there.

M&W:(yi-er-ya-er-yo-ya-er-yi-er-yo) Honey, you're also pretty when you're sitting there.

Woman: Ai-yo, my brother (lai)

Chinese version

nán ā i
(男) 哎
nǚ nǐ sòngshàngzhèmeduō ā
(女) 你送上这么多啊
nán dōngxī de gè shǎoxiēshě nǐ bú yào zhè yàng shuō
(男) 东西的个数些舍你不要这样说

English Translation

Man: Ah?

Woman: Too many gifts from you (a)

Man: Gifts are too few, but my mind is never too small.

This song describes a love story between Sister Huang—the fourth daughter of the noble Huang’s family—and a mountain vendor. They fell in love during the days of his peddling, however, they were too shy to confess the love. The vendor had to make excuses to figure out Fourth Sister Huang’s real thoughts and catch her attention. He gave her silk scarf, jade bracelets and nylon socks as presents. At the meantime, her acceptance of those gifts manifested her acceptance of his love.

This ballad has been sung for more than 150 years and originated in Sanli Township, Jianshi County. Later, folk artists combined with the marriage customs of Tujia people and used artistic forms to recreate the story, composing their love story into a song "Vendor’s Song" which was widely sung in the local area. In 1960s, it was adapted into a ballad "Fourth Sister Huang", and after 1980, it was recorded as a tape and distributed nationwide [12].

3.2. Interpretation of Its Temporal -Geographical Background

The inheritance of "Fourth Sister Huang" is concentrated in Sanli Town, Hongyan Town, Gaoping town, and other towns and surrounding areas within the jurisdiction of Jianshi County. Although there is no exact record of the source of "Fourth Sister Huang", according to the intensity of singing and inheritance genealogy, it was originated in Sanliba, Jianshi County [1]. The population of Sanliba Town used to be scattered, and the farmland was separated by mountains and rivers. Therefore, the mountain ballads for recreation and entertainment during labor were highly developed. When local people participated in various "blessing rice banquet"-- a common local social activity, mostly to celebrate the birth of a baby, "Fourth Sister Huang" will be learnt casually and gradually spread. "Fourth Sister Huang" is a folk culture cultivated from the soil of a typical farming society, which has been preserved and passed down from generation to generation in the context of a vast rural culture.

Jianshi County is the county that first came into contact with silk fabrics and has always been the gateway from Enshi to Yichang which is the biggest city adjacent to Enshi in the southwestern part of Hubei province. (please refer to *Figure 1*).

The foggy and humid natural environment made the Tujia people have the habit of wearing headscarves [18]. Due to economic constraints, the texture of the headscarves for most people at that time was cotton fabric. The "silk scarf" in "Fourth Sister Huang" not only protects against wind and cold, but also plays a role in decoration and beautification. In the end of 19th century, the hand-made silk products were scarce and the price was high, so that ordinary people did not dare to ask for extravagance. Therefore, silk fabrics are precious as

gifts for beloved girls. Silver bracelets, compared with other materials, are also rare and precious.

According to the "Jianshi County Chronicles", the shops and inns in Gaoping, Sanli and Hongyan were once prosperous. These three places became preferred markets for merchants from provincial capital Wuhan. In order to speed up capital turnover and maximize profits, the merchants began to sell goods in every possible way as soon as they stepped into Jianshi county. Shaking the rattle, hawking the goods, they went deep into each house to carry out dealings. That scene was a common sight at that time. Therefore, we have motivations to believe that the generation of "Fourth Sister Huang" should be in the middle and late Qing Dynasty and the embryonic period of the commodity economy in Enshi area.



Figure 1. The Location of Jianshi County.

3.3. Interpretation of Characters’ Identities

Mountain vendor

In the era of insufficient transportation and extremely scarce material resources, mountain vendor is the communicator of goods, a medium for internal and external material exchanges and a transmitter of internal and external information. He is the only one who can supplement daily

necessities and realize the local people's spiritual needs of contacting the outside world. Therefore, although the traditional social classes in China in a descending order are "scholar, peasant, artisan and merchant", in fact a mountain vendor enjoyed a very high status among the mountainous residents. Because the "vendor" was so knowledgeable and his arrival represented the arrival of outside "civilization".

Mountain vendor is the symbol of physical strength, courage and insight. To engage in this profession, it is inevitable to travel through mountains and rivers and face robbers and bandits. But wherever the vendor went, those difficult situations may rarely exist. On the contrary, wherever he went, it was as lively and festive as celebrating a festival. Vendor was loved by all kinds of people because he was an important force to maintain the material and spiritual life of the mountain people.

To sum up the above two points, the role of vendor was quite competitive in the "marriage" market at that time, and local girls considered that marrying a vendor would be a cost-effective choice.

Fourth Sister Huang

In the original version of the song, Huang was the fourth and the youngest daughter of the Huang family, 16 years old, cute and smart. Huang as a surname was a local noble family. At this age, she was seeking her prince charming and waiting to get a perfect marriage, so she needed all kinds of outfits to dress up in her boudoir. Therefore, the headscarf, bracelets and socks were her favorites. Even though her family can afford those items for her, she showed strong affection for those presents. Her cheerful and shy response revealed the reason and her inner thoughts---love me, love my dog.

As descendants of Tujia ethnicity, they kept the nature of boldly pursuing the freedom of love and marriage. There are still relics of the love style of "determining love by song" in the Tujia area [11]. "Fourth Sister Huang" is just such an image of a Tujia woman who pursues love, happiness and a happy marriage. Although she was shy on the surface and even said, "too many, too many gifts from you," she hoped in her heart that she would become captivating and a favorite of the vendor. This mentality laid the foundation for the exchange of the two young people.

3.4. Interpretation of the Cultural Philosophical Connotation

The expression of love between men and women

The merchandiser put his affection on things to express his admiration. Fourth Sister Huang was reserved and echoing tactfully. Even if the two love each other, they cannot directly express their love in full view. This reflects the profound influence of the traditional Confucian farming and reading culture on the people in the mountainous area. The creeds of self-denial, courtesy and seeing no evil are reflected with the unfolding of the story and the duet of men and women.

The sense of the times expressed by the objects

"Clothes are more normally used to convey social meaning than to express personal emotion or mood [2]." At a certain period of time, clothes including outfits, on the one hand, are

necessities of personal dress, on the other hand, are the symbols of social beliefs and fashion representation.

As the ballad was in the embryonic stage of the commodity economy, the silk scarf, silver bracelets and silk socks appearing in the folk songs also reflect the blending and collision of traditional farming civilization and the budding industrial civilization. For example, the silver bracelet carries the meaning of the ancient traditional token of love, while the mercerized socks¹ are "industrial" products. Its appearance and popularity show a strong sense of the times and the impact of "industrial products" on absolute farming civilization.

Social Value

The reason why "Fourth Sister Huang" has been sung for so long and loved by everyone is that it is beautiful and passionate. It reflects life, marriage, love, customs and labor conditions of the Tujia people, and shows the richness of the Tujia descendants' imagination, frank and plain expressiveness and unique artistic appeal. In addition to its unique artistic charm, the ballad also has a solid social value. It takes the praise of the love of men and women as the theme, encourages free love. With a clear theme, its artistic style with constant change and development shows strong and vivid social vitality.

3.5. Summary

To sum up, by analyzing the interpretation of identity and cultural philosophy, the folk song shows that the seemingly peaceful appearance of young men and women in Enshi hides the expectation and love for industrial civilization, commercial civilization and beautiful love. This is an expression of the life picture and inner feelings of "openness without losing one's duty, openness with considerable degree".

4. Translation and Interpretation of "A Seven-inch-long White Copper Pipe"

This short ballad, with simple language, depicts a life scene of an ordinary Tujia couple. Even though there are only 35 Chinese characters, it is catchy and full of meaning.

4.1. Translation

Báitóng Yāngǎn Wǔcùn Cháng (A Seven-Inch-Long White Copper Pipe) [16].

Chinese version

báitóngyāngǎn wǔ cùn cháng
白铜烟杆五寸长，
zhuāngānyānlái dī gěi láng
装 杆烟来递给郎。
láng bā sānkǒu dī gěi jiě
郎叭三口递给姐，
jiě bā sānkǒu dī gěi láng
姐叭三口递给郎。
suī shuō yān wèi dào cháng
虽说烟味道长。

English Translation

A white copper pipe, seven
inches long,
with tobacco, handed to you.
Taking three drags, you give
it to me;
puffed thrice, it back to you.
Tobacco poor, love lives
long.

¹ In the original version, it is "silk socks", the existing modified version is "mercerized socks", so the mercerized socks may be made of nylon.

4.2. Interpretation of the Pipe

Chinese tobacco pipe has the similar outward appearance and functions like that in western. The traditional Chinese pipe is illustrated by the picture below:



Figure 2. Chinese Tobacco Pip.

The bag is often filled with shredded tobacco. When one is ready to smoke, he or she takes out some tobacco, then fills up the tobacco pot and lights it.

Tobacco pipes are generally made of bamboo or wood. The material “white copper” in this song may be referred to copper pipe or copper tobacco pot. In the mountainous areas of Enshi, the stuff made of white copper was relatively rare and precious.

Enshi people have produced a wide range of smoking accessories according to the age, occupation, and interest of the smokers. Here are some different utensils in terms of their size and materials.

- 1) Big-pot pipe: made of bamboo pole or horse whip. The tobacco pot of the pipe is large and heavy, about 1 to 3 meters in length. It is mostly used by the elderly and is forbidden by women;
- 2) Pointed cone pipe: made of bamboo and wood, about 1 to 2 meters long, with a special 1 cm sharp cone at the front end of the pipe, which can be used for smoking and as pestle for a rest;
- 3) Long copper pipe: made of copper and bamboo. The pot and filter are made of copper, and the middle is connected by bamboo. It is about 1 meter long and used by elderly women.
- 4) Horse-stick pipe: made of golden bamboo or Arhat bamboo. The pot is inlaid with carved copper skin. It is about 3 cm long and convenient to carry. It is a smoking tool for elderly people and male young adults occasionally.
- 5) Water-holder pipe: usually made of white copper and some are made of bronze or tin. It is divided into four parts: tobacco pot, water holder, tobacco bag and filter. It weighs about 750 grams and looks like a pistol. It is generally used by women and can be used as dowry.

According to the material preserved, the length and the

view of expression, the pipe in this song is most possibly a water-holder pipe.

4.3. Interpretation of Enshi's Tobacco Culture

Tobacco culture is an important component of Enshi's mountain culture, because tobacco has been closely related to the production and life of people of all ethnic groups in Enshi during a long historical process, even with the economic and social development of Enshi today. The blessed natural environment provides natural soil for tobacco planting, and the rich and colorful ethnic culture in the local area prepares a hotbed for the localization and nationalization of tobacco culture [15]. The soil in Enshi is suitable for planting high-quality tobacco leaves. Because of the high percentage of selenium in the soil, the tobacco leaves contain less nicotine. The area of yellow brown soil in Enshi Autonomous Prefecture is widely distributed, accounting for 56.14% of the total area [10].

Being introduced into the Enshi mountain area at the end of the Ming Dynasty, tobacco leaves gradually became an indispensable item in the lives of local people and penetrated into the production and life of the people, forming the unique mountain tobacco culture. First, smoking is a status symbol and people's living habits. When tobacco planting was first introduced to Enshi, smoking became a status symbol and was very popular in the upper class due to its scarcity. In the folk, because smoking tobacco can relieve fatigue and a boring life, it quickly spread among the folks. In Enshi, the break between labor is called “eating rod cigarettes” and “smoking” becomes synonymous with “rest”. Second, tobacco is related to folk customs. In the process of smoking, tobacco is almost integrated into all moments of people's lives in Enshi mountainous area, including religious beliefs, life etiquettes, weddings, funerals and other aspects. The people of all ethnic groups living in Enshi mountainous area worship the gifts of nature and also believe in the tobacco grown on the mountain as a deity. The sacrifice to the god of smoke shows that tobacco has a lofty status in the lives of Tujia mountain people. In other ritual activities of Tujia people, cigarettes have also become indispensable sacrificial articles. Tobacco also penetrates into life etiquette. In Enshi, smoking is a sign of a man's maturity. When a man can smoke, it means that he has grown into an adult and is recognized by the society, so he can marry. Tobacco is inseparable in every aspect of life-- using tobacco as a matchmaker, sending tobacco to blind dates, etc., namely, tobacco has almost become a symbol of life etiquette. Tobacco plays a more important role in the funeral activities of the locals. Burning tobacco and pipes in the burial as the memorial service is more than saving the dead. When the tomb is scanned, the tobacco must be burned to show nostalgia. The relatives and friends who participate in the funeral must be respected and thanked by handing tobacco to them. Third, tobacco is an important medium of communication. The people of all ethnic groups in Enshi have a tradition of warmth and hospitality. For a long time, they have maintained the etiquette of treating guests to smoke and have tea. There goes a saying that “tobacco is the grass of kindness, and one can

look for it after smoking." Historically, the people in the mountains used grass tobacco (leaf tobacco) to treat their guests, and the wealthy people treated their distinguished guests with shredded tobacco. Fourth, the making of smoking utensils has become a folk craft. In Enshi, the trees and bamboo forests gifted by the mountains provide conditions for the creation and inheritance of smoking utensils. Enshi people use their cleverness to create unique manufacturing techniques of smoking utensils. This is mainly manifested in the smoking pipe.

4.4. Interpretation of the Couple's Love

The couple shared the pipe as well as sharing their joys and sorrows together. It is a picture full of simple but deep love. Even though the Chinese version does not contain any explicit expression like "I love you", readers can feel their affection through the action of passing the pipe between them. That is a common and traditional way for Chinese artist, folk or official, to describe emotions between people, especially between couples. Zhu Zhirong has interpreted six features of Chinese art philosophy and the fourth feature "unique way of comprehension accentuated" can be applied to the interpretation of this song. "the subject...might be so much moved by emotions when perceiving an object that man and nature would be united to form a whole, and man's interest in the object and man's emotions merge in the course of life. For the...Chinese the object aroused the interest of the subject who empathized the object and read its own state of mind into it, resulting in two-way communication between the subject and the object in the subject's mind. And in the two-way communication, the subject elevated the object to the realm of the mind, while the object made possible the subject's transcending its own perceptual life so as to acquire intellectual joy [17]." The pipe in this ballad arouse the interest of the couple and they showed their mind by the object.

The production and living conditions in the mountainous area are quite tough in the old days. In this situation, the simple relationship between husband and wife is the basic guarantee for multiplying and overcoming difficulties together. The song also reveals the local people's optimistic and open-minded attitude and spirit towards life, which is the epitome of the life attitude of ordinary Chinese people with the influence of traditional culture. Li Zehou believes that compared with the "guilt culture" in the West, Chinese culture can be called "music culture". "From ancient times to today, from the upper-class elite to the lower-class people, from erotic pictures to god of longevities, from toasting etiquette to playing the finger game in the 'wine culture', from chatting intimately to the 'tea culture', from food, clothing, housing and transportation to sex, health, longevity, and entertainment, all show that Chinese culture's emotional noumenon feature for pursuing happiness from celebrating birthdays, happy lives, affirming life and daily survival [4]." Although this statement is somewhat general, it also reflects the essence of Confucian culture--pursuing harmony, focusing on people and life, striving to improve the spiritual realm of life and seeking the

most pleasant side of the spirit.

4.5. Summary

The couple in this ballad may be spending leisure time after dinner in their own yard, or having a nap in the field after hard work. But no matter what the situation is, the ballad, in just a few words, using the "pipe" -- an object that represents the unique customs of Tujia people, portrays a leisurely and tranquil picture of Tujia's daily life. Through the ordinary action of "passing and sharing the pipe", the simple and tacit understanding of husband and wife is depicted. This folk song extols the quiet and peaceful life of Tujia people, their undesirable attitude towards life and their loving and harmonious life. The longing and love for this kind of life are expressed between the lines. The content that seems plain to read contains warm and touching power. It is this kind of love and strength that keeps this land alive no matter how harsh it goes through.

5. Conclusion

The two minority ballads are consistent in many respects. First of all, their themes are both related to love, which is also one of the important and everlasting themes of Enshi Tujia ballads for a long time. Second, the writing technique for both of them is the typical method of "transmitting emotions with objects" which reflects the implicit and introverted traditional character of the Chinese. Third, the content of the two minority ballads is more than love of man and woman, but with the help of clue of "love" to show the customs and life attitude of the Tujia ethnicity.

However, there are still many limitations which need to be gradually resolved in future research. First, this study does not focus on the interpretation and research of the local artistic methods applied in the two ballads which is also of great significance for understanding the historical and cultural value of minority ballads. Second, there is no specific synchronic research on the two ballads. Most of the folk songs adopt love as the subject matter, so a comparative study with other representative love ballads can better summarize the translation and appreciation methods of this type of minority ballads.

References

- [1] Chen Yujing. (2003) A General Comment on Cultural Significance of Folk Activity "Sister Huangsi" Phenomenon. *Journal of Hubei Institute for Nationalities (philosophy and social science)*, 2 (21), 28.
- [2] Fisk, John. (1989) *Understanding Popular Culture*. Routledge, 2-4.
- [3] Gou Bin. (2009) On the Subject Orientation, Historical Status and Strategies of Translation of Folk Songs. *Journal of Xi'an Conservatory of Music*, 4 (28), 68-69.
- [4] Li Zehou. (2008) *Practical Rationality and Music Culture*. Beijing SDX Joint Publishing Company, 29-33, 104-106.

- [5] Liang Gaoyan. (2016) On the Three Principles of English Translation of Ancient and Modern Folk Songs. *Explorations in Music*, (02), 136.
- [6] Liu Huazhong., Wang Baiquan. (2006) Preliminary research on the mechanism of landslide disaster in Enshi Autonomous Prefecture. *Journal of Anhui Agriculture Science*, (34), 2233-2234.
- [7] Low, P. (2005) The Pentathlon Approach to Translation Songs [A]. *Song and Significance: Virtues and Vices of Vocal Translation [C]*. D. Gorlee. (Ed.). Amsterdam: Rodopi B. V: 205-212.
- [8] Tan Defu., Yan Fengjiang., Rong Xianxiang. (2009) *Appreciation of Jianshi Folk Songs*. Hubei People's Publishing House. 219-225.
- [9] Tan Zaixi. (2004) *A Brief History of Translation in the West*. Beijing: The Commercial Press, 15-18, 49-55.
- [10] *The Compilation Committee of Local Chronicles of Enshi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture, Hubei: "Enshi Prefecture Chronicles"*. (1998) Hubei People's Publishing House. 85.
- [11] Tian Maochun. (2008) The Origin, Handing-down and Protection of the Folklore "Sister Huang". *Journal of Hubei University for Nationalities (philosophy and social science)*, No. 5, Vol 26, 55-56.
- [12] Wang Yanni. (2008) Cultural and folkloric connotations in folk song "Sister Huang". *Journal of Hubei University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, 5 (26), 59.
- [13] Wang Hongyin. (2014) *Chinese Folk Songs and Their English Translation*. Beijing: Commercial Press, 65-78, 82-84.
- [14] Wu Chao. (1989) *Chinese Folk Songs*. Hangzhou Education Press, 1.
- [15] Xiao Zhu. (2017) On the Features of Enshi's Tobacco Culture. *Three Gorges Forum*, (06), 11-13.
- [16] Xu Yuancong. (2007) *300 Tang Poems (Chinese-English)*. China Translation & Publishing Corporation, 15-27, 46-52.
- [17] Zhu Zhirong. (2021) *Philosophy of Chinese Art*. Chen Kaiju (trans). Routledge, 4-5.
- [18] Zou Tan. (2018). *A Study on Tujia Folk Songs of Jianshi County, Enshi District of Hubei Province*. [D]. Lanzhou University, 35-38.