

# History as Leisure Reading for Ming-Qing Women Poets

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## Leisure and Leisure Reading

In this paper, I present some first person narrations written by Ming-Qing women poets who occasionally treated history as their leisure reading. In line with another project that I am currently undertaking to rediscover the works of female historians in imperial China, I have been searching for women-authored books, prose, and poems on historical themes.<sup>1</sup> It has come to my attention that although some women poets commented on history in very serious tones, similar to those of most male writers, others chose to deliver their remarks in a more relaxed manner. Some women poets explained to readers that they were composing verses on historical themes when they had spare time, when they felt like it, or whenever it pleased them. Such reading behavior is very close to our present understanding of leisure reading. Hence, we may argue that among the thousands of women poets who lived in the era governed by China's last two dynasties, some of them enjoyed the privilege of picking up history as leisure reading.

Leisure is far from being a modern concept. There are a myriad of studies on leisure and a wide range of works on the origins of the term "leisure" in ancient cultures, such as those of Greece and Rome.<sup>2</sup> Other studies have focused on the definitions and evolution of leisure,<sup>3</sup> its social history,<sup>4</sup> the philosophy of leisure,<sup>5</sup> the theory of the leisure class,<sup>6</sup> the new politics of leisure,<sup>7</sup> the humanistic view as opposed to the quantitative conceptualization of leisure,<sup>8</sup> or the various scholarly interpretations of leisure culture in the twentieth century.<sup>9</sup>

It must be pointed out that the concept of leisure appeared very early in Chinese history. The characters *xian* 閒/閑 (both the original version with *yue* 月 inside *men* 門 and the derivative with *mu* 木 inside *men*), already existed in the earliest comprehensive dictionary of Chinese characters, the *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字.<sup>10</sup> *Xian* was clearly defined as unoccupied or free time. Throughout history, Chinese people have enjoyed their leisure time with a variety of entertaining activities. Recent studies have addressed many dimensions of this subject. The history of leisure culture (labeled as *xiuxian wenhua* 休閒文化, *xianqing wenhua* 閑情文化, or *youyi wenhua* 遊藝文

化, and so on) has developed quickly as a field of study and gained much scholarly attention.<sup>11</sup>

However, among the various current works concerning Chinese leisure culture in the past, none have suggested that reading history could be treated as a leisure activity in traditional society. It is often believed that the literati spent much of their leisure time on *qin qi shu hua* 琴棋書畫 (zither, chess, calligraphy, and painting), whereas people of different classes entertained themselves with a variety of performing arts, games, sports activities, and folk amusements. The reading of history as a leisure activity has never been mentioned in these studies. Of course, it is not at all difficult to understand this omission. History is a mainstream discipline in conventional scholarship. According to the *sibu* 四部 (four parts), the traditional four-fold division of books that includes *jing* 經 (classics), *shi* 史 (histories), *zi* 子 (disciplines), and *ji* 集 (belles-lettres), history was ranked second, or just subordinate to the classics.<sup>12</sup> History was supposed to be studied seriously and industriously by men who wished to pass the civil examination and take office, or to lead a scholarly life.

So, could history be studied in a leisurely mood? Nowadays, we understand leisure reading as voluntary reading, spare time reading, and something that involves personal choice.<sup>13</sup> In the past, when history was by default incorporated into the civil examination curriculum, history was simply part of formal education, no matter whether individual men learned it at home, with private tutors, or at school. However, women could not participate in examinations and as such could not become scholar-officials. Does this mean that they showed no interest in history, or that they never studied history?

I would say, according to my observations so far, that many Ming-Qing women poets studied history to some extent. Many of them touched on historical themes in their works, and some of them directly stated that they regarded history as their leisure reading.

### Did Ming-Qing Women Poets Study History?

Now I will briefly explain why my investigation into this kind of reading behavior among women poets is focused on the Ming-Qing era.

The Ming-Qing period is an important era as far as women's publications in Chinese history is concerned. Women in the Ming and Qing, especially in the Qing, surpassed their counterparts of previous dynasties both in productivity and in the numbers of renowned women writers. A quick statistical measure of this development can be seen in Hu Wenkai's 胡文楷 (1901-1988) catalogue, in which Ming women writers occupy 133 pages and Qing women occupy 615 pages, whereas women in the pre-Ming period occupy only seventy-eight pages altogether.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, Kang-i Sun

Chang points out that there was a “sudden increase” in women’s publications from the late Ming onwards. She also informs us that during the late imperial period, China was the country that produced the largest number of women writers.<sup>15</sup> Of course, this development had something to do with the flourishing publishing industry and the advanced printing technology of the period. Still, women clearly took increased initiative, and the volume of writings by female authors was enormous. We have many reasons to believe that these authors did not just touch on trivial matters and personal sentiments, as Hu Shih 胡適 (1891-1962) had inappropriately commented.<sup>16</sup>

With the rediscovery of thousands of anthologies and collected works produced by women over the past few centuries, we are able to contemplate the wide range of themes covered therein, including the topic of history. The impressive collections of women’s works include multi-authored anthologies (*zongji* 總集) and single-authored collected works (*bieji* 別集).<sup>17</sup> A user-friendly website of Ming-Qing women’s works, *Ming Qing Women’s Writings*, has been wonderfully helpful in spreading the knowledge of women’s writing.<sup>18</sup> Also, it is possible to locate additional works by women in other non-gender-specific collections, such as the voluminous *Qingdai shiwenji huibian* 清代詩文集彙編 and the *Beijing shifan daxue tushuguan cang xijian Qingren bieji congkan* 北京師範大學圖書館藏稀見清人別集叢刊.<sup>19</sup> Both of these collections contain a significant number of women’s works. Hence, we may say that the Ming-Qing period, by virtue of its vast quantity of women’s works, provides an indication of the degree to which women might have studied and written about history. Moreover, Ming-Qing women have received increasing attention from scholars over the past two or three decades. A large group of scholars at the academic frontiers of many disciplines have produced numerous influential works on Ming-Qing women.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, due to the richness of sources available, my investigation of Chinese women’s interest in history will focus on the Ming-Qing period.

It is also worth noting that a great many biographical materials of Ming-Qing women writers have survived. We can infer from the narrations in these works that in those days, it was quite fashionable to describe learned ladies as knowledgeable in history. To have studied history was commonly viewed as a significant accomplishment for women. This attitude can be observed in many biographies of women writers, in anthologies, collected works, and in some works on literary criticism. There are many examples of women being described as well-learned in history, in which they were often referred to with fancy labels, such as *boshe jingshi* 博涉經史,<sup>21</sup> *botong jingshi* 博通經史,<sup>22</sup> *xianxi jingshi* 嫻習經史,<sup>23</sup> *yougong shushi* 幼攻書史,<sup>24</sup> *yantong wenshi* 淹通文史,<sup>25</sup> *anxiao shushi* 諳曉書

史,<sup>26</sup> *xingdan shushi* 性耽書史,<sup>27</sup> *jing shishi* 精史事,<sup>28</sup> *you jing shixue* 尤精史學,<sup>29</sup> *hao xinsi yu tushi* 耗心思於圖史,<sup>30</sup> and *zhi jingshi yu guita zhizhong* 治經史於閨闈之中.<sup>31</sup>

Of course these flowery words may have sometimes conveyed unjustified claims. We do not know the breadth or depth of historical knowledge that individual women poets might have possessed. However, it is interesting to note that in so many biographical materials of Ming-Qing women poets, their interest and/or knowledge in history has been highlighted.

In a poem mourning his wife, the husband of the female poet Zhou Shuying 周淑英 (Qing) remarks that his wife “often studied history while weaving in the evening” 絡緯聲淒讀史燈.<sup>32</sup> In a funeral essay the Ming scholar Yang Ji 楊基 (ca.1334-ca.1383) describes the lady née Zhao 趙 as having studied history and did weaving in her inner chamber during late evenings (讀史青閨夜, 治絲錦帳春).<sup>33</sup> All these references suggest that it was not rare for women of the literate class to study history in late imperial society.

Sometimes it is possible to locate first person narration about studying history. For instance, in her work “Reading History” 讀史, Wang Men 王璫 (1796-1829) indicates her gender in the first line and then thanks her father for instructing her in many subjects since her childhood, including history. She tries to be humorous by saying that she would laugh at herself for being so serious in studying, despite being a girl. However, she confirms that she was born thirsting for knowledge even though she says that she is not capable of conducting serious inquiries.<sup>34</sup> This poem is only one of the many pieces authored by women that indicate their personal interests in studying history.

As recent studies have shown, many literate mothers in the Ming-Qing period were heavily involved in educating their children. It seems reasonable to argue that to teach their children, mothers needed historical knowledge. A famous poem by the early Qing official Xie Daocheng 謝道承 (1691-1741), “Remembering My Mother Urging Me to Study” 憶母勸學詩, vividly recalls the author’s mother asking him questions on history.<sup>35</sup> There is an excellent translation of this poem by Susan Mann, rendered in her *Precious Records*:

“Son, come here.	兒來前
How many years has it been since Yao?	自堯至今凡幾年
Son, you must remember.	兒強記
From Yao to the present, how many emperors	自堯至今凡幾帝
have reigned?”	
As a boy, whenever I showed the slightest	兒時應對稍逡巡
hesitation in my reply,	

my mother's face changed color and flared up in anger:	母顏變色旋怒嗔
"To spread out a book with a humble heart, this is a student's responsibility;	陳篋遜志學人責
In studying the ancient ways, are you no better than a woman?" <sup>36</sup>	稽古胡不如婦人

Doubtless, the mother knew the answers to her questions on the ancient sage-emperor Yao. Otherwise how could she ask her son? There is also a record that Xie's mother questioned him about historical matters every day and would scold him if he could not provide fine answers to her questions.<sup>37</sup> Mothers studied history themselves and told historical stories to their children. Of course, they expected their sons to become much more learned than themselves. Therefore, Xie's mother scolded her son for being "no better than a woman" in this sense.

### Poems on Historical Themes Written by Ming-Qing Women Poets

As Ming-Qing women were not indifferent to historical scholarship, some of them had joined the ranks of historians and published books in a variety of genres.<sup>38</sup> Some of these books echoed mainstream views, and others delivered distinctly female perspectives and insights. However, historical works by women in Ming-Qing China were not necessarily made in the form of published books. Women wrote limited essays on historical matters, such as *shilun* 史論 (treatise or discourse on history), *xu* 序 (prefaces), and *shu* 書 (letters). They also composed many *yongshi shi* 詠史詩 (poems on history or historical themes).

Ever since a classic article on *yongshi* poetry was published by Zhang Zhenglang 張政烺 (1912-2005) in 1948, *yongshi* poems have received considerable attention from scholars in Chinese literature.<sup>39</sup> Actually, *yongshi* poetry is a broad genre that covers several subgenres such as *yonggu* 詠古 (poems on the past), *huaigu* 懷古 (meditating on the past), *yueshi* 閱史 (reading history), *langu* 覽古 (glancing over historical places), or *lanshi* 覽史 (glancing at history). Although some scholars treat these subgenres as different categories, in their comprehensive study, *Gudai yongshi shi tonglun* 古代詠史詩通論, Zhao Wangqin 趙望秦 and Zhang Huanling 張煥玲 place them all under *yongshi shi*.<sup>40</sup>

Regarding the content of *yongshi* poetry, a previous study states that the majority of such works are comments on individual historical personages or events. Works in this category far exceed the quantity of works devoted to history or historiography in general.<sup>41</sup> Another study classifies poems in the *yongshi shi* genre into four categories: poems narrating history, quoting history, dramatizing history, and criticizing history.<sup>42</sup>

Apart from individual *yongshi shi* entries, a number of single-authored collections of *yongshi* poetry also survive. A good example is the collection of eight *juan* of *yongshi* poems by the Qing writer Xie Qikun 謝啟昆 (1737-1802). From its table of contents we can learn that all the poems in this collection have individual historical figures as their subjects.<sup>43</sup> Another example is *Jiyixuan yongshi shi* 集義軒詠史詩 by Luo Chunyan 羅惇衍 (1814-1874), a much larger collection of sixty *juan* that also focuses on historical personages.<sup>44</sup> This is the most common type of *yongshi* poetry that we encounter. There are a host of studies on *yongshi* poetry, plus a catalogue of *yongshi* poetry collections published during the Ming and Qing dynasties.<sup>45</sup>

Gang Xu's 徐鋼 study, "The Past is Eternal," offers some important insights. The author discusses the traditional sense of "Chinese Pan-historicism," implying that history lives in the minds of most intellectuals. He argues that there is a deep-rooted attitude towards history in Chinese culture and that this "extraordinarily strong sense of history" has no parallel in any other culture in the world. Intellectuals, he says, "frequently think about history," "think in history," and "inescapably live in history." No matter what career roles they play, they study history and use the lens of history for all sorts of intellectual inquiries. Gang Xu concludes that the popularity of *yongshi* poetry in China has something to do with this "Pan-historicism."<sup>46</sup> Gang Xu's study is also relevant to our discussion of women poets' interest in history. We can simply ask, given the prevailing "Pan-historicism," could women fail to share in this tradition if they wished to "anchor" themselves securely in the elite culture, as suggested by Susan Mann in her *Precious Records*?<sup>47</sup>

The truth is that women scholars and poets did not isolate themselves from this major tradition. They wrote plenty of *yongshi* poems as well. A quick search via the *Ming Qing Women's Writings* website reveals many titles of women-authored *yongshi* poems, such as "Reading History" 讀史, "On History" 詠史, "Miscellaneous Poems on History" 讀史雜詠, "Reading History: Composed at Random" 讀史偶成, "Poems Discussing Antiquity: Kept by Chance" 論古偶存, "On History of the Jin" 詠晉史, "Reading the History of the Five Dynasties" 讀五代史, "Miscellaneous Poems on Song History" 宋史雜詠, and numerous others.<sup>48</sup>

Unfortunately, but somewhat understandably, the *yongshi* poems authored by women are rarely included in existing anthologies of this genre; some include no entries by women at all,<sup>49</sup> and others only a few.<sup>50</sup> However, in a dictionary of Chinese women's poetic writings published in 1992, the editors were able to include a total of eighty-two entries on the theme of *yonggu shuhuai* 詠古抒懷 (writing a poem on past history to express one's feelings), which was one of the nine themes in this work.<sup>51</sup>

A work of miscellaneous notes from the Ming period did introduce the *yongshi* poems of the famous Song poetess Zhu Shuzhen 朱淑真 (ca.1135-ca.1180).<sup>52</sup> This, however, is a rare example of attention paid to women-authored *yongshi* poems in the past. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that in the recent study cited above, *Gudai yongshi shi tonglun*, the authors give some attention to *yongshi* poems by women poets. They point out that the writing of *yongshi* poems by women came to a height in the Qing dynasty and that these writings illustrate the uniqueness of female perspectives.<sup>53</sup> A monograph on Qing women's literature, *Qingdai guige wenxue yanjiu* 清代閨閣文學研究, also devotes a short section on women who offered alternative views on history in their poems.<sup>54</sup> Such instances indicate awareness that writing on historical matters is certainly one of the themes contained in women's writings.

Moreover, we should not forget a point made earlier by Susan Mann, in *Precious Records*, that women's poetry can be viewed as women's history.<sup>55</sup> Women's voices preserved in poetry have much to offer, including their thoughts, their wisdom, and their views of the world and of history. We should also bear in mind Grace Fong's advocacy for rethinking women's writings as forms of cultural practice. Clearly, an investigation into the poems on historical themes delivered by women can also echo the "cultural turn" in literary studies.<sup>56</sup>

There are a myriad of interesting and even ambitious arguments contained in the historical-themed poems written by Ming-Qing women. Their arguments offer women-oriented and family-centered perspectives, apply women's knowledge to the fields of food and medicine, and affirm women's agency as interpreters of history. I do not have time to go into all of their arguments in this paper but will focus on explaining how some women poets have treated history as leisure reading. I begin with an overview of the concept of leisure in the Chinese poetic tradition. Then I discuss the representation of history as leisure reading, as seen in poetry written by both men and women.

### The Concept of *Xian* 閒/閑 in the Chinese Poetic Tradition

When considering the concept of *xian* in the Chinese poetic tradition, the genre of *xianshi shi* 閒適詩 (poems of leisure and comfort, casual poems) comes easily to mind. The great poet Bo Juyi 白居易 (772-846) is believed to have advocated *xianshi shi*, and he personally composed hundreds of them.<sup>57</sup> Actually, before Bo Juyi coined the term for this particular genre, various writers had already produced a considerable quantity of poems that reflect leisurely lives and moods. After Bo Juyi's promotion of *xianshi shi*, works in this genre continued to grow in quantity and popularity. Therefore, in compiling a collection of *xianshi shi* from

imperial China, the editor Kang Ping 康萍 included a great variety of poems written in various periods. The famous line in one of Tao Yuanming's 陶淵明 (365-427) poems, "Plucking Chrysanthemums by the Eastern Hedge" 采菊東籬下, has been selected to represent the general theme of this entire collection of *xianshi shi*.<sup>58</sup>

Bo Juyi has left us hundreds of *xianshi shi* in his collected writings. There are scores of titles containing the character *xian*. For example, he adds the character *xian* in naming his daily activities, such as sitting (*xianzuo* 閑坐), lying down (*xianwo* 閑臥), sleeping (*xianmian* 閑眠), living (*xianju* 閑居), reciting (*xianyin* 閑吟), or traveling (*xianyou* 閑遊). Obviously, Bo Juyi is particularly fond of using the character *xian*. However, I am not quite satisfied with the common translation of *xian* as "idle."<sup>59</sup> Although Howard Levy also translates *xian* as idle, I am quite pleased with his translation of *xianshi shi* as "poems of quiet pleasure."<sup>60</sup> In fact, in his letter to Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779-831), Bo Juyi offers a classification of his poems in which the second category, *xianshi shi* comes after his didactic poems (*fengyu shi* 諷諭詩).<sup>61</sup> As Levy explains, Bo "states that the poems of quiet pleasure were composed under a variety of circumstances: when he withdrew from public life and lived alone, when he lived quietly under the pretext of illness, content and tranquil, and when he cultivated his temperament."<sup>62</sup> Therefore, Bo Juyi's reading of *xian* should be seen in a more positive light. Words such as "idle," "unoccupied," or "free" simply fail to convey all the connotations of *xian*. I am very happy to have located another translation of *xian* as "leisure," provided by Wendy Swartz.<sup>63</sup> Bo Juyi was indeed very much committed to using the concept of *xian* (leisure) in his poems and made use of a number of synonyms for *xian* and *shi* (fitting, comfortable), as previous studies have already pointed out.<sup>64</sup> One study even shows that Bo Juyi's employment of the concept *xian* was not confined to the category of *xianshi shi* but was also applied to his other poems. Bo mentioned *xian* a total of 684 times in his poems, and his advocacy of *xian* made him unique in the history of Chinese poetic literature.<sup>65</sup> However, after Bo Juyi, the poets of subsequent generations have continued to pursue this expression of leisurely living and thinking. These artists have considered the enjoyment of leisure as something positive and healthy, and this sentiment is widely accepted and even celebrated in traditional literati culture. The flourishing of *xianshi shi* testifies to this attitude.

### Representations of History as Leisure Reading in Poetry Written by Male Writers

Could history serve as leisure reading for men? Did male writers in the past ever voluntarily choose to study history in their leisure time? In addition to



studying history for scholarly and professional purposes, did men enjoy the pleasure of reading history as a leisure activity?

Intellectuals were expected to study seriously and gain mastery in the knowledge of history. The ancient classic *Chunqiu* 春秋 (Spring and autumn annals) is generally believed to be the first historical work, and this text carries extremely serious moral messages and lessons. As Mencius explains,

The *Spring and Autumn Annals* are concerned with the affairs of the Son of Heaven, and thus Confucius said, "It is by the *Spring and Autumn Annals* alone that I will be known, and for them alone that I will be condemned."<sup>66</sup>

This forceful and authoritative view on the significance of the *Chunqiu* leads us to assume that history is meant to be studied with great earnestness.

The grand historian, Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145 B.C.E. or 135 B.C.E. – 87 B.C.E.), describes his ambition of writing *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the historian) in his letter to Ren An 任安 as follows:

In it I also wanted to fully explore the interaction between Heaven and Man, and to show the continuity of transformations of past and present. It will become an independent discourse that is entirely my own.<sup>67</sup>

Throughout history, historians have elaborated on the purpose and significance of studying past events. For example, Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661-721) claims that a well-qualified historian should simultaneously possess *cai* 才 (skill), *xue* 學 (learning), and *shi* 識 (insight), and adds that the achievement of such balance is far from easy. Therefore, Liu states the world does not have many good historians.<sup>68</sup> Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824) also makes the sobering observation that many historians have suffered misfortune due to their learning.<sup>69</sup>

Other famous thinkers such as Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602), Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619-1692), or Dai Mingshi 戴名世 (1653-1713), all tried to establish the importance of history, either claiming that history holds an equal status with the classics (*jing*) or granting historians a vital role in upholding morality, and condemning evil deeds.<sup>70</sup> Another widely circulated saying by Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1610-1695) also emphasizes the necessity for scholars to study both the classics and history.<sup>71</sup> It is interesting to note the startling title of an historical work published in the early Qing era: *Jushi dashu* 懼史大書. The word *ju* (to fear) echoes Mencius's reading of the *Chunqiu* and suggests the author's worry for the chaotic

political situation of his time. In a preface to this book, Yang Yongjian 楊雍建 (1627-1704) lays down the basic requirements for historians: skill, learning, insight (which were mentioned by Liu Zhiji), plus *xinshu* 心術. He argues that without proper *xinshu*, one is unqualified for writing on history.<sup>72</sup> What is *xinshu*? Another famous mid-Qing historian Zhang Xuecheng 章學誠 (1738-1801), also upholds the importance of *xinshu*. He elaborates on insight, literary skill, and learning as basic requirements for historians, and then he goes on to explain the chief virtue of an historian (*shide* 史德). He writes:

What is Virtue? It is the way an author's heart-mind works.... Scholars of literary history vie with each other in talking about "skill," "learning," and "insight," and yet they do not know how to discern the way their heart-minds work (*xinshu*), which would enable them to discuss the Virtue of an historian. Is this not sad indeed?<sup>73</sup>

Judging from these influential and serious pronouncements on history, it may be difficult to imagine that writers in the past would consider using their leisure time for reading history.

Nevertheless, male writers authored a large number of *yongshi* poems. Also, there are a large group of titles concerning individual historical personages as their subject matter. The most common titles for *yongshi* poems include "Stirred by Feelings When Reading History" 讀史有感, "Freely Inscribed when Reading History" 讀史漫題, "Moved by Feelings When Reading History" 讀史感懷, "Mixed Feelings from Reading History" 讀史雜感, "Stirred by Interest When Reading History" 讀史感興, "Composed When Reading History" 讀史偶作, "Reading History: Composed at Random" 讀史偶成, "Narrated Casually When Reading History" 讀史偶述, "Casual Poems on Reading History" 讀史偶詠, and "Casually Written When Reading History" 讀史偶書. These titles indicate or imply that the authors are giving casual reflections on history in their poems. The titles themselves do not suggest that the authors are in a leisurely mood, but it would be wrong to say that male writers of the past had never conveyed their opinions on historical matters in a relaxed or leisurely manner. The following examples would help to illustrate this.

The term *xizuo* 戲作, which means making remarks in a playful manner, can be found in poems on historical subjects as early as the Song dynasty, such as the poem "Composed Playfully on Reading History" 讀史戲作 by Zhao Dingchen 趙鼎臣 (1068-?).<sup>74</sup> The poet labels this composition as a *xizuo* because it is not written with serious concern for correct references to available historical sources. He twists the story of Sima

Xiangru 司馬相如 (ca.179 B.C.E. – ca.118 B.C.E.), by overlooking the corrupt conduct of this official and simply sighing that such a talented writer was downgraded to end his career as a caretaker for the tomb of Han Wendi 漢文帝 (202 B.C.E. – 151 B.C.E.; r. 184 B.C.E. – 157 B.C.E.).<sup>75</sup>

Some writers claim that they study history when they are *xian*, but not necessarily when they are happy. For example, Peng Yisun 彭貽孫 (1615-1673), a poet and historian who witnessed the Ming-Qing transition, reports that he studies history in his free time when he is *gumen* 孤悶 (lonely and feeling bored). He says that he feels especially emotional when he comes to the accounts of the Song-Yuan transition. Obviously, Peng is relating his sad feelings concerning the fall of the Ming dynasty to the fall of the Song dynasty, as both dynasties fell to non-Han regimes.<sup>76</sup> An early Qing poet Zha Shenxing 查慎行 (1650-1727) also indicates that he reads history when he is *xian* (*xianfan qingshi* 閒緝青史), but what follows is: *lei jiaohen* 淚交痕. He discloses that tears cover his face, so touched is he by reading history and relating it to his own times.<sup>77</sup>

Nevertheless, some male poets did express pleasure over reading history. A poem written by Chen Yuanlong 陳元龍 (1652-1736) is an excellent example. The poet states that he is spiritually contented and describes his joy over studying illustrated historical works (*tushi* 圖史) in the summer. He uses the character *le* 樂 (joy) to describe his feelings, saying that he is pondering the past thousand years and feels so fulfilled that he can hardly express it in words (*deyi yi wangyan* 得意已忘言).<sup>78</sup>

The Qianlong emperor (1711-1799; r. 1736-1795) also states that he takes history as leisure reading. The first line of one poem describes how he spends his leisure time on something he really enjoys, namely reading history: “For diversion, I peruse history books in leisure” 遣興閒翻史.<sup>79</sup> Recent studies have successfully portrayed the Qianlong emperor as a didactic historian, who often claimed his views and comments to be standard and final.<sup>80</sup> Therefore, it seems he took history as serious learning, and it is not surprising that he could really enjoy this scholarship, even in his leisure time.

Perhaps Qianlong’s commitment to historical scholarship can serve to remind us of the superior position of a ruler who could enjoy studying history, if and only if he chose to. A famous Ming memorial, submitted to Emperor Zhengde (1507-1567; r. 1505-1522) by Wang Ao 王鏊 (1450-1524), includes a lecture on the importance of learning. The memorial indicates that although an emperor has to deal with a long agenda every day, if he can spare a little time (*youxia shi* 有暇時), he will also enjoy discussing history with his officials, especially concerning the lessons of successes and failures in the past (*gujin chengbai* 古今成敗). Wang Ao is trying to urge the young emperor to reinstitute the advisory council Hongwen guan

弘文館 (College of Literature) and let himself be advised by a group of learned officials. However, the young emperor does not choose to enjoy reading and discussing history in leisure, as Wang Ao recommends.<sup>81</sup>

Zhao Yi 趙翼 (1727-1814) is perhaps the best well-known poet-historian who wrote about taking history as his leisure reading. Zhao lived until his late eighties and enjoyed some forty years out of office. As a productive historian, he wrote poetry that clearly reflected his historical expertise. In several poems he mentioned his leisurely browsing the history books (*xianfan qingshi*). For example,

Leisurely, I browse the history books to view the earthly world. <sup>82</sup>	閒翻青史覽窮塵。
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Leisurely, I browse the history books and often feel sorry. <sup>83</sup>	閒翻青史幾悲涼。
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Leisurely, I browse the history books while sitting in the cool night. <sup>84</sup>	閒翻青史坐涼宵。
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Leisurely, I browse the historical biographies to get rid of boredom. <sup>85</sup>	閒翻史傳遣無聊。
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I browse the history books in leisure to learn lessons from the past. <sup>86</sup>	青史閒翻覽昔因。
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Repeatedly, Zhao Yi declares that history is indeed his favorite leisure reading. He often picks up history books in his free time or when he is bored, and time after time, he feels moved by the touching stories of the past. As a previous study has pointed out, “given his lifelong study of history,” it is not unexpected that Zhao Yi “is also highly regarded for his poems in the *yung-shih* (contemplations of the past) manner.”<sup>87</sup> Du Weiyun 杜維運 (1928-2012), in his monograph on Zhao Yi, also highlights the liberal thought and open attitude towards history that appears in many of Zhao’s *yongshi* poems.<sup>88</sup>

The leisurely act of *xianfan qingshi* is eloquently elaborated in Zhao Yi’s poetic works. This elaboration makes him stand out among the large group of *yongshi* poetry authors of many generations. We do have other poets who wrote on reading history in leisure, such as Bin Liang 斌良 (1771-1847) and Liu Jia 劉佳, but not to the extent or degree shown by Zhao Yi.<sup>89</sup>

A fascinating couplet on treating history as leisure reading can also be located in a collection of couplets compiled by the Ming scholar Qiao

Yingjia 喬應甲 (1559-1627):

Casually browsing through Sima Qian's <i>Shiji</i>	閑翻遷史咏杜詩
and reciting Du Fu's poems,	
I gathered a host of elegant artworks to	芸窗內收古今絕藝
appreciate within the studio.	
Facing Mount E'mei, surrounded by River Su,	坐對峨嵋環涑水
In the tiny room I paint the wonderful scenery	斗室中繪宇宙奇觀
of the universe. <sup>90</sup>	

This couplet is to be hung on the pillars of a hall (*yinglian* 楹聯), and it illustrates a most pleasant studio setting for leisure reading that encourages the owner to read Sima Qian's *Shiji* and Du Fu's 杜甫 (712-770) poetry in a casual manner. The appreciation for history complements the beauty of artworks displayed in the studio and the wonderful scenery outside. Hence, although viewing history as leisure reading has not been a major or a regular theme in the poetic works written by men, it would be wrong to think that men never picked up history as voluntary reading in their spare time. The examples above suffice to demonstrate this.

### Leisure Activities in Women's Poetry

Now let us turn our discussion to women. First of all, what did Ming-Qing women do in their leisure time? It is not justifiable to assume that they simply bored themselves to death sitting in their inner quarters. Susan Mann informs us of women's praise for the virtues of travel.<sup>91</sup> Grace Fong shows us how women on the road authored accounts of their journeys.<sup>92</sup> Dorothy Ko describes the variety of activities undertaken by Ming-Qing women outside their homes.<sup>93</sup> A recent thesis by Hoi-ling Lui also explores what women did together with their husbands during leisure time, such as watching the moon, appreciating musical performance, tasting wine or tea, sightseeing, boating, or admiring flowers.<sup>94</sup>

Ming-Qing women also wrote a lot about what they did during their leisure time. A quick search on the *Ming Qing Women's Writings* website would lead us to over a hundred poem titles containing the character *xian*, such as *xianju* 閒居 (living in leisure), *xianbu* 閒步 (walking in leisure), *xianwang* 閒望 (viewing in leisure), *xiantiao* 閒眺 (viewing afar in leisure), *xianqi* 閒棋 (playing chess in leisure), and *xianzuo* 閒作 (composing in leisure).<sup>95</sup> A recent study also argues that in many cases, writing itself was already a special form of leisurely activity for many women in the imperial age. They clearly wrote for their own enjoyment, as they had no need to prepare for civil examinations.<sup>96</sup>

Indeed, there are many poems on leisure that provide evidence about

women's reading behavior. For example, the much-respected female scholar Wang Zhenyi 王貞儀 (1768-1797) writes a poem about her leisure time in autumn, telling her readers that almost half of her bed is occupied by books.<sup>97</sup> Another female scholar of the same generation, Jiang Zhu 江珠 (1764-1804) declares that she does a lot of reading in her leisure during the springtime, and she even reads until late at night.<sup>98</sup> Cai Wan 蔡琬 (1695-1755) also describes reading poetry and playing the *qin* 琴 instrument as her leisure activities in the springtime.<sup>99</sup> Another female poet, Bao Zhifen 鮑之芬 (1761-1806), registers her feelings of joy and harmony in holding a book in early autumn.<sup>100</sup>

In their poems, Ming-Qing women mention their reading behavior quite frequently. Did they specifically enjoy studying history?

### When History is Labeled as Leisure Reading in Women's Poetry

Women were under no pressure to study history. However, gaining some knowledge of history would likely enhance their *guixiu* 閨秀 (gentle-women) status, so it is likely that they could easily feel motivated to pick up history as voluntary reading in their leisure time. Some women's poems do not reflect any particular historical insights but rather reveal the authors' simple joy in reading history. A poem by Gan Lirou 甘立嫻 (1743-1819) can serve as a good example. In the past, male scholars often compared history to mirrors and emphasized the practical uses of history. When Gan Lirou presents this mirror analogy in her poetic language, she states that when one studies history quietly, it looks like a clear mirror, but if one pursues it to make inquiries, then the process is as enjoyable as musical rhythm.<sup>101</sup> As Gan Lirou is one of the major poets covered in Grace Fong's *Herself an Author*, we should take note of Fong's conclusion that Gan Lirou's writings "do not reflect familiarity with the dynastic histories" owing to her limited education.<sup>102</sup> Therefore, this *yongshi* poem is just a general expression of her enjoyment in history as leisure reading.

A Jiangxi female poet, Tan Ziyang 譚紫瓔 (1796-1850), wrote a poem entitled "Reading a Book" 讀書 that contains the following couplet:

When I open my book it seems that I am	開卷對古人
face-to-face with the ancients,	
And my mind is really in a leisurely mood. <sup>103</sup>	此心真閒閒

Such statements are lively expressions of the frame of mind some women had in choosing to read historical works at their leisure.

Some women poets report that they study history in different seasons, and mostly in the evenings. For instance, in the poem "Reading History at Night in Spring" 春夜讀史, a Manchurian lady named Rongxian 蓉仙

(Qing) writes that she studies history in the evenings during springtime.<sup>104</sup> Another poem by Wang Zhaoluan 王肇鸞 vividly depicts a lady who explores the enjoyment of reading and commenting on history in the spring evenings:

It is such a wonderful time for me to appraise      春宵好自評文史  
history and literature in the evenings of  
spring.<sup>105</sup>

Some women poets write about studying history in other seasons. For instance, “Reading History at Night in Autumn” 秋夜讀史 by Gu Ruopu 顧若璞 (1529-1681) indicates that the author is studying history until late on an autumn night. She is so absorbed in her reading and commenting on Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 (181-234) that she only realizes how late it is by the crying of birds.<sup>106</sup>

Wang Duan 汪端 (1793-1839), the only woman scholar whose image can be found in the *Qingdai xuezhe xiangzhuan* 清代學者像傳 (Illustrated biographies of Qing scholars),<sup>107</sup> describes her readings on history during an autumn evening in the poem “Reading History at Night in Autumn” 秋夜讀史. She sighs that history records the events of so many centuries, but she also questions how many talented and well-qualified historians there have been over the centuries 青史千秋事 / 千秋幾逸才.<sup>108</sup>

Another poem, “Reading History by a Window in Autumn” 秋窗閱史, is written by Huang Yuanzhen 黃媛貞, a younger sister of the famous writer Huang Yuanjie 黃媛介 (ca.1620-ca.1669). The poem describes the lady poet sitting near the window in autumn, lamenting the sad stories of many scholar-officials throughout history who did not have the luck to work with fair, benevolent, and righteous emperors.<sup>109</sup>

In a poem by Xue Shaohui 薛紹徽 (1866-1911), the author reports that she is producing her composition while studying history during an evening in mid-autumn. Hence, the title of her poem is “Reading History on the Mid-Autumn Night” 仲秋夜讀史作. In this poem, Xue discusses the subtle relationship between emperors and their ministers in history. She counts on fate for a perfect matching of *jun* 君 (emperors) and *chen* 臣 (officials) in order to create prosperity.<sup>110</sup> In Nanxiu Qian’s translation:

Disaster and good fortune never match one      從來禍福不相侔  
another;  
Success and failure are only revealed after the      成敗惟看棋局收  
chess game is over.  
Grand ambition craves close association with      篤志有人欣御李  
the top;

The bag of wisdom contains no tactics to protect the royal house.	智囊無策到安劉
Was this a real match between ruler and subject?	豈真遇合風雲會
One should cherish efforts to maintain family ties.	須惜艱難骨肉謀
Last night, I observed the Northern Dipper in the sky:	昨夜長天覘北斗
Still, the bright moon shone at the height of autumn. <sup>111</sup>	依然明月照高秋

Nanxiu Qian believes that Xue Shaohui was lamenting over the tragedy that Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927) and the Guangxu Emperor (1871-1908; r. 1875-1908) were not a perfect match to rescue the failing dynasty. Xue was critical towards Kang Youwei's manipulating the young emperor and undermining his relationship with the empress dowager. Therefore, Qian argues that Xue Shaohui actually had sympathy for Cixi 慈禧 (1835-1908).<sup>112</sup>

The arguments made by Huang Yuanzhen and Xue Shaohui are interesting because they alert us to the fact that literate women had joined the conversation concerning the ruler-subject (*jun-chen*) relationship, even though they themselves could not hope to take office in the government. Still, these women studied history and paid attention to many stories involving ruler-subject themes. They wrote poems to show their concern and express their opinions. Perhaps we should ask, if officialdom was none of women's business, why did they bother to talk about it? To answer this question, I would like to quote Benjamin Elman's monumental work, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China*. Elman states that although the anxiety produced by examinations was experienced most directly by boys and men, the "fathers and mothers, sisters and extended relatives [we should add wives and concubines], were not immune to this anxiety" because "they shared in the experience and offered comfort, solace, and encouragement."<sup>113</sup> Elman's insightful remark on the civil examination is also applicable to officialdom in general. Mothers, wives, and concubines alike, all worried over whether their sons and husbands would have the luck to be valued by the emperors they worked for. In this light, it seems natural for women poets to express their views with reference to cases in history, as Huang Yuanzhen and Xue Shaohui did.

All the afore-mentioned poems by Gu Ruopu, Huang Yuanzhen, Wang Duan, and Xue Shaohui were written in the autumn. Doubtlessly, there are enormous quantities of reflective writing concerning this beautiful and poetic season. Autumn is a season very much loved by Chinese poets of the



past. Although it is harvest time, autumn, especially late autumn, foretells of the arrival of winter. In comparing the human life cycle to the four seasons, which Chinese literati often love to do, autumn becomes a time to put things in perspective. The Ming-Qing women poets, in “authorizing” themselves as “authors,”<sup>114</sup> also picked up this prevailing pattern from the male writing tradition.

Some women poets, however, clearly enjoyed being excluded from the masculine ambition of seeking an office in the government. A *yongshi* poem written by Zhou Huijuan 周慧娟 conveys the poet’s detachment in an ironic sense. She says that men work too hard and drive themselves mad in taking offices, but when women study history, they realize that many of these officials have withered away without leaving any significant record of accomplishments.<sup>115</sup>

Occasionally we encounter women poets borrowing the stories of historical figures to reflect on their own values. For example, Mao Xiuyu 毛秀玉 (Qing), a Fujian woman poet, describes reading a biography of Zhu Maichen 朱買臣 (?-115 B.C.E.) at night and declares that she would not abandon her husband although they were living in humble poverty. These comments explicitly refer to the story of Zhu’s wife who divorced her husband when he was poor, but felt terribly ashamed when Zhu returned to his hometown as a high official, and she ended up committing suicide.<sup>116</sup>

Leisure reading can lead some people to joyful feelings, but it can also provoke emotions of gloom or sympathy. It all depends on what one chooses to read in leisure. Some women poets were moved by touching stories, and therefore lamented over these historical figures while writing *yongshi* poems. For example, Yuan Shou 袁綬 (1795-?), the granddaughter of Yuan Mei 袁枚 (1716-1798), authored a set of ten poems called “Moved When Reading History” 讀史有感, in which she announces that she feels a deep sense of unfairness whenever she studies history 青史重繙每不平. The first verse conveys the author’s lament at the speedy passing of time, a theme that is quite common in *yongshi* poems written by both men and women.<sup>117</sup> However, the author’s use of the word *lùbian* 驢鞭 (donkey penis), an aphrodisiac food, to describe how fast time could pass is quite humorous here: “A donkey penis perishes easily, like time passes by quickly” 驢鞭易爛光陰短. Relating *lùbian* to history is certainly not common in men’s writings.<sup>118</sup> Yuan Shou’s use of this term in her *yongshi* poem is quite innovative. The reference is related to China’s food and medicine culture. It suggests the choice of vocabulary in women-authored *yongshi* poems invites further investigation.

The second and third verses of Yuan Shou’s poem reflect a gender-specific explanation of certain political incidents. The author is viewing history from a family perspective. Han Wudi 漢武帝 (157 B.C.E. – 87

B.C.E.; r.141 B.C.E. – 87 B.C.E.) gained significant political achievements, but, in the author's eyes, this emperor paid the price of a broken family. Yuan integrates the public and private spheres of Han Wudi's life by combining the scenes of his openly admitting his faults at Luntai 輪臺 (Bugur, in today's Xinjiang) and sadly mourning his lost heir apparent, Liu Ju 劉據 (128 B.C.E. – 91 B.C.E.), at Sizi tai 思子臺.<sup>119</sup> This mixture of scenes further signifies Yuan Shou's family-oriented viewpoint. The third verse illustrates this view even more obviously. She points out that none of the Southern dynasties—Song, Qi, Liang, or Chen—enjoyed long prosperity. Hence, their efforts in *huajia weiguo* 化家為國 (achieving status as royal families by overthrowing the previous dynasties) were meaningless, because all of them were short-lived regional dynasties that could not endure. Yuan concludes that the emperors of the Southern dynasties were indeed *kelian chong* 可憐蟲 (pitiful worms or wretches).<sup>120</sup> The contrast between women's family-oriented viewpoints on history, expressed in the course of leisurely study, and the politically oriented opinions of male authors deserves a systematic comparison.

As some Ming-Qing women poets chose to study history in their leisure time, they recorded their reading in various ways. Although some highlighted the seasons and times of their readings, others offered interesting details concerning their reading patterns. Some women poets registered pleasure at studying history in the inner chambers. A Tongcheng lady poet, Xu Huiwen 徐蕙文, writes that she works hard at all her domestic duties, but after that she can “study history at her dressing table in her leisure time” 閑掃妝台讀舊史.<sup>121</sup> Another woman poet, Liang Ronghan 梁蓉函 from Fujian, declares: “I often return to reading history when I am done with embroidery” 繡餘每自史還讀,<sup>122</sup> emphasizing that she studies and comments on history when she has leisure time to enjoy. She does this after finishing embroidery, a womanly duty according to the social norms. Men did not study history in such settings or moods. Another Jiangsu woman poet, Jin Hesu 金鶴素 (Qing), writes that she quits embroidery at night and moves on to study history: “Putting aside my embroidery instruments / I lay my books one by one on the desk” 夜來罷繡紅 / 展讀一披對. She composes this poem, which concerns her reflections on the *Lie nüzhuan* 列女傳 (Biographies of Women), the first collective biographical collection in ancient Chinese historiography.<sup>123</sup>

In another *yongshi* poem, Wang Duan laments, “My emotions were stirred up while reading history in leisure” 閑繙青史偏多感.<sup>124</sup> In fact, Wang Duan was very much gifted in historical scholarship. This fact is recorded in a long biography that her father-in-law, the famous literati Chen Wenshu 陳文述 (1771-1843), wrote in her memory after she passed away.<sup>125</sup> Wang Duan was an historian who authored an historical work of

eighty volumes on the transition between the Yuan and Ming dynasties. However, after she later devoted herself to religion, she decided to destroy her manuscript.<sup>126</sup> Wilt Idema and Beata Grant also point out in *The Red Brush* that “a large portion” of Wang Duan’s “more than one thousand surviving poems consists of ‘poems on historical subjects’ (*yongshishi*)” and the closely related poems “lamenting the past (*huaigu*)” 懷古詩.<sup>127</sup> Not only do contemporary scholars hold such views; scholars of Wang Duan’s time also said the same. For example, Wang Duan’s beloved aunt Liang Desheng 梁德繩 (1771-1847), who was also a woman author, wrote the preface to Wang Duan’s famous anthology of Ming male poets, *Ming sanshi jia shixuan* 明三十家詩選 (A selection of thirty poets of the Ming Dynasty). In this preface, Liang explains that “this work claims to be an anthology of poetry but is really a treatise on history” (雖曰詩選, 實史論也).<sup>128</sup> Liang Desheng knew her niece very well, because Wang Duan grew up in her family after her parents passed away.

However, not all women poets commented on serious matters in history or lamented the past when reading history. Some women described history as enjoyable leisure reading. For example, a poem by Zhang Zao 張藻 (?-1780), the mother of the famous scholar-official Bi Yuan 畢沅 (1730-1797), incorporates a description of her leisurely reading of *Hanshu* 漢書 (History of the Han) amid other leisure activities at her house, while enjoying the scenery in her courtyard.<sup>129</sup>

Another significant piece composed in a leisurely mood, “Feeling Listless in the Long Summer I Recall at Random Historical Events and Composed Twelve Poems” 長夏無聊雜憶史事得十二首 is by Ji Lanyun 季蘭韻 (1793-1848). This poet complains that the long summer can be boring.<sup>130</sup> Of course, as mentioned earlier, Zhao Yi had also written about reading history to dispel his feelings of boredom, but this was not typical among men. Zhao Yi was in his retirement, but for many men who had to prepare for round after round of examinations, the classics (*jing*) and history (*shi*) were books that they should study very seriously to earn offices for themselves. They could not possibly afford to spend much time reading history for leisurely entertainment. Women seem to have enjoyed such reading a little more, taking it as a privilege, if they chose to do it. It is interesting to note that in one of the verses Ji Lanyun wrote on that boring summer night, she offers a counter-explanation as to why the famous Lu general Wu Qi 吳起 (440 B.C.E. – 381 B.C.E.) of the Warring States period killed his wife of Qi 齊 origin. It has always been thought that Wu Qi did so to gain trust from the ruler of Lu 魯, because at that time Lu and Qi were enemies. However, Ji Lanyun argues that there must have been other hidden reasons behind the scene. She ponders over Wu Qi’s inhumane deed and suggests that perhaps he no longer liked his wife. Perhaps she was

ugly, or perhaps she was jealous, and he wanted to abandon her. So, he finally got an excellent excuse to kill her.<sup>131</sup> Needless to say, the poet has no evidence in saying this, but she has the right to make such a guess and offer such a perspective, and she delivered it in a playful manner.

We can also gather an impression of history as the subject matter of leisure reading from some paintings that have poetic inscriptions. For example, Qian Cuifeng 錢翠峰 painted herself “A Painting of Reading History by a Lamp in Winter” 寒燈讀史圖. She also inscribed a poem on the painting, saying that after sunset she has a lot of time, and thus she indulges herself by reading history again and again: “There is not a single important task to do in the early evening, / so I read my history books for a thousand times” 黃昏無一事 / 青史閱千回.<sup>132</sup> Another woman poet, Sun Peiqiu 孫佩秋, a niece of the famous scholar Sun Xingyan 孫星衍 (1753-1818), also produced “A Painting of Reading History by the Window with Flowers” 花窗讀史圖, which was poetically inscribed by another female poet Wang Shengzhi 王甥植 (1789-1825).<sup>133</sup> These examples further demonstrate that some women poets engaged in reading history as one of their hobbies. In fact, images of reading women are not rare in traditional Chinese paintings. Among such works, some are labeled *dushi tu* 讀史圖 (paintings of reading history), such as a painting done by the famous Ming artist Qiu Ying 仇英 (1482-1559) entitled “A Painting of Reading History in a Garden” 園中讀史圖.<sup>134</sup> Another painting by the accomplished artist Fei Danxu 費丹旭 (1802-1850) is entitled “A Painting of Reading History under the Shadow of Candlenut Trees” 桐蔭讀史圖.<sup>135</sup> Still another famous piece, “A Painting of Ban Zhao Continuing the Writing of *Han shu*” 班姬續史圖, was painted by Su Renshan 蘇仁山 (1814-1850) during the nineteenth century.<sup>136</sup> Of course, as we appreciate these artists’ efforts to visualize women’s reading of history in a leisurely manner, we should also note that *dushi tu* depict both men and women.<sup>137</sup>

Before concluding, I wish to point out that we occasionally find women reporting that they collaborate with their husbands to study and write on historical themes. For instance, in a poem Gan Qihua 甘啟華 (Qing) remarks that she is actually composing a set of exchange poems on Ming history with her husband. She expresses great sympathy towards Yu Qian 于謙 (1398-1457), who was put to death when Emperor Yingzhong 英宗 (1427-1464, Zhengtong r. 1436-1449 and Tianshun r. 1457-1464) returned to the throne after the Tumu 土木 incident.<sup>138</sup>

A poem by Chen Yunlian 陳蘊蓮 (Qing) records the author’s feelings and lamentations on studying history, which she shares with her husband. This is another example of a female poet reflecting on the relationships between emperors and their ministers. In this poem, Chen Yunlian comments on how important it is for an official to be appreciated by

emperors who have vision, but many officials are not so fortunate. She also reminds us that the historical figure she admires and respects most is Yan Guang 嚴光 of the Eastern Han dynasty, who gave up office and enjoyed his life as a recluse, as symbolized by his fishing in the cold weather with a sheep-skin coat. Chen Yunlian uses the phrase *zhi wai* 質外 (questioning my husband) in the title of this poem, which suggests that her husband may be holding a different opinion.<sup>139</sup>

Another example, though given in a letter instead of a poem, is very special and worthy of mention. In this letter, the wife of the famous Qing calligrapher and collector Liang Shanzhou 梁山舟 (1723-1825) reports that she needs some way to enjoy the long summer (長夏無消遣法), so she discusses historical themes in a playful way with her husband (戲論史事), and she enjoys doing so very much.<sup>140</sup>

These examples of women writers who mention their casual discussions on history with their husbands carry important messages. We could easily locate a number of poems written by men for or about their wives, but these poems rarely mention that the men discuss history with their wives.

### Concluding Remarks

I conclude my preliminary survey of women's poetic writing on historical subjects with a few observations:

First of all, it is worthy of our attention that many Ming-Qing women poets were interested in history and had received some education in history. Myriads of biographies of women poets are found in anthologies, collected works, biographical collections, gazetteers, and works of literary criticisms. Many of these accounts give due credit to individual women poets who received education in history or acquired knowledge of history by their own efforts. It would be inappropriate to generalize that women have been entirely outsiders to historical scholarship. In fact, numerous literate women had the opportunity to study and reflect on history. Women writers studied history because they chose to, because they did not want to be excluded from such mainstream knowledge, because they needed to educate their sons, and for other reasons. Unlike men, who were required to study history in completing their education and preparing for their careers, women were more likely to study history on a voluntary basis, in a relaxed manner, and as a part-time hobby.

Second, it must be acknowledged that the concept of *xian* does exist in China's time-honored poetic tradition. Both male and female poets have done a great deal of writing on leisure-related themes. The idea of taking history as leisure reading has appeared in some poems produced by both male and female writers. We come across both similarities and differences

in the ways that men and women have viewed this practice. Although many men most commonly composed *yongshi* poems as serious commentaries on historical incidents and figures, we can still identify individual male poets who were able to *xianfan qingshi*, or study history in their leisure time. Some of these men found delight and peace of mind in their reading of history. Others were moved to sorrow or sympathy over tragedies of the past. As for the women poets, some have expressed their serious and meticulous reflections concerning historical themes after studying history in their leisure time. Others have emphasized the joy they gain through choosing history as their leisure reading. Some stress that this activity is especially suited to certain seasons, to certain times of day, such as at night after embroidering, or to certain places such as their dressing tables. There are examples of men expressing their moods while doing *xianfan qingshi*, but they rarely emphasize that they are doing so in the evening, or next to a window with beautiful scenery. These kinds of expressions are more commonly found in women's writings. Men have tended to study history more frequently, at all times of day, and in all seasons. In short, both male and female poets have enjoyed history as leisure reading but under different circumstances and with different moods. Nonetheless, both the similarities and the differences between genders merit focused study.

Finally, I would like to propose that although some women poets have treated history as their leisure reading, they could still generate inspirational thoughts and insights on a variety of historical themes. Ming-Qing women poets attempted to anchor themselves in the literati culture and put forward their voice in historiography. They joined the ranks of *yongshi shi* poets and crafted their opinions on an array of historical themes. The body of *yongshi* poetry works by women is much smaller than that of men, but it is not insignificant. As poets, these women's arguments may not have always been convincing and supported by historical documents, but the same criticism applies to the works of male writers. After all, women poets should be able to express their views on history because history is not the monopoly of a particular gender. Historical reflection and interpretation would be poorer without the participation of women. Therefore, we need to rediscover women's subjectivity and agency in the reading and writing of history. By appropriately placing women back into the historical scene, we can gain a more balanced understanding of how people in the past recorded and viewed history. We are able to find ambitious and interesting arguments presented by women poets in their *yongshi* poems. In going through their works, we can witness how women in the past have integrated the public and private spheres, offered uniquely female perspectives on historical events, and brought up family-oriented or daily-life-based viewpoints to challenge traditional interpretations. We can see how these women

empowered themselves by engaging in debates on central issues in historiography. A more detailed study of poems on historical themes authored by women would indeed be very worthwhile.

## Endnotes

1. My project, “*Herstory: Historical Works by Women in Imperial China*,” is funded by the Research Grants Council-Fulbright Hong Kong Senior Research Scholar Program and Research Grants Council-General Research Fund (#243313). The Hong Kong Baptist University Faculty Research Grant also provides seed funds to support a portion of this project, “Identifying Female Historians in Imperial China” (#30-12-207). I gratefully acknowledge these generous financial supporters. I also thank the Department of History, Northeastern University, for hosting me during my Fulbright visit in the 2012-13 academic year, and for providing me full office support and library privileges to work on this project. My thanks are also due to Prof. Grace S. Fong for inviting me to give a Hsiang lecture, which has led to the publication of this paper. The faculty members, in particular Prof. Robin D. S. Yates, and graduate students of the Department of East Asian Studies at McGill University are also deeply appreciated for their kindness in attending my lecture and sharing their valuable opinions with me.
2. For a clear account of how the term leisure originated in the languages of ancient Greece and Rome, see Byron Dare, George Welton, and William Coe, *Concepts of Leisure in Western Thought: A Critical and Historical Analysis* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1987). For definitions of various concepts in leisure studies, see Stephen L. J. Smith, *Dictionary of Concepts in Recreation and Leisure Studies* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1990); David Harris, *Key Concepts in Leisure Studies* (London, Thousand Oaks, and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005); Tony Blackshaw and Garry Crawford, *The Sage Dictionary of Leisure Studies* (Los Angeles and London: Sage Publications, 2009).
3. Thomas L. Goodale and Geoffrey C. Godbey, *The Evolution of Leisure: Historical and Philosophical Perspectives* (State College PA: Venture Publishing Inc., 1988). For a brief multi-cultural analysis of leisure’s evolution through early civilization, see Gus J. Gerson, Jr., Hilmi M. Ibrahim, Jack DeVries, and George Eisen, *Understanding Leisure: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1988), 39-60.

4. See, for example, Gary Cross, *A Social History of Leisure since 1600* (State College PA: Venture Publishing Inc., 1990). See also Rudy Koshar, *Histories of Leisure* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002) and Peter Borsay, *A History of Leisure: The British Experience since 1500* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).
5. See, for example, Tom Winnifrith and Cyril Barrett, eds., *The Philosophy of Leisure* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989).
6. See the monumental work by Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899; repr., New York: Penguin Books, 1967).
7. Peter Bramham and Stephen Wagg, eds., *The New Politics of Leisure and Pleasure* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
8. On the difference between the humanistic and the quantitative views of leisure, see Smith, *Dictionary of Concepts in Recreation and Leisure Studies*, 179-85.
9. For a brief account see Rudy Koshar, "Seeing, Traveling, and Consuming: An Introduction," in Rudy Koshar, ed., *Histories of Leisure* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002), 1-24.
10. Xu Shen 許慎, annotat. by Duan Yucai 段玉裁, *Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981), 12 shang.12a-13a (589-90).
11. See, for example, Chu Liu 楚流, Wang De 王德, and Sun Xin 孫新, eds., *Xianqing wenhua* 閑情文化 (Beijing: Zhongguo jingji chubanshe, 1995); Zhang Wen 張文, *Fengzhong de xunmi: Han minzu xiuxian wenhua shi* 風中的尋覓: 漢民族休閒文化史 (Kunming: Yunnan jiaoyu chubanshe, 2002); Anders Hansson et al., eds., *The Chinese at Play: Festivals, Games and Leisure* (London, New York, and Bahrain: Kegan Paul, 2002); Yin Wei 殷偉, *Nüzi youyi* 女子游藝 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2003); Hong Kong Heritage Museum, *Enlightening Trivialities: Ancient Chinese Pastimes* 雖小道亦可觀—中國古代消閒娛樂 (Hong Kong: Leisure and Cultural Services Department, 2006); Xu Wanli 許萬里, *Xianqing yiqu: Minghua zhong de fengsu haoshang* 閑情逸趣: 名畫中的風俗好尚 (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 2010); Song Lizhong 宋立中, *Xianya yu fuhua: Ming Qing Jiangnan richang shenghuo yu xiaofei wenhua* 閑雅與浮華: 明清江南日常生活與消費文化 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2010); Yu Wei 余偉, *Wan de gediao: Zhongguo xiuxian wenhua quanshi qudu* 玩的格調: 中國休閒文化全史趣讀 (Xi'an: Shanxi shifan daxue chubanshe 2011); J. P. Park, *Art by the Book: Painting Manuals and the Leisure Life in Late Ming China* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2012);



- Wu Renshu 巫仁恕, *Ming Qing Jiangnan chengshi de xiuxian xiaofei yu kongjian bianqian* 明清江南城市的休閒消費與空間變遷 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindai shi yanjiusuo, 2013); Su Zhuang 蘇狀, “*Xian*” *yu Zhongguo gudai wenren de shenmei rensheng* “閑”與中國古代文人的審美人生 (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2013).
12. *Sibu* is translated as “the four branches” in Endymion Porter Wilkinson’s *Chinese History: A New Manual* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013), 938-39, and as “the four departments” in Harriet T. Zurndorfer’s *China Bibliography: A Research Guide to Reference Works about China* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 46. Another translation, “the four parts,” appears on Benjamin A. Elman’s website, “Classical Historiography for Chinese History,” Princeton University, <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/history/elman/ClasBibl>. This fourfold division arose during the Wei-Jin period and reached its maturity in the early Tang, when the official history of the Sui dynasty was compiled. Since then, this classification system became the standard and formed the basis of the classification system of the *Siku quanshu* (Complete collection of the four treasures). For an overview of the development of this fourfold division of books, see Zuo Yuhe 左玉河, *Cong sibu zhi xue dao qike zhi xue: Xueshu fenke yu jindai Zhongguo zhishi xitong zhi chuangjian* 從四部之學到七科之學：學術分科與近代中國知識系統之創建 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2004). See also my “An Investigation into the Sources for Women’s History in the *Sibu*: In Lieu of an Introduction,” in Clara Wing-chung Ho, ed., *Overt and Covert Treasures: Essays on the Sources for Chinese Women’s History* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2012), 2 and 13.
  13. Sandra Hughes-Hassell and Pradnya Rodge, “The Leisure Reading Habits of Urban Adolescents,” *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 51.1 (September 2007): 22-33.
  14. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao* 歷代婦女著作考, revised edition with supplementary entries by Zhang Hongsheng 張宏生 et al. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008), 212-826.
  15. Kang-i Sun Chang, “Ming and Qing Anthologies of Women’s Poetry and Their Selection Strategies,” in Ellen Widmer and Kang-i Sun Chang, eds., *Writing Women in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 147.
  16. Hu Shi, “Sanbai nian zhong de nü zuojia: Qing guixiu yiwen lüe xu 三百年中的女作家：《清閨秀藝文略》序,” in *Hu Shi wencun* 胡適文存, vol. 3 (Shanghai: Yadong tushuguan, 1930), 8.1078.

17. Note the important contribution of recently published Ming-Qing women-authored collections: Fang Xiujie [Grace S. Fong] 方秀潔 and Yi Weide [Wilt Idema] 伊維德, comps., *Meiguo Hafo daxue Hafo Yanjing tushuguan cang Ming Qing funü zhushu huikan* 美國哈佛大學哈佛燕京圖書館藏明清婦女著述彙刊 (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2009); Hu Xiaoming 胡曉明 and Peng Guozhong 彭國忠, eds., *Jiangnan nǚxing bieji chubian, erbian, sanbian, sibian* 江南女性別集初編二編三編四編 (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014).
18. <http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/mingqing/>, launched by McGill University Library under the directorship of Grace S. Fong.
19. Some fifty works by forty women authors are included in the eight-hundred volume collection of *Qingdai shiwenji huibian* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2009), and nine collected works of women authors can be found in the thirty-three volume *Beijing shifan daxue tushuguan cang xijian Qingren bieji congan*, comp. by Cheng Rentao 程仁桃 et al. (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2007).
20. For a quick reference see Robin D. S. Yates, *Women in China from Earliest Times to the Present: A Bibliography of Studies in Western Languages* (Leiden and Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2009).
21. Description for Ji Lanyun 季蘭韻, see Lei Jin 雷瑒 and Lei Jian 雷瑒, *Guixiu cihua* 閨秀詞話, in Wang Yingzhi 王英志, ed., *Qingdai guixiu shihua congan* 清代閨秀詩話叢刊 (Nanjing: Fenguang chubanshe, 2010), 4:1505.
22. Description for Wan Duanshu 王端淑, see Shen Shanbao 沈善寶, *Mingyuan shihua* 名媛詩話 (reprint of the Guangxu Hongxue lou edition), in *Xuxiu sikuquanshu* 續修四庫全書, vol. 1076 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995), 2.5b.
23. Description for Li Lixiang 李吏香, see Lei Jin and Lei Jian, *Guixiu shihua* 閨秀詩話 (Shanghai: Saoye shanfang, 1922), 16.10b.
24. Description for an unnamed poetess of Kuaiji 會稽, see Qian Qianyi 錢謙益, *Liechao shiji* 列朝詩集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1959), “runji” 閩集, “xianglian zhong” 香奩中, 761.
25. Description for Zhu Wuxia 朱無瑕, see Qian, *Liechao shiji*, “xianglian zhong,” 766-67.
26. Description for Zhou Yuxiao 周玉簫, see Qian, *Liechao shiji*, “xianglian shang,” 737.
27. Description for Mao Jun 冒俊, see Shi Shuyi 施淑儀, *Qingdai guige shiren zhenglüe* 清代閨閣詩人徵略 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1987), 9.21b.

28. Description for Xu Xuan 徐璇, see Shi, *Qingdai guige shiren zhenglüe*, 5.16b.
29. Description for Chen Jingying 陳靜英, see Lei Jin and Lei Jian, *Guixiu shihua*, 2. 4a and *Guixiu cihua*, 2:1458.
30. Description for Feng Lüduan 馮履端, see Huang Zhimo 黃秩模, *Guochao guixiu shi liuxu ji jiaobu* 國朝閨秀詩柳絮集校補, 4 vols., annot. by Fu Qiong 付瓊 (Beijing: Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 2011), 1:11.
31. Description for Zhuang Tao 莊燾, see Huang, *Guochao guixiu shi liuxu ji jiaobu*, 27.1233.
32. Sun Yugong 孫愚公, “Daonei ershou” 悼內二首, in *Zuili shixi* 樵李詩繫, in *Yingyin Wenyuange siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書, vol. 1475 (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1986), 21.27a.
33. Yang Ji, “Zhao Yiren Hui shi wanzhang” 趙宜人衛氏挽章, in his *Mei'an ji* 眉庵集 (Chengdu: Sichuan chuban jitudan Ba Shu shushe, 2005), 181.
34. Wang Men, “Dushi,” in her *Yinyue lou shiji* 印月樓詩集, in Cai Dianqi 蔡殿齊, comp., *Guochao guige shichao* 國朝閨閣詩鈔 (Langhuan bieguan edition, 1844), “gui” 癸, 3ab.
35. In Zhang Yingchang 張應昌, comp., *Qing shi duo* 清詩鐸 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1960), “dushu” 讀書, 22.803-804.
36. Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 104-105.
37. See Li Diaoyuan 李調元, *Yucun shihua (jiaozheng)* 雨村詩話校正, annot. by Zhan Hanglun 詹杭倫 and Shen Shirong 沈時蓉 (Chengdu: Ba Shu shushe, 2007), 8.205. Note the romanization of 李調元 is sometimes rendered as Li Tiaoyuan (or Li T'iao-yüan in Wade-Giles, as in Arthur W. Hummel's *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period, 1644-1912* [Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1943], 486-488). Actually, Tiaoyuan makes more sense than Diaoyuan. The former name has been used in ancient texts as meaning the perseverance of health and fitness. See *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大詞典 (Shanghai: Hanyu da cidian chubanshe, 1991), 11:298. However, the official name of Li's memorial in Deyang, Sichuan, is the Li Diaoyuan Memorial Museum 李調元紀念館, <http://www.sichuan-tour.com/about-sichuan3.php?id=9238>; <http://www.quanguotong.com/poi/7172548ldyng>.
38. See my “Ming-Qing nüxing de shizhu” 明清女性的史著, in *Caide xianghui: Zhongguo nüxing de zhixue yu kezi* 才德相輝:中國女性的治學與課子 (Xianggang: Sanlian shudian, 2015), 24-77.

39. Zhang Zhenglang, "Jiangshi yu yongshi shi" 講史與詠史詩, *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 10 (April 1948); reprinted in his *Wenshi congkao* 文史叢考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2012), 225-81.
40. Zhao Wangqin and Zhang Huanling, *Gudai yongshi shi tonglun* (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2010).
41. See Yue Xiren 岳希仁, ed., *Gudai yongshi shi jingxuan dianping* 古代詠史詩精選點評 (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 1996), 7-8.
42. See Xu Gang, "The Past is Eternal: Chinese Pan-historicism as Manifested in Poetry on History" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1996), 6-27.
43. Xie Qikun, *Shujing tang yongshi shi* 樹經堂詠史詩歌 (1825 edition), in *Siku weishou shu jikan* 四庫未收書輯刊, vol. 4.20 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1997).
44. Luo Chunyan, *Jiyi xuan yongshi shichao* (1875 edition), in *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, vols. 1542-43.
45. For studies on *yongshi shi*, see Leng Jiping 冷紀平 and Liu Huairong 劉懷榮, "Ershi shiji yongshi shi yanjiu de lishi huigu" 二十世紀詠史詩研究的歷史回顧, *Hiroshima Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities* 4 (March 2005): 86-95. Also see Zhan Xiaoyong 詹曉勇, *Ming Qing yongshi shiji zhijian lu: Ming dai* 明清詠史詩集知見錄: 明代 (Hong Kong: Jao Tsung-I Petite Ecole, University of Hong Kong, 2009) and *Ming Qing yongshi shiji zhijian lu: Qing dai* 明清詠史詩集知見錄: 清代 (Hong Kong: Jao Tsung-I Petite Ecole, University of Hong Kong, 2010).
46. Xu, "The Past is Eternal," 3. See also the author's monograph on the same theme rendered in Chinese, *Yongshi shi yu Zhongguo fan lishi zhuyi* 詠史詩與中國泛歷史主義 (Taipei: Shuiniu tushu chubanshe, 1997), 2.
47. Mann, *Precious Records*, 17-18.
48. <http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/mingqing/english/>.
49. See, for example, Pan Minzhong 潘民中 et al, eds., *Zhongguo yongshi huaigu shijuan* 中國詠詩懷古詩卷 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1988) and Yue Xiren, *Gudai yongshi shi*.
50. For example, there is one entry on female-authored *yongshi* poetry out of sixty-three entries in the collection edited by Zhang Hui 章回, ed., *Lidai yongshi shixuan* 歷代詠史詩選 (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1989). Only eight out of 515 entries concern female-authored *yongshi* poems in Chu Dahong 儲大泓, ed., *Lidai yongshi*

- shi xuanzhu* 歷代詠史詩選注 (Xi'an: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1990). There are fifteen entries on female-authored *yongshi* poems among the 1590 entries in Wan Ping 萬萍 and Ye Weigong 葉維恭, eds., *Zhongguo lidai yongshi shi cidian* 中國歷代詠史詩辭典 (Nanchang: Jiangxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 1998). There are fifteen entries on female-authored *yongshi shi* out of 540 entries in Shi Lun 師綸, ed., *Lidai yongshi shi wubai shou* 歷代詠史詩五百首 (Guangzhou: Huanan ligong daxue chubanshe, 2010).
51. Shen Lidong 沈立東 and Ge Rutong 葛汝桐, eds., *Lidai funü shici jianshang cidian* 歷代婦女詩詞鑒賞辭典 (Beijing: Zhongguo funü chubanshe, 1992), 851-990. It is interesting to note that another collection of female-authored poetic writings containing two hundred works by palace women includes just three *yongshi* poems. See Shen Lidong, ed., *Lidai houfei shici jizhu* 歷代后妃詩詞集注 (Beijing: Zhongguo funü chubanshe, 1990).
  52. Xu Boling 徐伯齡, "Nüren yongshi" 女人詠史, in his *Yijing jun* 蟬精雋, in *Yingyin Wenyuange siku quanshu*, vol. 867, 14.13b-14b.
  53. Zhao and Zhang, *Gudai yongshi shi tonglun*, 267.
  54. Duan Jihong 段繼紅, *Qingdai guige wenxue yanjiu* 清代閨閣文學研究 (Tianjin: Nankai daxue chubanshe, 2007), 156-65.
  55. Mann, *Precious Records*, 214-18.
  56. See Grace S. Fong, *Herself an Author: Gender, Agency, and Writing in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 1-3.
  57. See n. 61.
  58. Kang Ping, ed., *Caiju dongli xia: Gushi fenlei jianshang xilie xianshi pian* 采菊東籬下: 古詩分類鑒賞系列閑適篇 (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chuanshe, 1996). The translation of "caiju dongli xia" is adopted from Wendy Swartz, *Reading Tao Yuanming: Shifting Paradigms of Historical Reception (427-1900)* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), 17.
  59. For example, the following translations have all rendered *xian* as "idle" or "idleness." See Arthur Waley, trans., *Waiting for the Moon: Poems of Bo Juyi* (Mount Jackson, VA: Axios Press, 2012); Howard S. Levy, trans., *Translations from Po Chü-i's Collected Works Vol I: The Old Style Poems* (New York: Arno Press, 1970); *Vol II: The Regulated Poems* (New York: Arno Press, 1970); *Vol. III: Regulated and Patterned Poems of Middle Age (822-832)* (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center Inc., 1976); *Vol IV: The Later Years (833-846)* (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, Inc., 1978); David Hinton, trans.,

- The Selected Poems of Po Chü-i* (New York: A New Directions Book, 1999); Burton Watson, trans., *Po Chü-i: Selected Poems* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).
60. Levy, *Translations, Vol. I: The Old Style Poems*, 13.
  61. Bo Juyi officially classifies the poems in his collection into four categories, in which *xianshi shi* is the second category. See *Bo Juyi ji* 白居易集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), *juan* 5 to 8, pp. 91-166.
  62. Levy, *Translations, Vol. I: The Old Style Poems*, 13. This famous saying appears in Bo's original letter to Yuan Zhen. See "Yu Yuan Jiu shu" 與元九書, in *Bo Juyi ji*, 45.964.
  63. Swartz, *Reading Tao Yuanming*, 48.
  64. See, for example, the analysis of Shigeo Umeda 埋田重夫, *Haku Kyo kenkyu: Kanteki no shiso* 白居易研究: 閑適の詩想 (Tokyo: Kyuko Shoin, 2006).
  65. Mao Yanjun 毛妍君, *Bo Juyi xianshi shi yanjiu* 白居易閑適詩研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2010), 19.
  66. Zhao Qi 趙岐 and Sun Shi 孫奭, annots., *Mengzi zhushu* 孟子注疏, in Ruan Yuan 阮元, comp., *Shisan jing zhushu* 十三經注疏 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 6 xia.50 (2714). Translation adopted from Irene Bloom, *Mencius*, ed. by Philip J. Ivanhoe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), Book 3b, 70.
  67. Sima Qian's letter in reply to Ren An is preserved in Ban Gu 班固, *Han shu* 漢書, annot. Yan Shigu 顏師古, vol. 9 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), 62.2735. Translation adopted from Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996), 136-42.
  68. See Liu Xu 劉昫 (887-946) et al., *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書, vol. 10 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 102.3173.
  69. Han Yu, "Da Liu xiucui lun shi shu" 答劉秀才論史書, in Ma Qichang 馬其昶 and Ma Maoyuan 馬茂元, annots., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu* 韓昌黎文集校注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1986), "waji" shang, 667.
  70. See Li Zhi's early announcement of *liujing jieshi* 六經皆史 (The Six Classics are all history) in his *Fenshu* 焚書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 5.214. See also Wang Fuzhi's comments on the value of history in his *Du Tongjian lun* 讀通鑑論 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 6.156-57; and Dai Mingshi's remarks on how difficult it was to locate a person capable of writing history seriously, in "Shilun" 史論, in *Nanshan ji* 南山集 (reprint of the 1900 edition), in *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, vol. 1419, 1.14a.

71. Zhao Erxun 趙爾巽 et al., *Qingshi gao* 清史稿, vol. 43 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), 480.13105.
72. She Yunzuo 余雲祚, *Jushi dashu* (reprint of the Chiwen tang edition of the Kangxi reign), in *Siku weishou shu jikan*, vol. 4.20. Also, see the preface authored by Yang Yongjian, 2ab (141).
73. Zhang Xuecheng, *Wenshi tongyi* 文史通義 (reprint of the 1922 Liu shi Jiaye tang *Zhang shi yishu* 章氏遺書 edition), in *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, vol. 448: 223, *neipian* 5, *zhang* 5.1. Translation adopted from Philip J. Ivanhoe, trans., *On Ethics and History: Essays and Letters of Zhang Xuecheng* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 76-77.
74. Zhao Dingchen, “Dushi xizuo,” in *Zhuyin qishi ji* 竹隱畸士集, in *Yingyin Wenyuange siku quanshu*, vol. 1124, 2.4b-5a.
75. For a detailed account of Sima Xiangru’s life and works, see *Shiji* 史記, vol. 9 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), 117.2999-3074.
76. Peng Yisun, “Yezuo” 夜坐, in his *Mingzhai ji* 茗齋集, in *Sibu congtan* 四部叢刊 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1936), 2.105b.
77. Zha Shenxing, “Wuling Yang Zhangcang chonglai Duxia ganjiu youzeng” 武陵楊長蒼重來都下感舊有增, in his *Jingye tang shiji* 敬業堂詩集, in *Sibu congtan*, 7.12ab.
78. Chen Yuanlong, “Fude jingyou tushi le” 賦得靜有圖書樂, in Chen Tingjing 陳廷敬 and Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉, comps., *Huang Qing wenying* 皇清文穎, in *Yingyin Wenyuange siku quanshu*, vol. 1450, 68.5b.
79. Qing Gaozong 清高宗, “Qianxing” 遣興, in Jiang Pu 蔣溥 et al., comps., *Yuzhi shi siji* 御製詩四集, in *Qing Gaozong [Qianlong] yuzhi shiwen quanji* 清高宗〔乾隆〕御製詩文全集 (Beijing: Renmin daxue chubanshe, 1993), 8.17a.
80. See Qiao Zhizhong 喬治忠, *Qingchao guanfang shixue yanjiu* 清朝官方史學研究 (Taibei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1994); Ye Gaoshu 葉高樹, “Qianlong shidai guanxiu shishu de jiaohua gongneng: Jianlun Qianlong huangdi tongyu Hanguan de celue” 乾隆時代官修史書的教化功能: 兼論乾隆皇帝統御漢官的策略, *Taiwan shida lishi xuebao* 臺灣師大歷史學報 22 (June 1994): 171-99; and the following articles by He Guanbiao 何冠彪: “Lun Qing Gaozong zhi chongxiu Liao, Jin, Yuan san shi” 論清高宗之重修遼金元三史, *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 12.3 (Spring 1995): 49-66; “Qing Gaozong gangmu ti shiji bianzhuan kao” 清高宗綱目體史籍編纂考, *Guoli bianyiguan guankan* 國立編譯館館刊 24.1 (June 1995): 129-50; “Lun Qing Gaozong ziwo chuixu de lishi panguan xingxiang” 論清高宗自我吹

- 噓的歷史判官形象, *Jiuzhou xuekan* 九州學刊 7.1 (January 1996): 85-107; “Qing Gaozong dui NanMing lishi diwei de chuli” 清高宗對南明歷史地位的處理, *Xin shixue* 新史學 7.1 (March 1996): 1-27; “Qianlong chao chongxiu Liao, Jin, Yuan sanshi foushi” 乾隆朝重修遼金元三史剖析, *Mengguxue xinxi* 蒙古學信息 1997.1 (March 1997): 26-34; “Qing Gaozong Yuzuan zizhi tongjian gangmu sanbian de bianzhuang yu chongxiu” 清高宗《御撰資治通鑑綱目三編》的編纂與重修,” *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 70.3 (September 1999): 671-97; “Qing Gaozong Yupi lidai tongjian jilan bianzhuang kaoshi 清高宗《御批歷代通鑑輯覽》編纂考釋,” *Lingnan xuebao* 嶺南學報 new series 2 (2000): 131-67.
81. Wang Ao, “Xie Cunwen xian jiangxue qinzheng shu” 謝存問獻講學親政疏, in Huang Zongxi, ed., *Ming Wenhai* 明文海, in *Yingyin Wenyuange siku quanshu*, vol. 1453, 50.28a-29b. See also Hok-lam Chan’s entry on Wang Ao in L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, eds., *Dictionary of Ming Biography 1368-1644* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1976), 1343-47.
  82. Zhao Yi, “Wushi chudu” 五十初度, in his *Oubei ji* 甌北集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1997), 23.481.
  83. Zhao Yi, “Yonggu” 詠古, *Oubei ji*, 31.710.
  84. Zhao Yi, “Yueshi xizuo” 閱史戲作, *Oubei ji*, 25. 542.
  85. Zhao Yi, “Wuliao” 無聊, *Oubei ji*, 49.1260.
  86. Zhao Yi, “Yongshi” 詠史, *Oubei ji*, 52.1330.
  87. See the entry on Zhao Yi (Chao I) by William Schultz in William H. Nienhauser, Jr. et al., eds., *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 227-29.
  88. Du Weiyun, *Zhao Yi zhuan* 趙翼傳 (Taipei: Shibao wenhua chuban shiye youxian gongsi, 1983). See also his “Zhao Yi zhi shixue” 趙翼之史學, in his *Qingdai shijia yu shixue* 清代史家與史學 (Taipei: Dongda tushu youxian gongsi, 1984), 369-90.
  89. Bin Liang 斌良, “Haihuai xuan zaxing bu Zhang Chuanshan jiuyun” 海懷宣雜興步張船山舊韻, in his *Baochong zhai shiji* 抱沖齋詩集 (Chongfu Hunan edition, 1879), 16.56ab; Liu Jia, “Yongshi” 詠史, in Pan Yantong 潘衍桐, comp., *Liang Zhe youxuan xulu* 兩浙輶軒續錄 (reprint of the Guangxu Zhejiang shuju edition), in *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, vol. 1685:732, 25.54a.
  90. Qiao Yingjia, *Banjiu ting ji* 半九亭集, edited by Zhao Wangjin 趙望進 (Taiyuan: San Jin chubanshe, 2012), 5.1a.



91. Susan Mann, "The Virtue of Travel for Women in the Late Empire," in Bryna Goodman and Wendy Larson, eds., *Gender in Motion: Divisions of Labor and Cultural Change in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005), 55-74.
92. Fong, "Authoring Journeys: Women on the Road," in *Herself an Author*, 85-120.
93. Dorothy Ko (Gao Yanyi 高彥頤), "'Kongjian' yu 'jia': Lun Mingmo Qingchu funü de shenghuo kongjian" '空間'與'家': 論明末清初婦女的生活空間, *Jindai Zhongguo funü shi yanjiu* 近代中國婦女史研究 3 (August 1995): 21-50.
94. Hoi-ling Lui, "Gender, Emotions, and Texts: Writings to and about Husbands in Anthologies of Qing Women's Works" (M. Phil. thesis, Hong Kong Baptist University, 2010), 90-119.
95. A quick reference can be obtained by a combined keyword search for the two characters of *xian* (閑 and 閒) contained in poem titles, which show a total of 152 entries. Among them, the most frequent phrase is *xianju*, which appears 36 times, while all the others such as *xianbu*, *xianwang*, *xianzuo*, *xianyong*, *xiantiao*, or *xianqi* appear much less often ([http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/mingqing/search/index\\_ch.php](http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/mingqing/search/index_ch.php)).
96. Zhang Hongping 張紅萍, "Xiuxian: Nüxing shengming jiazhi de ziwo tixian" 休閒: 女性生命價值的自我體現, in her *Zhongguo nüren de yige shiji* 中國女人的一個世紀 (Beijing: Jiuzhou chubanshe, 2010), 143-62.
97. Wang Zhenyi, "Qiuri xianju," 秋日閒居 in *Defeng ting chujì* 德風亭初集 (Jiang shi Shenxiu shuwu edition, 1916), Ding 丁, 22.7b.
98. Jiang Zhu, "He Qingxi furen chunri xianju yun queji" 和清溪夫人春日閒居韻卻寄, *Qingli ge ji* 青藜閣集, in Ren Zhaolin 任兆麟 and Zhang Yunzi 張允滋, comps., *Wuzhong nüshi shichao* 吳中女士詩鈔 (1789 edition), 14b-15a.
99. Cai Wan, "Chang xiangsi (xianzuo)" 長相思(閒坐), in Xu Naichang 許乃昌, *Guixiu cichao* 閨秀詞鈔 (Xiaotanluan shi edition, 1909), 10.6b.
100. Bao Zhifen, "Zaoqiu xianyong" 早秋閒詠, in her *Sanxiu zhai shichao* 三秀齋詩鈔, in *Jingjiang Bao shi san nüshi shichao heke* 京江鮑氏三女史詩鈔合刻 (1882 edition), in Fang and Yi, *Ming Qing funü zhushu huikan*, 1.2b.
101. Gan Lirou, "Dushi" 讀史, *Yongxue lou gao* 詠雪樓稿 (Banjizhai edition, 1840), 4.14b.
102. See Fong, "A Life in Poetry: The Auto/biography of Gan Lirou

- (1743-1819),” in *Herself an Author*, 52.
103. Tan Ziyang, “Dushu” 讀書, *Xiuyin lou shichao* 繡吟樓詩鈔, in Cai, *Guochao guige shichao*, 9.45a.
  104. Rong Xian, “Chunye dushi,” in Yun Zhu, comp., *Guochao guixiu zhengshi xuji* 國朝閨秀正始續集 (Hongxian guan edition, 1836), 4.7a.
  105. Wang Zhaoluan, “Song Zifu dushu Xishang caotang” 送子父讀書溪上草堂, in Huang, *Liuxu ji*, 23.1049.
  106. Gu Ruopu, “Qiuye dushi,” in her *Woyue xuan gao* 臥月軒稿 (Guangxu Jiahui tang edition), 2.4ab.
  107. Ye Yanlan 葉衍蘭 and Ye Gongchuo 葉恭綽, *Qingdai xuezhe xiangzhuan* 清代學者像傳, 2 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2001), 1:355-56. On Wang Duan, see also n. 123.
  108. Wang Duan, “Qiuye dushi,” in her *Ziran haoxue zhai shichao* 自然好學齋詩鈔, in Mao Jun, comp., *Linxia yayin ji* 林下雅音集 (1884 edition), 2.12ab.
  109. Huang Yuanzhen, “Qiuchuang yueshi,” in Xu Shichang 徐世昌, comp., *Wanqing yi shihui* 晚晴移詩匯 (Shanghai: Sanlian shudian, 1989), 183.1391.
  110. Xue Shaohui, “Zhongqiu ye dushi zuo,” in her *Daiyun lou shiji* 黛韻樓詩集 (1911 edition), in Fang and Yi, *Ming Qing funü zhushu huikan*, 2.3b.
  111. Nanxiu Qian, “Xue Shaohui and Her Poetic Chronicle of Late Qing Reforms,” in Grace S. Fong and Ellen Widmer, eds., *Inner Quarters and Beyond: Women Writers from Ming through Qing* (Leiden and Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2010), 354-55.
  112. Fong and Widmer, *Inner Quarters and Beyond*, 354-55.
  113. Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 296-97. See also Harriet Zurndorfer (宋漢理), “Xingbie hua de Zhongguo keju zhidu” 性別化的中國科舉制度, in Li Hongqi 李弘祺, ed., *Zhongguo yu Dongya de jiaoyu chuantong* 中國與東亞的教育傳統 (Taibei: Ximalaya yanfa jijinhui, 2006), 207-29.
  114. Borrowed from Grace S. Fong’s analysis, see her *Herself an Author*, 159-60.
  115. Zhou Huijuan, “Dushi” 讀史, in Ciyi nüshi 慈懿女史, ed., *Lichao guixiu mingshi yiqian shou* 歷朝閨秀名詩一千首 (Shanghai: Shanghai jingwei shuju, 1936), 211.
  116. Mao Xiuyu, “Qie boming” 妾薄命, in Huang, *Liuxu ji*, 17.743. For a

- full account of Zhu's story, see his biography in Ban, *Han shu*, 64 shang, 2791-94.
117. Yuan Shou, "Dushi yougan," in her *Yaohua ge shicao* 瑤華閣詩草 (1867 edition), in Fang and Yi, *Ming Qing funü zhushu huikan*, 5a-6a.
  118. One can easily see this by searching databases such as the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 and *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊. For a quick reference see Chen Shiduo 陳士鐸, *Bencao xinbian* 本草新編 (Beijing: Zhongguo Zhongyiyao chubanshe, 1996), 5.344.
  119. Yuan Shou, "Dushi yougan," 5a.
  120. Yuan Shou, "Dushi yougan," 5a. For the full story of Han Wudi admitting his faults at Luntai, see Ban, *Han shu*, vol. 12, 96.3912-3914. Han Wudi lost his heir apparent due to a witchcraft accusation incident in 91 B.C.E. The emperor only learned that his son was an innocent victim after his death. To mourn his lost heir, Han Wudi constructed a memorial named Sizi gong 思子宮 and a platform called Guilai wangsi zhi tai 歸來望思之臺 in the middle of a lake. See Ban, *Han shu*, vol. 9, 63.2741-2747.
  121. Xu Weiwen, "Dushi," in Fu Ying 傅瑛, *Ming Qing Anhui funü wenxue zhushu jikao* 明清安徽婦女文學著述輯考 (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 2010), 4.213.
  122. Liang Hanrong, "Du shishu" 讀史書, in Chen Xiang 陳香, comp., *Qingdai nü shiren xuanji* 清代女詩人選集 (Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1977), 211.
  123. Jin Hesu, "Yue Lienü zhuan" 閱《列女傳》, in Huang, *Liuxu ji*, 34.1559.
  124. Wang Duan, "Yong shi," in her *Ziran haoxue zhai shichao*, 3.6b.
  125. Chen Wenshu, "Xiaohui Wang yiren zhuan" 孝慧汪宜人傳, included in the beginning of Wang Duan's *Ziran haoxue zhai shichao*, 306-19. On the life of Wang Duan, see also Hu Jing 胡敬, "Wang Yunzhuang nüshi zhuan" 汪允莊女史傳, also included in *Ziran haoxue zhai shichao*, 303-304; Chen Ruifen 陳瑞芬, "Wang Duan yanjiu" 汪端研究, *Guoli Taiwan shifan daxue Guowen yanjiu suo jikan* 國立台灣師範大學國文研究所集刊 32 (June 1988): 668-824; Lu Zhihong 盧志虹 (Ina Lo), "Wang Duan nianpu" 汪端年譜, *Qingshi luncong* 清史論叢 2013 (December 2012): 148-81 and "Cainü Wang Duan jiqi jieren zhi shengping kaoshu" 才女汪端及其家人之生平考述, *Yanjing xuebao* 燕京學報 new 30 (August 2012): 275-341.
  126. In his "Xiaohui Wang yiren zhuan," Chen Wenshu describes Wang Duan's destroying of this eighty volume work due to her religious beliefs (p. 309). Note that Hu Jing also mentions this work of history,

but says the length of the work was eighteen instead of eighty volumes (p. 303). Contemporary researchers on Wang Duan are very curious about this work but have not been able to locate much information. Cao Zhengwen 曹正文 labels Wang Duan's *Yuan Ming yishi* as China's first female-authored popular fiction. He admits that he has not read the novel but does not explain that the work has been destroyed by its author. See Cao's "Wang Duan yu *Yuan Ming yishi*: Nüxing tongsu xiaoshuo de dangsheng" 汪端與《元明佚史》：女性通俗小說的誕生, in his *Nüxing wenxue yu wenxue nüxing* 女性文學與文學女性 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1991), 150-52. Wilt Idema and Beata Grant also describe the *Yuan Ming yishi* as "a long novel in eighty chapters." See their *The Red Brush: Writing Women of Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), 627. Ellen Widmer previously describes the *Yuan Ming yishi* as "fictional." See "Ming Loyalism and the Woman's Voice in Fiction after *Hong lou meng*," in Widmer and Chang, *Writing Women in Late Imperial China*, 378-82. Widmer also refers to the manuscript as a "colloquial novel," in *The Beauty and the Book: Women and Fiction in Nineteenth-Century China* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 121. However, for Widmer's most recent analysis of the *Yuan Ming yishi*, see her "Women as Biographers in Mid-Qing Jiangnan," in Joan Judge and Hu Ying, eds., *Beyond Exemplar Tales: Women's Biography in Chinese History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2011), 255-61. Widmer argues that if the *Yuan Ming yishi* (which Widmer translates as the *Lost History of the Yuan and Ming*) had survived, "it would have been the first known novel (or possibly popular history; we are not quite sure of the genre) by a woman author." Widmer also suggests that, "Wang Duan tried to write biography and history, even a novel, in a world that apparently discouraged pure narrative by women writers" (p. 257). Lu Zhihong (Ina Chi Hung Lo) expresses great reservation in labeling the *Yuan Ming yishi* as a vernacular fiction. See her convincing elaboration "Nengfou tuiduan Wang Duan de *Yuan Ming yishi* wei baihua xiaoshuo?" 能否推斷汪端的《元明逸史》為白話小說? in her "Guizhong de xuezhe: Wang Duan (1793-1839) de shengming licheng, shige bianzhuang ji lishi guanhuai" 閨中的學者：汪端 (1793-1839) 的生命歷程，詩歌編撰及歷史關懷 (M. Phil. thesis, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2010), 239-44. Concerning the possible reasons why Wang Duan burned her manuscript, see Lu Zhihong's

- discussion in the same thesis, 145-51.
127. Idema and Grant, *The Red Brush*, 628.
  128. Liang Desheng, “*Ming sanshi jia shixuan xu*” 《明三十家詩選》序, in her *Guchun xuan wenchao* 古春軒文鈔, xia, 2a. For a complete translation of this preface, see Idema and Grant, *The Red Brush*, 621-23.
  129. Zhang Zao, “Chunri xiaoyuan dushu zuo” 春日小園讀書作, in her *Peiyuan tang shiji* 培遠堂詩集, vol. 10.20 (reprint of the Qianlong edition), in *Siku weishou shu jikan*, 9b (658).
  130. Ji Lanyun, “Changxia wuliao zayi shishi de shi’er shou,” in her *Chuwan ge ji* 楚畹閣集 (1847 edition), in Fang and Yi, *Ming Qing funü zhushu huikan*, 8.4a-7a.
  131. Ji, “Changxia wuliao zayi shishi de shi’er shou,” 5a. Concerning the story of Wu Qi killing his wife, see his biography in *Shiji*, vol. 7, 65.2165-2169.
  132. Reported in Wang Yunzhang 王蘊章, *Ranzhi yuyun* 燃脂餘韻 (2nd ed.; Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1919), 1.11b–12a and in Lei and Lei, *Guixiu shihua* 閨秀詩話 (Shanghai: Saoye shanfang, 1922), 11.2ab.
  133. Wang Shengzhi, “Ti Sun Peiqiu nüshi huachuang dushi tu” 題孫佩秋女史花窗讀史圖, in *Mingyun xuan yishi* 茗韻軒遺詩 (Zilang yuguan edition, 1865), in Fang and Yi, *Ming Qing funü zhushu huikan*, 14ab.
  134. Chou Ying, *Yuanzhong dushi tu*, [www.coauction.com/1/58463](http://www.coauction.com/1/58463).
  135. Fei Danxu, *Tongyin dushi tu*, [auction.artxun.com/paimai-95273-476364264.shtml](http://auction.artxun.com/paimai-95273-476364264.shtml).
  136. Su Renshan, *Banji xushi tu*, [auction.artron.net/Showpic.php?ArtCode=art21950221](http://auction.artron.net/Showpic.php?ArtCode=art21950221). Also, note an interesting contemporary painting, *Munü dushi tu* 母女讀史圖, which depicts a mother and a daughter studying history, by Wei Qian 魏謙, [shop.xinhuaacang.com/goods/1673](http://shop.xinhuaacang.com/goods/1673).
  137. For example, male scholars reading history are illustrated in the following modern and contemporary works: Zhang Daqian 張大千, *Hetang dushi tu* 荷塘讀史圖, [www.zunke.com/result/good/id/2408157](http://www.zunke.com/result/good/id/2408157); Deng Shen 鄧聖, *Jiaoyin dushi tu* 蕉蔭讀史圖, [http://art.china.cn/mjda/2009-03/26/content\\_2815095.htm](http://art.china.cn/mjda/2009-03/26/content_2815095.htm); Liu Dawei 劉大為, *Jiaoyin dushi tu*, in Wu Changjiang 吳長江, ed., *Mingde Herong: Quanguo Zhongguo hua minjia yaoqingzhan zuopin ji* 明德和融:全國中國畫名家邀請作品集 (Beijing: Beijing gongyi meishu chubanshe, 2011), 3; Ge Qingyao 葛慶友, *Dushi tu* 讀史圖, [www.jinghui888.com/jh/showzp.asp?id=690](http://www.jinghui888.com/jh/showzp.asp?id=690).
  138. Gan Qihua, “Tong waizi fenyong *Ming shi* ni gu yuefu sishou zhi yi”

- 同外子分詠《明史》擬古樂府四首之一, in her *Fenyu xiaocao* 焚餘小草, in Cai, *Guochao guige shichao*, 10.33b-34a. See also Yu Qian's biography in Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉 et al., *Ming Shi* 明史, vol. 15 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 170.4543-53.
139. Chen Yunlian, “Dushi yougan yonghuai zhiwai” 讀史有感咏懷質外, in her *Xinfang ge shicao* 信芳閣詩草 (1859 edition), in Fang and Yi, *Ming Qing funü zhushu huikan*, 3.4a. On Yan Guang, see Fan Ye 范曄, *Hou Han shu* 後漢書, vol. 10 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), 83.2763-64.
140. Liang Shanzhou furen 梁山舟夫人, “Lun shishu” 論史書, in Wang Xiuqin 王秀琴, comp. and Hu Wenkai, ed., *Lidai mingyuan shujian* 歷代名媛書簡 (Changsha: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1941), 171.