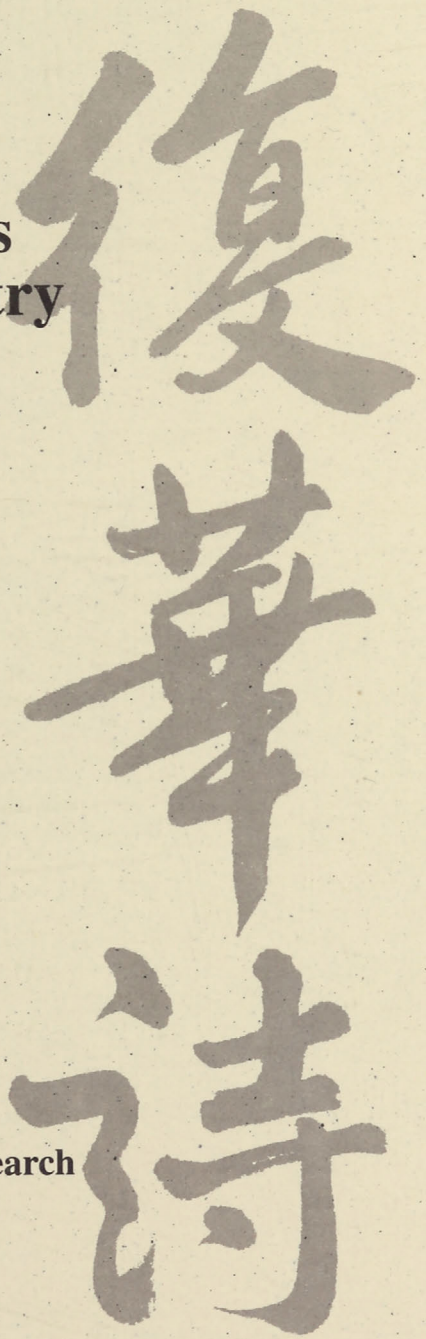
Hsiang Lectures on Chinese Poetry



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Hsiang Lectures on Chinese Poetry

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Grace S. Fong
Editor

Chris Byrne
Editorial Assistant

Centre for East Asian Research
McGill University

Calligraphy by: Han Zhenhu

For additional copies please send request to:

Hsiang Lectures on Chinese Poetry
Centre for East Asian Research
McGill University
688 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, Quebec
Canada H3A 3R1

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Endowed by

Professor Paul Stanislaus Hsiang (1915-2000)

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Editor's Note

It has been almost four years since the last volume of *Hsiang Lectures on Chinese Poetry* was published in the fall of 2015. In the meantime, the Hsiang Lecture Series has changed from a biannual event to an annual event held usually in April of each year. The three lectures published in this volume are in the order in which they were presented. In different ways, they engage with poetic developments and cultural and intellectual issues that arose in the Song Dynasty, demonstrating the significant impact the Song has borne on practices, developments, and understandings of Chinese poets and poetry down to our very own times.

In "'Modern' Science and Technology in 'Classical' Chinese Poetry of the Nineteenth Century," Professor Jerry Schmidt examines the classical poetic skills with which several nineteenth-century poets of the Shatan Group of Guizhou province seamlessly recorded their experience of modern science and Western technology such as steamships and trains, noting how some wrote in praise of, but also reflected critically on, consequences of technological developments, such as the first railroad in China. He challenges the disparagement of these and other poets of the nineteenth century by May Fourth revisionists as the "Qing Dynasty Song School" and their exclusion from China's literary canon in the twentieth century. The lecture finishes with an analysis of the tour-de-force poem on the Eiffel Tower by Huang Zunxian (1848-1905), celebrated as a poetic innovator in the late Qing, which encapsulates the exhilaration and questioning brought by the experience of modern technology.

From the poets of the Song School of the Late Qing we travel back to verse composed by poets in the Tang and Song periods who were later canonized in the tradition. But how do we understand their poetic texts from our worlds, from our standpoints in the twenty-first-century West? This is the question Professor Michael Fuller set out to answer in his self-reflective lecture "In Praise of Alienation: A Role for Theory in Reading Classical Chinese Poetry." He refuses Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic circle of the "fusion of horizons," the gradual understanding between past cultures and the present based on the assumption of continuities deriving from "effective history" that erase historical differences. Prof. Fuller maintains a theoretical frame of "alienation" to understand Su Shi, and Du Fu, in their worlds, their "intellectual and aesthetic contexts," which are alien to his (and our) own. He proposes to dialectically assimilate historical difference into his world, and

in the process, to recover the meaning of *li* as inherent pattern in Northern Song intellectual culture in his reading of Su Shi and the structure of ordering and aesthetic experience of Du Fu leading to the changed world after the An Lushan Rebellion and beyond.

In "Avatars of Li Bai: On the Production of Tang Poetry and Tang Poets during the Northern Song Dynasty," Professor Anna Shields problematizes the teleological tendency and assumption of coherence in reception history studies regarding the canonization process of a single author by taking a broader perspective on Song readings of Tang literature as hermeneutic practice. She examines how, in the changing culture and politics of the Tang-Song transition, multiple Li Bais were produced by editors, critics, and readers after the poet's death. By first reviewing how images of Li Bai during the Tang were co-produced by a combination of his own poems, contemporary responses to him, and commemorative records written in diverse genres after his death, Prof. Shields sets up a comparative framework in which to examine and elucidate how Song scholars reacted to the versions of Li Bai they inherited from the Tang and the complex shifts in their own constructions and representations of Tang poets that developed in the context of new intellectual, bibliographical, and editorial trends.

There would have been another lecture in the present volume. But due to unforeseen circumstances, Professor Graham Sanders was not able to complete the revision of his lecture "Fake Views: Poetic Presentations of the Self in Shen Fu's *Six Records of a Life Adrift*," which will appear with the next two lectures in Volume 9 projected for 2021.

As always, I am immensely grateful for the efficient and meticulous editorial assistance provided by Dr. Christopher Byrne. He not only formatted, copyedited, and proofread the lectures, but also resolved various issues that arose in the production process.

March 2019

"Modern" Science and Technology in "Classical" Chinese Poetry of the Nineteenth Century

J. D. Schmidt 施吉瑞
University of British Columbia

This paper is dedicated to the memory of Prof. Daniel Bryant (1942-2014), University of Victoria, a great scholar and friend.

Introduction

This paper examines poetry about science and technology in nineteenth-century China, not a common topic in poetry written in Classical Chinese, much less in textbook selections of classical verse read in high school and university curricula in China. Since the May Fourth/New Culture Movement from the 1910s to the 1930s, China's literary canon underwent a drastic revision that consigned a huge part of its verse written after the year 907 to almost total oblivion, while privileging more popular forms from after that date that are written in vernacular Chinese, such as drama and novels.[1] The result is that today most Chinese confine their reading of poetry in the *shi* 詩 form to works created before the end of the Tang Dynasty (618-907), missing the rather extensive body of verse about scientific and technological subjects that began in the Song Dynasty (960-1278), largely disappeared in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), and then flourished as never before in the late Qing period (1644-1912). Except for a growing number of specialist scholars in China, very few Chinese readers have explored the poetry of the nineteenth century—in my opinion, one of the richest centuries in classical verse—thinking that the writing of this age is dry and derivative. Such a view is a product of the culture wars of the early twentieth century, but the situation has not been helped by the common name given to the most important literary group of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Qing Dynasty Song School (Qingdai Songshi pai 清代宋詩派), a term which suggests that its poetry is imitative of earlier authors, particularly those of the Song Dynasty. However, the comments of one of this school's more prominent authors and critics, He Shaoji 何紹基 (1799-1873), suggest that such a view is highly questionable:

> I only study [past poets'] writings to allow me to get my hands on

> the subject. Once I have taken control of my own hands and eyes, I ought to be able to gallop side by side with the ancients. If I had been born before Du Fu, Du Fu would have had to study *me*![2]

He Shaoji and other major Chinese poets of the nineteenth century learned from earlier authors, but they also believed that a writer had to develop his or her original style, from which even the greatest authors of the past such as Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770) could learn something. They were fully aware that they were living in a new age and were writing highly original poetry.

The actual literary accomplishments of the Song School poets would also suggest that the current neglect of nineteenth-century poetry is untenable. I do not have the space here to give a detailed introduction to these authors as a group, but my monograph on the poet Zheng Zhen 鄭珍 (1806-1864) would suggest that he is one of China's greatest authors, a view that was shared by many of his contemporaries and critics of the early twentieth century before the May Fourth Movement's drastic revision of the literary canon. The prominent poet and literary critic Zhao Xi 趙熙 (1867-1948) called Zheng China's "greatest poet, of the very first rank" (絕代經巢第一流) and the outstanding twentieth-century scholar Qian Zhonglian 錢仲聯 (1908-2003) said that he was the "number one poet of the Qing Dynasty" (清代第一詩人) and "the equal of Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101)" (*buzai Dongpo xia* 不在東坡下), better known in China today as Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 and generally regarded as the greatest poet of the Song Dynasty. Although many scholars in Chinese departments in China still ask me "Zheng who?" when I mention his name to them, the situation in that country is changing rapidly, and more and more graduate students and established scholars are working on Qing verse.

The Two Cultures

Modern Western readers' possible doubts about nineteenth-century Chinese poetry on science and technology most likely arise from one of the most prominent fissures in Western culture since the beginning of the nineteenth century, i.e., the deep divide between the humanities and science, or what some term the "two cultures." Many humanists of the seventeenth century found the new scientific knowledge of that period positively exhilarating, but when the Industrial Revolution got under way in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Great Britain, English authors such as William Blake (1757-1827) began talking about the "dark, satanic mills" of the new economic and technological order and lamenting the end of earlier traditional life styles.[3] Although a French author like Jules Verne (1826-1905) celebrated the new technology in his highly popular novels, many writers, especially poets, exhibited a profound ignorance of the new technology, Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892) telling his readers that the first time he

took a steam-driven train, he thought the vehicle rode in grooves rather than on rails!

> Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range.
> Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change.[4]

European society was becoming more and more specialized; poets rarely delved into scientific and technological matters, while most scientists and technicians were too busy with the "real world" to write (or perhaps even read) poetry.

Assuredly, this divide between the worlds of science and literature was not yet as apparent in nineteenth-century China as it is in both China and the West now. However, it was one of the most persistent literary debates in Chinese history, namely, the argument between some critics who maintained that poetry in the *shi* form was not an appropriate vehicle for the discussion of ideas and those who did not agree with this view. In spite of possible support for Chinese critics opposed to the use of poetry as a vehicle to discuss ideas, the literary theory of the Qing Dynasty Song School encouraged the discussion of ideas and the use of learning in poetry. For them the greatest verse was a perfect blend of what they called the poetry of learned scholars (*xueren zhi shi* 學人之詩) and the poets' poetry (*shiren zhi shi* 詩人之詩), i.e., poetry of feelings. This ideal might seem difficult to realize, but Zheng Zhen frequently succeeded, a good example being a set of two poems that he wrote about vaccinating his grandson against smallpox. This work combines a brief review of Chinese medical literature on the disease over the centuries with a clinical description of the young boy's reaction to the vaccination but concludes with a deeply moving depiction of the profound love that the poet had for his grandson. [5]

Poetry of Ideas

However, as I have just suggested, Zheng's approach was contrary to the ideas of some of China's more influential critics. As a member of the Qing Dynasty Song School, he was influenced by Song Dynasty authors such as Su Shi, many of whom used poetry to discuss all sorts of ideas, including those of a scientific or technological nature. Yet, by the end of the Song Dynasty the critic Yan Yu 嚴羽 (fl. 1180-1235) initiated an attack on many of the practices of Song poets in the *shi* form, declaring that "poetry has its special 'interest,' but it is not ideas," and had criticized such Song authors as Su Shi who "in recent ages...used their talent and learning to write poetry or who used discussions of ideas to write poetry..., which is not [as good as] the poetry of the ancients.[6] The Ming poet and critic Li Mengyang 李夢陽 (1473-1530) concurred with Yan's view:

> The men of Song made ideas primary and used the language of ideas....But when was poetry ever lacking in ideas? If you use the language of ideas alone, why not write prose essays? Why write *poetry*?[7]

As a result of the criticisms of Yan Yu and Li Mengyang, Song *shi* poetry and its interest in ideas became unpopular during the Ming Dynasty, and it was not until the Qing Dynasty that attitudes began to shift, the thinker Fang Yizhi 方以智 (1611-1671) retorting: "Who says you cannot use allusions? Who says you cannot put discussions [of ideas into your poems]?"[8] Song influence on Qing verse is already very apparent by the eighteenth century in the work of such widely read and influential masters as Yuan Mei 袁枚 (1716-1798), but it reaches new heights in the early nineteenth century with the work of Zheng Zhen's and He Shaoji's teachers, especially Cheng Enze 程恩澤 (1785-1837).

Zheng Zhen on Science and Technology

Cheng had been a close friend of Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764-1849), a man whose collection of biographies of Chinese mathematicians and astronomers, *Chouren zhuan* 疇人傳 (Biographies of Astronomer-Mathematicians), had been quite influential in the revival of interest in mathematics and astronomy in China during the nineteenth century, but Cheng was also an expert on agricultural technology, particularly new methods for rearing silkworms. The very first book that the poet Zheng Zhen himself published was not a collection of his verse but rather a detailed technical treatise on a new form of sericulture that had revolutionized the rural economy in the region of Guizhou Province in which he spent most of his life. Zheng does not seem to have had any knowledge of the new Western science and technology of his age, but he had probably read Ruan Yuan's account of Chinese mathematicians and astronomers, which included biographies of Westerners such as Euclid (fl. 300 B.C.), as well as European Jesuit missionaries who brought knowledge of Renaissance mathematics and astronomy to China during and after the sixteenth century. There was, however, no way for scholars like him to learn about the new astronomy of Galileo (1564-1642) and Kepler (1571-1630) or about the revolution in mathematics brought about by Isaac Newton's (1643-1727) and Gottfried Leibniz's (1646-1716) invention of calculus. This was not possible until the establishment of China's first Western-style industrial enterprise, the Jiangnan Arsenal (Jiangnan zhizao ju 江南製造局) in Shanghai in 1865 by another outstanding Song School poet Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 (1811-1872), better known today in China as the man who defeated the Taiping 太平 Rebellion (1850-1864). The Translation

Bureau (Fanyibu 翻譯部) that was set up in the Arsenal began translating a substantial number of books on contemporary Western science and technology, including monographs about modern astronomy and the first book on calculus in Chinese.

In spite of his ignorance of these more recent developments, Zheng created more poetry of high quality on science and technology than any author before his age whose works I have read. Since I have already written extensively about these in my book on Zheng, I do not want to dwell on them here but will mention that these included poems on sericulture, a particularly fascinating work about the so-called "paddy horse" (*yangma* 秧馬)—a newly invented agricultural machine—a poem on road building, and the work on smallpox vaccination already mentioned.[9]

But even more interesting than these poems is Zheng's exploration of the economic, social, and political dimensions of scientific and technological innovation before any contact with the new developments in the West. Zheng wrote works about the problems involved in technology transfer, explored the issue of how new technology frequently favors the rich and powerful over the poor and disadvantaged, and even dealt with the problem of industrial pollution.[10] Again I do not wish to discuss these topics in detail, for they are all covered in my book, but I will give two examples in a poem series about pollution from lead mining (1836):

Lead Smelters at Zhehai (Two Poems of Three) 者海鉛廠三首

(1)

Let's have no more of this heating and forging for money; 無斯煎煆利
Even demons would turn around and run from this place. 鬼亦掉頭還
Human voices issue from ink-black pits; 墨井人聲底
Glowing furnaces merge with the setting sun. 爐場夕照間
For a century there's been no shade from trees; 百年無樹影
Those masses of wrinkles are soot-stained hills. 衆皺是灰山
We can imagine that on those barren peaks, 誰識荒荒頂
No claws of flying swans ever dare to linger. 飛鴻爪自閒

(2)

Forgers sleep by the side of their furnaces; 竈甬邊爐宿
Colliers lean against rocks as they cook. 煤丁倚石炊
Their families idly wait for their pay, 妻兒閒待養

Scrap metal adorning the tombs of their dead.[11]	喬罐死猶隨
Their resources count for so very little,	物力秖斯數
But how long can the life of a human last?	生涯能幾時
Lead is shipped north and south each year;	年年南北運
Don't people see the tragedy of these impoverished mountains?[12]	不見窮山悲

Zhehai 者海 is located near modern Huize 會澤 District in Yunnan Province not far from the border with Guizhou, and Zheng passed through the place in 1836, when he was on his way to visit his uncle in Pingyi 平夷 and take on a post as one of his advisors. Zheng provides a haunting portrait of Zhehai, where the lead pollution is already so severe that the trees have stopped growing and all animal life has vanished. The toll that the pollution had exacted on the natural environment was terrible enough, but the human toll was beyond imagination. As Zheng writes, "Human voices issue from ink-black pits," the entrances to which are eerily illuminated by forges that resemble the fires of hell. The families of the miners and forgers sit about idly, while the workers themselves slave constantly, rewarded only with a tomb made of waste material from the furnaces they once tended. Here we have the Wasteland before the Industrial Revolution even came to China, but the motive for its creation is the same as in the West, the yearning for money by people who are rich already, the same sort of people who would soon inflict the First Opium War (1839-1842) on Zheng Zhen's nation.[13] Although pollution must have been even more "advanced" in Europe than in China at this period, so far I have not been able to find any poems by major Western poets about this problem coming from such an early date.

However, since the main purpose of my paper is to examine how Chinese responded to the "modern" technology introduced from the West in their "classical" poetry, I will say no more about Zheng Zhen, who spent most of his life in Guizhou Province, which was about as far as one could be from Western influence in China then, except to comment that his positive attitudes about the possible benefits of technological innovations for ordinary Chinese remained an abiding concern of Chinese intellectuals throughout the rest of the nineteenth century and into our present age and was an important component of what I have termed his "modernity" in my book. His discussion of the economic, political, and social implications of technological change was considerably ahead of his own age and was prophetic of growing interest in such issues among later Chinese intellectuals and, more and more today, the general public. We normally think of the present Chinese discourse on science and technology as being of Western origin, but my own preliminary research on this topic suggests that much of it was already in place before

Zheng Zhen died in 1864.

Now I will turn to focus on Zheng's followers and other poets who were connected either directly or closely with the Qing Dynasty Song School. The authors who were closely associated with Zheng Zhen are now usually called the Shatan Group 沙灘派, because they were mostly from the small town of Shatan, which lies southeast of Zunyi 遵義 in Guizhou Province. The first author I would like to discuss is Zheng Zhen's son Zheng Zhitong 鄭知同 (1831-1890), who is even less well known than his father but definitely a writer of major importance. During the chaotic period that followed the Taiping invasion of Guizhou in 1862, Zheng Zhen's house and library were destroyed. After he and his family were forced to seek refuge in a mountain stockade nearby their former home, Zheng died a most horrible death from an ulcerated jaw, a condition probably brought on by the suffering and deprivation of his later years.

Zheng Zhitong's Voyage

After the destruction of the family home and the death of his illustrious father, economic necessity soon forced Zheng Zhitong to leave Guizhou and seek employment with one of the most renowned figures of the age, Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909), a progressive member of the Foreign Matters Movement (Yangwu yundong 洋務運動), which was attempting to strengthen and modernize China by the use of Western science and technology. Although Zhang's literary accomplishments have been little studied so far, he was also a major poet of the Song School and, hence, had a good deal in common with Zheng Zhitong and his father. At this time, Zhang was serving in Sichuan, which is not far from Guizhou, so Zheng Zhitong was obviously delighted at the prospect of working for him. Unfortunately, Zhang's term of office in Sichuan soon came to an end, and Zheng had to begin thinking of other options, eventually doing what many others did during his age, heading "downriver." By early spring of 1879 Zheng was in Wuchang 武昌 in Hubei Province and by the end of the season he was riding on a steamship heading for Shanghai, possibly the first time that a member of the Shatan Group traveled on a form of modern transportation. Zheng must have found his first contact with the new technology of the modern age exciting, because he wrote a series of four quatrains describing his voyage:

I Was About to Travel to Hangzhou, so I Rode a Steamship, First Arriving at Shanghai, Four Poems Describing Scenes	將適余杭，乘火輪船，先至上海，即景四首
(1)	
At morning I leave Hubei's Ezhu and am at Poyang by evening,[14]	朝辭鄂渚晚鄱陽
Cloudy mountains racing busily in front of my eyes.	奔走雲山過眼忙
Only Xiaogu's peak welcomes me and sends me off,	獨有小姑迎送客
But when I turn round, it shines green, a hundred li away.	回頭百里尚蒼蒼
(2)	
After sailing all night, I wake up at Anhui's Wuhu;[15]	宵行一覺是蕪湖
A thousand li of rivers and mountains seem to have never existed.	千里江山了若無
But despite this, I haven't let down my enthusiasm for travel—[16]	畢竟不孤遊覽興
For in my dreams I really visited Jiangxi's Mount Lu!	夢中贏得到匡廬
(3)	
Morning colors intoxicate Nanjing's White Gate willows;[17]	白門柳色正朝酣
How could I be satisfied without a stop in this southern capital?	不住金陵那便甘
But I'm in a rush to view West Lake in the third month of the year,	為趁西湖三月景
And, alas, must forego Jiangnan's flowering apricots.	杏花時節負江南
(4)	
When I pass by Jiangsu's Dantu, the evening tide is rising,[18]	行過丹徒又晚潮
And I point at Zhenjiang's holy mountains by	卻從月下指金焦

the light of the moon.[19]
Though spring has ended, I wanted to stop for a while, 管教春盡還停泊
And take a close look at Yangzhou's twenty-four bridges.[20] 看到揚州廿四橋

The modern reader may be disappointed that Zheng's poems say nothing about the black smoke and clattering machinery of the steamship and fail to mention the Westerners who were almost inevitably on board a vessel heading downriver from Hankou 漢口 (just across the river from Wuchang), which had been opened to Western trade in 1861 and was developing quickly as a major *entrepôt* for products being shipped from the Yangtze Basin to Shanghai. Nonetheless, these "deficiencies" of Zheng's poems do not allow us to deny the early modernity of the series, for although their overt content is completely traditional, Zheng is already exploring the effects of new technology on the themes of classical verse. Without any special difficulty he has transferred his father's fascination for Chinese technology to the newest Western inventions then transforming the Qing empire, and he had performed this feat six years before the diplomat Huang Zunxian's 黃遵憲 (1848-1905) similar work was written while riding on a steamship back to China from his post as Chinese Consul-General (Zonglingshi 總領事) in San Francisco.[21]

In Zheng Zhitong's poems, everything has been speeded up. A journey that would have taken weeks, perhaps months with the many side excursions favored by the leisurely literati of past ages, is reduced to a matter of a few days.[22] The trip begins in the morning in Hubei but by evening Zheng has reached Jiangxi, and when he remembers to turn around and say goodbye to Xiaogu Island, it is already one hundred li (thirty-five kilometers) away! The ship travels on relentlessly the entire night, and Zheng misses all the beautiful scenery between Jiangxi and Anhui, only being able to envision a side trip to the holy Mount Lu in his dreams. Nor can he stop in the southern capital Nanjing, the second most important city in the empire, because he has accepted the new pace of the modern technology and has set a date to arrive in Hangzhou's West Lake to view the scenery of the third month so admired by ancient writers. At the end of the fourth poem, Zheng is close to Shanghai and thinks about going on a tour of another famous beauty spot, Yangzhou, but the ship forges on. One suspects that Zhitong's father, with his special fascination for agricultural machinery, might have written very different poems, but his son has been faithful to his Shatan background and brings the same open-minded approach to his writing of poetry that was being transformed by the new technology of travel.

Zheng Zhitong in Shanghai

As soon as he arrived in Shanghai, Zheng Zhitong became so busy editing scholarly texts and working over his deceased father's philological manuscript *Hanjian jianzheng* 漢簡箋正 (Commentary and corrections to bamboo tablets of the Han) that he never seems to have to have had time for the voyage to Hangzhou that he had planned. Shanghai itself also had undeniable attractions, including outstanding library collections and the largest Western presence in any Chinese city, a result of China's defeat in the First Opium War and the opening of the city to foreign trade. Shanghai had become a refuge for Chinese escaping from the Taiping Rebellion and had been shaken by its own uprising of the so-called Society of Little Swords (Xiaodaohui 小刀會), but as the Taiping Rebellion declined and Qing control over the region was restored, Shanghai began to flourish.[23]

Shanghai was so different from most Chinese cities that Zheng Zhitong was lucky to have Mo Shengsun 莫繩孫 (?-1919), the second son of the great poet Mo Youzhi 莫友芝 (1811-1871), Zheng Zhen's closest friend, as his cicerone on his first excursion to the foreign settlement. To say the least, Zhitong was flabbergasted by what Shengsun took him to see:

I Went Together with Shengsun on an Outing to Look at the Garden Residences of the English to the North of the Shanghai City Wall	偕莫繩孫游觀上海城北英國人園林
The Ocean People live by the Huangpu River,[24]	春申江頭海人居
Which has become more luxurious than old Suzhou.[25]	爾來奢麗逾姑蘇
Buildings and gardens twist this way and that,	樓臺園苑相縈紆
Each completely different in form and construction.	剪裁裝拘百迥殊
I take my friend, call a carriage, and ride to the green suburb,	攜朋命駕青郊驅
Where the verdant shade resembles the spring's third month.	陰綠初長春三餘
Suddenly I leave the dusty world and soar to the pure void;	忽離埃俗超清虛
My soul flutters, my eyes tremble, and I am sighing in amazement.	魂翻眼倒方詫吁
Has my body suddenly ascended to the paradise of immortals,	此身倏爾躋蓬壺
Where pearl palaces and nacre gates vanish and reappear?[26]	珠宮貝闕光有無

With a colored halo, the morning sun first rises from its home;[27]	扶桑彩暈朝暾初
Fairy flowers fall to the ground, where jasper grass is scattered.[28]	若華墮地瑤草鋪
Gorgeous ladies ride in cloud-covered coaches one after another;	雲軿絡繹來藐姑
Even their servants have blue eyes with large black pupils.[29]	方瞳碧眼為隸奴
This paradise is hidden, but these women are not alone;	洞天幽深良不孤
There are pet birds and lapdogs with women and children.[30]	果然雞犬偕妻孥
I seem to float in the sky as I gaze at one beauty,	飄飄乘風參彼姝
But she looks back and seems to say I'm not her match.	顧我乃似非其徒
I turn around and suddenly realize how foolish I've been;	回頭驚悟何其愚
Were all my fantasies about romance just a self-deception?[31]	非非幻想寧不誣

Zheng Zhitong was not the first Chinese author to use such language to describe Western buildings constructed with the aid of modern architectural technology in China, for nine years earlier (1870) the young Huang Zunxian had written about the "bejewelled church towers for worshipping Jesus" (*baota li Yesu* 寶塔禮耶穌) and the luxurious mansions erected on land worth more than "a thousand gold pieces per foot" (*chituo guo qianjin* 尺土過千斤) in the British colony of Hong Kong.[32] Huang was intrigued by the sexual side of Western life, too, but instead of fantasizing about a liaison with a young English lady like Zheng, he described how the English in Hong Kong:

Get lost in jeweled topknots of Barbarian hairdos	蠻雲迷寶髻
Or dissipate themselves in fleshpots with flowerlike courtesans.[33]	脂夜蕩花妖

There was, however, a much more "serious" side to Zheng Zhitong's poem, for just after the young lady rebuffs his advances, he continues:

Isn't Europe a land of gold and jewels?	豈非歐羅金碧都
The treasures of China are hardly its equal.	華夏瑰奇無彼如
We are startled that the human realm can	訝殊人境惟仙廬

become a paradise,
A fact we have ignored for a thousand years. 千年茫昧誰覺諸
Now Heaven must be laughing at China's southeast, 天公笑倒東南隅
Where people race to get rich but cannot catch up. 趨來繁盛益莫逾
The Western machines are very clever, and Westerners plan for wealth, 機制極巧規利圖
Wracking their brains to perfect a hundred new products.[34] 取竭百產精英枯

In Zheng Zhitong's piece there is not a trace of the xenophobia found in some of his contemporaries' writings, and following the practice of his father in his poem and prose preface written just after the First Opium War (1843), he prefers to use neutral words like "Ocean People" or the more accurate geographical label "European" to designate foreigners rather than the pejorative terms usually translated "barbarian" in Western books. Although Zhitong was certainly as nationalistic as his father, he feels no malice toward these outsiders and would rather learn from them than confront them. Like his father, Zheng Zhitong had spent practically all his life up to this point in a remote part of China with little or no knowledge of the West, but he felt nothing but admiration for what he saw in Shanghai, quickly realizing that the great power of nations like England derived from the combination of an orderly pursuit of wealth with the use of modern technology, an approach similar to what his father had espoused, which can transform "the human realm" into a veritable "paradise." Unfortunately, Zhitong was not able to pursue his study of Foreign Matters in any serious way during the rest of his one-year stay in Shanghai, for he was still assailed by guilt over his inability to salvage his father's Shatan tradition from the ruins of the Taiping Rebellion by fulfilling his promise to his dying father to print as many of his unpublished manuscripts as possible. Hence, rather than learning English or studying calculus as other progressive Chinese of the age did, he spent most of his time in that city editing classical texts and working on his father's scholarly treatise on the Han *Bamboo Tablets*.

The Railway Debate and Li Shufan's Poem on the Wusongkou Railway

Even before the First Opium War, a number of Chinese scholar-officials had admired certain aspects of Western science and technology, Ruan Yuan writing:

> Westerners are familiar with geometry, and so the instruments they manufacture are extremely well made. In general, if instruments are

> well made, then measurements are accurate. If measurements are accurate, then [what is observed] corresponds closely to the movements of celestial bodies.[35] That Western laws of science are confirmed by [what we observe] in the sky is because they are based on [observations made with] good instruments.[36]

Shortly before the war and after its humiliating conclusion, the premier architect of China's anti-opium policy, Lin Zexu 林則徐 (1785-1850), began urging his government to learn from Westerners, but it was not until the reign of the emperor Xianfeng 咸豐 (r. 1851-1862) and under the leadership of Zeng Guofan that any of his recommendations were taken very seriously.[37] By this time, even the court conservatives begrudgingly admitted the necessity of mastering certain elements of modern Western military technology in order to deal with future aggression and to help put down the numerous rebellions that threatened the very existence of the dynasty, but they were not willing to go much beyond such minor changes, as we can see from the debate about railroads that soon erupted.

Western businessmen were eager to open up China to further commerce, and once they got their feet into major seaports like Shanghai after the war, they soon saw the advantages they could reap from the construction of railroads into the interior. The first application to construct a railroad in China came in 1865, just two years after Zheng Zhen's death, when Sir Rowland Macdonald Stephenson (1808-1895), a pioneer in the development of railroads in British India, tried to persuade the statesman Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823-1901) to build various railroad lines and offered to arrange financial loans for their construction.[38] This was just one year after the conclusion of the bloody Taiping Rebellion, and Li probably thought the moment was still inopportune and sent Stephenson packing.

The first railway to be constructed on Chinese soil had to wait eleven more years, when the forty-kilometer line from the port of Wusongkou 吳淞口 to Shanghai was opened by Jardine-Matheson on the eighth of the fifth intercalary month (June 30) of 1876.[39] Western investors had only succeeded in building this by resort to a subterfuge, for knowing that the Qing court was still vehemently opposed to railways, they applied to local officials to build a "road" from the seaside to Shanghai, failing to tell them that this "road" would be supplied with iron rails along which fire-breathing steel dragons would race. Contrary to what one might suspect, the general public reception of the railway by local Chinese was initially quite positive, and it was soon packed with goods and passengers racing back and forth from Shanghai's major sea berth to the city itself, many of the common people riding it for the novel experience it provided. It was a profitable venture and was of vital importance for the development of Shanghai's economy, because it allowed

goods to be transported more quickly from the only place where large steamships could dock to the city's markets.

Some troubles did eventually arise when one person was killed by the train on the fourteenth of the sixth month (August 3) of 1876, causing concerns that current negotiations between China and Great Britain, which eventually led to the Treaty of Chefoo, might be jeopardized. Thomas Wade (1818-1895), the British ambassador to China, ordered the railway to halt all operations until the negotiations could be completed, which it did twenty-four days later.[40] The Qing government was not happy about the line and exerted sufficient diplomatic pressure to force the owners of the railway to sell it "at cost" to them on the eighth of the ninth month (October 24). Although it reopened on the seventeenth of the tenth month (December 2) and continued to carry large crowds of enthusiastic passengers, while the government paid its purchase price in three installments and foreign companies lobbied the Chinese to keep it open, the train took its last trip on the fourth of the ninth month (October 20) of 1877, and a few days later Chinese workers began dismantling the entire railway line. China's first railroad had come to an abrupt and ignoble end.[41]

Nor did anti-railroad sentiments die an early death in China, even when more and more Chinese intellectuals had chances to travel in countries where the new technology had been fully accepted. One of the more prominent foes of railroad building was Liu Xihong 劉錫鴻 (*juren* 1848), the number two man on China's first permanent embassy to the Western world, who started his diplomatic career by serving in Great Britain in 1877 and then became China's ambassador to Germany the following year.[42] Liu had been appointed to the first embassy in London to serve as a counter-weight to Guo Songtao 郭嵩燾 (1818-1891), the ambassador, because Guo was considered too pro-Western and too pro-reform to be completely trusted. Liu succeeded in making life miserable for Guo in England and sent many malicious reports back to Beijing about his supposed misdeeds.[43]

During his first year as a diplomat in England, Liu had many opportunities to observe the advantages of modern Western science and technology, traveling by steamship from China to England, riding on railroads numerous times, and even attending demonstrations of electricity and other modern scientific marvels.[44] He clearly recognized that these scientific and technological advances had had positive effects in Western countries, but he thought that such innovations would only cause trouble in China:

> When I saw the English ambassador Thomas Wade in the capital the first time, he immediately told me that the most important task for a government is to ensure the livelihood of its people and that the most urgent thing we ought to do is open coal and iron mines and

> construct railroads.[45] This time when we traveled south from Tianjin, the Westerners who were together with us on the ship centered their conversations with us on this point.[46] I maintained that we Chinese give priority to righteousness in our teachings and do not emphasize profit, and I informed them that we do what is suitable for the people and what does not bother them. They just kept on debating with me without any signs of fatigue, and at first I did not know why they took so much pleasure in making China rich and strong and why they were so insistent in making these proposals.
>
> But when I arrived in Shanghai, I went to see the Science Academy on the tenth, where Circuit Intendant Feng showed me a map of railroads that the Westerners had presented him, with lines stretching from India and other places outside our passes to our capital city, a complete line from south to north.[47] Then I knew that their intentions were not the same as the old ideas that caused them to occupy ports and force us to do business with them. If those in authority do not resolutely oppose this, then [Chinese] who work on the seaboard or along the border and who are entranced by every new thing, will fall into the [foreigners'] trap and will not wake up until it is too late…
>
> I must sincerely express my humble opinion that the construction of railroads is not only harmful to China but is harmful to England, too. The anger of the commoners [over the construction of the Wusongkou-Shanghai railroad] has not yet calmed down, and if we suddenly construct more railroads and damage more of their fields, houses, and tombs, the fury of the commoners will become greater.[48] Bandits who lie low now will use this as an excuse to kill more Englishmen and will exploit the feelings of the commoners to raise a rebellion. Not only will the commercial areas of our coastland be trampled upon, but the railroads that [are planned] to pass [to China] from India will also serve as a resource for these bandits…
>
> The talent and knowledge of the many generations of China's sagely rulers and virtuous ministers are hardly inferior to the Westerners, but none of them constantly rummaged around in the sky and in the earth or tried to compete with the forces of creation in order to become rich and powerful, probably because they understood the profundity of the principles involved and were worried about the long-term hazards, and most certainly they did not think of profit exclusively the way the English do.[49]

Liu's anti-railway tirade is at least partially a product of the immediate political environment. Thomas Wade was exerting pressure in Beijing to try and

save the Shanghai-Wusongkou line from demolition, and representatives of Jardine-Matheson even badgered Guo Songtao on this issue as he and Liu were traveling by slow relays from Beijing to north China's main seaport, Tianjin 天津, on their way to their point of embarkation in Shanghai.[50] China also had legitimate concerns about the ways that Westerners might exploit an envisioned railway network stretching from British India to the Chinese capital, for a railroad system that could transport troops quickly to defend China's borders could also be used by foreign invaders. In addition, there was the possibility that the building of railways might cause social dislocation. One of the early anti-railroad arguments was that their construction would increase unemployment for the many coolies who carried most of China's goods on their backs, but anyone like Liu who had traveled extensively in the West should have understood that the economic advantages of railroads far outweighed any harm they caused.[51]

Economic and political factors all played a role in Chinese opposition to railways, but deeper intellectual issues were involved, too. One of the ironies of Liu Xihong's prose passage is that Thomas Wade quotes Confucian ideals that Zheng Zhen and his teacher Cheng Enze would most certainly have agreed with, i.e., one of the basic responsibilities of the government is to improve the livelihood of the people by promoting the use of new technology such as the paddy horse, smallpox vaccination, or advanced methods of sericulture. In their poems and prose essays, Zheng Zhen and Cheng Enze constantly urged people to adopt such new techniques because they will derive material benefit from them. Neither Zheng nor Cheng (nor even Thomas Wade) would have claimed that profit is the sole concern of a government or the society it serves, but they would have disapproved of the way that Liu Xihong was willing to sacrifice the possibility of raising living standards to the levels in the West because of his blindness to the potential benefits that the new knowledge offered.

Zheng and Cheng would have been particularly displeased by Liu's disparagement of modern science's "rummaging around in the sky and earth," for nineteenth-century intellectuals like Ruan Yuan, Zheng's model and Cheng's closest friend, had already done a good deal of "rummaging" themselves. As accomplished Han Studies (Hanxue 漢學) scholars, Ruan, Cheng, and Zheng knew very well that rational enquiry can frequently lead to conclusions which fly in the face of long cherished ideas, and although they honored China's ancient sages just as much as Liu Xihong, their respect was not merely a blind worship of antiquity. But then again, Liu never did Han Studies scholarship, and he most certainly was not a Song School poet![52]

By the time that the Wusongkou-Shanghai line was completed, Zheng Zhen had already been dead for twelve years, so it is impossible to say with

absolute certainty how he would have reacted to this first debate about major technology transfer from the West to China, but we can hazard an intelligent guess based on a poem that his student and cousin Li Shufan 黎庶蕃 (1829-1886), the famous diplomat and prose stylist Li Shuchang's 黎庶昌 (1837-1897) elder brother, created shortly after the demolition of the railway. In 1867 Li Shufan helped his mother move from Guizhou to Nanjing, where Shuchang was then working as an advisor to Zeng Guofan, and then himself took up the job of Salt Commissioner for the Lianghuai Region (Lianghuai yan dashi 兩淮鹽大使) in Yangzhou, the center of the government salt trade. After Li Shuchang joined Guo Songtao's embassy to England in 1876 and moved their mother once more to Shanghai, Shufan frequently traveled between Yangzhou and that city to look after her welfare.[53] Although the precise date of Li's poem is not mentioned in its preface, it was certainly written in late 1877 or early 1878, shortly after the railroad was dismantled, a date confirmed by its position in Li Shufan's collected verse, which is arranged in chronological order:

The Railroad, with Prose Preface 火輪車 并序

All the Western countries have made railroads with steel wheels that can travel more than a thousand li in a single day. At the beginning of the Guangxu era (1875-1908), the English purchased land from the Chinese and built a railroad track from Shanghai to Wusong, which allowed a return trip of less than an hour. No vehicle is superior to this for carrying heavy loads over a long distance. I was able to see the railroad myself, but unfortunately it has now been destroyed.

All year I've closed my doors like some hibernating worm; 終年閉戶幾蟄蟲
Now I'm a wild bird that breaks out of its cage! 耆如野鳥初出籠
I buy fish and purchase wine, calling for my light cane; 買魚沽酒喚輕策
As the sun starts setting, I require an outing to Wusong. 日斜更欲游吳淞
On a Western train, I'm an immortal who rides the wind;[54] 西洋火車列子御
I gallop in stars, race past clouds, and soar in the void. 星馳電騖雲騰空
The train sounds like two blades that slice through silk, 又如并刀裂縑素

Flying past you like a bird glanced hurtling through mist. 鳥飛瞥過投煙中
It's a scared deer running from a net, an arrow shot from a bow, 驚麋脫網箭辭弩
A light boat shooting some rapids, a shuttle flying off a loom. 輕舟下瀨梭無蹤
It's not just a magic stallion racing from a whip, 豈獨揮鞭失神駿
And I marvel at the wind grazing against my ears as if coming from heaven.[55] 但怪掠耳號天風
It's a pity how clouds and hills flash by my eyes so quickly— 雲山過眼殊可惜
I can't detect how deep the colors of the mist and clouds are. 未辨煙霞深幾重
I finish a return journey of a hundred li in a short period of time, 朅來斯須盡百里
And the guards on the city wall still await the evening bell. 城頭尚待鳴昏鐘
But an occasional thrill of this sort is a trifling affair, 偶然一快亦細事
When you think of the unfathomable skill that made this train. 卻思至巧真難窮
Who would believe that the earth itself can be shrunk? 世間誰言地可縮
For this train makes us feel that Heaven has lost its power! 有此更覺天無功
The year I sailed down the Gorges, I was especially delighted— 當年出峽差可喜
In one day I reached Jiangling, traveling a thousand li.[56] 一朝千里江陵通
My safe journey made me happy, but dangerous ones cause concern,[57] 猶嫌夷險異憂樂
For the river tide rises and falls from autumn to winter.[58] 又況漲落殊秋冬
But this train is even more powerful than a team of horses, 何如此車勝馬力
Carrying heavy loads with you over a very long distance. 負重致遠皆從同
The Westerners hoped to use it to transport their goods, 西方轉餉若待此
Not imagining it would be destroyed after only three years.[59] 懸知易轍三年終

Chinese who do not cherish the great inventions of our land,	國之利器不自惜
Fail to learn the past's lessons, and are craven cowards![60]	後車失鑒非英雄

Although Li Shufan's prose preface tells us that he has penned his poem to mourn the tragic end of the Shanghai-Wusong Railway, its first three lines seem ordinary enough, and we think that we are about to read a rather conventional work inspired by a pleasant outing, the poet first complaining about his confinement at home, buying a meal with wine, and then preparing his walking staff. The first hint that something new is afoot comes in line four, when we realize that Li is proposing an eighty-kilometer hike at a time when the sun is about to set! Yet this surprise hardly prepares the reader used to pre-nineteenth century poetry for the next twelve lines of Li's work, which can only be read as a paean to the modern technology that enables an eighty-kilometer journey in such a short time. Li is no longer ambling along, staff in hand, viewing flowering trees or delighting in the graceful contour of the landscape, but is traveling at an exhilarating speed which allows him to imagine that he has left the material world behind like some latter-day Liezi and is "riding the wind." It is true that the last two lines of this section also suggest that there might be negative aspects of this mode of transport, since its very speed makes it difficult to appreciate the beauty of the scenery fully, but despite this minor reservation, we are left with the feeling that Li Shufan's impression of the new technology is highly positive.[61]

In spite of its revolutionary content, one of the more delightful features of this poem for a learned nineteenth-century reader would have been the clever and witty way that Li Shufan uses and transforms his literary tradition to accommodate the new world of science and technology then opening up to the Chinese people, a technique which allows him both to find connections between the old and new ages and also to show how the new age is totally different from what preceded it. We have already mentioned Li Shufan's allusion to the story of the mythical sage Liezi, first seen in the Zhou Dynasty text *Zhuangzi* 莊子, where he is described as being able to "travel by riding on the wind with cool skill" (御風而行, 泠然善也).[62] This allusion functions both ways, for Liezi's experience of riding on the wind resembles the feeling that someone has when taking a modern form of transport, but it also points out how the modern age differs from the pre-modern, because now Liezi's experience is not restricted to transcendent beings but is available to anyone able to purchase a railway ticket.[63]

The double character of Li Shufan's allusions is illustrated even better in the way that he employs one of Su Shi's most famous poems, "The Hundred

Pace Rapids" 百步洪, which Su created for a close friend, the Buddhist monk-poet Daoqian 道潛 (alternate name Canliao 參寥).[64] Su Shi's original work begins with an exhilarating account of how his monk friend and he ride in a light boat down the Hundred Pace Rapids (lines one to ten), which then changes to a meditation on the transitory nature of human life (lines eleven to twenty-two), concluded with Master Daoqian "scolding me for my noisy rambling" 多言譊譊師所呵, and in Michael Fuller's words "denying that, as a mere phenomenon, the rapids are anything special," in line with the Buddhist philosophy of the emptiness of all things.[65]

Li actually quotes a number of words verbatim from Su's original description of his exciting experience. In the following lines (two, six, seven, and nine) of Su's work, the words copied verbatim by Li Shufan are italicized, and the line numbers in which they appear in Li's poem are enclosed by parentheses:

2. My *light boat shoots down* to the south like a tossed *shuttle*.
   輕舟南下如投梭 (Li Shufan, line ten)

6. [It resembles] a spirited *stallion* dashing down a mile-long slope;
   駿馬下注千丈波 (line eleven)

7. A snapped string leaving its peg, an *arrow* leaving a hand.
   斷絃離柱箭脫手 (line nine)

9. The mountains on all sides make me dizzy as they turn, and the *wind grazes against my ears*.
   四山眩轉風掠耳 (line twelve)

Up to this point it would seem that Li Shufan echoes Su Shi's language to point out the similarities between the modern experience of rail travel and Su's account of a boat trip in classical poetry, but in line seventeen of his poem he copies Su Shi again but with a very different effect.

Su Shi's original for Li's line seventeen appears in lines eleven and twelve of the Song master's work, where he ends his description of his wonderful boat trip and begins to meditate about the illusory nature of human experience:

The joy I obtain among such perils is an *occasional thrill*,	嶮中得樂雖一快
How is this different from the River God boasting about his autumn river?[66]	何異水伯夸秋河

In other words, realizing that his enjoyment is only temporary and that he is

but a mere mortal, Su tells his readers that he would not adopt the ignorant perspective of the River God before he saw the boundlessness of the sea.

In line seventeen of his poem, Li Shufan uses the expression "occasional pleasure" (*yikuai* 一快) to end his description of his experience on China's first train, but he does not continue with an exposition of Buddhist philosophy but instead praises the new technical "skill" that has made his journey possible. This knowledge has "shrunk the world" and made people feel that "Heaven has lost his power," a startling proposition in a society which, like the pre-modern West, gave primacy to Heaven.[67] Li then proceeds to contrast his trip on the train with an earlier, more traditional voyage he took down the famous Yangzi Gorges on his way from Sichuan to Jiangsu Province and eventually Shanghai, alluding to Li Bai's quatrain, "I Set Out in the Morning from the White Emperor's Fort" 早發白帝城, another renowned evocation of rapid travel in the classical tradition:

In the morning I left the colored clouds of White Emperor's Fort,	朝辭白帝彩雲間
And returned a thousand li to Jiangling in a single day.	千里江陵一日還
Gibbons cry continuously on both banks of the river,	兩岸猿聲啼不住
But my light boat has already passed myriad layers of mountains![68]	輕舟已過萬重山

The link between Li Shufan's experience and that of Li Bai more than a thousand years earlier would have been self-evident to all his readers, but once again Li Shufan uses his classical original to point out the superiority of modern technology to that available to the ancients. To be sure, he enjoyed the outstanding natural scenery of the Yangtze Gorges, but he was always worrying about the dangers of riding on a traditional boat along this perilous stretch of river.

In the last six lines of the poem Li returns to his strong feelings of regret and even anger that the Qing government has destroyed the country's first railroad, a technological marvel that "is even more powerful than a team of horses" and that can carry great loads "over a very long distance." Western merchants had hoped to increase their trade with China by means of this railroad, but they had hardly imagined that the backward-looking Qing government would have torn it up after "a mere three years," denying its obvious benefits to both foreign and Chinese businessman as well as to common people like himself. For Li, the government officials who have supported this fatal decision "do not cherish the great inventions of our land" and are "craven cowards." He even uses the language that these opponents of

change understand to show how harmful their decision has been, citing an old Chinese proverb, *qianche zhi jian* 前車之鑑, or "take warning from the preceding cart," in the very last line. This traditional saying urges human beings to learn from earlier mistakes, just as a following cart must take precautions if the cart in front overturns due to problems in the road. But here there is a modern meaning, too, for the Chinese expression for "train" at the time (*huolunche* 火輪車) also contains the graph for "cart" (*che*), suggesting that future makers of railways in China will have to learn from the Qing court's blunder. Li's allusion demonstrates once more the connection between ancient and modern learning but also shows how ancient Chinese proverbs can be used to refute the appeals that reactionaries like Liu Xihong made to the Confucian tradition to prevent China from entering the modern world. Nor is it any coincidence that a man from the Shatan Group made the only literary protest that I have found so far against the dismantling of the Shanghai-Wusongkou railroad, for Li Shufan had been tutored by Zheng Zhen himself.[69]

Huang Zunxian and the Eiffel Tower

I shall conclude the paper with one more poem, written by the diplomat-poet Huang Zunxian, who has already been mentioned several times. Although Huang was not a member of Zheng Zhen's Shatan Group and is usually not classified as an author of the Qing Dynasty Song School, he has a good deal in common with both groups, being strongly influenced by Su Shi and also by Zheng Zhen's two favorite Tang poets, Du Fu and Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824). Nor would Huang Zunxian have objected to the Song School's ideal of great poetry being a perfect synthesis of the poetry of learning and the poetry of poets. At present Huang is the most widely studied Chinese poet of the nineteenth century, at least partially because he is also greatly admired as one of China's most prominent diplomats and reformers. He should be of special interest to Canadians because of his major contributions to Canadian Chinese, the subject of a study I am presently engaged in writing. The following poem was written during a trip that Huang took to Paris while he was serving as a diplomat in Europe in 1891, two years after the Eiffel Tower was completed:

On Climbing the Eiffel Tower	登巴黎鐵塔
The tower is three hundred French meters tall (about one thousand Chinese feet) and is the world's highest man-made structure.	
The tower bursts from the ground and rises straight up,	拔地崛然起
Soaring like a mountain hundreds of feet in the	崚崢矗百丈

air.	
If you don't happen to have a pair of wings on your back,	自非假羽翼
You won't be able to take a trip to its top.	孰能躡履上
A golden lightning rod crowns the tower's summit,	高標懸金針
And a lattice of steel hangs down on four sides.	四維挂鐵網
Below the pinnacle, they hang a fifty-foot flag,	下竪五丈旗
Just the right size for a thousand-man tent.	可容千人帳
Granite foundation stones huddle like trees in a forest;	石礎森開張
Dew-laden arches face each other grandly.	露闕屹相向
Tourists stand on tiptoe to get a closer look,	遊人企足看
Thrilled by this new spectacle revealed to their eyes.	已驚眼界創
An elevator car suddenly shoots up its cable,	懸車倏上騰
And I'm startled when I hear the whine of its engine.	乍聞轆轤響
I really am flying without any wings on my back,	人已不翼飛
Soaring on a journey to the heavens above!	迥出空虛上
Nothing in our world is as sublime as this tower,	並世無二尊
Rising alone without any support.	獨立絕依傍
Even when you stand on its lowest platform,	即居最下層
You're already beyond the reach of other buildings.	高已莫能抗
The only roof above you is heaven's blue dome,	蒼蒼覆大寰
And below, planet earth displays her infinite variety.	森芒列萬象
The air I exhale blows against Heaven's throne;	呼吸通帝座
I can commune directly with the deities in paradise![70]	疑可通肹蠁
Everything under heaven, everything on the earth	自天下至地
Can be seen looking down (no more looking up!).	俯察不復仰
I only regret I don't have perfect vision,	但恨目力窮
For here no obstacles block my view.	更無外物障
Square field boundaries stand out precisely,	離離畫方罫
A million acres of the world's most fertile	萬頃開沃壤

farms.	
A hazy line stretches far into the distance,	微茫一線遙
Where the broad River Seine flows hundreds of miles.	千里走河廣
Palace towers and the ramparts of forts	宮闕與城壘
All merge together in the blue, misty air.	一氣作蒼莽
You can't tell the cows from the horses or men,	不辨牛馬人
All swarming beneath you like tiny midges.	沙蟲紛擾攘
Soon as I arrive from the world below,	我從下界來
Things large and small are magically transformed.	小大頓變相
Do you imagine that everything looks smaller than this,	未知天眼闚
When a god gazes down at the world beneath him?	么麼作何狀
The north wind arrives from a sea crammed with ice;	北風冰海來
The autumn air suddenly turns crisp and chilly.	秋氣何颯爽
A few wisps of mist rise west of the sea,	海西數點煙
Where the British Isles glower far in the distance.	英倫鬱相望
I remember the engagements of the Hundred Years' War,	緬昔百年役
How England rent France and battled for empire.	裂地爭霸王
Two kings drove their people against enemy swords,	驅民入鋒鏑
Exhausted their treasuries, and bankrupted their nations.	傾國竭府帑
In later ages Napoleon Bonaparte arose,	其後拿破侖
A hero without peer in the entire world.	蓋世氣無兩
As long as he kept winning, he was emperor of Europe,	勝尊天單于
One defeat, and he became the world's number one exile.	敗作降王長
All of Europe is an ancient battlefield;	歐洲古戰場
Its people love war and don't compromise lightly.	好勝不相讓
Today six great emperors divide the continent,[71]	即今正六帝
Each boasting that he's the strongest leader of	各負天下壯

the world.	
These fellows resemble the proverbial kings in a snail shell,[72]	等是蠻觸爭
Who wasted their time chalking up victories and defeats.	紛紛較得喪
I'm afraid that my body is a tiny grain of rice;	嗟我稊米身
I'm just a feeble creature, who's always overrated himself.	尪弱不自量
The world seems to shrink when I see it from here;	一覽小天下
Its seven continents would fit in the palm of my hand.	五洲如在掌
As soon as I climb to the pinnacle of the tower,	既登絕頂高
I begin to daydream about flying on the wind.	更作凌風想
When can I harness the air as my steed,	何時御氣遊
Ride on a hydrogen balloon wherever I want?	乘球恣來往
I would soar on a whirlwind, ninety thousand li straight up;	扶搖九萬里
I laughed out loud, because I might just do it![73]	一笑吾其儻

Although, as we just mentioned, it might be preferable to read Huang as a close ally of the Qing Dynasty Song School, the late Qing reformer and critic Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929) considered him a pioneer of what Liang called the late Qing Poetic Revolution (Shijie geming 詩界革命), one of the special characteristics of which was the use of language and themes drawn from foreign (particularly Western) sources, a trait of Huang's poem on the Eiffel Tower that is so obvious it requires little explanation. Although not all critics of Huang's age agreed with this employment of foreign material and many take issue with Liang's approach today, Liang felt that the use of such foreign devices would help rejuvenate a literary practice which he considered to be overly conservative and in decline.[74] Many of his contemporaries agreed, and Huang Zunxian's use of foreign language and themes served as a major inspiration for the late Qing and early Republican verse of the large literary group called the Southern Society (Nanshe 南社), which dominated the literary scene in Shanghai and the surrounding area during the early decades of the Republic. The group finally collapsed due to many factors, but one of the most important was a nasty argument about the relative value of Tang or Song *shi* poetry as a model for authors, one of the last chapters in a literary battle, which went back to the late Song critic Yan Yu.[75]

At least equally impressive as Huang Zunxian's references to foreign places and history is his deft use of earlier Chinese texts, an example of the

"learning" that Song School poets found so essential in great verse. We cannot examine this question fully here, but Qian Zhonglian's detailed notes cite examples from such disparate works as the poetry anthology the *Chuci* 楚辭 (Songs of Chu), the verse of the Tang authors Du Fu and Han Yu, the Han historian Sima Qian's 司馬遷 (ca. 145-ca. 85 B.C.E.) *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the grand historian), the *Yijing* 易經 (Classic of Changes), the philosophical text *Zhuangzi*, and even Buddhist scriptures. Huang uses these allusions in ways similar to what we found in Li Shufan's poem, both to point out the similarities between ancient experiences and the modern world but also to let contemporary readers understand how they differ. The allusions to *Zhuangzi* and the Buddhist texts are particularly interesting, because, again similar to Li Shufan, Huang sees a resemblance between the mastery of the world that the Eiffel Tower's new technology offers the human race with the transcendence of the world that Daoism and Buddhism had promised to their followers, concluding his poem with the hope that, like some modern Daoist immortal, he will be able to fly off into the void, not on wings he has sprouted after years of meditation and imbibing elixirs, but rather on a hydrogen balloon!

However, as Huang had begun realizing, the technology that he admired so much also presented new challenges and dangers to the human race. After his initial celebration of the Eiffel Tower's revolutionary innovations, a somber note is introduced by the arrival of the cold wind from the North Sea, reminding Huang that the same Europe which has produced the Eiffel Tower has been the site of endless bloody conflicts including the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) between France and England and that its great progress in science and technology suggests that its future wars will be even more terrible than those of the past and may even threaten the survival of the human race. Toward the end of the poem Huang moves beyond his musings on this question to imagine a voyage through the sky by means of another modern technological marvel, but in some of his other writings of the period, he shows that he was increasingly worried about the prospects of massive bloodshed in the world's most technologically advanced region and the disastrous consequences this could have for the human race as a whole.[76] From the time of the First Opium War onward Chinese authors had noted how technological superiority had enabled countries like Great Britain to defeat their country again and again, a perception that soon led to the Foreign Matters Movement, but the idea that the new technology could threaten the human race's future had not been discussed by Chinese authors before Huang.

Concluding Remarks

This paper has briefly examined more than five decades of poems written about science and technology in the Classical Chinese language by four

different poets, including Zheng Zhen himself, other authors from his Shatan Group, and Huang Zunxian, who was closely allied to the larger Song School to which Zheng Zhen belonged. All of these authors disagreed with Yan Yu's and the more conservative Ming critics' rejection of the Song practice of writing poetry about ideas, which in their case included the discussion of scientific and technological matters. All of them promoted progress in scientific knowledge and the adoption of new technologies, but even at the very beginning of the period we have studied, they were aware of the dangers of technological progress, Zheng's poems on pollution being an early example of this concern. Zheng's son Zheng Zhitong was also one of the first (perhaps the first) to treat the issue of how the speed of modern transport and communication is very convenient to human beings but can also cause the loss of cherished values and lead eventually to a sense of disorientation and alienation, a theme that is treated in greater detail by Huang Zunxian.[77]

In addition to being of interest to us today as examples of early Chinese intellectual modernity, the poems by these authors have great literary merit. Some of Zheng Zhen's works on science and technology are among the most moving pieces he created, and although his followers did not always reach his level, their creations are a fascinating example of how Chinese authors strove to express the brave, new world of modern science in a poetic form with a history of more than two thousand years. That they succeeded so admirably demonstrates their genius as writers but also attests to the great flexibility of the *shi* form, a literary genre that thousands of Chinese writers are using skillfully at the present to express their feelings and discuss their ideas about an age of jet transport and computers, which, like the nineteenth century, is fraught with both great promise and grave danger.

Endnotes

1. See my discussion of this revision in J. D. Schmidt, *The Poet Zheng Zhen (1806-1864) and the Rise of Chinese Modernity* (Leiden: Brill Press, 2013) (hereafter abbreviated ZZ), 7-12.
2. He Shaoji, "Yu Jiang Jushi lunshi" 與江菊士論詩, in *Jindai zhongguo shiliao congkan* 近代中國史料叢刊, 5.27ab, in *Dongzhou caotang wenji* 東洲草堂文集, vol. 1, no. 885 (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1973), 205-206.
3. This phrase comes from Blake's poem "Milton," in *Blake Complete Writings*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 481.
4. Alfred Lord Tennyson, "Locksley Hall," in *Poems of Tennyson* (London: Oxford University Press, 1917), 175. For Tennyson the "grooves" of change are the railway, his note to this line reading: "When I went by the first train from Liverpool to Manchester (1830), I thought that the wheels ran in a groove. It was black night and there was such a vast crowd round the train at the station that we could not see the wheels. Then I made this line."
5. See the translation and discussion of these poems in ZZ, 486-492.
6. Yan Yu, "Shibian" 詩辨, in *Canglang shihua jiaoshi* 滄浪詩話校釋 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1998), 26. Even if they were published in simplified characters, I cite both the titles and texts of modern editions of classical works in the traditional forms. I also use traditional forms for the names of authors without regard to their period.
7. Li Mengyang, "Fouyin xu" 缶音序, in *Mingdai lunzhu congkan* 明代論著叢刊, in *Kongtong xiansheng ji* 空同先生集 (Taipei: Weiwen tushu chubanshe, 1976), 51.1462.
8. Fang Yizhi, "Shishuo" 詩說, in *Tongya* 通雅, *juanshou* 卷首, 3.4a, in *Siku quanshu zhenben sanji* 四庫全書珍本三集, ed. Wang Yunwu 王雲五, no. 757 (Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1972).
9. For poems on sericulture, see ZZ, 481-486; for the paddy horse, see ZZ, 477-481; and for road building, see ZZ, 496-500.
10. See ZZ, 492-500.
11. Literally, "Iron platters and crucibles still follow them in death," i.e., workers use left-over equipment to build their tombs. Three crucibles containing molten lead were placed on each iron platter.
12. Zheng Zhen, "Zhehai qianchang sanshou" 者海鉛廠三首, in *Chaojing-chao shichao zhushi* 巢經巢詩鈔注釋, comm. and ed. by Long Xianxu 龍先緒 (Xi'an: Sanqin chubanshe, 2002), "Qianji" 前集, 3.124. Both of these poems are translated into modern Chinese in Liu Date 劉大特,

Songshipai Tongguangtishi xuanyi 宋詩派同光體詩選譯 (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 1997), 47.

13. For a brief discussion of another aspect of Zheng Zhen's concern about environmental problems and deforestation, see Tang Moyao 唐莫堯, "Zheng Zhen de shengtaiguan" 鄭珍的生態觀, in *Guiyang wenshi* 貴陽文史 41.3 (2005): 27.
14. Ezhu 鄂渚 is in Wuchang District of Hubei, and Poyang 鄱陽 is the name of the large lake in northern Jiangxi Province.
15. Wuhu 蕪湖 is located in southeastern Anhui.
16. I am taking the word *gu* 孤 here in the sense of *gu* 辜.
17. This was the southern gate of Nanjing when it served as the capital city of the Southern Dynasties.
18. Dantu 丹徒 is located southeast of Zhenjiang 鎮江 city in Jiangsu Province.
19. Literally, "Jin 金 and Jiao 焦," two hilly islands located respectively to the southwest and northeast of Zhenjiang and famous for their scenery and Buddhist monasteries.
20. These bridges were already in existence during the Sui Dynasty, but their number has varied over the centuries. Zheng Zhitong, *Qulu shiji jianzhu* 屈廬詩集箋注 (Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian chubanshe, 2004), 4.170-171.
21. Please refer to the translation and discussion of Huang's poem on his journey by steamer from San Francisco to China in Schmidt, *Within the Human Realm: The Poetry of Huang Zunxian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) (hereafter abbreviated HZX), 191-194 and 254-255. I have also discussed this poem in J. D. Schmidt, "Jinshan sannian ku: Huang Zunxian shi mei yanjiu de xin cailiao" 金山三年苦: 黃遵憲使美研究的新材料, in *Cong chuantong dao xiandai de Zhongguo shixue* 從傳統到現代的中國詩學, ed. by Lin Zongzheng 林宗正 and Zhang Bowei 張伯偉 (From Tradition to Modernity: Poetic Transition from Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Century China), 177-205 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2017).
22. We have a detailed and famous account of one such journey in the opposite direction written by a poet favored by many members of the Song School, namely, Lu You's 陸游 (1125-1209) *Ru Shu ji* 入蜀記 (Record of entering Sichuan). Although Lu was sailing upstream, he was on government business, so he could not travel at the leisurely pace favored by many literati. The section of Lu's journey from Wujiang 吳江 District (near modern Suzhou) to Huangzhou 黃州 (modern Huang-gang 黃岡 in eastern Hubei on the north bank of the Yangzi River) is roughly the same distance as Zheng Zhitong's trip. Lu started out from

Wujiang on the ninth day of the sixth month (July 24) of 1170 and arrived in Huangzhou on the eighteenth day of the eighth month (September 29), a journey of sixty-eight days. See the English translation of the relevant sections in Chun-shu Chang and Joan Smythe, *South China in the Twelfth Century: A Translation of Lu Yu's Travel Diaries* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1981), 45 and 115.

23. There is a fairly detailed history of early Shanghai in Linda Cooke Johnson, *Shanghai: From Market Town to Treaty Port 1074-1858* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 21-175. Another useful history of Shanghai is found in Betty Peh-T'i Wei, *Shanghai: Crucible of Modern China* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1987). See pp. 5-19, for the early period. More detailed histories of Shanghai in Chinese are Xiong Yuezhi 熊月之 et al., *Shanghai tongshi* 上海通史, 15 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1999) and Tang Zhijun 汤志钧 et al., *Jindai Shanghai dashiji* 近代上海大事記 (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1989). For the British conquest and settlement of Shanghai, see Johnson, *Shanghai*, 176-266, Wei, *Shanghai*, 20-45, and Xiong Yuezhi, *Jindai Shanghai dashiji*, 3:1-18. A rich source of information about Shanghai's history is the detailed historical atlas of the city and the region around it in Zhou Zhenhe 周振鹤, *Shanghai lishi dituji* 上海歷史地圖集 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1999).
24. Zheng uses the older name Chunshen 春申 for the Huangpu 黃浦 River that flows through Shanghai.
25. Zheng uses the old place name Gusu 姑蘇 for Suzhou. Before the rise of Shanghai, Suzhou was the most prosperous and cultured city in the region.
26. Zheng is alluding to a poem from the *Songs of Chu*, which describes the underwater palace of the deity, Lord of the Yellow River. See "Jiuge" 九歌 and "Hebo" 河伯, in Hong Xingzu 洪興祖, ed., *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注, 2 vols. (Hong Kong: Xianggang Zhonghua shuju, 1963), 1:2.20a.
27. I.e., from Fusang 扶桑, the tree over which the sun rises according to Chinese mythology.
28. The flowers mentioned here (*ruohua* 若華) fall from the Sunrise Tree.
29. Here I am not following Long Xianxu's suggestion in his note that the term *linu* 隸奴 refers to Westerners.
30. Zheng's original has the word "chicken" where I translate "bird," for he is alluding to a famous story of how the chickens and dogs of a man who achieved immortality licked elixir he left behind and ascended to heaven with him and his family.
31. Zheng Zhitong, *Qulu shiji jianzhu*, 4.172.

32. Huang Zunxian, "Xianggang ganhuai" 香港感懷 (poems three and five of ten), in *Renjinglu shicao jianzhu* 人境廬詩草箋注, comm. by Qian Zhonglian 錢仲聯, vol. 1 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981), 1.67, 1.69.
33. Huang Zunxian, "Xianggang ganhuai" (poem six of ten), 1.70, Part of Huang's series of poems about Hong Kong is translated in HZX, 226-228. Zheng was hardly the first Chinese intellectual of his age to day-dream about carrying his exploration of the West a bit farther than what the Foreign Matters movement had envisioned, for when Wang Tao 王韜 (1828-1897), James Legge's (1815-1897) collaborator in the translation of the Chinese Classics and one of the founders of modern Chinese journalism, traveled to Great Britain with Legge in 1867, he flirted briefly with a bonnie Scottish lassie, leaving an account of his experience in his *Manyou suilu* 漫游隨錄 (Jottings from carefree travel). See Wang Tao, "Sanyou Sujing" 三游蘇京, in *Manyou suilu* (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1985), 140-141. See also the discussion of the original literary features of Wang's account in Mei Xinlin 梅新林 and Yu Zhanghua 俞樟华, *Zhongguo youji wenxueshi* 中國遊記文學史 (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 2004), 364.
34. Literally, "the flower of their essence withers." Zheng Zhitong, *Qulu shiji jianzhu*, 4.172.
35. The term *tuibu* used here refers to the calculations of the motions of heavenly bodies through the sky.
36. Ruan Yuan, "Xiyang" 西洋, in *Chouren zhuan* 疇人傳, 45.3, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書, vol. 516 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995).
37. See Lin Qingyuan 林慶元, *Lin Zexu pingzhuan* 林則徐評傳 (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2000), 245-255 and Yang Guozhen 楊國楨, *Lin Zexu zhuan* 林則徐傳 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1995), 217.
38. Peter Crush, *Woosung Road: The Story of China's First Railway* (Hong Kong: The Railway Tavern, 1999), 4. For the role of Stephenson in the promotion of India's first railway line, the East Indian Railway, see Aruna Awasthi, *History and Development of Railways in India* (New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications, 1994), 18-20 and 38. Stephenson's activities were inspired by the contemporary railway mania in England.
39. The most complete Western-language study of this railway is found in Crush, *Woosung Road*. See also the account in Yang Yonggang 楊勇剛, *Zhongguo jindai tielu shi* 中国近代鐵路史 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1997), 11-12. See also pp. 6-10 and 15-18 for a general discussion of the railway debate during this period.

40. Crush, *Woosung Road*, 52-58.
41. Crush, *Woosung Road*, 95-103.
42. For Liu's terms in office and exact titles, see Gugong bowuyuan Ming Qing dang'an bu 故宫博物院明清檔案部, *Qingji Zhongwai shiling nianbiao* 清季中外使领年表 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 3 and 9. Liu's surviving works are contained in Liu Xihong, *Liu Guanglu* (*Xihong*) *yigao* 劉光祿(錫鴻)遺稿, in *Jindai Zhongguo shiliao congkan sanbian* 近代中國史料叢刊三編, no. 446 (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1988). Documents pertaining to his period of service in Germany are collected together in Liu Xihong, *Zhude shiguan dang'an chao* 駐德使館檔案鈔, 2 vols. (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1966). The only monograph on Liu so far is Zhang Yuquan 張宇權, *Sixiang yu shidai di luocha: Wanqing waijiaoguan Liu Xihong yanjiu* 思想與時代的落差: 晚清外交官劉錫鴻研究 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 2004). There is a useful review of this study in Pan Guangzhe 潘光哲, "Shuping" 書評, *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 23.1 (2005): 509-513.
43. See the introductory essay in Liu Xihong, "Guo Songtao de siduitou" 郭嵩燾的死對頭, in *Yingyao siji* 英軺私記 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1986), 22-26, and J. D. Frodsham, *The First Chinese Embassy to the West: The Journals of Kuo Sung-t'ao, Liu Hsi-hung and Chang Te-yi* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), xlvii and lx. See also the devastating portrait of Liu presented by Halliday Macartney (1833-1906), the British secretary for the Chinese mission, in the fragment of his diary preserved in Demetrius Boulger, *The Life of Sir Halliday Macartney K.C.M.G., Commander of Li Hung Chang's Trained Force in the Taeping Rebellion, Founder of the First Chinese Arsenal, for Thirty Years Councillor and Secretary to the Chinese Legation in London* (London and New York: John Lane, 1908), 267. Guo Songtao had originally promoted Liu's career, but the two soon fell out particularly after a bitter court debate on Westernization in which they took opposite sides. See the introductory section of Liu, *Yingyao siji*, 12-16.
44. See the entry in his diary, Liu Xihong, "Guan dianxue yougan" 觀電學有感, in *Yingyao siji*, 65.127-129.
45. The most detailed study in a Western language of Thomas Wade's (1818-1895) activities in China is James C. Cooley, Jr., *T. F. Wade in China: Pioneer in Global Diplomacy (1842-1882)* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981). Wade's proper title was Minister Wade.
46. Guo Songtao and Liu Xihong had traveled from Beijing to Tianjin by canal and then taken a steamer to Shanghai, from where they took another steamship to England.
47. Liu Xihong's visit took place on the tenth of the tenth month (November

25), ten days before the Wusongkou-Shanghai railway reopened. The English name of the "academy" was the Chinese Polytechnic Institution and Reading Room. It had been established in 1874 by the translators John Fryer (Chinese name Fu Lanya 傅蘭雅, 1839-1928), and Xu Shou 徐壽, 1818-1884). Many of the volumes of its former library are now in the collection of the Shanghai Library. See the discussion in Benjamin A. Elman, *On Their Own Terms: Science in China 1550-1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 308-310. Elman also mentions Liu Xihong's visit, especially his disregard for practical technological knowledge, which he considered beneath Chinese scholars. Feng Junguang 馮焌光 (*juren* 1852, d. 1877), a scholar from Nanhai 南海 in Guangdong province and the Circuit Intendant of Suzhou, Songjiang 松江, and Taicang 太倉 (Susongtai 蘇松太) Circuit administered from Shanghai, was one of the most vociferous opponents of the railroad. This may seem ironic, because before serving as Circuit Intendant, he administered the Jiangnan Arsenal for thirteen years starting in 1864. However, his objections were not likely to have been technological but rather more a result of his defense of Chinese sovereignty. See his biography in Wu Xin 吳馨 and Yao Wennan 姚文柟, *Shanghai xian xuzhi* 上海縣續志 , vol. 2, 826-827 (1918; repr., Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1970), "Minghuan" 名宦, 15.3b-4a, and the sections about his association with the Jiangnan Arsenal in Thomas L. Kennedy, *The Arms of Kiangnan: Modernization in the Chinese Ordnance Industry, 1860-1895* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1978), 81-85, which stresses his advocacy of steamship building and technological development. Feng passed away not long after his meeting with Liu Xihong while attempting to take his father's body back from Xinjiang, where he had died in exile.

48. One traditionalist argument against railways is that they damage the *fengshui* of the land they pass over.
49. Liu Xihong, "Shilun tielu" 始論鐵路, in *Yingyao siji*, 48-49. See also the translations from this passage in Frodsham, *The First Chinese Embassy in the West*, 110-113.
50. A representative of the firm Jardine-Matheson had a long talk with Guo Songtao in a small place called Zizhulin 紫竹林, where Liu and he spent the night. Guo gives us no information about the contents of the conversation, but quite likely, the man was discussing the fate of Jardine-Matheson's railroad. See Guo Songtao, *Guo Songtao riji* 郭嵩燾日記 (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1980), Guangxu 2, thirtieth day of the ninth month (November 15, 1876), 3.63.

51. See Liu's comments about the way railroads would cause unemployment in China in Liu Xihong, "Shijian huolunche" 始見火輪車, in *Yingyao siji*, 63. This passage, which describes Liu's first experience of riding in a train at Port Suez, Egypt, also contains his stock response to Westerners who badgered him about the issue of railroads in China from then on: "This is a matter of internal policy. No one can interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign states, which is a principle recognized by your international law." This response was suggested to Liu by a Chinese translator who had worked for Thomas Wade!
52. The term Hanxue is now largely employed in China to translate the Western word "Sinology," but it originally meant the rational and critical examination of classical texts through the use of scientific inductive reasoning for the purpose of recovering their original meaning, a practice that became widespread in the Qing Dynasty. Most of those scholars who engaged in Han Learning considered the Han Dynasty commentaries on the Classics to be the most reliable, since their authors lived nearer to the age of Confucius, and, hence, they called their scholarly approach "Han Learning." See also Liu Xihong's comments about such fields of modern science as the study of heat, electricity, gases, light, chemistry, and astronomy, which he called "minor trickery" (*zaji zhi xiao* 雜技之小), and which he declared are not to be compared to the "teachings of the Sages" in Liu Xihong, "Guan dianxue yougan," 128 .
53. For a short biography of Li Shufan, see Long Xianxu, *Zheng Ziyin jiaoyou kao* 鄭子尹交游考 (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2004), 17-18. Li would have worked for the Salt Supervisor (Yanzheng 鹽政), a high official who supervised the government monopoly in salt in the six provinces of Henan, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Anhui, Hubei, and Hunan.
54. The Daoist immortal Liezi is said to have been able to ride on the wind. See *Liezi zhuzi suoyin* 列子逐字索引 (Hong Kong: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1996), "Huangdi" 黃帝, 2/7/9. Liezi is also referred to in the *Zhuangzi*, which may be the source of this passage. See the discussion below.
55. From line nine to this line, Li Shufan is alluding to a famous poem by Su Shi. See the discussion below in the main text.
56. Allusion to a popular quatrain by Li Bai. See the discussion below.
57. Literally, "I still dislike [the fact that] safe and dangerous differ in worry or happiness."
58. Literally, "Not to mention that the rising and falling [of the current] differ from autumn to winter." Before the dredging of the river channel

and the construction of dams in the twentieth century, the depth of the Yangzi River in the gorges differed considerably from season to season, always exposing the traveler to new hazards.

59. Three years elapsed from the time the railway's construction began (1874) until it was torn up by the Qing government. The term *zhuanxiang* 轉餉 literally means "transport grain." I am assuming that the expression *yizhe* 易轍 (literally, "change the track") refers to the demolition of the railway. Unfortunately, my translation of this difficult couplet is conjectural, and I am indebted to suggestions made by Prof. Hu Xiaoming 胡曉明 and Zhong Jin 鍾錦 of East China Normal University for arriving at this version.
60. Literally, "The cart traveling behind has lost the lesson, which is not heroic." See the discussion below. Li Shufan, "Huolunche" 火輪車, in *Jiaoyuan shichao* 椒園詩鈔, 5.24b-25a, in *Lishi jiaji* 黎氏家集, ed. Li Shuchang, vols. 7-8 (Tokyo: Riben shishu, 1888-1891). This same edition of Li Shufan's poetry has recently been reproduced in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian* 清代詩文集彙編, vol. 709 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010). Another interesting example of Li's fascination with the West is his poem about the visit of the former U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) to Shanghai in 1879 in Li Shufan, "Run sanyue ershijiu ri Taixi geguo guanshang wei Meilijian qian zongtong Gelantuo zhangdeng Hudu she shuilong zhi hui; shiye yu yi wang guan, yin ji yi lü" 閏三月二十九日, 泰西各國官商為美利堅前總統格蘭脫張鐙滬瀆, 設水龍之會; 是夜余亦往觀, 因紀一律, in *Jiaoyuan shichao*, 6.2a. This work is dated May 9, 1879 on the Western calendar.
61. The shortcomings that derive from the breathtaking speed of modern transport are discussed much more fully in the series of poems about steamship travel from Hubei to Shanghai by Zheng Zhitong that we read above and particularly in some of Huang Zunxian's later works. See the translation and discussion of Huang's experimental series "Modern Parting" 今別離, in HZX, 186-191 and 269-272.
62. *Concordance to Chuang Tzu* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956), "Xiaoyaoyou" 逍遙遊, 2/1/19.
63. The second way allusion functions here has an obvious resemblance to the technique of *fan'an* 翻案 (turning over or overthrowing an allusion) and the Song poet Huang Tingjian's 黃庭堅 (1045-1105) highly influential technique of "changing the bones" (*huangu* 換骨), both of which "up-date" earlier texts. See the discussion in ZZ, 293 and 353.
64. Su actually wrote a set of two poems about the rapids, the first, which is treated here, to Daoqian, and the second to another friend, who had shot the rapids earlier but had already left the place. See Su Shi, *Shizhu Su*

shi 施注蘇詩 (Taipei: Guangwen shuju, 1964), 15.15-17, 15.241-242. Two English translations of the first work are found in Burton Watson, *Su Tung-p'o*: *Selections from a Sung Dynasty Poet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 65-67 and Michael A. Fuller, *The Road to East Slope: The Development of Su Shi's Poetic Voice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 242-244.

65. Fuller, *The Road to East Slope*, 244. One could say that, in line with the Chan mistrust of discursive language and thought, Daoqian is also denying the meaning of Su Shi's exposition of Buddhist philosophy.
66. In the second line Su Shi is himself using an allusion to a passage from the *Zhuangzi*. See *Concordance to Chuang Tzu*, "Qiushui" 秋水, 42/17/1.
67. Refer to Huang Zunxian's elevation of human beings (presumably in relation to Heaven) in his poem on the Hong Kong Museum (1870) translated and discussed in HZX, 101 and 227, especially his line to the effect that "The power of the human race is quite beyond all belief" (*renli xin xiongzai* 人力信雄哉, literally, "human power is truly heroic"). Before the nineteenth century Chinese poets sometimes wrote that skillfully executed works of art "snatched away heaven's skill" (*duo tiangong* 奪天功), but, to the best of my knowledge, they never suggested that human technology rendered heaven without skill or power.
68. See Hanabusa Hideki 花房英樹, *Ri Haku kashi sakuin* 李白歌詩索引 (Kyoto: Kyōto Daigaku Jinbun Kagaku Kenkyūjo, 1957), 746,01. The White Emperor's Fort was located just east of the administrative center of Fengjie 奉節 District in eastern Sichuan. Jiangling 江陵 is the administrative center of Jiangling District in modern Hubei.
69. Perhaps there are other poems or essays opposing the Qing government's decision, but so far I have found none.
70. Literally, "penetrated to the Xixiang insect," a kind of insect that was supposedly very sensitive to sound and later became a symbol of divine inspiration.
71. I.e., the emperors of France (Napoleon III), England, Germany, Austria, Italy, and Russia.
72. Allusion to a story in the *Zhuangzi* about two kingdoms that fought with each other constantly, one on the left antenna of a snail and the other on the right antenna. See *Concordance to Chuang Tzu*, "Zapian" 雜篇, "Zeyang" 則陽, 70/25/27.
73. Huang Zunxian, *Renjinglu shicao jianzhu*, 2:565-572, and the modern commentary in Li Xiaosong 李小松, *Huang Zunxian shixuan* 黃遵憲詩選 (Taipei: Yuanliu, 1988), 161.

74. For a discussion of Liang Qichao's views on the need for foreign terms in poetry, see HZX, 68-69.
75. See my short discussion of this in ZZ, 7-8 and the more detailed study in Yang Mengya 楊萌芽, "Cong 1917 nian Tang Song shi zhi zheng kan Nanshe yu Wanqing Minchu Songshipai de guanxi" 從 1917 年唐宋詩之爭看南社與晚清民初宋詩派的關係, *Lanzhou xuekan* 蘭州學刊 162.3 (2007): 136-142.
76. Huang's increasingly pessimistic view of the future is discussed in HZX, 211-214.
77. See, for example, my discussion of the experimental series "Modern Parting," mentioned in n. 61.

In Praise of Alienation: A Role for Theory in Reading Classical Chinese Poetry

Michael A. Fuller 傅君勤
University of California, Irvine

Classical Chinese poetry offers compelling orderings of the human experience of the world. If we commit ourselves to this seemingly simple affirmation of the power of poetry, however, we have to confront some rather complex interpretive issues that I shall explore in this study.

The central problem is that we are more creatures of our time and place than we usually care to acknowledge. Let me begin with some obvious statements. I am a fairly typical Caucasian male born into the middle class in mid-twentieth century United States. My knowledge of—and belief in the constancy of—biology, chemistry, and physics shapes my understanding. I know the interconnections by which the models of those sciences relate to the material realm. As events unfold in my experience of the world, I attribute the underlying causes to biology, chemistry, and physics, even if I may not know the particular facts that can justify the attribution. When I look up at the night sky, I see a Copernican, Newtonian array of stars moving in their orderly arcs as the earth rotates, and not the Ptolemaic heaven of the medieval European world. I trust there will be no sudden holes opening up in the causal net of the natural sciences. Gravity will not decide to stop. Electrons will continue to do their strange quantum dance that makes my computer work. I will not wake up tomorrow as someone else.

Entering the social realm, I bring biological commitments with me and believe in gender equality, but this seemingly abstract modern belief plays a visceral role in my closest relations. I believe in democracy, but this is based not on biology but on a different level of ordering, the social-contract model of society, as well as on my personal experience of growing up in the United States. I believe that it is not acceptable to kill people on a whim, and this commitment is yet more complex: beyond the social-contract model for participation in society are the lingering remnants of religious beliefs that deeply if quietly inform our moral values. That is, I am thoroughly embedded

in a network of commitments that shape how I physically perceive the world, how I understand my place in the world, and how I act. This network, however, is not stable; it has a history and continues to evolve: my children are not part of the same world as I am. The network also varies geographically: my wife, raised in Seattle, shares many values but also reveals local variations.

Let me stress that when I encounter events, when I find meaning, I do so through this network of commitments about the world. And when I read Classical Chinese poetry, I bring to it, as well, this array of early twenty-first century beliefs. The problem, of course, is that these poems are from Tang or Song China, not contemporary North America. Moreover, I believe that when Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770) in the Tang or Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) in the Song wrote their poems, they did so within an elaborate, all-encompassing network of commitments about the world that were deeply different from mine. So, if I believe that poetry offers compelling modes of ordering experience, I must decide: am I going to look for the ordering as Du Fu imagined it, or will I draw primarily from the structures of the contemporary world? I cannot have it both ways. I have chosen, because I am restless in my own world, to try to hear Du Fu and Su Shi on their own terms and to see into their world. Yet I can begin to do so only if I accept difference, and this is the alienation of my title: I must see that Du Fu and Su Shi are writing from different worlds and that I must risk my assumptions, change my grasp of the world if I am to begin to hear them well.

Theoretical Framing

The branch of literary theory that systematically explores the problem of engaging texts across differences is hermeneutics, the study of understanding. How to bridge the gap between cultures—the modern West and late medieval China—has two components, one theoretical, one practical. To understand difference, one must begin with a belief in commonalities in human experience that arise out of basic features we all share as part of our biological (and existential) condition. Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) at the turn of the twentieth century suggested that we begin by thinking in terms of basic conditions of lived human experience—our physical and social needs and desires, our shared pains, joys, and hungers—and that we think of the objects of the constructed culture of any time (Tang China or contemporary North America) as an objectification of intentions, as a means through which we have sought to shape our collective lived experience.[1] Dilthey's presentation of the social and cultural world as structured through—and giving objective form to—human intentionality increases the difficulty and complexity of the task of understanding because we live historically: we grow up in a world of already objectified forms of human intention and learn to think and act through those forms, including our inherited languages, even if our world in

fact has outlived some of those forms. Thus, the reconstruction of the world of Tang and Song poetry, the grasping of the human in a culture distant from ours in both time and space within all of these sedimentations of intentions long obscured, is difficult and requires careful attention. But, Dilthey argued, because we do indeed share basic human qualities, the project is not impossible.

In hermeneutics, the process of seeing shared forms of lived human experience within very different cultural constructions is a slow, patient iterative cycle beginning with a preliminary understanding of the pieces of the earlier, foreign world and seeing them all as parts of a lived culture. Once one has a somewhat clearer sense of how the pieces fit together, one returns to them in their particularity and develops a more fine-grained understanding of their roles, which in turn allows one to better understand the totality of which they are parts. This is the famed "hermeneutic circle" of understanding the whole from the parts and the parts from the whole.

Most often, people describe the larger process of understanding a different, distant culture made possible by the hermeneutic circle as the "fusion of horizons," a term developed by Hans-Georg Gadamer. In my view, however, Gadamer's account of the fusion of horizons presents a cautionary tale, a counterposition—perhaps even the dominant one in contemporary thought—to what I propose in this talk. For Dilthey, historicity was the condition that made understanding the objectifications of life-experience possible and at the same time provided an insuperable constraint on the complete realization of understanding. Just as, for Kant, our knowledge of the world can never reach either "things in themselves" or the "transcendental subject" that grounds the synthesis of knowledge within the phenomenal realm of appearance, for Dilthey, we can never escape our historical condition to know a self or a text outside of time. We must live with a form of alienation from ourselves and from what we study in the human sciences. In contrast, Gadamer formulates the "fusion of horizons" as a mode of continuity that dissolves the danger of self-alienation. He describes the relationship of the "horizon of the present" and that of the past as beginning in self-conscious difference but ending in restored unity.[2] Gadamer's proposal to assimilate the past to the present erases the deep alterity of the past and forecloses the difficult encounter with historical difference. I therefore suggest a second hermeneutic circle, a model of engagement that differs from the metaphor of fusion. It is the perhaps bleak, surely agonistic model embodied in Harold Bloom's formulation:

> Assimilation is Alienation.
> Alienation is Assimilation.

That is, when one assimilates the meaning in a text and the voice of its author into one's own modes of understanding, one displaces and covers over—alienates—the actual inherent structure of the text. Conversely, when one sees the difference and refuses fusion, when one strips away easy readings and certainty in understanding—when one alienates the text—one restores the possibility of seeing into the powerful structures of meaning within the world of the text. This second "hermeneutic circle" of doubt crucially complements the primary hermeneutic circle of progressive understanding.

Discovering Doubt

In my own career of reading Chinese poetry, I did not seek out this doubt and this focus on deep cultural difference hiding in plain sight: rather, these issues came to me. Many long years ago, when I was working on my doctoral dissertation on Su Shi's *shi* poetry, I had a straight-forward plan: I would read the collections of the major writers of the early Northern Song and then turn to Su Shi and read his poetry in the context of his other writings and the writings of the major figures of his day. I would rely on a few late imperial annotations of Su Shi's work, but I would *not* read more broadly in the later reception history. When I had finished my survey of Su Shi and Northern Song literary culture, I looked up to see what Southern Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing scholars had written, and we clearly were not talking about the same person. All of our Su Shis were brilliant, broadly learned, and had a sharp tongue that often brought trouble. But my Su Shi was a careful, systematic thinker deeply engaged in larger reflections on selfhood, knowledge, experience and the world, all of which was directly reflected in his poetry. Theirs was Su Shi, the "gay genius" of Lin Yutang's biography, subjective, undisciplined, drawing on his creativity but far outside the mainstream of Northern Song thought.[3] I, of course, believed I was right, but if I was right, how could I show it, and how did they manage to be so wrong? This is where theory comes in. The problem was not of being ignorant of texts but of understanding how (and why) one reads them. The problem was one of framing, bringing to bear an adequate understanding of the intellectual and aesthetic contexts within which Su Shi wrote. Later readers had assimilated Su Shi to their world, without acknowledging that he was not in fact of their world.[4]

Issues of intellectual context are the easiest to sort out. Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) worked very hard to redefine the Northern Song *Daoxue* 道學 advocates—and especially Zhang Zai 張載 (1020-1077), Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-1085) and Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107)—as the central figures in Northern Song intellectual culture.[5] They were not. Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072), above all others, was at the heart of the elite culture of his day,

and yet, by the end of the Southern Song, he had been effectively written out of the narrative.[6] Ouyang Xiu had shaped many aspects of Northern Song cultural practice. He had been a historian, statesman, political theorist, epigrapher, classical scholar, and the best belletristic writer of his day. He had been very skeptical of the growing trend toward philosophizing over abstract terms like "nature:" these abstractions did not help men in their daily duties in governing the realm.[7] The displacing of Ouyang Xiu in favor of the *Daoxue* partisans thus seriously distorted the intellectual culture of the day.

Most crucially, the term *li* 理 that generations of American scholars have translated as "principle" in accordance with Zhu Xi's redefinition of the term, meant something quite different in the Northern Song. Cheng Yi was beginning to use *li* as an abstract, all encompassing, undifferentiated ground for moral knowledge that Zhu Xi later adopted, but this was a distinctive, polemical interpretation quite far from the broader, descriptive use of the term. Cheng Yi reconceived of *li* as constant among humans and identical with their natures and that problems for humans arose because of the impurity of their substance:

> Question: "Since human nature is basically perspicacious (*ming* 明), whence is there obstruction?" "One needs to explore and understand this. Mencius was right in stating that human nature is good. Even Xunzi and Yang [Xiong] did not know the Nature. Wherein Mencius exceeds all other Confucians was that he was able to be clear about the Nature. In the Nature, there is nothing that is not good. Wherein what is not good is the material (*cai* 才). The Nature is *li*, and *li*, from Yao and Shun to the man in the street, is identical. The material is received from *qi*, and in *qi* there is both the pure and the turbid. Those who receive the pure are the worthy; those who receive the turbid are the dolts." [8]

In contrast, for Ouyang Xiu, Su Shi, and Northern Song elite culture generally, *li* meant "pattern." The "myriad patterns of the phenomenal realm" (*wanwu zhi li* 萬物之理) were all the many interlinking patterns immanent in the world of experience. Su Shi's "Account of the Paintings in the Jingyin Hall," for example, suggests the breadth of Northern Song usage:

> When I once discussed painting, I said that people, beasts, palaces and halls, utensils, and equipage all have constant shapes. Now, as for mountains, rocks, bamboo, trees, water, waves, mists, and clouds, though none has a constant shape, each does have a constant inherent pattern (*li*). Everyone will recognize a lapse in a fixed shape, but if the constant patterns are not right, there will be some who will

> not know it even though they understand painting. Therefore, one who would deceive the world and acquire a reputation must do so through [objects] without fixed shapes. However, a lapse in a fixed form stops at the fault itself and will not mar the entirety. But if the inherent pattern is not right, then the whole is worthless. Because its shape is not fixed, one must be very careful with the inherent pattern. Of the present artisans, some can exhaustively follow the contours of the form, but as for the inherent pattern, if they are not elevated spirits, they cannot discriminate it.
>
> Yuke [Wen Tong] truly can be said to have obtained the inherent patterns of bamboo, rocks, and barren trees. Thus it is born, thus it dies. Thus it is cramped and gnarled, thus its branches stretch and flourish. The roots, stalk, joints and leaves, sprout tips and veins, through ten thousand transformations, never encroach on one another, and each is in its right place. They are in accord with Heavenly creation and satisfy human thought. Is this not perhaps the work of a "realized" (*da* 達) man?[9]

Su Shi in his writings turned again and again to an understanding of himself as meaningfully linked to the larger patterns of the world of experience as represented in the term *li*.[10] Yet this Northern Song usage was occluded and erased in later scholars' reading of *li* as Cheng Yi's and Zhu Xi's "principle." In this assimilation, Su Shi disappeared. Alienation—the realization that Su Shi's *li* was not their *li*—would have been crucial, but they were men of their times and read Su Shi through the demands of their time.

The *aesthetic* ramifications of the displacement of "pattern" by "principle" are more complex and plunge us deeper into theory. Poetry can offer compelling and creative orderings of our experience of the world. Poetry therefore necessarily works not on words alone but on a world to which language refers; its creativity—its bringing into being—is *through* language, but it is an ordering of larger structures of experience. The ordering of experience in a world encompassed by myriad interconnected patterns is profoundly different from that in a world of "principle." How language participates is different; the nature of the intuitions of order that can be captured within the web of words is different.[11]

Su Shi's "Aboard Boat, Rising at Night"

To convey some of the qualities of aesthetic ordering of experience among the "myriad patterns of the phenomenal realm," let me turn to a poem Su Shi wrote in 1089 en route to taking up the post of magistrate in Huzhou:

Aboard Boat, Rising at Night	舟中夜起
A light breeze rustles, blowing the reeds.	微風蕭蕭吹菰蒲
As I open the door to watch the rain, the moon fills the lake.	開門看雨月滿湖
The people on the boat and the water-fowl both share the same dream.	舟人水鳥兩同夢
A large fish starts and scurries to hide like a fleeing fox.	大魚驚竄如奔狐
The night is late: people and phenomena do not involve one another.	夜深人物不相管
Alone I, my shape, and my shadow amuse ourselves.	我獨形影相嬉娛
The hidden tide grows on the bank: I lament the cold earthworms.	暗潮生渚弔寒蚓
As the setting moon hangs amidst the willows, I watch the suspended spiders.	落月掛柳看懸蛛
In this life, so hurried amid sorrow and calamity,	此生忽忽憂患裏
Can a pure scene passing before the eyes last more than a moment?	清境過眼能須臾
The cock crows; the bell strikes; the many birds scatter:	雞鳴鐘動百鳥散
At the prow they beat the drum and call out to one another.[12]	船頭擊鼓還相呼

In the deep quiet late on a moonlit night, Su Shi reflects on his place in the phenomenal realm. The scene Su Shi encounters is indeed *phenomenal*, that is, a world of objects that appear before him as objects of perception but whose inner causality distinct from his apprehension of them remains hidden. Su Shi in many writings stresses that we know the "being like this" (*ran* 然) but do not know and do not have access to "that through which it is like this" (*suoyiran* 所以然).[13] This may seem a mere abstraction, but the poem gives sensuous form to this vision of the world.

Phenomena are tied to perception, and perception can be wayward and be brought up short by the world: Su Shi hears the rustling of the reeds in the light breeze and takes this to be the sound of rain falling lightly on the reeds. He is in a mood to watch the rain and thus steps out of his closed cabin to the deck and discovers not rain but a bright moon (ll. 1-2). He thematizes misperception here: he begins inside his own thoughts and expectations only

to encounter a beautiful but unanticipated scene. In a quiet, meditative state, he takes stock of the scene and notices patterns linking the human realm to the larger world. The people aboard the boat and the water fowl are both travelers in mid-journey resting for the night; they somehow are parts of one another's dreams (l. 3). This is strictly a speculative projection on Su Shi's part, born of the quiet and his wakeful reflection on a "sleeping world." His comparison of the fish diving into the deeps to a fox reveals analogous patterns that link the nocturnal riverine world to the land, but he explicitly presents this linking as a comparison, an act of thought, as he searches for ways to situate the moment (l. 4). The abstraction—the pulling away from particulars—of the next couplet is a way to convey his mood of reverie in the vast stillness of the scene. Within this reverie, there is still an acuteness of perception as he notes subtle shifts in the landscape: the tide rises, the moon sets, and the flux of the world is framed by these movements (ll. 5-6). The earthworms on the bank respond to the tide, while the setting moon makes the threads of the spiders' webs glisten brilliantly against the surrounding dark (ll. 7-8). Again Su Shi slips into reverie: the fifth couplet stands in for Su Shi's now nightlong vigil and indeed explains it: he honors the moment amid the unceasing flow of temporality (ll. 9-10). But then he brilliantly recasts that moment, sees it as part of the larger rhythms of the world in which he, the boatmen and all the creatures who shared the nighttime scene equally find their place (ll. 11-12).

The poetic intuitions of ordering the scene that move the poem from line to line, couplet to couplet, beginning to end, are complex and very distinctly Northern Song. Su Shi assimilates his own subjectivity—the moods and expectation that drive the poem—to the patterns discovered in the poem. These particular orderings of objects, images, thoughts, emotions, and events in the poem are only possible within Su Shi's larger structure of commitments about the world and his sense of how the world coheres. This aesthetic synthesis utterly falls apart if one replaces an understanding of *li* as the inherent patterns that encompass the self and the phenomenal realm with Zhu Xi's abstract and morally centered understanding of *li* as principle. The powerful aesthetic coherence of the poem simply disappears.

Su Shi's *li*—so vital to his poetry—was not that of the later tradition, and the distinction hidden within the continuity of the term itself makes all the difference. To achieve an understanding of Su Shi's poetry, I was compelled to deal with the intersection of poetry and intellectual history. Yet it took me many years to grasp the ways in which aesthetic experience and intellectual history intertwine in Su's poems and in Classical Chinese poetry more broadly. Every paper I write now eventually turns to Immanuel Kant's account of aesthetic judgments precisely because his approach grounds aesthetic experience in how people understand the structure of the

experiential realm *and*—crucially—grounds people's understanding of experience in aesthetic intuitions.[14] We are not given the order of the world: we must discover it. But before we can articulate and name it, we must intuit the presence of an order to be explored and finally named; providing those intuitions is the role of aesthetic experience. Kant, in arguing that art grounds the very possibility of knowledge of the world, thus confirms that poetry matters deeply in our engagement with experience. This, I assert, is a universal principle of human nature.

However, while the formal principle is a constant, we have seen how history strongly informs poetic experience—both the reading and the writing—through the evolution of a culture's understanding of the larger structures that organize the experiential realm. As those structures change, poetry and the poetic forms and tropes that shape aesthetic experience must change as well. In my recent monograph, *Drifting among Rivers and Lakes*, I sought to explore this model of poetic change by tracing the interweaving of poetic, social, cultural, and more specifically intellectual history from Su Shi's death through the Southern Song to the beginning of the Yuan Dynasty. I examined in particular the ramifications of the failure of Su Shi's belief that people could find their way through life through a creative recognition of and response to the immanent patterns of the world of which we are a part. Su Shi's understanding of *li* as inherent pattern could not provide people with the sort of certainty and collective commitments they needed to respond to the increasingly intense cacophony of partisan debate they encountered in the late Northern Song. As people began to reconceive the sources of authoritative meaning by which to organize experience, this restructuring had a direct impact on the sorts of intuitions of order poetry could capture and the techniques through which writers could embody those intuitions in poetic form. Conversely, however, as Zhu Xi proposed a conception of *li* as principle that was "above form" (*xing er shang* 形而上), meaning retreated both inward and upward, threatening to disappear outside the experiential realm altogether. Zhu, thus, was proposing a ground for moral authority that was beyond the sensuous intimations of meaning that poetry provided. But poetry and its crucial aesthetic intuitions of an immanent order in the phenomenal realm provided the limit to what Zhu Xi could propose. Thirteenth century *Daoxue* advocates subtly changed Zhu's conceptual structure to make it amenable to the sensuous intuitions of order by which poetry grounded experience. Even so, *Daoxue* at the end of the Southern Song offered an understanding of the source of order in the human realm that differed profoundly from Su Shi's, displaced his, and rendered his all but invisible to the late imperial inheritors of the *Daoxue* worldview.

The Tang World

For late imperial readers, Su Shi presented a forceful personality, great erudition, and impressive flights of imagination, but he did not quite speak to the world as they knew it. Yet, if Su Shi in the Northern Song presents a problem for later readers—including us—what of the poets of the Tang Dynasty? Did the same matrix of connections between the shaping of meaning in poetry and the authors' understanding of the experiential realm inform the work of poets like Wang Wei 王維, Li Bai 李白 (701-761), Du Fu, Han Yu 韓愈 (768-825), Li He 李賀 (790-816), and Li Shangyin 李商隱 (813-858)?[15] The theoretical reflections I have presented so far argue that indeed the same problems of historical change, distance, and difference should make us step back from any easy assumptions about our ability to read the poets from *throughout* the Chinese poetic tradition. The great Tang Dynasty poets are especially challenging because we as the inheritors of the Chinese interpretive tradition believe that their poetry captures meanings of particular depth and importance, and thus the stakes for reading well are very high. Yet, to complicate our approach, the great Tang poets do not form a coherent group. Wang Wei was the consummate court poet who shaped a distinct style by taking to the extreme the erasure of the individual in the court style. Li Bai was the radical outsider whose training in poetry came from what he could read of the poetry of bygone eras. Du Fu, although from a great clan lineage, pushed poetry far beyond the values of the court and died an apparent failure. Only later, as cultural values shifted in the wake of the An Lushan rebellion, did writers discover in Du Fu a poet who powerfully addressed what they saw as the dynamics of meaning in their new world. For them, Wang Wei was part of an already lost cultural synthesis, and his poetry could not speak to them or for them as could Du Fu's. Thus the challenge of reading the High, Mid- and Late Tang poets is in the fragmented character of their intuitions of order in the world. Still, there are deep commitments about the basics of human experience that hold the poets together, even as the catastrophe of the Rebellion forced them to confront the limits of the model of human nature and its relationship to the cosmos articulated in those commitments.

Recall my argument that knowledge of the world depends on aesthetic experience because we would not seek out patterns in the phenomenal realm if we did not first intuit the existence of the patterns we later clarify through investigation. Yet, we would not have intuitions of order without some sense of a large-scale orderliness to the world that makes these intuitions possible. For Su Shi, that orderliness is in *li* as "inherent patterns" that encompass the self and all phenomena.[16] The Tang writers, however, participated in an older understanding that derived from the Warring States. For them, Heaven granted humans their nature, which included their physical form, their

faculties of perception, their minds and their emotions. This inner connection with Heaven was what underlay the intelligibility of the world and the Way. Du Fu wrote at the cusp of an important shift as the An Lushan Rebellion (755-763) was proving all too clearly the hollowness of the confident correlative cosmology of the medieval period. The fundamental understanding of human nature as Heaven-granted endured, but the certainties about the specific correlations between a Heavenly order and the political order of the Tang Dynasty failed. Heaven retreated. It remained the ground for the human encounter with the world, but it became inaccessible as an object of knowledge in a way directly parallel with how, for Su Shi, *li* was the inaccessible ground for coherence. Su Shi insisted that while one could know the *ran*, the way things are, one could not know the *suoyiran*, that by which things are as they are. All of this perhaps seems very abstract, yet I would argue that these underlying commitments about the world—particular to Du Fu's cultural moment shaped by the An Lushan Rebellion—were viscerally part of Du Fu the poet and his poetry. They shaped the structuring of Du Fu's verse and informed the aesthetic imagination immanent in his poems, just as Su Shi's commitments gave life to "Aboard Boat, Rising at Night."

Du Fu's "Weary Night"

In order to illustrate the role of this historically situated structure of intuitions of meaning in the human encounter with the experiential realm, I would like to explore Du Fu's "Weary Night" 倦夜, a late-night poem that we can compare with Su Shi's "Aboard Boat, Rising at Night."

Weary Night	倦夜
Bamboo coolness invades the bedroom.	竹涼侵臥內
The outland moon fills a corner of the courtyard.	野月滿庭隅
The heavy dew forms water drops that fall.	重露成涓滴
The sparse stars flicker, now there, now gone.	稀星乍有無
Fireflies gleam in their own light as they fly in the dark.	暗飛螢自照
The birds stopping for the night on the water call out to one another.	水宿鳥相呼
Ten thousand affairs all hemmed in with weapons:	萬事干戈裏
In vain I sorrow that the pure night passes.[17]	空悲清夜徂

To a certain extent, comparing the aesthetic structure of a regulated verse

poem like this with Su Shi's old-style poem presents a problem, but I would like to focus less on the construction of the parallel couplets and more on other aspects of organization and movement that are not specifically determined by generic requirements.

Like Su Shi, Du Fu is awake alone on a moonlit night, but he is awake unwillingly, and we don't know why. In the first six lines Du Fu assembles elements in the surrounding nightscape both to articulate the concerns that keep him up and to recast them by placing them in the larger order of which he discovers himself to be a part. Thus the aesthetic goals of imaginatively shaping encountered events are largely the same for both Du Fu and Su Shi, but the pieces from which the whole is built are different, as is the nature of the coherence and the role of the author in that order. Du Fu begins by noting a "bamboo coolness invad[ing] the bedroom." "Invade" (*qin* 侵) is a courtly variation on the verb "enter" but it remains slightly ominous.[18] The coolness, however, is welcome, since this is the end of summer, and the slight movement of air passing through the bamboos outside his window brings relief from the heat. Du Fu steps out of the bedroom into the enclosed courtyard to see the bright moonlight slanting into one corner of the courtyard, leaving the rest in darkness. The moon, however, is an "outland moon" bringing the vast stretches of wild country outside his courtyard into his home. This too has a slightly ominous inside-outside tension. The second couplet picks up elements from the first: dew is forming, now that the temperature is falling deep in the night, and the dewdrops on the plants in the courtyard glint in the moonlight then disappear as they roll off the leaves. Above, the stars are few because the moon is bright. This surely brings to mind Cao Cao's 曹操 (155-220) line "The moon is bright and the stars few" 月明星稀 in "Short Ballad" 短歌行, but the phenomenon and the allusion are commonplace.[19] Those few stars, however, flicker in the humid atmosphere and thus repeat the pattern of points of light appearing and disappearing that Du Fu has noted for the dewdrops. This pattern takes a new shape in the fifth line with the glow of the fireflies of late summer, whose time is now short, visible in the dark portions of the courtyard. The flashing of the fireflies, however, transforms the image of small lights sparking on and off: the fireflies illumine themselves amid the darkness. There is a correspondence that is subtle—and derives from the physical details, not allegory—to Du Fu's own situation, a sense of temporality and restlessness against the darkness, and of course Du Fu is writing a poem. This correspondence takes a new form as Du Fu moves from the fireflies glowing intermittently to the unseen waterfowl beyond the courtyard calling out to one another from time to time. The waterfowl are migrating because of the change of season; they are here tonight but will continue their journey tomorrow. Du Fu shares their fate of moving as the seasons of man compel him, and they and the fireflies are temporary

companions following the physical rhythms of a world in flux. In line seven Du Fu speaks at last of the concerns that frame his observations, focus his attention on particular aspects of the landscape, and explain his sleeplessness. The fighting continues; he and his family are not yet secure. Still, despite these concerns, this *is* a beautiful scene. It must pass, but it is a fragile moment in time when Du Fu sees himself as part of calm processes of change that he has captured in poetry for us to read twelve hundred years later.

The intuition of order in "Weary Night" is very circumscribed and deals with largely observable patterns in the physical world.[20] Du Fu does not make significant implicit claims about the extent to which people are "of the same category" (*tong lei* 同類) in participating in these patterns. True to the assertion in the preface to the *Mao Shi zhengyi* 毛詩正義 (Mao commentary on the Canon of Poetry), resolve—a structure of human commitments—holds the poem together, but the objects and events of the poems speak to the poet's resolve in complex, multivocal ways as he shapes his response and reads the significance of the confluence of events structured in the poem. A. C. Graham puts Du Fu at the beginning of his *Poems of the Late Tang* because Du Fu is cautious about the earlier world of correlative cosmology and surrenders much in order to preserve a smaller realm shaped by human concerns.[21] Poets in the Mid- and Late Tang grew increasingly self-conscious about the role of human desire in shaping the order they saw in the world until by the time of Li Shangyin, desire largely dominated the poetic intuitions of coherence in experience. Yet the point to be stressed is that Du Fu is *not* reading the world in "Weary Night" as a moral allegory. Instead, the poem builds on a recognition of patterns in the world that evoke complex emotions based on how those patterns speak to the poet's commitments. The poem is not about Du Fu but about how he places himself in a world of meanings. In recognizing substantive patterns, he recognizes himself and takes his stand.

Conclusion

I am arguing for a deep continuity in the poetic tradition from Du Fu to Su Shi but also a significant shift. For both authors, occasional poetry in particular is about seeing oneself, defining oneself through the emergent patterns of events. But the connection between the world and the self, the ways in which the poet participates, changed over the three hundred years separating Du Fu and Su Shi, and thus the nature of the aesthetic coherence and the poetic techniques through which the poet sets out this coherence changed correspondingly. One cannot read Du Fu and Su Shi easily within one aesthetic and conceptual framework. Each demands something different from us. Learning what they demand from us takes time, patience, and acuteness of sensibility. But it requires first of all that crucial step of alienation, a recognition of difference: "This poet's world is not my world."

This is—at least at the beginning—a *theoretical* injunction. Theoretical reflection tells us that if poetry speaks powerfully about human experience, it must do so precisely through the poem's rich connections to the world. But theory tells us again that these connections between poet, poetry and the world are as complexly historical as are we ourselves. We thus must give up something of our world—we can no longer be fully of our world; we must accept and even seek alienation—if we are to begin to gain insight into the structures of meaning through which the poetry of the Classical Chinese tradition speak. However, what we gain in our alienation is a rich past and powerful poetic voices that open up before us. These are far greater than what we surrender.

Endnotes

1. Dilthey argued:

> I have shown how significant the objective mind is for the possibility of knowledge in the human studies. By this I mean the manifold forms in which what individuals hold in common have objectified themselves in the world of the senses. In this objective mind, the past is a permanently enduring present for us. Its realm extends from the style of life and the forms of social intercourse to the system of purposes which society has created for itself and to custom, law, state, religion, art, science and philosophy. For even the work of genius represents ideas, feelings and ideals commonly held in an age and environment. From this world of objective mind the self receives sustenance from earliest childhood. It is the medium in which the understanding of other persons and their life-expressions takes place: For everything in which the mind has objectified itself contains something held in common by the I and the Thou. Every square planted with trees, every room in which seats are arranged, is intelligible to us from our infancy because human planning, arranging and valuing—common to all of us—have assigned a place to every square and every object in the room. The child grows up within the order and customs of the family which it shares with other members and its mother's orders are accepted in this context. Before it learns to talk, it is already wholly immersed in that common medium. It learns to understand the gestures and facial expressions, movements and exclamations, words and sentences, only because it encounters them always in the same form and in the same relation to what they mean and express. Thus the individual orientates himself in the world of objective mind.
>
> This has an important consequence for the process of understanding. Individuals do not usually apprehend life-expressions in isolation but against a background of knowledge about common features and a relation to some mental content.

Kurt Mueller-Vollmer, ed., *The Hermeneutics Reader: Texts of the German Tradition from the Enlightenment to the Present* (New York: Continuum Press, 1985), 155.

2. Gadamer writes:

> In fact the horizon of the present is being continually formed, in that we have continually to test all of our prejudices. An important part of this testing is the encounter with the past and the understanding of the tradition from which we come. Hence the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. There is no more an isolated horizon of the present than there are historical horizons. Understanding, rather, is always the fusion of these horizons which we imagine to exist by themselves.... In a tradition this process of fusion is continually going on, for there old and new continually grow together to make something of living value, without either being explicitly distinguished from the other.
>
> If, however, there is no such thing as these horizons that are distinguished from one another, why do we speak of the fusion of horizons and not simply the formation of the one horizon, whose bounds are set in the depths of tradition...? Every encounter with tradition that takes place within historical consciousness involves the experience of the tension between the text and the present. The hermeneutic task consists in not covering up this tension by attempting a naïve assimilation but by consciously bringing it out. This is why it is part of the hermeneutic approach to project an historical horizon that is different from the horizon of the present. Historical consciousness is aware of its own otherness and hence distinguishes the horizon of tradition from its own. On the other hand, it is itself, as we are trying to show, only something laid over a continuing tradition, and hence it immediately recombines what it has distinguished in order, in the unity of the historical horizon that it thus acquires, to become one with itself again.
>
> The projecting of the historical horizon, then, is only a phase in the process of understanding, and does not become solidified into the self-alienation of past consciousness, but is overtaken by our own present horizon of understanding. In the process of understanding there takes place a real fusing of horizon, which means that as the historical horizon is projected, it is simultaneously removed.

Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: The Crossroad

publishing Company, 1982), 273.

3. Lin Yutang, *The Gay Genius: The Life and Times of Su Tungpo* (New York: John Day, 1947). For an excellent set of surveys of Ming, Qing, and modern assessments of Su Shi, see Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊, ed., *Su Shi yanjiu shi* 蘇軾研究史 (Nanjing: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001). The changing views of Su Shi are part of the complex cultural and literary history of the Ming and Qing dynasties, but the constant theme—whether an author honored or loathed Su Shi—was his combination of talent and learning. The later writers do not explore the intellectual structure of Su Shi's world or his works, except for the occasional reference to Buddhism or Zhuangzi that displaces his actual intellectual positions.
4. Modern scholars of Su Shi such as Zeng Zaozhuang and Wang Shuizhao 王水照 are important exceptions. They have been very attentive to the totality of Su Shi's writings and to the mid-Northern Song context in which he wrote.
5. Zhu Xi recognized Su Shi in particular as a threat to his project of redefining *li* as moral principle. See my "Aesthetics and Meaning in Experience: A Theoretical Perspective on Zhu Xi's Revision of Song Dynasty Views of Poetry," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 65.2 (2005): 311-355.
6. Neither Feng Youlan's 馮友蘭, *Zhongguo zhexue shi* 中國哲學史, revised ed. (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1994) nor Wing-tsit Chan's *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963) has a section devoted to Ouyang Xiu or Su Shi. Chan mentions Su Shi just once, in a footnote on Cheng Yi. Peter K. Bol in *"This Culture of Ours": Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992) presents Northern Song intellectual history in a manner that much more closely accords with what the texts of the period tell us.
7. "I worry that in our time many of those who [seek to] learn speak of Nature, and thus I once composed an explanation: Nature is not what those who learn are anxious about, and the sages rarely spoke of it." "Answering Li Xu," second letter 答李詡第二書, *Ouyang Xiu quanji* 歐陽修全集, 6 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2001) 2:47.669; Hong Benjian 洪本健, ed., *Ouyang Xiu shiwenji jiaojian* 歐陽修詩文集校箋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 2009), 2.1169; Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊 and Liu Lin 劉琳, eds. *Quan Song wen* 全宋文, 360 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu, 2006), 33:697.54.
8. Cheng Yi, *Er Cheng yishu er Cheng waishu* 二程遺書二程外書 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1992), 18.8b-9a. This is a reprinted

photocopy of the *Siku quanshu* edition.

9. Su Shi, "Jingyinyuan huaji" 淨因院畫記, in *Su Shi wen ji* 蘇軾文集, edited by Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 367-368. See my discussion of this text in *The Road to East Slope: The Development of Su Shi's Poetic Voice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 84.
10. I discuss Su Shi's developing sense of the significance of *li* in the chapter "Fengxiang and the Poetry of Immanent Pattern" in *The Road to East Slope*, 78-118.
11. My recent monograph *Drifting among Rivers and Lakes: Southern Song Poetry and the Problem of Literary History* (Cambridge: Harvard Asia Center Press, 2014) explores the relationship of intellectual and literary history—the orderings of language and experience—in the transformation of poetry that occurred from the late Northern Song to the end of the Southern Song.
12. Wang Wengao 王文誥, *Su Shi shi ji* 蘇軾詩集, edited by Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), 17.891-892; Wang Wengao 王文誥, *Su Wenzhong Gong shi bian zhu ji cheng* 蘇文忠公詩編註集成 (Taipei: Student Bookstore, 1967), 17.18b-19; Ogawa Tamaki 小川環樹, *So Shoku* 蘇軾 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1972), 1.123-129; Burton Watson, *Su Tung-p'o: Selections from a Sung Dynasty Poet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 65-67.
13. For example, in his commentary on the "Explanation of the Trigrams" (Shuo gua 說卦) in the *Canon of Changes* (Yijing 易經), Su Shi writes:

> The transformations of the Way and virtue are like rivers constantly rushing downward…. The sages considered that if one stood at the end, one could not know the whole and exhaust their transformations. Therefore they went upstream and followed them back to their beginnings. The Way is where it travels; virtue is its traveling (*xing* 行, also "enacting") and bringing to completion. Pattern (*li*) is that by which the Way and virtue are as they are, and rightness (*yi*) is the explanation of that by which they are as they are.

Su Shi, *Su shi Yi zhuan* 蘇氏易傳 (Taipei: Guangwen, 1974), 9.533. I discuss this passage in "Moral Intuitions and Aesthetic Judgments: The Interplay of Poetry and Daoxue in Southern Song China" in *Modern Chinese Religion I: Song-Liao-Jin-Yuan (960-1368 AD)*, edited by John Lagerwey (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 1307-1377.

14. For my use of Kant's approach to aesthetic experience, see *Drifting*

among Rivers and Lakes, 18-24.

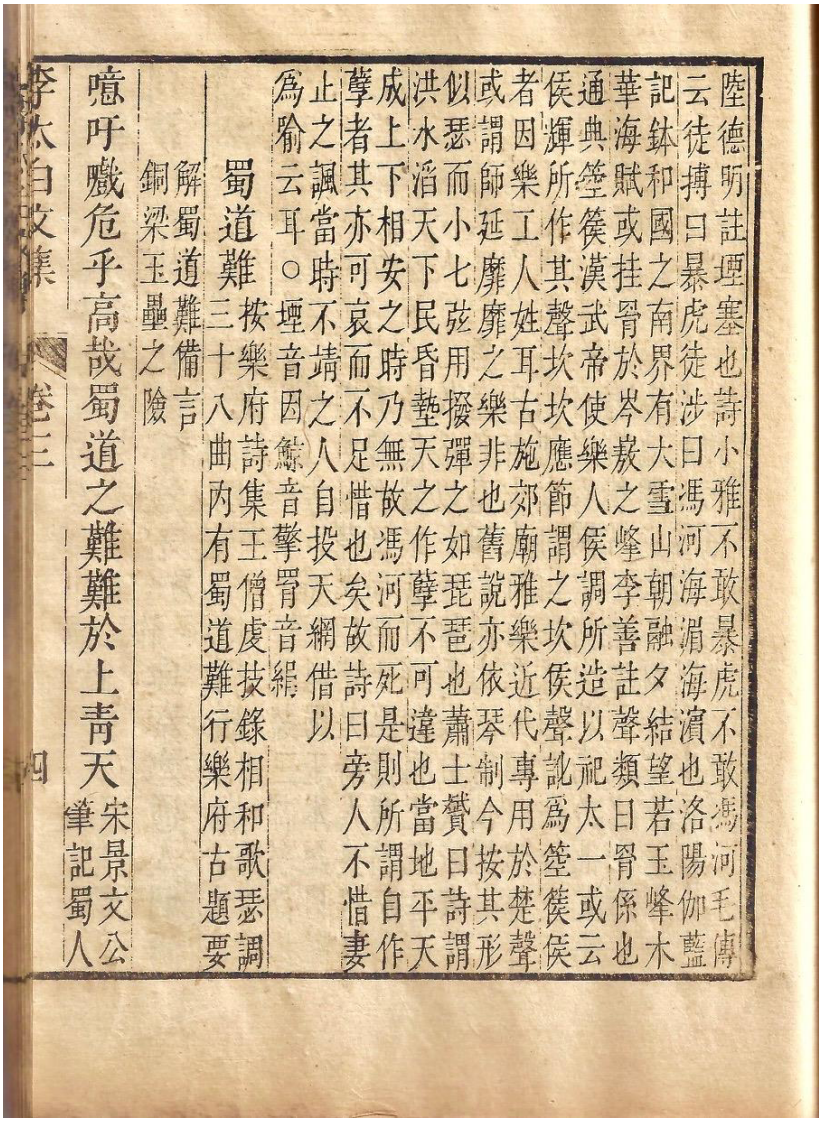
15. I explore this question in detail in two recent articles: "'Renwen': Zhongtang shiqi shige he shenmei jingyan zhuanbian" "人文": 中唐時期詩歌和審美經驗轉變 (Patterns of the Human Realm: Poetry and Transformations of Aesthetic Experience in Mid-Tang China), in *Chuanhe xiansheng rongxiu jinian wenji* 川合先生榮休紀念文集 (Retirement Festschrift for Kawai Kōzō), edited by Jiang Yin 蔣寅, 195-222 (Hangzhou: Fenghuang Press, 2017), and "'Juanye'—dui Zhongguo gudian chuantong zhong roushen shixue de fansi" "倦夜" —對中國古典傳統中肉身詩學的反思 ("'Weary Night:' A Reflection on Embodied Poetics in the Classical Chinese Tradition"), *Zhongguo xueshu* 中國學術 (Chinese Scholarship) 38 (2017): 119-137. "Patterns of the Human Realm" explores the relationship of poetic practice and cultural transformation in the Mid-Tang, while the second essay, "Weary Night," examines the character of aesthetic experience in a poem by Du Fu.
16. My monograph, *The Road to East Slope*, explores the process by which Su Shi came to his broad, capacious view of *li* as "inherent pattern." His distinctive understanding of its role in grounding the human engagement with the world moved beyond the narrowness of the post-An Lushan Confucian humanism, of which his mentor Ouyang Xiu was the last great advocate.
17. Qiu Zhao'ao 仇兆鰲, ed., *Du shi xiang zhu* 杜詩詳注, 8 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2015), 5:14.1422-1423; Peng Dingqiu 彭定求, ed., *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩, 25 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1960), 7:227.2465. Stephen Owen, trans., *The Poetry of Du Fu*, 6 vols. (Boston: Walter De Gruyter, 2016), 4:13.
18. Cf. Li Bai, "Jade Staircase's Grievance" 玉階怨: "White dew grows on the jade stairs. / The night is long, invading her gauze stockings." 玉階生白露 / 夜久侵羅襪. Zhan Ying 詹鍈, ed., *Li Bai quanji jiaozhu huishi jiping* 李白全集校注彙釋集評, 8 vols. (Tianjin: Baihua Wenyi, 1996), 2:5.727-731. "Jade Staircase's Grievance" is a title (and theme) that originated in Southern Dynasties court poetry.
19. Cao Cao, *Cao Cao ji* 曹操集 (Hong Kong: Zhonghua, 1973), 5.
20. The commentaries cited in Qiu, *Du shi xiang zhu*, largely respect Du Fu's close attention to the night scene and his place in it. Even though critics acknowledge the comparisons to Du Fu's own circumstances implicit in the images of the fireflies and the water birds in the much-admired third couplet, physical presence of the insects and birds in the scene remains central.
21. Angus C. Graham, *Poems of the Late T'ang* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), 39-56.

Avatars of Li Bai: On the Production of Tang Poetry and Tang Poets during the Northern Song Dynasty[1]

Anna M. Shields 田安
Princeton University

In recent years, scholarship on premodern Chinese literature has taken a sharp turn towards reception history (*jieshou shi* 接受史), historical studies of the responses of generations of readers to the works of individual writers. Though this historicist trend is in many ways a welcome expansion of traditional biographical or formal studies, in the study of the Tang it also runs the risk of reaffirming a false confidence in the stability and coherence of "Tang literature," let alone "Tang authors," as interpretative categories. At its most complex, reception history traces messy debates over significance, values, and canonicity through contrasting positions, and it reveals readers engaged in making meaning from the tradition. At its most simplistic and positivist, it reifies in a hagiographic manner the historically formed canonical identity of a given writer and reinforces a teleological narrative about the process of canonization.

In many reception studies we also find a rigid subject-object dichotomy, in which an author's corpus is presented as a unitary object only partially understood (or misread) by reading subjects over time—and the "partiality" of their response is assessed by the contemporary scholar, who implicitly claims a full, correct understanding of the whole. Furthermore, though reception history is aimed at demonstrating the continued but varying impact of a given author's corpus transmitted over time, scholars often fail to nuance the changing cultural and ideological contexts in which readers encountered the corpus, producing narratives of "response" that are often strangely deracinated from their cultural moments.[2] This tendency is especially problematic, I suggest, in studying the transmission of Tang literature over the course of the epistemic shifts of the Tang-Song transition, in which definitions of the literary and its relationship to moral and ethical value were changing irrevocably even as the material conditions of literary production and transmission were also evolving in a new era of print. The multiple cultural transformations of the tenth through twelfth centuries reshaped both



陸德明註堙塞也詩小雅不敢暴虎不敢馮河毛傳云徒搏曰暴虎徒涉曰馮河海涓海濱也洛陽伽藍記鉢和國之南界有大雪山朝融夕結望若玉峰木華海賦或挂罥於岑崟之峰李善註聲類曰罥係也通典箜篌漢武帝使樂人侯調所造以祀太一或云侯暉所作其聲坎坎應節謂之坎侯聲訛爲箜篌侯者因樂工人姓耳古旃郊廟雅樂近代專用於楚聲或謂師延靡靡之樂非也舊說亦依琴制今按其形似瑟而小七弦用撥彈之如琵琶也蕭士贇曰詩謂洪水滔天下民昏墊天之作孽不可違也當地平天成上下相安之時乃無故馮河而死是則所謂自作孽者其亦可哀而不足惜也矣故詩曰旁人不惜妻止之諷當時不靖之人自投天網借以爲喻云耳○堙音因鯨音擎罥音絹

蜀道難 按樂府詩集王僧虔技錄相和歌瑟調三十八曲內有蜀道難行樂府古題要解蜀道難備言銅梁玉壘之險

噫吁嚱危乎高哉蜀道之難難於上青天 宋景文公筆記蜀人

Li Bai's "The Road to Shu is Hard," from the 1758 edition of *Li Taibai wenji* 李太白文集, held by the Research Library at the Elling Eide Center, Sarasota, Florida.

Tang texts and Song readers, and thus the "reception" of Tang literature should be read not just within but as part of—and even a catalyst for—those transformations.

Scholars acknowledge the degree to which textual practices such as colophons, anthologies, evaluations, and editions produced different versions of Tang poets in the centuries after 907, but to date, the study of that process has been focused on individual authors rather than on the ways that these activities, taken as a whole, constituted new hermeneutic practices growing out of new intellectual and material circumstances of the Northern Song. What were the continuities within the reshaping and transmission of different Tang texts and authors from Tang to Song? How might we read across those continuities to create a larger literary historical picture of reception as a set of hermeneutic practices in the Tang-Song transition? In this essay, I begin to address these questions by decentering High Tang poet Li Bai 李白 (701-762) from the narratives of single-author reception history in order to situate him in the broader story of Song approaches to the Tang literary legacy.[3] Song writers' attempts to justify or deny Li Bai's position near the top of a Tang literary pantheon reveals critical fault lines in their struggle to define literary and historical values. The ongoing debate over Li Bai's talent and relative place in the literary pantheon during the Northern Song—which is to say, the efforts of those writers to produce a stable, canonical figure—reveals both the challenging features of Li Bai's corpus and the impact of new literary standards on the shaping of the medieval literary canon. At the same time, the material practices of collecting, editing, reorganizing, selecting, and printing Tang writers' works were becoming more culturally prestigious activities in the Northern Song and thus transforming the ways Tang works and authors were evaluated.

Li Bai became an interesting problem for Northern Song readers in at least two ways. First, much of his poetry was not easily accommodated to the sociopolitically oriented literary values that emerged in the wake of the "ancient prose" (*guwen* 古文) movement of the mid-eleventh century. Second, his checkered personal history challenged the Song tendency to write biographical narratives linking a writer's moral character to his political moment and his literary corpus, narratives that were being crafted around the two key figures of Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824) and Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770). It was not that the terms by which Tang readers had championed Li Bai's reckless, energetic genius were unintelligible to Song readers—they were perfectly intelligible, if applied to a narrow set of poems. But they were insufficient to meet new Northern Song definitions of literary greatness. For Li Bai to sustain his position as one of the Tang greats in the Northern Song, his reputation and corpus had to be reexamined and redefined.

Though late Northern Song scholars labored to reconcile discrepancies

among competing versions of Li Bai, successfully producing by the last decades of the eleventh century a rationalized, fixed corpus and a sanitized biography, their efforts did not result in a triumphant twelfth-century consensus—in fact, debates over the core features of Li Bai's talent and his relative place in the Tang canon continue even today. The Li Bai story in the Northern Song began as an epistemological challenge—what were the appropriate aesthetic and historical frameworks in which to understand Tang poetry?—but ended in an ontological question: what is a Tang poet? Because Li Bai was complex, well-documented, and controversial, he provides an especially clear lens through which to see these questions unfold. Reading the history of Li Bai's interpretation alongside that of other Tang writers being reframed in the Northern Song, such as Du Fu, Han Yu, and Meng Jiao 孟郊 (751-814), calls into question Li Bai's exceptionalist reputation and reveals how deeply embedded he was in far-reaching Song inquiries into the meaning of the historical past and the quest for usable literary models. More broadly, this essay takes a turn away from traditional reception history and its subject-object dichotomy towards a dynamic model of transmission that foregrounds the ways that readers, imitators, editors, and anthologists made meaning from Tang literature.[4]

Our necessary starting point is a brief survey of the most influential versions of "Li Bai" produced in the last half of the Tang and the Five Dynasties era. Recognizing the polyvocality of the poet and his corpus as they stood in the ninth and tenth centuries is important for understanding the wide range of Northern Song reimaginings of the poet—some of which were positive, some negative, but none neutral. I also emphasize the degree of physical and material engagement we see among readers of his work from his death through the end of the Northern Song, though Li Bai is not unique in this regard.[5] These readers literally handled Li Bai's legacy: they collected and copied manuscripts, they wrote inscriptions for steles about him, they visited and renovated his gravesite, selected poems for anthologies, made editions of his work, and viewed paintings of him. As art historian Kathlyn Liscomb has shown in her analyses of the visual and material legacy of Li Bai, Li Bai became a "multivalent iconic figure" in art and material culture from the Southern Song onward—but that story begins in the Tang and Northern Song, even if little evidence remains of readers' material engagement before the thirteenth century.[6] This evidence reveals the proliferation of multimedia Li Bai "avatars" in what at first seems to be only textual reproduction. Where Li Bai began as an avatar in the older, Hindu sense, the "banished transcendent" (*zhexian* 謫仙), an incarnation of a Daoist deity sent down from the heavens, certainly by the late Northern Song he more resembled an avatar in today's gaming sense: an icon, an abstracted representation of a particular set of features that could be adapted to multiple

uses and contexts and adopted by readers for self-representation. For Li Bai and other Tang writers, Song readers slowly assembled verbal iconographies that included specific topics, styles, metrics, lexica, and images they saw as quintessential. Moreover, Song readers' conceptualization of Tang poets *as* avatars—Du Fu being an even more prominent example—was itself an innovative, increasingly valorized form of cultural production.

The Tang Multiplicity of Li Bai

Northern Song scholars made Du Fu—but they inherited Li Bai. Or, to be more precise, they inherited many Li Bais. The achievement of scholars in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in canonizing Du Fu as the "poet-historian" and "poet sage" has been well studied in recent years, and that scholarship has done much to illuminate the essential role of editions, printing, and paratextual practices in producing a morally paradigmatic and stable Du Fu.[7] This Northern Song making of Tang poets included other major figures, most significantly Han Yu, Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (768-819), and others associated with the mid-Tang interest in "antiquity."[8] Those editions of mid-Tang corpora were critical to the invention of new literary standards associated with the *guwen* prose movement of the mid-eleventh century. From one perspective, Li Bai was an outlier in Tang literary history. His fame was established during his lifetime (in part through his own production of his self-image)[9] and solidified in the eighth and ninth centuries by a series of collectors and influential admirers, as well as by writers who composed new inscriptions for his tomb, anthologists who collected his poems, and anecdote compilers who inflated his outrageous reputation with new stories.[10] These assessments of his talent and person were by no means univocal or consistent, yet nowhere do we see anxiety among Tang readers about those inconsistencies—instead, we find pleasure in circulating well-known poems and tales that featured Li Bai's outsized personality.[11]

The extant evidence from Tang quotations, anthologies, anecdotes, and later imitations suggests that Tang versions of Li Bai tended to cluster around a few popular poems and stories. For example, Li Bai's poem "The Road to Shu Is Hard" 蜀道難 has a strong claim to being one of the best-known poems of the Tang dynasty, perhaps second only to Wang Wei's 王維 (701-761) eighth-century parting poem "Song of Yang Pass" 陽關曲 and followed by Bai Juyi's 白居易 (772-846) "Song of Lasting Sorrow" 長恨歌.[12] Yin Fan 殷璠 (fl. mid-8th c.), who first collected it in his mid-eighth century anthology *Heyue yingling ji* 河嶽英靈集 (The eminences of our rivers and mountains), praised it as "marvelous beyond marvelous" (*qi zhi you qi* 奇之又奇).[13] "The Road to Shu Is Hard" crystallized key elements of Li Bai's reputation: his youth in Sichuan—the region also famous for producing Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 (ca. 180-117 BCE), Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53 BCE-18 CE), and Chen

Zi'ang 陳子昂 (661-702), as Li Bai himself never ceased to remind his readers, his fame as a far traveller, fondness for grandiose gesture, and poetic experimentation. The memorable opening of the poem tied these together:

Yi-xu-xi!! So sheer! So high!	噫吁戲危乎高哉
The hardship of the road to Shu is harder than mounting to Heaven.	蜀道之難 難於上青天
Since Can Cong and Yu Fu founded Shu, how long ago—[14]	蠶叢及魚鳧 開國何茫然
Forty-eight thousand years since that time,	爾來四萬八千歲
yet from there to the passes of Qin no path links human dwellings.	不與秦塞通人煙

After thirty lines of wild description and mental journey across the precipitous landscape, Li Bai concludes with a warning and a dramatic gesture:

Though they say the Brocade City is full of pleasures,	錦城雖云樂
it's better to return home soon.	不如早還家
The road to Shu is hard, harder than mounting to Heaven—	蜀道之難難於上青天
I lean and gaze west, heaving a long sigh.[15]	側身西望長咨嗟

"The Road to Shu Is Hard" was composed to a traditional Music Bureau (*yuefu* 樂府) title, and Li Bai's reputation as a poet in Tang anthologies was centered around *yuefu*, which were overrepresented in anthologies compared to his other verse forms. Other of his *yuefu* poems often anthologized and quoted in the Tang and later centuries include "Bring in the Wine" 將進酒, "Tune of Crow-black Night" 烏夜曲, and "Hardships of the Road" 行路難, verses that showcased respectively the roles of drinker, voyeur to romantic sorrow, and roaming bravo.[16] But certain of Li Bai's occasional verses were also frequently imitated by Song poets; perhaps the best example is the first of his four "Drinking Alone Beneath the Moonlight" 月下獨酌 poems, which vies with "Asking of the Moon, Wine in Hand" 把酒問月 as his most popular "wine" verse in the Northern Song. If we hope to understand the challenges that Li Bai posed for later readers, the fact that these three poems were so often discussed and imitated after his death should serve as a caution.[17] Their narrow sampling of his poetic oeuvre contrasts provocatively with versions of the poet we find in other, more serious Tang portraits of Li Bai that survived into the Song.

Three elements of Li Bai's life story pervade Tang accounts of him, two

of which were hotly contested and would go on to deeply influence Song readers' attitudes toward Li Bai the historical figure. The first and least controversial element is his extraordinarily wide travels throughout China, documented by the geographic references in his occasional verse; second, his brief service at Tang Xuanzong's 唐玄宗 (r. 712-757) court; and third, the question of his attitude to serving the Prince of Yong (Li Lin 李璘, d. 757) during the An Lushan Rebellion in 757. After years of youthful travel and patron-seeking, Li Bai was appointed in 742 to the Hanlin Academy at the glorious court of Xuanzong, and he remained there for roughly two years—but the extant sources do not agree on the extent and nature of his service at court, whether he was merely a literary entertainer (a drunken one at that), or whether he had weightier official duties.[18] He left Chang'an in 744, either with affection and rewards from the emperor or in disgrace after being dispatched by Gao Lishi's 高力士 and Yang Guifei's 楊貴妃 machinations. The penultimate act in Li Bai's story, when he was employed by the Prince of Yong in the prince's attempt to seize the southeast from his brother (Emperor Suzong 肅宗, r. 756-762), occurred in the least-documented period of his life. Different texts in his corpus during and after those events suggest conflicting views of his willingness to join the prince, and the question is ultimately unresolvable.[19]

The uncertainties in Li Bai's biography are further complicated by the messiness of his Tang textual legacy—and given that messiness, scholars have expressed suspicion over many poems added to his corpus during the Song. But we do have evidence of one collection that the poet himself compiled during his lifetime in a farewell preface composed in 759 for the Buddhist monk Zhenqian 真倩, in which Li Bai stated that he had made a copy of "all that he'd written in his life" for the monk. This tantalizing reference to a Li Bai hand copy is the only information we have about Li Bai's compilation efforts, and no evidence remains of the monk's copy.[20] At Li Bai's death in 762, two people had partial copies of his poetry with which they had been entrusted. One was his younger friend and drinking companion, Wei Hao 魏顥 who compiled a small two-*juan* collection, the *Li Hanlin ji* 李翰林集 (Collection of Hanlin Scholar Li) and the other was his younger cousin, the official and famous calligrapher Li Yangbing 李陽冰 (d. ca. 777) who compiled a more ambitious collection of Li Bai's work in ten *juan*, the *Caotang ji* 草堂集 (Collection from the thatched hall).[21] Though neither collection survived past the Song, the two prefaces did, and they offer us contrasting views of his life and the work. Wei Hao's preface is brief and casual, emphasizing their friendship, and his collection apparently included his own poems to Li Bai. Li Yangbing's preface, discussed below, is both serious and ambitious, to the point of being defensive about Li Bai's work and his reputation. Out of these initial verdicts on Li Bai new appreciations

and stories would proliferate over the next century and a half. But it is important to note that we have relatively little evidence about the forms in which his work circulated in the last half of the Tang, with the important exception of evidence from Dunhuang, only some of which is dateable.[22] A handful of poems on "Reading Li Bai's Collection" 讀李白集 from the ninth and tenth centuries reveal that there were "collections" (*ji* 集), in circulation, but they are not referred to by more precise titles or described in any manner.

During the Tang, versions of Li Bai appeared in a variety of literary forms, including commemorations, admirations, and anecdotes. Rather than a consistent typology of response, we find what we might call a typology of production: under certain generic conditions, particular kinds of Li Bai were produced. In the category of eulogistic commemoration, which contained texts that greatly influenced Song readers, we find the first two collection prefaces from 762, an epitaph, and three subsequent tomb stele inscriptions by relatively unknown writers.[23]

Table 1: Tang Commemorations of Li Bai

Date	Author	Commemoration title
762	Wei Hao 魏顥	"Preface to the Collection of Hanlin Scholar Li" 李翰林集
762	Li Yangbing 李陽冰	"Preface to the Thatched Hall Collection" 草堂集序
770	Li Hua 李華	"Epitaph for Former Hanlin Scholar Master Li" 故翰林學士李君墓誌
790	Liu Quanbai 劉全白	"Stele Record for Former [Hanlin] Scholar Lord Li of the Tang" 唐故翰林學士李君碣記
817	Fan Chuanzheng 范傳正	"New Tomb Stele for Lord Li, Left Rectifier of Omissions and Hanlin Scholar of the Tang" 唐左拾遺翰林學士李公新墓碑[24]
843	Pei Jing 裴敬	"Tomb Stele for Hanlin Scholar Lord Li" 翰林學士李公墓碑

These writers all shared a commitment to Li Bai's material preservation in different forms: they handled manuscripts and made decisions about their inclusion or exclusion from a collection, tended to his gravesite, including composing supplementary inscriptions on steles, and even supported his descendants. Because they explicitly linked their reputations to Li Bai's, they had a vested interest in representing him (and themselves) in the most heroic

light possible.

With the exception of including Li Bai's brief service at Xuanzong's court, which they all praise, these six commemorations appear lightly tied to political or personal history. Perhaps because he was closest to Li Bai, as a relative who cared for him in his last days, Li Yangbing reveals some anxiety about the contents of Li Bai's poetry in his overwrought praise that invoked the Classics:

> [In his youth] he only read the work of the sages, and he was ashamed to compose poems like those of Zheng and Wei; therefore his language often resembled that of celestial transcendents…. In all his work, his language was often satirical and critical;[25] since the Three Ages, after the "Airs" and the "[Li] Sao," speeding past Qu Yuan and Song Yu, surpassing Yang Xiong and Sima Qian, the one who strode alone after one thousand years was none but [Li Bai]. [26]

However excessive and even disingenuous this description of Li Bai's work may seem to contemporary readers, it opened the door to allegorical and political readings of his verse, a strain of interpretation that gained momentum in the Song. The longest Tang commemoration, by Fan Chuanzheng, was composed almost fifty years after Li Bai's death. It repeats passages from the earlier accounts but adds little historical detail; furthermore, over half of the text recounts Fan's own labor in finding, relocating, and rededicating Li Bai's grave. He summarizes the disparate elements of Li Bai's reputation as follows:

> He did not drink wine to indulge in its drunken pleasure; he took its mellowness to enrich himself. He did not compose poetry to heed literary rules; he took its chants for his own ease. He did not love divine transcendence because he wished to lightly ascend; he sought the unattainable with the unattainable, almost depleting his brave spirit to send off the remaining years of his lifetime…. In life, he was a high official at the emperor's sagely court; in death, he was a traveller on the road.[27]

The last extant Tang commemoration, from 843, comes from the hand of Pei Jing, an otherwise unknown literatus who also visited Li Bai's grave and erected a new stele inscription.[28] Pei's text is critical in these accumulating narratives because it adds—almost one hundred years after the fact—a new element of the rebellion story that described general Guo Ziyi 郭子儀 (697-781), hero of the An Lushan Rebellion, as instrumental in releasing Li Bai from prison after his disgrace (Pei Jing states that Guo helped Li Bai because

the poet had helped Guo out of difficulty in earlier years). While no longer regarded by scholars as credible, this story deeply influenced later views of Li Bai.

In Tang poetry and letters, we find admiration and praise of Li Bai in a different tone. Dozens of Tang poems praising Li Bai's unique poetic genius survive, composed by readers seeking to articulate their own poetic or social values, and often in an oppositional or self-promoting manner. In general, these admiring poems and discussions depict Li Bai in broad brushstrokes as the drinker and convention-defying poet above all, showing little interest in his biography or his historical moment. Du Fu's depictions of Li Bai as the drunken transcendent and his fond poems to and about the older poet (however one-sided their "friendship" might have been) convinced later readers of his esteem.[29] Mid-Tang poets Bai Juyi and Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779-831) specifically admired Li Bai's *yuefu* (while ranking Du Fu above Li Bai).[30] Han Yu and Meng Jiao championed Li Bai's brilliance, wildness, and eccentricity as a counter-cultural, authentic moral stance.[31] And by the late ninth and early tenth century, we begin to see stylistic imitations of Li Bai in works by the poet-monks Guanxiu 貫休 (832-912) and Qiji 齊己 (860-940).

Anthologists also counted among the admirers, and they too created rather different versions of the poet through their selections. For example, several of the twenty-eight Li Bai poems in the tenth-century Shu anthology *Cao diao ji* 才調集 (Collection of the tunes of the talents) do not appear in any other extant Tang anthology. More notably, almost all of them depict romantic longing, including five poems written in a first-person female voice. The Li Bai of the *Cai diao ji*, in other words, is not only very different from the poet championed by Han Yu and Meng Jiao, but he is also very different from what we find in the eighth-century *Heyue yingling ji*,[32] the earliest Tang anthology to select Li Bai's work, or the *You xuan ji* 又玄集 (Collection of the evermore mysterious) compiled by late Tang poet Wei Zhuang 韋莊 (836-910).[33] (The Li Bai poems found in the Dunhuang manuscripts tend to align with the *yuefu* poet Li Bai we find in the *Heyue yingling ji*.)

Finally, a wide range of ninth- and tenth-century anecdote and tale collections[34] preserve the most memorable Li Bai stories according to their particular interests, such as the more historical *Guo shi bu* 國史補 (Supplement to the History of the State) to the more gossipy and humorous stories from collections such as *Yunxi youyi* 雲谿友議 (Friendly discussions at Cloudy Creek) and the *Ben shi shi* 本事詩 (Stories behind poems). As we might expect, these stories tend to grow longer and more elaborate over time.[35] Here, too, we need to see Li Bai as part of a broader cultural practice of elite storytelling. As Sarah Allen has noted, these ninth- and tenth-century "tale clusters" around specific individuals "show the range of motivations and interests that different writers brought to the task of recording and

developing the stories that they collected."[36] More significantly, these tales would be consistently incorporated into later anecdotal and historical accounts of Tang figures.[37]

Scholars have long recognized that the *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Old Tang history) biography of Li Bai is a brief (three-hundred-word) patchwork of bits from earlier prefaces, inscriptions, and anecdotes, but it is perhaps best known for arguing that Li Bai sought to be employed by the Prince of Yong, and thus deserved imprisonment. Though the *Jiu Tang shu* credits Li Bai with having "a stalwart spirit that was vast and carefree, and a soaring desire to transcend the world," it only mentions his literary work in association with his drinking.[38] In fact, drunkenness is the key theme of this short biography—the word for alcohol (*jiu* 酒) appears six times, and "drunk" (*zui* 醉) or "tipsy" (*han* 酣), four. One famous story about his being hauled into Xuanzong's presence to compose poetry while drunk locates Li Bai first in a common tavern; and an episode in which he insults Gao Lishi by ordering him to take off his boots, which appears as a terse sentence in *Guo shi bu* and in a longer version in the late ninth-century collection *Song chuang zalu* 松窗雜錄 (Miscellaneous records from the pine-filled window) also appears here. The biography concludes by adding the claim that he spent his final years drinking himself to death: "When Bai was in Xuancheng he paid a visit to [the Prince of Yong], and then followed him in to service. . . in the end he drank to excess and died of drunkenness in Xuancheng."[39] Interestingly, Du Fu's *Jiu Tang shu* biography, located just after that of Li Bai, depicts Du Fu dying in similar fashion.

We find a fascinating profusion of Li Bais across a wide range of extant ninth- and tenth-century texts, which are of course only a fraction of the quotations from his works and anecdotes that would have circulated by and about him in manuscript and by word of mouth. More importantly, though tenth-century readers expressed delight in reading his work and imitating his voice, none appeared to see the need to reconcile the record or edit the corpus. Li Yangbing's effusive eighth-century preface reveals concern about sanitizing Li Bai's biography and securing him a place in history. But beyond his preface, we have no details as to how those concerns might have played out in his organization or editing of the corpus, including deleting problematic texts. In the early Northern Song, however, scholars launched serious efforts to rationalize Li Bai's multifarious legacy.

Early Northern Song Productions of Li Bai

The many versions of Li Bai that early Northern Song literati inherited were overdetermined in some ways and internally inconsistent in others: wild drunken courtier, Daoist adept, traitor to the throne; inheritor of the tradition of the *Odes*, brilliant experimentalist, versifier of romantic songs. But

although Li Bai's case may seem extreme due to his celebrity, it exemplifies the miscellaneous and haphazard ways the broader Tang literary legacy came into the hands of Northern Song readers. Collections of Tang writers were scattered across the regions that had been the Tang empire during the tenth century, amplifying an already troublesome bibliographical reality: most literary collections were partial, even idiosyncratic, because they were manuscript copies, often made by individuals for their own use, in "small collections" (*xiaoji* 小集).[40] There were likely multiple copies of such collections in the major libraries of the capitals of the Shu and Southern Tang kingdoms, regions with high levels of literary and cultural activity, and readers who had access to those could collate competing texts and traditions, if they were so inclined. After the fall of the southern kingdoms and the transport (or copying) of regional libraries to the new Northern Song capital of Bianjing (Kaifeng), significant editorial and collecting work could begin.[41] The "Four Great Books" of the Northern Song, which included the one thousand-*juan* literary collection *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 (Brilliant blossoms from the literary garden) constitute but one example of the grand scale of bibliographical work that became possible and even pressing after the 970s.[42]

But Song scholars were neither neutral nor disinterested when they edited collections. The early Northern Song case of Han Yu and his zealous editor Liu Kai 柳開 (948-1001) provides an illustrative if extreme counterpoint to that of Li Bai, underscoring the seriousness of editing as a potential ideological tool. In 971, Liu Kai, the fervent partisan of "antiquity," who had renamed himself after Liu Zongyuan, produced an edition of Han Yu's works to honor him.[43] Liu Kai's ambitions were explicitly hagiographic, as the praise of Han in his preface demonstrates:

> The Master's compositions during his lifetime, in their criticism, praise, regulation, and warning, as responses, essays, inquiries, and discourses, all purely returned to Confucius's teachings and expounded them, surpassing by far Mencius and Yang Xiong…[44]

But in the process of compiling this work (which is no longer extant), Liu Kai apparently added and corrected almost six thousand characters—and ultimately one has to wonder what "Han Yu" this edition represented. Liu's rhetoric certainly went on to influence later Song readers' advocacy of Han and his followers as heroes of antiquity. But his ambitious language also points to a new urgency in editing Tang writers' works in the Northern Song—what we might think of as an opening volley in the eleventh-century culture wars.

In the case of editing Li Bai's collection and selecting his work to

circulate, Song scholars' goals initially appear less ideological and more curatorial in nature. And yet two early Northern Song efforts reveal that Li Bai presented special problems for readers even so: Yue Shi's 樂史 (930-1007) 998 editions of Li Bai's work—one in twenty *juan,* titled *Li Hanlin ji* 李翰林集 (Collection of Hanlin Academician Li), along with a ten-*juan bieji* 別集 (separate collection of prose)—and Yao Xuan's 姚鉉 (968-1020) anthology *Wen cui* 文粹 (Literature's finest; compiled in 1011, presented to the throne in 1020, printed in 1039), which contained sixty-three of Li Bai's poems, four of his *fu,* and twenty-one pieces of prose. In quite different ways, these two works document Northern Song struggles to reshape both the poetic corpus and the biography into forms that were morally instructive or exemplary. The first responds to this challenge through expansion, the second through exclusion. Though we cannot know what Yue Shi's "Li Bai" looked like, because all Northern Song copies of his collection are lost, Yao Xuan's version in the *Wen cui* is at once familiar and subversively new. (Both of these versions of Li Bai were also compiled before the great library fire at the Song capital in 1015 and may have preserved texts that would otherwise have been destroyed—perhaps along with texts of questionable attribution that thereafter became a permanent part of the corpus.)

Yue Shi's edition of Li Bai came almost two centuries after the last recorded compilation, Fan Chuanzheng's *Li Hanlin ji* of 817, but we see no trace in the ninth- or tenth-century record of Fan's collection until Yue Shi mentions having it in 998.[45] Yue Shi was a prominent Southern Tang official before he joined the Northern Song court, and we can assume he had access to multiple Li Bai manuscripts in the south and at the Song capital. We may have a reasonably faithful copy of Yue Shi's *Li Hanlin ji* in the one Southern Song edition of that name to survive (known as the Xianchun edition 咸淳本, after the Xianchun reign period, 1265-1274, to which it has been dated—about which more below).[46] But the preface to his second Li Bai collection, the ten-*juan Li Hanlin bieji* 李翰林別集 that collects *fu* 賦, letters, encomia, and other prose texts has also been transmitted separately. That *bieji* preface provokes some questions: in it Yue Shi reveals that he has included Li Yangbing's preface to the *Caotang ji* and Fan Chuanzheng's stele inscription for Li Bai in his edition. Then he adds that he has composed a "Biography of Li Bai" 李白傳, also to include in the edition. He concludes by noting he has recently obtained three more stories (*shi* 事) about Li Bai, which he copies into the *bieji* preface.

Yue Shi's painstaking efforts to copy those anecdotes in the later *bieji* preface surely stemmed from the fact that the anecdotes work to rehabilitate Li Bai in different ways. The first anecdote gives us a new, longer version of the drunken composition story in which Li Bai appears at Xuanzong's court no longer really drunk but just "as if he were not quite recovered from a

hangover."[47] The second presents a much more detailed version of the story about eunuch Gao Lishi and his boots, which adds that Gao Lishi subsequently lied to Yang Guifei in order to get Li Bai dismissed. And the third anecdote provides a much longer version of the Li Bai-and-Guo Ziyi story than we saw in the *Jiu Tang shu*: according to this account, Li Bai keenly perceived Guo Ziyi's virtue long before Guo was famous—a vignette that works to shore up the account of Li Bai's integrity.[48] In short, the *bieji* preface documents Yue Shi's efforts to compile as much evidence as possible in defense of Li Bai's conduct. What were Yue Shi's motives? On the one hand, he had a very popular product in Li Bai, and adding more detailed anecdotes would have appealed to his readers. But all this editorial labor also indicates some concern about Li Bai's personal history and a need to control the reading of his corpus through a redemptive biographical framework. According to Li Bai's later editor Song Minqiu 宋敏求 (1019-1079), these biographies appeared as the first *juan* of this 998 edition—and as far as we know, this is the first Tang writer whose collection was deliberately *prefaced* by multiple biographies.

Since Yue Shi's edition was slowly replaced in the printing history of Li Bai's collection by Song Minqiu's 1068 edition, we can only guess at the impact his Li Bai might have had on Northern and Southern Song readers. However, the still-extant early Song anthology of Tang literature, *Wen cui*, later known as *Tang wen cui*, gives us another influential version of Li Bai. Where Yue Shi was concerned to historicize and defend Li Bai, Yao Xuan, the scholar who independently compiled the *Wen cui* in 1011, presented a freshly curated Li Bai as part of his more sweeping portrait of Tang literature. The *Wen cui* was the first influential period anthology of the Tang, collecting over two thousand pieces of poetry and prose from almost two hundred writers. It is not only famous for promoting *guwen* as a new prose ideal, but also infamous for having excluded all regulated verse from its poetry selections—giving us today what seems like a very strange view of "the finest" Tang poetry.[49] There is a remarkable contrast between the anthology's polemical "antiquity"-oriented preface and its contents: though the preface centers on Han Yu and his mid-Tang circle, the prose and poetry selections reveal a far more diverse range of styles and topics, suggesting early Northern Song tastes that were more catholic than later Song views. Despite the lack of regulated verse, this diversity is also found in the poetry section—although Han Yu and his followers dominate the prose pieces, Li Bai, Wu Yun 吳筠 (d. 778), and Bai Juyi head the list with the most poems. Moreover, Yao Xuan uses his selections to argue for the existence of a powerful "return to antiquity" sensibility throughout the Tang—in both the prose selections, where he invents the new category of *guwen* prose, and in the poetry, where Li Bai predominates.

With sixty-three of his poems and four *fu*, Li Bai is the single most visible poet in the *Wen cui*. This was also the first anthology (as far as we know) to select so many of Li Bai's "ancient airs" (*gufeng* 古風), selecting eleven, and to group them as a set at the beginning of a new category called "Songs to Ancient Tunes" (*gudiao gepian* 古調歌篇).[50] The evidence suggests that either Yue Shi or Li Yangbing before him had grouped together a set of poems called *gufeng*, and one or both of them may also have put the *gufeng* at the beginning of their collections. But in the *Wen cui*, the *gufeng* appear not just as important pieces in Li Bai's collection—they are presented some of the most noteworthy poems of the Tang, exemplars of what a poet concerned with "antiquity" would compose.[51]

There are a few other new and noteworthy features of the *Wen cui*'s "Li Bai": in general, Yao Xuan includes very little poetry on women, romance, or drinking in the anthology, which is also true of his Li Bai selections. As noted above, *Wen cui* also favors his *yuefu*, including twenty-eight of them, and some of his most popular pieces associated with his biography, such as "The Road to Shu Is Hard," "Tune of Crow-black Night," and "Bring in the Wine." This curation of Li Bai is designed to be appealing and inoffensive, but it also seems quite similar to earlier Tang versions. Another new feature is the selection of many Li Bai occasional poems (many more than appear in Tang anthologies) that documented his history of travel and his social ties to other poets, such as He Zhizhang 賀知章 (659-744) and Meng Haoran 孟浩然 (689-740). In contrast to earlier Tang anthology versions of Li Bai (at least among those extant), these selections have the effect of weaving the iconoclastic poet more deeply into the social fabric of the High Tang. Furthermore, Li Bai's footprint extends well beyond the poetry section: *Wen cui* also includes twenty-one of his prose texts in five different genres—and also includes Fan Chuanzheng's eulogistic inscription for Li Bai.[52] Yao Xuan gives us a much rounder, historically grounded Li Bai—he is no longer exceptional and solo, but a socially well-connected writer who composed in an "ancient" style across multiple genres. In short, he stands as an ideal Tang author who could serve as a model for contemporary writers.

Northern Song and later evidence suggests that the *Wen cui* circulated widely after being printed first in 1039—though some readers may also have had Yue Shi's *Li Hanlin ji*, the *Wen cui* would have served as a broad introduction to Tang literature, and to Li Bai, for many. The Li Bai of the *Wen cui* was constructed to support Yao Xuan's view of a Tang canon and a Tang commitment to antiquity, a view that increasingly gained traction after the mid-eleventh century. In it, Li Bai also appears more historically intelligible and plausibly integrated into the larger world of Tang literati than he had before: he appears in the anthology for the first time as a knowable, consistent, and ideal writer in significant new ways.

Impact of the Eleventh-Century *Guwen* Moment: Poetic and Historical Narratives in Conflict

To shift the focus away from Li Bai alone, we should recall that these efforts on his corpus were only two moments in the growing literati interest in the second half of the eleventh century in managing the records of the Tang past, including its literary past. To mention only a few of the most prominent Tang writers, new editions of Du Fu, Han Yu, Liu Zongyuan, Meng Jiao, Li Deyu 李德裕 (787-850), and Du Mu 杜牧 (803-852) all appeared between the 1030s and 1060s, as Northern Song scholars became ever-hungrier readers, book collectors, and editors. But this eleventh-century interest in Tang literature was also unfolding in the context of the ideological battles of the *guwen* reform movement, which shaped the demands that certain Song readers began to make of Tang texts. The activist officials associated with Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989-1052) in the 1040s sought out literary models for their efforts to reform and revitalize public prose, and they turned to Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan in particular for literary writing, *wenzhang* 文章, that could be both politically and ethically powerful.[53] Some described the mid-Tang moment as the high point of Tang literature, and Han Yu, the "Master" who propounded the "Way of antiquity," as the epitome not merely of prose but of all *wenzhang* (writing or composition). But the question of where Tang *poetry* stood in relationship to this new discourse—what we might call the challenge of writing literary history that could account for both prose and poetry—was still open.

The *guwen* scholar Mu Xiu 穆修 (d. 1032), in his postface to his edition of Liu Zongyuan's work, offered this assessment of the Tang literary pantheon in 1031:

> The literary writing of the Tang in the beginning did not depart from the style of the Sui and [Southern] Five Dynasties. In its middle period, [people] praised Li Bai and Du Fu; when they started to employ their talents, they became dominant, and yet their reputation was only heroic for their poetry, and the Way had not yet reached its completion [in them]. When Han and Liu arose, only then were they able to greatly express the writing of the ancients. Their language and their virtues adorned and substantiated each other and were not adulterated.[54]

Here, Li Bai and Du Fu are allowed to be "heroic" for their verse, but they still fall short of the true ideal that Han and Liu embodied, which included the breadth of *wenzhang*, both poetry and prose, and was focused on the revival of the Way of antiquity. In the case of Du Fu, scholars in the second half of the eleventh century advocated placing him at or near the top of the

literary pantheon by reading his poetry as record of his life and as historical chronicle—which gave him the role of unappointed "poet-historian" of his age.[55] But Li Bai proved more difficult to wrestle into this new *guwen* garb, despite the efforts of Yao Xuan in his *Wen cui* to orient him towards antiquity. Li Bai's overdetermined "greatness" thus became a new problem. In a sense, the Tang commemorators, admirers, and anecdotalists had done their work all too well: we recall that Du Fu, Han Yu, and Meng Jiao—Tang writers venerated by *guwen* partisans—had all sanctioned his brilliance. Li Bai's well-documented disdain for "low office" (*xiaoguan* 小官, as one commemorator phrased it) and his carefree life, along with his wide-ranging and heterodox interests, so well documented in the larger collection, stood as stubborn evidence against remaking him in the model of Han Yu and Du Fu.[56]

By the late eleventh century, readers had tried a wide range of strategies to reframe Li Bai's character and corpus. In general, these took one of three routes, hints of which we can find in earlier Tang versions of Li Bai: either limiting the reading and imitation of Li Bai to a handful of popular and generally inoffensive poems; or reading the corpus allegorically, as political critique of—rather than enthusiastic participation in—the excesses of High Tang culture; or rewriting the biography to more safely embed him in a didactic historical narrative centered around a few carefully defined "iconic events."[57] One could, of course, combine all three approaches—which might leave one with a corpus of five poems and a caricature poet.

Because so many different versions of Li Bai were proposed and debated in the eleventh century, I offer just a few representative voices, the most prominent of which, such as that of Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), would affect subsequent generations of readers. Here is the Buddhist monk Qisong 契嵩 (1007-1072)[58] reading Li Bai's *yuefu* with allegorical gravity in his postface to his copy of the *Li Hanlin ji*. He also remarks on the debate around Li Bai's reputation:

> When reading the *Li Hanlin ji*, I saw his more than one hundred *yuefu* poems; in their intent to revere the state and rectify human relations, they brilliantly embody the Airs of the Zhou *[Classic of] Poetry*. It is not merely that they sing of feeling and nature or are casually chanted to please himself. . .[59]

Qisong then goes on to offer brief but systematic readings of ten named *yuefu* poems, including "The Road to Shu Is Hard"—but, perhaps surprisingly, none of the *gufeng*—as political or social critiques. He concludes with an attempt to improve Li Bai's reputation beyond its Tang associations:

> Recent generations explained that Li Bai had pure talent and an

> untrammeled spirit, but that he was only a "banished transcendent," and that's all—how is that necessarily so? When we scrutinize his poetry, [we see that] its form and power, talent and thought are like mountains that loom and seas that shake, completely inexhaustible…. [60]

For perhaps the first time in discussions of Li Bai's merit, Qisong exposed the negative side of being a "banished transcendent," with its twin implications of reclusion and esoterism. Taking a new view of the exceptionalist narrative, he follows the allegorical reading strategy suggested by Li Yangbing and applies it to specific poems, defending Li Bai, however implausibly, as a Ru 儒 (Confucian scholar) *manqué*. Though Qisong argued his case from specific poems, his was definitely a minority opinion among Northern Song readers.

Other Li Bai promoters, such as Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) and his friend and fellow poet Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣 (1002-1060), took pains to defend the poetry—and imitate it playfully—without getting entangled in the details of personal history and without reaching for allegorical readings. Later Song poets would strive for subtlety in their imitation of Tang masters; here Ouyang Xiu, whose own moniker of "Drunken Old Man" (*zuiweng* 醉翁) made him unashamed to praise Li Bai's drinking, was also happy to emulate him in an obvious fashion.

[Li] Taibai Teases Shengyu [Mei Yaochen] (alt. title: "Reading Li Bai's Collection and Imitating his Style")	太白戲聖俞 (讀李白集效其體)
The Kaiyuan went untroubled for twenty years;	開元無事二十年
The five weapons went unused and Taibai was at leisure.	五兵不用太白閒
The essence of Taibai [Venus] descended to the human world,	太白之精下人間
Li Bai sang loudly his "Road to Shu is Hard."	李白高歌蜀道難
"The hardship of the road to Shu is harder than mounting to Heaven!"	蜀道之難 難於上青天
When Li Bai touched down his brush, mists and clouds sprang forth.	李白落筆生雲煙
A thousand wonders, ten thousand steepnesses that couldn't be climbed,	千奇萬險不可攀
Yet then he looked back to see that Shu	卻視蜀道猶平川

resembled the level plain.
When palace ladies came to prop him up, he was already drunk-- 宮娃扶來白已醉
And still drunk he finished his poems—when sober, he'd forgotten. . . 醉裏詩成醒不記

***

Amid empty mountains, flowing water vainly flows with blossoms, 空山流水空流花
In a gust, he has already gone, ascending on blue auroras. 飄然已去凌青霞
Up above he looks down on petty little [Meng] Jiao and [Jia] Dao: 下看區區郊與島
dancing fireflies, soaked with dew, they chant in autumn grasses.[61] 螢飛露濕吟秋草

Imitative poems like these are often treated as a symptom of Northern Song poets' unoriginality, but this one poem, however playful, scores some serious literary-critical points. In addition to riffing on no fewer than four different Li Bai poems and anecdotes about him, Ouyang Xiu ends by placing Li Bai high above Meng Jiao and Jia Dao 賈島 (779-843), whose "bitter" (*ku* 苦) style had been wildly popular among late Five Dynasties and early Northern Song poet-imitators.[62] Ouyang Xiu's *hommage* is also technically virtuosic in Li Bai's own style, with a loose, hypotactic syntax, rhymes by couplets, and a prominent quotation of the first line of "The Road to Shu is Hard." On the one hand, poems like this paint a Li Bai stripped down to his least troublesome elements: the road to Shu, bravado, drinking, roaming amid mountains, and ascending to the heavens. And yet as imitative exercises, they also work to reinscribe Li Bai's most significant poetic innovations in the literary landscape—which is to say, they remind us of how he changed Tang poetry.[63]

Ouyang's form of emulation also reveals the potential complexity of the practice as Northern Song poets conceived it: this was not simply a text-to-text relationship (imitating a single poem), or a thematic imitation through variation (as in early medieval *yuefu* poetics),[64] but rather an adaptation of a characteristic style associated with both an individual author and a set of iconic poems.[65] We note that the alternate title of the poem was "Reading Li Bai's *Collection* and Imitating his *Style*" (emphasis mine). Certainly we find many shallower forms of Li Bai imitation in the Song, such as the exhaustive poem-by-poem imitations as well as "matching" and "returning to match" (*he* 和 and *zhuihe* 追和) poems by poet Guo Xiangzheng 郭祥正 (1035-1113). Guo was praised by Mei Yaochen as a new incarnation of Li Bai; but his

verses existed more parasitically alongside the Li Bai originals, reproducing entire titles, lines and structures from the earlier poems in his Song pastiches.[66] This type of imitation was not entirely new in the Northern Song. Tao Qian 陶潛 (372?-427) is of course the medieval poet whose particular, idiosyncratic voice was imitated influentially by Tang poets—Wang Wei and Bai Juyi being only the two most prominent examples. However, Northern Song imitations of earlier poets, particularly of Tang poets, spanned a much wider stylistic and formal range than ever seen before in the tradition, from text-to-text imitations to more general evocations of style based on lexicon, topic, formal and rhetorical techniques, and deeper knowledge of writers' biographies. This greater range of imitative practice grew out of new notions of authorship emerging over the course of the Tang-Song transition: it worked to reinforce and stabilize a Tang writer's authorial identity through a small body of representative texts in systematic, mutually reinforcing, and textual ways that are characteristic of Song hermeneutics.

Elsewhere, in one of the many "Li Bai vs. Du Fu" debates that entertained Northern Song literati, Ouyang Xiu focused on the two poets' relative talents in the traditional vein of literary evaluation that would become common in "remarks on poetry" (*shihua* 詩話) and "notebook" (*biji* 筆記) comments. To Ouyang, Li Bai was greater than Du Fu thanks to his "heaven-endowed genius and carefree abandon" (*tiancai zifang* 天才自放), a role that Ouyang Xiu at some moments also wished to play. We see a shift in Ouyang's assessment that foreshadows later Song poetic discourse: from the criteria used to evaluate the greatness of a particular *poet* to the criteria for excellent *poetry*. In the connoisseurial language of *shihua* and *biji*, Song readers sought to develop more nuanced language of analysis for their poetic practice and reading; nonetheless, this language increasingly sought to align personality and history with poetic output. This new form of literary theory and analysis, though it can touch on the biographical, exceeds the merely biographical, and from a literary perspective anticipates certain metaphysical arguments of Daoxue proponents. Ouyang Xiu may also have sensed the danger of an overly biographical reading of Li Bai, for nowhere in his poetry or prose does Ouyang—the quintessential historian—venture too far onto the historical ground for Li Bai's work.[67]

One of the most enduring Northern Song versions of Li Bai was in fact produced by Ouyang Xiu's fellow historian Song Qi 宋祁 (997-1061), in his revised biography of Li Bai in the *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (New Tang history). As he does with the biographies of many writers he admires, including Han Yu, Liu Zongyuan, and Du Fu, Song Qi, who was solely responsible for revising the biographies, overhauled the *Jiu Tang shu* biography of Li Bai in both obvious and subtle ways, doubling its length, adding new anecdotes, and deleting critical depictions of Li Bai's conduct. This new Li Bai, while still

summoned drunk to compose for Xuanzong, is much less drunk than the Li Bai of the *Jiu Tang shu*, and only drunk at court, as a way to manage "not being used" to his potential—a subtle echo of Li Yangbing's 762 suggestion that Li Bai's drinking was in fact this time-honored form of protest or reclusion. The *Xin Tang shu* Li Bai is also undermined by Yang Guifei, thanks to Gao Lishi's scheming. Even more influential was Song Qi's addition of the Guo Ziyi story to the account of Li Bai's punishment for joining the Prince of Yong's rebellion. Finally, in the official state history of the Tang, Li Bai had his character redeemed.

But the *Xin Tang shu* biography does not end with Li Bai dying an ignominious, drunken death. Song Qi instead interpolates three new statements about his posthumous reputation that show the impact of the Tang commemorations: a description of Li Yangbing's efforts for Li Bai, which resulted in a pardon and posthumous title in Daizong's 代宗 (r. 762-779) reign; an excerpt from Fan Chuanzheng's inscription; and an anecdote from a mid-ninth century text that describes Li Bai being named one of the "Three Peerless Artists" (*san jue* 三絕) by Tang emperor Wenzong 文宗 (r. 827-840), taken from Pei Jing's 843 inscription for Li Bai's grave. Though Li Bai's rehabilitation in the *Xin Tang shu* is not hagiographic in the manner of the revised biographies of Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan (and Li Bai did not get nearly as complete a makeover as Du Fu), it is clear that Song Qi read widely in Li Bai's biographical record to produce a more coherent and convincingly admirable version of the man.

With this new and improved account of Li Bai in the state history and the Li Bais circulating in Yue Shi's collection and in the *Wen cui*, one might think that Song scholars would see no need to reproduce him differently—yet they continue to propose new evaluations of Li Bai's relative literary worth and moral value. We see the larger debate being invoked by Su Shi, who offered a new interpretation of Li Bai's character in his "Record for the Reverse Side of Li Bai's Stele" 李太白碑陰記. In this essay, Su Shi opens with the problem of Li Bai's potential collusion with the Prince of Yong: "Li Taibai was a wild *shi* 士, and yet once he lost his integrity [by colluding with] Li Lin, the Prince of Yong—how could this be someone who 'would save the world'?"[68] Su Shi's solution to this problem is characteristic of his view of other admirable historical figures: that is, he argues for the coherence of Li Bai's conduct based on his *qi* 氣, his temperament, a quality that Su Shi elsewhere argued was essential for greatness. By casting Li Bai as a "wild *shi*," Su Shi put him in the company of other men he defined as *kuangren* 狂人 ("wild men"), activist figures who sought to put matters right.[69] Though Li Bai was unable to be "used" at court, his behavior in matters such as commanding Gao Lishi to take off his boots was consistent with his *qi* and therefore correct. Su Shi concludes:

> In the case of Taibai's following the Prince of Yong, he surely had to have been coerced. If not, the reckless wantonness and ugliness of Li Lin [who was famously ugly] were such that even a mediocre person would have recognized his inevitable defeat. For Taibai to have recognized Guo Ziyi's integrity as a person but not have been able to perceive Li Lin's eventual failure is certainly untenable. I cannot but dispute it here.[70]

One can see in Su's comments a degree of commitment that goes beyond the merely historical or biographical: Li Bai appears in this account as someone whose personality and actions were consistent, intelligible, and exemplary. Though Su Shi resolves the historical conflict with his own particular hermeneutics of character, thereby producing an even more heroic *and* coherent Li Bai, his comments point to the lingering doubts in the late eleventh century—and the new approaches to Li Bai's texts and biography that had to be crafted to settle them.

Creating a "Tang Poet": The 1068 *Collection of Li Taibai*

Up to this point, we have only encountered the ideal Li Bais that Song readers imagined—the antiquity-minded heir to the *Shijing* 詩經 (Classic of poetry) or the insouciant inebriated composer—but of course, they also perceived dissolute and shallow Li Bais as well. More importantly, these new Li Bais emerged from a closer reading of the poetry as well as attention to the biography, and in some cases, greater scrutiny of the corpus provoked skepticism about the status earlier readers had accorded him. The second half of the eleventh century saw many new editions of Tang writers' works, and a wider printed circulation of "Tang literature" in general in many forms, from the new biographies in the *Xin Tang shu* to "remarks on poetry" and new anthologies of Tang poetry. The most superficial of the Li Bai assessments that appeared in this engagement could be seen as indexing a shift in literary tastes from Tang to Song—deprecating Li Bai's breezy style in favor of Du Fu's moral seriousness, for example, or rejecting Li Bai's *yuefu* preferences and experimental meters for Du Fu's tightly wrought regulated verse. However, as Li Bai gained in circulation, more pointed negative assessments of the poetry appeared; the critiques of Su Zhe 蘇轍 (1039-1112) and Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-1086) were among the most famous. Su Zhe disagreed with his elder brother strongly over the merits of Li Bai, and he reversed Su Shi's argument to claim that the poetry substantiated the disrepute of the person:

> Li Bai's poetry is like his conduct as a person: he boldly expressed his lordly daring, yet he 'flowered and did not fruit' [was superficial

> without substance], loving adventures and delighting in fame, but not knowing where rightness and reason lay... Li Bai began by using poetry and wine to serve the glorious emperor and left when he met with criticism, but wherever he went, he did not change his former habits. When the Prince of Yong was going to secretly seize the southland, there is no question that Bai rose up and joined him, and thus he was exiled to his death. When we examine his poems, this is verified.[71]

Wang Anshi's disapproval of Li Bai was famously captured in his ranking Li Bai last in one of two collections of Tang poetry he compiled in the 1080s, the *Sijia shiji* 四家詩集 (Anthology of the Four Poets), in which he selected poems by Du Fu, Han Yu, Ouyang Xiu, and Li Bai, in that order (since this anthology is no longer extant, we cannot conclude more about Wang's views from selections or ordering). We have no explicitly negative remarks on Li Bai in Wang's extant corpus, but Hu Zi 胡仔 (1110-1170), in his Southern Song collection *Tiaoxi yuyin conghua* 苕溪漁隱叢話 (Collected remarks from the retired fisherman of Tiao Creek), claimed to have preserved Wang's view:

> When Wang Anshi ordered his *Anthology of the Four Poets*, he placed Li Bai last, and common folk generally wondered at it. Wang said, "Li Bai's poetry approaches vulgarity, and that is why people easily find pleasure in it. Bai's knowledge was often coarse, and nine out of ten poems speak of women and wine; however, his boldest and most heroic [poems] are worth keeping/selecting."[72]

Even if this anecdote is apocryphal, it surely exemplifies a standard critique of Li Bai's reputation in the late Northern Song; furthermore, despite its narrowness, it is no more restrictive than Qisong's admiring allegorical reading of Li Bai's *yuefu* some decades earlier.

After the printing of the 1060 *Xin Tang shu*, Song readers had a new biographical lens through which to reexamine Li Bai's literary corpus. Then, the 1068 revision by the scholar, historian, and bibliophile Song Minqiu of Yue Shi's edition of Li Bai's work, the *Li Taibai ji* 李太白集 (Collection of Li Taibai), appeared as the last significant work on Li Bai in the Northern Song. Song was one of the most influential editors and curators of Tang literature and history in the eleventh century. His work focused on the Tang included writing a geographical treatise on Chang'an, the *Chang'an zhi* 長安志 (Record of Chang'an), collecting Tang-era edicts in the *Da Tang zhaoling ji* 大唐詔令集 (Collected edicts of the Great Tang), working on revisions to the *Tang History*, and editing another nine Tang writers' works.[73] Among the

Tang corpora he edited, the most prominent included those of Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿 (709-784), Du Fu, Meng Jiao, Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫 (772-842), and Li Bai. Song's edition of Li Bai was one of his latest, inspired when he was posted to Shandong and began to collect traces of Li Bai's life story and his works there. In his zeal to "expand" (*guang* 廣) Li Bai's collection to its new thirty-*juan* form, Song tells us that he began with Yue Shi's twenty-*juan Li Hanlin ji* and the ten-*juan Li Hanlin bieji*, and then searched widely to locate more texts, eliminating duplicates and collating originals, eventually expanding the collection to over one thousand pieces. This edition set the collection in influential ways, and there is much to be explored in it. Song Minqiu's new edition of Li Bai's works in 1068 was then reorganized into chronological order within Song's categories by Zeng Gong 曾鞏 (1019-1083) in the 1070s, and finally printed in 1080.[74] Here I comment only on the ways that the new edition produced Li Bai as a "Tang poet."

If we take the Southern Song copy of the *Li Hanlin ji* as a faithful version of Yue Shi's 998 edition for comparison, we discover that Song Minqiu introduced seven new categories of poems, retitled or eliminated four others, and shifted many poems into new categories.[75] He states the following about his process: "I followed the old table of contents and modified and corrected its content and order, making sure that each [piece and category] followed one another; then I appended the *bieji* to the collection."[76] This statement leaves open the possibility that Song reordered the collection according to new or different categories, and it certainly implies that he reorganized poems within categories. Zeng Gong suggests this was the case in the postface to his chronologically ordered version of Song's edition from the 1070s:

> Once [Song Minqiu] broadened Li Bai's poetry through categories [perhaps according to preexisting categories?], he also wrote a [post]face, but he had not yet examined the order in which the poems were composed. When I obtained [Song's] edition, I then examined their chronology and arranged the poems accordingly.[77]

Why should we be concerned about the categories that Song Minqiu may have added or reorganized in Li Bai's collection? Because the organization and labeling of Song's edition stand as an argument about Li Bai as a certain type of poet: a master of certain forms, who composed in conventional and socially sanctioned contexts, and who focused on a narrow range of acceptable topics.[78] These categories simultaneously highlight and obscure features of Li Bai as poet: they attempt to promote him as an introspective, reflective writer while they disguise problematic topics as well as neatly classify poems that defy simple categorization.

The table gives the twenty-one categories Song Minqiu uses for Li Bai's

poetry, which I give in order, with numbers of poems and *juan* numbers in the third column (since some categories are split across *juan*). Here I rely on the numbers of poems included in Zhan Ying's modern edition, not those in Song's 1068 edition. The color-coding groups the categories in topically or thematically larger sets:

Table 2: Organization of poetry in the *Li Taibai ji*

Category title 類	# of poems	*Juan* #
Ancient Airs 古風	59	1
***Yuefu* 樂府**	144	2-6
Songs 歌吟	81	6-7
Presented [poems] 贈	125	8-11
Sent [poems] 寄	51	11-12
Parting 別	36	13
Farewell 送	102	14-16
Response and reply 酬答	34	16-17
Banquets on the road 遊宴	61	17-18
Ascending high and looking out 登覽	36	19
Travel on the road 行役	24	20
Reflections on the past 懷古	37	20
Poems of idleness 閒適	36	21
Harboring reflections 懷思	11	21
Being moved 感遇	33	22
Expressing reflections 寫懷	12	22
Praise of phenomena 詠物	24	23
Inscribing praise [of things] 題詠	12	23
Miscellaneous praise [of things] 雜詠	17	23
Bedchamber feelings 閨情	56	24
Mourning & grief 哀傷	6	24

Many readers since the Northern Song have critiqued the unevenness and taxonomic irregularity of these twenty-one categories—they include both form, context, and topic, and they vary wildly in size, from the large categories of 144 *yuefu* and 125 "presented" poems to the six poems of "grief" and thirty-three poems on "being moved." But we must recognize both the interpretive problems that Song Minqiu elides with broader categories and the arguments concealed in narrow ones. For example, by not subdividing the *yuefu* into topical categories (as other collections such as the *Wen cui* did), he maintains the image of Li Bai as the master of a form while veiling the diversity of his subject matter. Breaking the *yuefu* up more precisely would

expose the heterodoxy of his topics, including a fondness for romantic vignettes (many composed in women's voices or depicting women's figures in a mildly erotic fashion), Daoist themes,[79] and plenty of drinking.

But as the table suggests, we can easily regroup the twenty-one categories into six larger sets: form, social exchange, fixed topoi, "introspection" (various forms of *huai* 懷), poems on things, and feeling (*qing* 情). In the case of the categories of social exchange represented by "presented," "sent," and "farewell" poems, though of course these had been conventional in collections and anthologies for centuries, they were also undifferentiated, useful containers for uncomfortably flattering verses to patrons, sincere and eloquent addresses to Daoist and Buddhist religious figures, and exchanges with other assorted Tang men he cultivated with verse. And what of the sycophantic poem presented to the Prince of Yong in 757, the "smoking gun" verse from the Rebellion that readers even today have trouble rationalizing? It is safely nestled in the middle of the formal "songs" (*geyin* 歌吟) category. The occasional categories thus work to domesticate Li Bai's corpus in social and formal terms—presenting him as a widely traveled bon vivant with a large acquaintance, famous for his skill in song—and to disguise problematic themes or topics in other ways.

Where the large undifferentiated social and formal categories obscure, the narrower topical categories make claims: the many subcategories of reflection suggest that Li Bai is a poet whose tendency to introspection rivaled Du Fu's, as we see him engaged in "reflecting on the past," "harboring reflections," "being moved," and "expressing reflections." The relatively small number of poems in these subcategories reveal the labor needed to construct them—and we note that even sorting out the "feeling" poems cannot fully disguise Li Bai's preference for sexual passion over grief (fifty-six poems to six), however far down the list those categories appear. Though these categories appear irregular, they are in fact more logically ordered than the categories in the extant Southern Song edition of the *Li Hanlin ji*. Moreover, the *Li Hanlin ji* has only one category labeled *huai* (the monosyllabic term is itself quite unusual in category titles, which tend to use disyllabic compounds), and it contains only forty poems. What Song Minqiu's new organization reveals is a structural approach to representing a "Tang poet." Li Bai is represented as a wide-ranging genius of form and style, a socially well-connected elite male, and a poet of paradigmatic literary concerns. This is not merely domestication but homogenization, according to a model not derived from Li Bai himself but from ideals of Tang writers that Song and others were working to stabilize.

To broaden our focus beyond Li Bai one final time: when we compare this edition to other editions of Tang corpora that Song Minqiu produced with similar categories, we can perceive how his editorial practice reproduces a

specific typology of Tang poet. Examining Song's edition of Li Bai against his edition of Meng Jiao, the *Meng Dongye ji* 孟東野集 (Collection of Meng Dongye), which he had completed a decade earlier, is especially illuminating, because Song Minqiu was Meng Jiao's first and sole editor in the Northern Song, and his edition is the base edition for the one we have today. Moreover, we know from Song's preface that these specific fourteen categories were his own choices for organizing Meng Jiao's scattered and chaotic corpus.[80] As we saw with Li Bai's twenty-one categories, however, we can group Meng's fourteen into the same six larger sets, though here they appear in different order: form, introspection, fixed topoi, social exchange, poems on things, and feeling.

Table 3: Organization of poetry in the *Meng Dongye ji*

Category title 類	# of poems	*Juan* #
***Yuefu* 樂府**	64	1-2
Being moved 感興	65	2-3
Singing my feelings 詠懷	39	3-4
Traveling at ease 遊適	53	4-5
Dwelling in reclusion 居處	39	5
Travel on the road 行役	16	6
Noted and presented 紀贈	33	6
Reflections that were sent 懷寄	18	7
Response & reply 酬答	12	7
Farewell and parting 送別	67	7-8
Praising phenomena 詠物	14	9
Miscellaneous topics 雜題	35	9
Mourning & grief 哀傷	57	10
Linked verses 聯句	3	10

Despite the slightly different order, a comparison of the representation of these categories in Meng's corpus reveals a surprisingly similar construction of two very different poets' work. Though we know of Meng Jiao's admiration of Li Bai, we can hardly imagine two Tang poets whose styles, interests, and personalities were less alike, and yet we see here the same impact of these categories on individual poems in Meng Jiao's collection. Another representation of the distribution of poems demonstrates the similarities but also the relative sizes of the categories in each poet's corpus:

Table 4: Distribution of Li Bai's poetry across large formal and topical categories

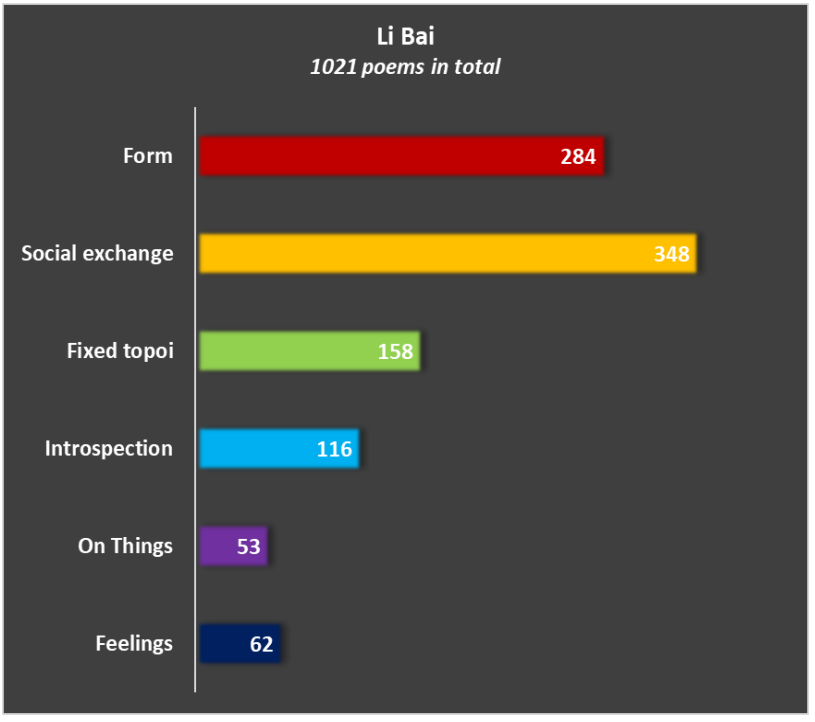
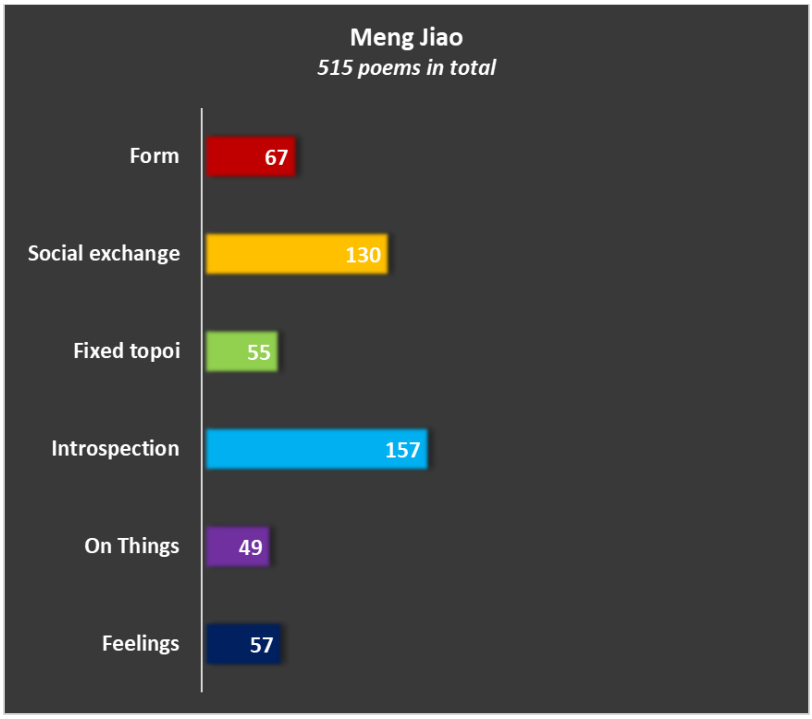


Table 5: Distribution of Meng Jiao's poetry across large formal and topical categories



Where social exchange looms larger in Li Bai's corpus, introspection carries almost twice as much weight in Meng Jiao's work as in Li's—but Meng Jiao's poetic corpus was also only half the size of Li Bai's. The larger categories are equally effective at flattening distinctive features of an individual poet's interests. In Meng Jiao's case, the unsorted *yuefu* disguise not romantic longing or drinking, but rather a constant litany of sadness, poverty, and abandonment; the "being moved" and "singing out" of feelings categories, which hark back to the models of Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210-263) and Chen Zi'ang, among others, contain some of Meng Jiao's most despairing and violent poems, including his three poems on failing the exams; and the many poems placed in "miscellaneous topics" bear witness to the difficulty of shaping Meng's unusual poetry into intelligible, conventional categories. Grief alone takes up ten percent of Meng's total (57 of 515), whereas Li Bai has only six poems of grief out of a thousand. Despite their different proportions, Song argues for the necessity of "grief" as a category in both poet's collections.

As he did in his representation of Li Bai, Song Minqiu presents Meng Jiao as a poet who embodied certain normative literary and social values that Northern Song poets sought in "Tang literature." Through his categorization of Meng's edition, Song depicts a poet who sustained a wide range of topical and formal interests, cultivated a broad social network, and responded with introspection in the face of moral and ethical conflict. Of these three claims, only the last has a strong relationship to the contours of Meng's poetry. Of course, readers experienced the poems beyond the categories that contained them, and yet we have to imagine that the normative packaging presented these difficult texts in ways that mitigated their more disturbing features. Topics and forms were certainly not the only approaches to repackaging Tang texts—for example, in the biographical *nianpu* 年譜 (chronologically ordered) editions that became increasingly popular from the late eleventh century and flourished in the Southern Song, we see readers seeking literary coherence through a logical narrative structure, drawing cause and effect out of texts that often resisted such readings. Song Minqiu was one Northern Song scholar among many producing models of Tang writers, but over the course of the eleventh century, he became a highly influential craftsman of the Tang literary and historical record. The durability of his approach to producing a "Tang poet"—and its intellectual and cultural contexts in the Northern Song—can be attested in many other collections and scholarly representations of the Tang.

Conclusion

This narrative of Li Bai as an avatar begins and ends in multiplicity, but also with new meaning: from Li Bai the "banished transcendent" to Li Bai as an

abstracted persona, a guise that could be adopted and adapted to readers' needs. Su Shi was of course dubbed the "transcendent of Eastern Slope" (*Po xian* 坡仙), in later centuries, and it was a role he sought to play in his lifetime. In outline, a similar path to avatar identity can be traced for other Tang authors prominent in the Northern Song, especially Du Fu, Han Yu, and Liu Zongyuan. But more than those three canonical and revered figures, Li Bai is a useful case study thanks to his controversial reputation. The successive attempts to redefine him illuminate more clearly the significant changes in the reading, production, and transmission of *wenzhang* that need to be understood in the context of the transformations of the Tang-Song transition. Tang readers produced their versions of Li Bai most often through the lens of genre, in the form of commemorations, poems of praise, and lively stories, revealing little concern about inconsistency or conflicts among competing generic accounts. But from the beginning of the Northern Song, literati wrestled with Li Bai according to new hermeneutic practices developed in response to profound changes in Northern Song culture. These practices included, among others, a new commitment to bibliography that was driven by state and individual interest in libraries and book-collecting, which prompted the production and printing of editions; an increasingly ideological approach to state historiography aimed at producing exemplary figures; and enthusiasm for compiling editions and anthologies of literary texts, which were seen as culturally prestigious activities in an age of connoisseurship. Moreover, all of these practices were shaped by changing definitions of literary writing and by its diminished position in the quest for political office and the Way. By shifting our focus away from the reception of individual Tang authors and towards the emergence of new hermeneutic practices in the reading of Tang texts, we can see more clearly how Song readers produced "Tang literature" in many new guises. Li Bai may have ended the Northern Song as a new kind of avatar—but he was one among many that readers could choose to play.

Endnotes

1. The author is grateful for the research support for this article provided by the Elling O. Eide Center in Sarasota, Florida, where I stayed as a scholar in residence in June of 2018. The Eide library contains extensive material on Li Bai, thanks to the collection efforts of Elling Eide, whose scholarship and translations of Li Bai are still pertinent today. Among other works, see his collection of translations, *Poems by Li Po: Translations by Elling Eide*, which was privately printed in 1984. Thanks also go to Michael A. Fuller, who commented on earlier drafts of this essay.
2. It is useful to consider the ways in which the volumes in the Zhonghua shuju XX-*ziliao huibian* [某]資料彙編 series enable this kind of flattening in reception history: the goal of these works is to help us track responses to single authors over time, but the passages that reference a given author's works are presented without context and also as of equal significance for a writer's evolving reputation.
3. In English, see Paula Varsano, *Tracking the Banished Immortal: The Poetry of Li Bo and Its Critical Reception* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003); and in Chinese, most recently, Wang Hongxia 王紅霞, *Song dai Li Bai jieshou shi* 宋代李白接受史 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010).
4. On this issue, I draw on recent scholarship on hermeneutics, particularly the lively debates in biblical hermeneutics and classical reception studies, where scholars have advocated a similar turn. See, among others, Timothy Beal, "Reception History and Beyond: Toward the Cultural History of Scriptures," *Biblical Interpretation* 19 (2011): 357-372; Emma England and William John Lynn, eds., *Reception History and Biblical Studies: Theory and Practice* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015); and Charles Martindale and Richard F. Thomas, eds., *Classics and the Uses of Reception* (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2006). See also Sheldon Pollock's recent work on "critical philology" and its approach to the interpretive tradition: Pollock, "Philology in Three Dimensions," *Postmedieval* 5.4 (2014): 398-413.
5. For another example of a Tang poet whose collection was labored over by early Northern Song scholars, see Stephen Owen's discussion of Yang Yi's work on Li Shangyin's corpus, in *The Late Tang: Chinese Poetry of the Mid-Ninth Century (827-860)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Asia Center, 2006), 336-337; also referring to Wan Man 萬曼, *Tang ji xulu* 唐集敘錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 283-284.
6. Kathlyn Liscomb, "Li Bai Drinks with the Moon: The Cultural Afterlife

of a Poetic Conceit and Related Lore," *Artibus Asiae* 70 (2010): 331. See also her "Iconic Events Illuminating the Immortality of Li Bai," *Monumenta Serica* 54 (2006): 75-118.

7. Most recently, Ji Hao, *The Reception of Du Fu (712-770) and his Poetry in Imperial China* (Leiden: Brill, 2017); and Jue Chen, "Making China's Greatest Poet: The Construction of Du Fu in the Poetic Culture of the Song Dynasty (960-1127)" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2016).
8. For recent reception histories of these two figures, see Yang Guo'an 楊國安, *Songdai Han xue yanjiu* 宋代韓學研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2006), and Yang Zaixi 楊再喜, *Tang Song Liu Zongyuan chuanbo jieshoushi yanjiu* 唐宋柳宗元傳播接受史研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2013).
9. Many scholars have argued that Li Bai's favorite poetic subject was ultimately himself; whether or not we agree with that assessment for his entire corpus, certainly this and other widely read poems reveal Li Bai's deep interest in role-playing and adopting different poetic voices.
10. As measured by the textual traces in later Tang texts, Li Bai seems matched in fame only by Bai Juyi and Yuan Zhen, but we do not see in the late ninth-century literary record the same traces of Yuan's and Bai's *lasting* popularity or admiration as we do for Li Bai.
11. Christopher Nugent has discussed this Tang attitude towards texts and compilations, noting that the scholarly and text-critical approaches were a Song phenomenon. See Nugent, "Putting His Materials to Use: Experiencing a Li Bai *yuefu* in Manuscript and Early Print Documents," *East Asian Publishing and Society* 5 (2015): 56-57.
12. "The Road to Shu Is Hard" played a key role in anecdotes about Li Bai's first notice at court by He Zhizhang 賀知章 and was collected in *Heyue yingling ji*, the ninth century *You xuan ji* 又玄集 (Collection of the evermore mysterious), *Wenyuan yinghua*, and *Wen cui.* There are also partial copies of the poem in the Dunhuang corpus. Modern critical opinion on its composition dates it to before the rebellion, written as a farewell piece to a friend travelling to Shu. Zhan Ying 詹鍈, ed., *Li Bai quan ji jiaozhu huishi jiping* 李白全集校注彙釋集評, 8 vols. (Tianjin: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 1996), 1:290; hereafter *LBQJ.* The earliest extant posthumous reference to Li's poem appears in Yao He's (early ninth century) poem "Presented to Li Yu Upon Passing the Examinations, on his Return to Shu" 送李餘及第歸蜀, but it is also the central text in the Li Bai anecdotes in the ninth century compilations *Ben shi shi* 本事詩 and *Yunxi youyi* 雲谿友議. It is not mentioned in any of the extant Tang prefaces to Li's collection or in the stele inscriptions for his renovated grave (though most of these texts do not mention specific

poems). Once tenth- and eleventh-century readers began reading the poem politically—the many versions of this story included reading it as Li Bai's prescient warning to Xuanzong or an attack on Yan Wu, on Du Fu's behalf—it was forever cemented as part of his popular biography, if not formally incorporated into Li Bai's *Jiu Tang shu* or *Xin Tang shu* biographies. For an early Song example of this reading, see Yang Sui's essay on Li's old dwelling in which Yang states that "The Road to Shu is Hard" could be used to "critique those in political power." Jin Taosheng 金濤聲 and Zhu Wencai 朱文彩, ed. and comp., *Li Bai ziliao huibian* 李白資料彙編, 3 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007), 1:89; hereafter *LBZL*.

13. Fu Xuanzong 傅璇琮 et al., *Tang ren xuan Tang shi xinbian* (*zengding ben*) 唐人選唐詩新編(增訂本) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2014), 171.
14. Legendary founding rulers of the Shu state. *LBQJ*, 1:292.
15. The poem is indebted in many places to earlier compositions. For more regarding the "The Road to Shu Is Hard" tradition and its influence on Li Bai, see Paul Kroll, "The Road to Shu, from Zhang Zai to Li Bai," *Early Medieval China* 10-11.1 (2004): 227-254.
16. His *yuefu* predominate the selections in the four extant Tang and Five Dynasties anthologies that contain his verse: *Heyue yingling ji* collects seven *yuefu* out of fourteen total poems (50%); *Youxuan ji* two *yuefu* out of four poems (50%); *Caidiao ji,* twenty *yuefu* out of twenty-eight poems (70%); *Wenyuan yinghua,* seventy-two out of 242 poems (30%); and *Wen cui,* twenty-eight out of sixty-three (44%). In contemporary editions of Li Bai's complete poetry, however, *yuefu* constitute only 14% of his poetic corpus.
17. In addition to the many Song imitations of these poems, we can also note their prominence in the two influential collectanea on Tang writers, the twelfth-century *Tang shi ji shi* 唐詩紀事 and the thirteenth-century *Tang caizi zhuan* 唐才子傳.
18. For a discussion of this question, see Zhou Xunchu 周勛初, *Li Bai pingzhuan* 李白評傳 (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2005), 97-103.
19. A recent entry in this endless debate appears in Wu Chengquan 武承權, "Yong Wang, Li Bai moufan hu?" 永王,李白謀反乎?, *Zhongguo Li Bai yanjiu* 中國李白研究 (2016): 305-326. The author notes that the Li Bai-defending arguments tend to fall into two groups: those who read the especially problematic poem, "A Song of the Prince of Yong's Eastern Campaign, in Eleven Stanzas" 永王東巡歌十一首 as veiled criticism and those who argue that the poem is a forgery or false attribution. However, Wu concludes by offering a twenty-first-century twist on the

poem: that it is a fervent expression of Li Bai's patriotism aimed at the prince, whom Li Bai truly saw as the savior of the central plain. The Northern Song argument (discussed below) that Li Bai was a person of such integrity that he could never have gone willingly with the prince is now largely abandoned.

20. This preface and its evidence have been discussed by Paul W. Kroll, in "Li Bao and Hu Ziyang: Companions of the Way," an as-yet unpublished paper presented at "The Way and the Words: Religion and Literature in Medieval China, A Conference in Honor of Professor Stephen Bokenkamp," October 7, 2017.
21. Scholars have exhaustively studied the edition history of Li Bai's collection, which I will not recapitulate in detail—there is a very clear outline and summary of the scholarship in the appendix to Zhan Ying's 1996 edition of Li Bai's work, *LBQJ* 8:4537-4672. See also Wan, *Tang ji xu lu*, 79-166; and Wang Yongbo 王永波, "Li Bai shi zai Songdai de bianji yu kanke" 李白詩在宋代的編集與刊刻, *Jilin shifan daxue xuebao* 吉林師範大學學報 2 (2014): 17-22.
22. For an analysis of these texts and the significance of their variants, see Nugent, "Putting His Materials to Use," 37-40ff. The Dunhuang copies of Li Bai's poems underscore the influence of *yuefu* on his reputation during the Tang, since almost all of the pieces in the Dunhuang manuscripts are *yuefu*.
23. All six of these, with the addition of Yue Shi's postface to his *Li Hanlin bieji* (discussed below) are included in Zhan Ying's 1996 *LBQJ* edition.
24. Note that Fan Chuanzheng adds the honorific title "Left Rectifier of Omissions," which was given to Li Bai at the beginning of Daizong's reign (762-779). Fan's father, Fan Lun 倫, had known Li Bai in earlier years. Noted in Li Bai's *Xin Tang shu* biography; Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 et al., *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 202.5763. See also the discussion in Zhou, *Li Bai ping zhuan*, 158-160.
25. Li Yangbing's praise of his cousin's interest in *fengxing* 風興, political critique and satire, is an important early moment in the allegorical reading tradition for Li Bai's "Ancient Airs" among other poems. The placement and relative importance of the *gufeng* in Li Bai's corpus is another perennial debate in the scholarship; for a summary, see Jia Jinhua 賈晉華, "Li Bai gufeng xinlun" 李白古風新論, *Zhongguo Li Bai yanjiu* 中國李白研究 (1990): 142-148; and more recently, Xue Tianwei 薛天緯, "Guanyu 'Gufeng wushijiu shou' yanjiu de sange wenti" 關於 "古風五十九首" 的三個問題, *Zhongguo Li Bai yanjiu* 中國李白研究 (2013): 85-93.
26. *LBQJ*, 1:1-2

27. *LBQJ*, 1:11-12.
28. The inscription is his sole surviving text.
29. The topic of Du Fu's attitude towards Li Bai is a perennial scholarly favorite; for one recent example of a historical study of their interactions, see Xia Shaohui 霞紹暉, "'Shiren jie yu sha, wu yi du lian cai': Li Bai Du Fu jiaoyi kaolun" 世人皆欲殺,吾意獨憐才: 李白杜甫交誼考論, *Du Fu yanjiu xuekan* 杜甫研究學刊 117.3 (2013): 101-110. For a brief discussion of the impact of Li Bai's verse on Du Fu, see Stephen Owen, *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry: The High Tang* (Revised ed. Melbourne, Victoria: Quirin Press, 2013), 188-189.
30. Several texts by both writers assessed the relative merits of Li Bai and Du Fu; most influential were Bai Juyi's 815 letter on literature to Yuan "Yu Yuan Jiu shu" 與元九書 and Yuan's stele for Du Fu's grave "Tang gu gongbu yuanwailang Du jun muximing" 唐故工部員外郎杜君墓係銘. See Zhu Jincheng 朱金城, ed., *Bai Juyi ji jianjiao* 白居易集箋校, 8 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1988), 5:2789-2805; Yuan Zhen, *Yuan Zhen ji* (*xiuding ben*) 元稹集(修訂本), ann. Ji Qin 冀勤, 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, rpt. 2010), 2:690-694.
31. For Han Yu, see, for example, "Drunk, Detaining [Meng] Dongye" 醉留東野 and "Teasing Zhang Ji" 調張籍; for Meng, see "Summoning My Fellow Literati to Drink" 招文士飲 and "Presented to Master Zheng Fang" 贈鄭夫子魴. Han Quanxin 韓泉欣, ed., *Meng Jiao ji jiaozhu* 孟郊集校注, 2 vols. (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2012), 1:270-271.
32. See Paul W. Kroll's discussion of the selections of the *Heyue yingling ji*, and his discussion of Yin Fan's approach to Li Bai in particular, in "*Heyue yingling ji* and the Attributes of High Tang Poetry," in *Reading Medieval Chinese Poetry: Text, Context, and Culture,* ed. Paul W. Kroll, 169-201 (Leiden: Brill, 2015).
33. On this issue, see Stephen Owen, "The Manuscript Legacy of the Tang: The Case of Literature," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 67 (2007): 295-326; and for the nature of the *Cai diao ji* selections preferring romantic topics, see Shields, "Defining Experience: The 'Poems of Seductive Allure' of the Mid-Tang Poet Yuan Zhen (779-831)," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 122.1 (2002): 61-78.
34. There is no established measure for distinguishing "anecdote" from "tale" in these collections, but the contrast in complexity of plot, number of characters, and dialogue between entries in the *Guo shi bu* (averaging fifty words) and those of a longer text such as the *Guang yi ji* (hundreds of words per tale) is clear.
35. The early ninth century *Guo shi bu* account of Li Bai's drunken

composition at court—where he is commanded to compose verses at imperial command and dashes off ten stanzas with no pause or error—has only thirty-seven words and includes no quotations from Li Bai's verse. But Meng Qi's late ninth century *Ben shi shi*, which focuses on the performance and evaluation of poetic talent, provides a longer version of the story that includes details such as the fact that Li Bai had to be held up by two court officials, and Meng Qi also includes a verse that he composed in the text. For a study of these stories about the High Tang, see Manling Luo, "Remembering Kaiyuan and Tianbao: The Construction of Mosaic Memory in Medieval Historical Miscellanies," *T'oung Pao* 97 (2011): 263-300. See *Ben shi shi* 3.1 in Tao Min 陶敏 et al., ed., *Quan Tang Wudai biji* 全唐五代筆記, 4 vols. (Xian: San Qin chubanshe, 2012), 3:285 [hereafter *QTWDBJ*]; *Guo shi bu* 1.10, *QTWDBJ* 1.802. The fame of this anecdote in the late Tang is attested by Pi Rixiu's poem on Li Bai in his "Seven Admirations" 七愛 poems: "Drunk, he drafted *yuefu*; ten stanzas in a brushstroke without pause." 醉中草樂府 / 十幅筆一息. *LBZL*, 45. See the discussion of this and another Li Bai anecdote in Graham Sanders, *Words Well Put: Visions of Poetic Competence in the Chinese Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Asia Center, 2006), 238-241 and 248-250.

36. Sarah Allen, *Shifting Stories: History, Gossip, and Lore in Narratives from Tang Dynasty China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Asia Center, 2014), 31.
37. See Allen's discussion of other examples of stories that influenced the *Xin Tang shu* biographies, *Shifting Stories*, 110-113.
38. Liu Xu 劉昫 et al., *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 190c.5054.
39. Ibid.
40. Owen, "The Manuscript Legacy of the Tang," 295-326. See also Christopher M. B. Nugent, *Manifest in Words, Written on Paper: Producing and Circulating Poetry in Tang Dynasty China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Asia Center, 2011), 258-275. For a discussion of how such collections might have produced variants in a corpus over time, see David McMullen's review article of Nugent, "Boats Moored and Unmoored: Reflections on the Dunhuang Manuscripts of Gao Shi's Verse," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 73.1 (2013): 83-145.
41. For the early Northern Song library-building and the collections that resulted from them, see Glen Dudbridge, *Lost Books of Medieval China* (London: The British Library, 2000), 1-26.
42. See Johannes Kurz, "The Politics of Collecting Knowledge: Song Taizong's Compilations Project," *T'oung Pao* 87:4/5 (2001): 289-316.

43. Ding Xiang Warner, *Transmitting Authority: Wang Tong (ca. 584-617) and the* Zhongshuo *in China's Manuscript Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 60-61.
44. Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊 and Liu Lin 劉琳, eds., *Quan Song wen* 全宋文, 360 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2006), 6:355-356.
45. As I noted above, Wei Hu's *Cai diao ji* collection of twenty-eight Li Bai poems gives us evidence of what may have been a very different Shu compilation. There was also an independent Shu edition of Li Bai's work produced in the Northern Song; for its printing history, see *LBQJ* 8:4540-4552.
46. In a recent article, Chen Shangjun 陳尚君 has argued that this Southern Song edition of the *Li Hanlin ji* is a faithful reproduction of Yue Shi's 998 edition and has further explored the variants among the extant Northern Song editions and the Dunhuang manuscript copies of Li Bai poems, arguing that these variants can give us insights into Li Bai's own edits to his work. See Chen, "Li Bai shige wenben duoqi zhuangtai zhi fenxi" 李白詩歌多歧狀態之分析, *Xueshu yuekan* 學術月刊 48 (2016): 110-120.
47. Yue Shi notes that he has taken one anecdote from a work entitled *Kaiyuan Tianbao hua muji* 開元天寶花木記. *LBQJ*, 1:5-6. The specific sources of the others are not given.
48. These additions are discussed in Wang, *Songdai Li Bai jieshou shi*, 41-42. However, Wang apparently finds nothing suspicious about the appearance of such detailed new stories almost 250 years after Li Bai's death.
49. See my article on this anthology, Shields, "Defining the 'Finest': A Northern Song View of Tang Dynasty Literary Culture," *Journal of Chinese Literature and Culture* 4 (2017): 306-335.
50. This speculation leaves out the possibility that the lost ninth century anthology *Tang shi lei xuan* 唐詩類選 included an "antiquity" section with Li Bai represented in this manner. However, we have no evidence to confirm or dispute that possibility, and Yao Xuan's dismissal of the other Tang anthologies in his preface, including the *Tang shi lei xuan*, would indicate that his selections were deliberately different from earlier anthologies. See Stephen Owen, "A Tang Version of Du Fu," *T'ang Studies* 25 (2008): 57-90.
51. Debate over the relative importance, original grouping, and organization of the *gufeng* in Li Bai's corpus stretches back centuries and is unlikely to be settled in this one; for a summary, see Paula Varsano, *Tracking the Banished Immortal*, 141-203. It is my view that they were largely an invention of one of Li Bai's compilers, either Li Yangbing or Yue Shi.

52. At the very least, this suggests that Yao Xuan had access to Yue Shi's *Li Hanlin ji* and the *bieji*, which contained the prose. Given what Yao states in the preface about exhaustively consulting the imperial libraries in the decades he was located in the capital (the anthology was compiled when he was in prefectural office), this seems likely.
53. For the standard account of this shift, see Peter Bol, *"This Culture of Ours": Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).
54. Zeng and Liu, *Quan Song wen*, 16:31-32.
55. For this process, see Chen, "Making China's Greatest Poet," 143-195.
56. For a study of the Song stages in the remaking of Du Fu, see Charles Hartman, "The Tang Poet Du Fu and the Song Dynasty Literati," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 30 (2008): 43-74.
57. I borrow Susan Nelson's and Kathlyn Liscomb's use of this phrase "iconic events" to describe specific anecdotes that came to represent poetic figures such as Li Bai and Tao Qian in the Song and later painting tradition. See Liscomb's discussion in "Li Bai Drinks with the Moon," 332-333.
58. For a discussion of Qisong's commitment to both the Dharma and the Ru tradition, see Elizabeth Morrison, *The Power of Patriarchs: Qisong and Lineage in Chinese Buddhism* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 117-120. This preface is undated in Qisong's corpus.
59. *LBZL*, 1:115.
60. Ibid.
61. Hong Benjian 洪本建, ed. and ann., *Ouyang Xiu shiwen ji jiaojian* 歐陽修詩文集校箋, 3 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008), 1:148-150. The comments note several of the references but do not comment on the allusion in ll. 17-18 to "Among the Mountains, Replying to a Layman" 山中答俗人 in LBQJ, 5:2623. The poem is more commonly known as "Replying to a Question among the Mountains" 山中問答.
62. For the history of early Northern Song poetics and the charge of unoriginality, see Ronald Egan, "The Northern Song (1020-1126) ," in *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, vol. 1, ed. by Kang-i Sun Chang and Stephen Owen, 381-464 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and many studies of Northern Song literature, including the recent dissertation by Xie Yan 謝琰, published as *Bei Song qianqi shige zhuanxing yanjiu* 北宋前期詩歌轉型研究 (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2013).
63. Mei Yaochen's poems on and imitating Li Bai are equally revealing of Li's reputation and stature in the mid-11th century. *LBZL*, 1:106-107.

64. See Owen, *The Making of Early Chinese Classical Poetry* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Asia Center, 2006).
65. There are overlaps with Gérard Genette's definitions of "pastiche" here, and yet the Chinese case demands much further exploration before we can easily adopt Genette's taxonomy of hypertextuality to the Chinese context. See Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), esp. 98-120.
66. See Wang's analysis of these imitations, *Songdai Li Bai jieshou shi*, 137-158. Wang argues that Guo's imitations were also influential in transmitting Li Bai's image and works to a broader audience, discussing the spread of the "incarnation of Li Bai" praise of Guo, which included the later creation of an image of Guo that was installed at Li Bai's shrine at Mt. Qingcheng in Sichuan (noted by Lu You 陸游 in his *Ru Shu ji* 入蜀記). However, aside from these anecdotes about Guo's fame as a Li Bai follower, there seems to be little evidence from the 11th century (or later) that Guo's own work was widely read. Wang estimates roughly 250 of Guo's extant 1400 poems are imitations of Li Bai in some fashion.
67. In the brief remark titled "On the Relative Merits of Li Bai and Du Fu" 李白杜甫詩優劣說, collected in *Bi shuo* 筆說 in Li Yian 李遺安, ann., *Ouyang Xiu quanji* 歐陽修全集, 6 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2001), 5:1968.
68. *LBZL*, 1:162.
69. My discussion here is drawn from Ronald Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard East Asian Monograph Series, 1994), 16-18.
70. Kong Fanli 孔凡禮, ann., *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集, 6 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, rpt. 2008), 2:348-349.
71. *LBZL*, 1:171.
72. *LBZL*, 1:140.
73. Although scholars of individual Tang writers have often discussed Song's efforts, there has not yet appeared a systematic study of Song's work *across* the corpora of different writers. For a brief introductory article, see Zhang Jia 張佳, Yang Yi 楊依, and Li Yinsheng 李寅生, "Song Minqiu bianjiao zhengli Tangren bieji kaolun" 宋敏求編校整理唐人別集考論, *Tangdu xuekan* 唐都學刊 1 (2011): 5-9.
74. For Zeng Gong's work on this edition, see Wang, *Songdai Li Bai jieshoushi*, 104-107; also *LBQJ*, 8:4539-4540. Since scholars have identified incorrect attributions in Song's edition, including some of Wei Hao's response poems to Li Bai, we are wise to approach the roughly 300-poem "expansion" with some skepticism.

75. Space does not permit a detailed comparison of the two editions here. Many of the formal and social exchange categories are similarly titled and occupy the first two-thirds of the collection, but Song Minqiu's most remarkable revisions of the *Li Hanlin ji* categories include deleting the category "Uncategorized Imitations" (*zani* 雜擬), splitting and amplifying the oddly-titled "Reflections" (*huai* 懷) category into multiple types of "reflection," as I discuss below, and his invention of a (thinly-populated) "grief" category. See Chen Shangjun, "Li Bai wenben," for his confidence in this Southern Song Xianchun-era edition as a faithful reproduction of the 998 *Li Hanlin ji*.
76. From Song Minqiu's "Postface to the Collection of Li Taibai" 李太白文集後序, which is included in *LBZL*, 1:138.
77. Postface quoted and discussed in Wan, *Tang ji xulu*, 80-81; Wang, *Songdai Li Bai jieshou shi*, 105-107; also in Zhang, Yang, and Li, "Song Minqiu bianjiao zhengli Tangren bieji kaolun," 6-7.
78. For another example of categories supplied by a Song editor, see the case of Wang Qinchen's 1056 edition of Wei Yingwu, discussed in Wan, *Tang ji xulu*, 87. Wan's larger argument that Tang poets did not themselves use topical categories for organizing their own collections is partially belied by the examples of Bai Juyi and Yuan Zhen (who were exceptional in their day), but supported by a powerful counter-example, the collection of Quan Deyu, which scholars believe to be largely intact and in its original order; it contains neither topical nor formal categories for Quan's verse.
79. Space does not permit a full discussion of the Daoist and Buddhist topics and themes in Li Bai's collection, but it is certain that the anti-religious *guwen* reformers found them unappealing, as my discussion suggests. For some important studies of his compositions on religious themes, see Paul W. Kroll, "Li Po's Transcendent Diction," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106 (1986): 99-117; Ge Jingchun 葛景春, *Li Bai sixiang yishu tanli* 李白思想藝術探驪 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1991); and Kroll, *Dharma Bell and Dhāranī Pillar: Li Po's Buddhist Inscriptions* (Kyoto: Scuola Italiana di Studi sull'Asia Orientale, 2001).
80. A recent discussion of the ordering of Meng Jiao's collection compares it to a few other Tang collections, including that of Li Bai. However, the author concludes that the use of topical categories versus formal categories was both "natural" (due to the fact that the majority of Meng's poems are pentametric old-style verses) and conventional (using the *Wen xuan* 文選 as model). The author also suggests that Song Minqiu's use of topical categories stemmed from his great familiarity with the

Tang shi lei xuan as well as the influence of the early Song "Four Great Books" that used topical categories to order information. This may be the case with respect to the origin of the organization, though there is no evidence for the latter claim; my concern here is for its hermeneutic impact. Fan Xinyang 范新陽, *Meng Jiao shi yanjiu* 孟郊詩研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2014), 243-244. For more on Meng Jiao's collection, see Wan, *Tang ji xu lu*, 215-218, and the preface to Han, *Meng Jiao ji jiaozhu*, 1:23-25. In his preface, Song details the confused state of Meng's works that he had to collect and reorder, compiling a total of 515 poems, sorted into ten *juan*, and he lists his fourteen categories in the order they appear in the collection. Wan, *Tang ji xu lu*, 215.