

**Poetry as a Tradition:
Male and Female Poets in the Debate over Tang and Song Poetry in the Jiangnan Region
during the High Qing Era (1683-1839)**

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the history of the debate over Tang (618-907) and Song (960-1279) poetry during the High Qing era (ca. 1683-1839) in the Jiangnan region. The main subject of this debate concerns the question of whether Tang or Song poetry should be employed as the poetic model in later generations and esteemed as the exemplar of the orthodox tradition of classical Chinese poetry. Three main groups of poet-critics dominated this debate—advocates of Tang poetry, those of Song poetry, and the poets who sought reconciliation between the two. I reconstruct the arguments of these groups from two perspectives: I) how the poets and concerned critics attempted to construct an orthodox poetic tradition through writing their versions of poetic history, which included evaluations of Tang and Song poetry; and II) how they emphasized the two concepts “nature and emotion” (*xingqing*) and “natural inspiration and sensibility” (*xingling*) in poetic practice and used them as criteria in poetic evaluation.

This dissertation shows that Qing literati, by joining the debate, wrote their versions of poetic history that included the poets who met their criteria and excluded those who did not. It concludes that this debate is significant as a collective effort of Chinese literati to uphold and extend the authoritative orthodox poetic tradition originating from antiquity and that female poets of the High Qing era also played an important role in the debate by learning from certain Tang or Song poetic models. The debate created an empire-wide “imagined poetic community” with local constituents. The construction of this “community” embodied diverse literati’s engagement with poetic legacy over time. This “community” transcended the limitations of region, time, and gender and reached unparalleled diversity and temporal and spatial scales, especially during the High Qing era.

Résumé

Cette dissertation examine l'histoire du débat sur la poésie Tang (618-907) et Song (960-1279) pendant l'ère du Haut-Qing (ca. 1683-1839) dans la région de Jiangnan. Le sujet principal de ce débat concerne la question de savoir la poésie de quelle dynastie doit être adoptée comme modèle de poésie. Trois groupes principaux de poètes-critiques ont dominé ce débat : les défenseurs de la poésie Tang, ceux de la poésie Song, et les poètes qui ont cherché à réconcilier les deux. Je reconstruis les arguments de ces groupes sous deux angles : I) comment les poètes et les critiques concernés ont tenté de construire une tradition orthodoxe de la poésie chinoise classique en rédigeant leurs versions de l'histoire de la poésie, qui comprenaient des évaluations de la poésie Tang et Song ; et II) comment ils ont mis l'accent sur les deux concepts “nature et émotion” (*xingqing*) et “inspiration naturelle et sensibilité” (*xingling*) dans la pratique poétique et leurs utilisations comme critères d'évaluation de la poésie.

Cette dissertation démontre que les lettrés Qing, en rejoignant le débat, ont écrit leurs versions de l'histoire de la poésie qui incluaient les poètes qui répondaient à leurs critères et excluaient ceux qui n'y répondaient pas. Il est donc conclu que ce débat est significatif en tant qu'effort collectif des lettrés chinois pour maintenir et étendre la tradition poétique orthodoxe faisant autorité depuis l'Antiquité. Les femmes poètes de la période de Haut-Qing ont joué un rôle important dans le débat en apprenant certains modèles poétiques de la dynastie Tang ou Song. Le débat a créé une "communauté poétique imaginaire" à l'échelle de l'empire, avec des constituants locaux. La construction de cette "communauté" a incarné l'engagement de divers lettrés envers l'héritage poétique au fil du temps. Cette "communauté" a transcendé les limites de la région, du temps et du genre et a atteint une diversité et des échelles temporelles et spatiales inégalées, en particulier, pendant l'ère Haut-Qing.

Introduction

This dissertation examines the debate over Tang (618-907) and Song (960-1279) poetry, specifically the *shi* 詩 genre, in the Jiangnan region of the High Qing era (ca. 1683-1839). As I will demonstrate, this debate is integral to the formation of a poetic tradition in imperial China. Thousands of poets produced poems of various literary styles in the Tang dynasty and perfected the formal aspects of regulated verse,¹ including grandmasters such as Li Bai 李白 (701-762) (courtesy name Taibai 太白, style name Qinglianjushi 青蓮居士) and Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770) (courtesy name Zimei 子美, style name Shaolingyelao 少陵野老).² Poets, critics, and scholars from the Song dynasty to the present day have considered the Tang as the apex in the development of classical verse. As Japanese scholar Yoshikawa Kōjirō 吉川幸次郎 points out, Tang poetry is characterized by exquisiteness and refinement of expression, conveyance of intense feelings and strong emotions (especially melancholy), and richness in literary themes, styles, and forms. At the same time, some examples of attempts at narration, social concerns, philosophical inquiries, and moderation and calmness in expression of feelings by Du Fu, Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824), and Bai Juyi 白居易 (772-846) (courtesy name Letian 樂天)³ were considered models of inspiration for Song-style poetry. Stephen Owen states that Tang poetry is

¹ The largest collection of Tang poetry, *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 (Complete Tang Poems), contains more than 48,900 poems by more than 2,200 poets. See “Dianjiao shuoming” 點校說明, in *Quan Tang shi*, 1:1.

² For their poetry, see Stephen Owen, *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry: The High T'ang*, 109-43, 183-224.

³ For their poetry, see Owen, *The Poetry of Meng Chiao and Han Yü; The End of the Chinese “Middle Ages”*: *Essays in Mid-Tang Literary Culture*, 12-106.

“the dominant model for most of the rest of the history of classical poetry.”⁴ During the Song dynasty, the new long-lived dynasty shortly after the Tang, the debate over Tang and Song poetry began almost concurrently with the emergence of Song poetry. Initially, poets of the Song dynasty admired the poetic greatness of the Tang dynasty and actively learned from Tang poetry in various aspects. At the same time, this historical period witnessed the flourishing of a greater number of poets and poems than the Tang and of a new style that characterized Song poetry by its intellectualism, especially discussion of social and philosophical issues and display of literary and historical learning.⁵ The divergences between these two trends led to the debate, which lasted until the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Generations of Chinese literati argued about whether Tang or Song poetry should be employed as the poetic model and esteemed as the exemplar of the orthodox tradition of classical Chinese poetry. All the famous, influential major poets and countless minor poets participated in the debate by stating their views in texts of various genres and modeling their poetic styles after certain masters they chose. Throughout its history, the debate involved various aspects of classical Chinese poetry: poetic writing, theory, criticism, and evaluation. The history of the debate is in fact a history of post-Tang poetry and poetics. In High-Qing Jiangnan, the debate reached its greatest intensity and complexity. My research of regional developments in addition to empire-wide patterns of the debate in the High Qing demonstrates a diachronic dimension of its complexity and far-reaching effects. It also

⁴ Stephen Owen, “The Cultural Tang (650-1020),” in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, 1:287.

⁵ For the characteristics of Tang and Song poetry and contrast between them, for example, see Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *An Introduction to Sung Poetry*, 1-48.

exemplifies the evolution of classical poetry and the collective attempt shared by literati to construct an orthodox tradition in the history of Chinese literature.

In focusing on “poetry as tradition,” I draw on the concept of tradition as it has been defined and used by scholars in fields such as folklore, ethnography, and anthropology. A definition given in folklore studies provides a productive framework to consider the use of the concept in this thesis:

One definition would deem tradition as something passed down from one generation to the next, generally in informal means, with little or no change in the transmission of that item or in the item that is transmitted. However, particularly in the latter decades of the twentieth century, many folklorists have asserted that tradition entails a complex set of relationships between the past and the present, in which the past sets precedent for the present and the present reflects the past in its adherence to a particular tradition. [...] [T]radition is understood as a set of preexisting values and materials particular to a genre, which have been passed from one generation to the next. In the performance of a traditional genre, these preexisting values are of greater importance than the performer’s individual tastes, and judgment of the relative success or failure of the performance is based on these constructs.⁶

According to this definition, tradition is something whose early values and materials are passed

⁶ Charlie T. McCormick and Kim Kennedy White, eds., *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art*, 1:800.

down without significant changes and are used as criteria of greater importance than personal interests to measure later developments. At the same time, folklorists pay attention to creativity in tradition. People change and adjust tradition according to various circumstances, and tradition embodies influences from different perspectives and demonstrates “variation in repetition.”⁷ For example, Daniel Crowley argues that storytellers are not only “receptacles” but also “choosers, arrangers, and performers” of tradition and that creativity is equally effective in folk art and the most extreme “personal self-expression in modern European painting.”⁸ In sum, the authority of established exemplarity and criteria and individuals’ originality are two closely interrelated sides in folklorists’ observation of the evolution of tradition.

Anthropologists have two major understandings of tradition, which echo the tension between the two sides found in folklore. According to Eugenia Shanklin, on the one hand, tradition is understood as a passive force that impedes change, innovation, and creativity and reinforces internal solidarity. It is authorized and transmitted by older generations and valued irrationally and emotionally by younger generations under the elders’ influence. On the other hand, according to the understanding from ethnography, tradition as an active force is used to evaluate and explain current situations and hide innovations. It records achievements, attributes them to particular people or communities, and is maintained rationally and deliberately by the descendants who worship them and desire to follow them. Its different versions can be used to promote either internal convergences or divergences.⁹

⁷ Simon Bronner, introduction to *Creativity and Tradition in Folklore: New Directions*, 2.

⁸ Bronner, introduction to *Creativity and Tradition in Folklore*, 4.

⁹ Eugenia Shanklin, “Two Meanings and Uses of Tradition,” *Journal of Anthropological*

In folklore, anthropology, and ethnography, tradition is understood as what is admired and transmitted as exemplars and criteria from generation to generation because of their shared recognition of its values and merits among a community or group of people. Views of tradition in different fields call attention to its two sides, the passive, static, cohesive one maintained by authority, and the active, dynamic, disintegrative one led by individual agency. As Edwards Shils states: “Tradition might undergo very great changes but its recipients might regard it as significantly unchanged.”¹⁰ It is inherited, accepted, and repeated; it is also examined, challenged, and developed.

Literary tradition is no exception. Lucas Klein in his study on Du Fu’s poetry notes a gap between two statements. On the one hand, Harold Bloom says: “All strong literary originality becomes canonical.” On the other hand, Italo Calvino writes: “A classic is a book which even when we read it for the first time gives the sense of rereading something we have read before.”¹¹ Canons and classics are works of the greatest literary and aesthetic values and qualities and/or the deepest thoughts and thus represent the highest achievements in literary (and also intellectual and artistic) traditions. The originality of canons and classics and the similarities and resonances between them in various aspects and ways, as illustrated by Du Fu’s poetry in Klein’s study, suggests that in the tradition of classical Chinese poetry are both repetition and variation.

Research 37.1 (1981): 72-77.

¹⁰ Shils, introduction to *Tradition*, 14.

¹¹ Klein, “Composing Foreign Words: Canons of Nativization in the Poetry of Du Fu,” in *The Organization of Distance: Poetry, Translation, Chineseness*, 154.

In the classical Chinese poetic tradition, the canons and classics as well as their themes, literary devices, and aesthetic features are generally accepted by literati as “orthodox.” These works include the earliest extant anthology, the *Shijing* 詩經 (The Classic of Poetry) compiled around 600 BCE, the *Chuci* 楚辭 (The Lyrics of Chu) of the fourth and third centuries BCE, *yuefu* 樂府 poetry (Music Bureau poetry) of the Han dynasty (202 BCE-220 CE), and literati poetry, especially pentasyllabic poetry, from the Han to the Jian’an period (approx. 184-240).¹² This tradition reached formal perfection during the Tang dynasty, especially the High Tang period. From generation to generation, literati of imperial China repeatedly emphasized and eulogized the unchallengeable authority and exemplarity of these poems in the art of poetry. Except in several exemplary works of literary criticism, such as Liu Xie’s 劉勰 (ca. 465-522) *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 (Literary Mind and the Carving of the Dragon), literati rarely elaborated on and analyzed the literary characteristics and styles of these poems in a systematic and discursive way or established a theoretical system of poetics. Even so, their collective attempts to recognize the eminence of these poems and their literary values and characteristics, such as gentleness and earnestness (*wenrou dunhou* 溫柔敦厚), which characterized the *Shijing*,¹³ established them as

¹² The Jian’an period in the history of Chinese literature is much longer than the Jian’an reign (196-220) of Emperor Xiandi of the Eastern Han dynasty (25-220). See Zhang Keli 張可禮, “Jian’an wenxue fazhan jieduan chutan” 建安文學發展階段初探, 8-10, 14.

¹³ According to the *Liji* 禮記 (The Book of Rites), Confucius designated “gentle and earnest” (*wenrou dunhou* 溫柔敦厚) as the characters of people edified by the *Shijing*. During the Qing dynasty, this passage was accepted as an authentic comment on the poems in the *Shijing*. The authority of Confucius and the *Liji* established *wenrou dunhou* as important qualities represented by the *Shijing* for the classical poetic tradition. See Wang Yunwu 王雲五 ed., *Liji jin zhu jin yi* 禮記今注今譯, 2:645.

representative of orthodoxy in the classical poetic tradition and thus the highest models for admiration and imitation.

As Stephen Owen observes, while the “luminosity” of this “apogee of all Chinese poetry” was admired, “[l]ater poets [...] imitated it slavishly, revolted against it violently, declared they would ignore it and write spontaneously according to the dictates of their inner natures; but in the history of Chinese poetry it remained the fixed center that defined the positions of all later poets.”¹⁴ Owen’s precise, insightful observation reveals that the continuation of the classical poetic tradition comprised both emulation as well as innovation and creation on the part of poets. The debate over Tang and Song poetry was an important part of this tradition.

Maureen Robertson, in her study of women’s literary culture in late imperial China, also noted women poets’ negotiation with the dominant literary tradition.¹⁵ She and other scholars explored how women writers appropriated the literary language that had been created and monopolized by male literati, rewrote some conventional literary genres, themes and image codes, and negotiated gender boundaries and roles set by Confucian gender ideology. These inquiries point to fundamental questions regarding the development of a “tradition” of women’s writing in late imperial China: for example, what was women’s position in the tradition of classical Chinese literature, which had been dominated by men?

Similar questions are also fundamental in the study of classical Chinese poetic tradition: did classical Chinese poetry develop a tradition in its history? Who were members of this

¹⁴ Owen, introduction to *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry*, xi.

¹⁵ Maureen Robertson, “Voicing the Feminine: Constructions of the Gendered Subject in Lyric Poetry by Women of Medieval and Late Imperial China.”

tradition? How did Chinese literati observe, interpret, and continue the history and tradition of classical Chinese poetry? Which kind of “tradition” did they admire and preserve? How did they declare their own position(s) in classical Chinese poetry? How did they evaluate one another’s importance in and contribution to the classical poetic tradition? Questions from a gender-related perspective include: which positions did women poets occupy in this tradition? Did women share goals and criteria with male literati in the (re)construction of the tradition? How did female and male poets evaluate each other’s position in the tradition? Was the tradition of women’s writing in late imperial China a component of it?

In the study of the debate over Tang and Song poetry, we can further ask: what are the main views literati held in the debate? How did these views develop and change over the course of this debate? How did a literatus compare and evaluate Tang and Song poetry or particular Tang and Song poets? Which criteria and framework did he use? Which aspects of Tang and Song poetry or poets did he observe—for example, literary style including word choice, sentence structure, application of metaphors and historical allusions, and rhyme scheme and tonal pattern? How do we interpret a critical term in the evaluation and comparison of Tang and Song poetry, such as “inspired interest” (*xingqu* 興趣) in *Canglang shihua* 滄浪詩話 (Canglang’s Poetry Remarks) by the Song critic Yan Yu 嚴羽 (c.1192-c.1245) (style name Canlangbuke 滄浪逋客)?¹⁶ How did a poet learn from particular Tang or Song poets? Which aspects of Tang or Song poets, such as the abovementioned ones, did a poet imitate? How do we evaluate a poet’s views about and imitation of Tang and Song poetry? How do we evaluate their individual versions of

¹⁶ For his *Canglang shihua*, see Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 391-420.

the orthodox poetry tradition? Did a poet conform to his views in his writing practices? What were the similarities and differences among their views and writing practices? What were the historical and literary contexts of the literati's advocacies and oppositions in the debate?

The intricacy and long duration of this debate typified by these questions result in the impossibility of providing an all-inclusive study of it in a single dissertation. I choose the debate in the Jiangnan region during the High Qing era as the subject of my dissertation because the intensity and complexity of this debate resulted from the unprecedented development of the equal strength and influence of three major critical groups: the advocates of Tang poetry, the admirers of Song poetry, and the literati who attempted to reconcile the two. This dissertation investigates two issues in order to answer part of the above-mentioned questions: I) how the poets and concerned critics attempted to construct the orthodox poetic tradition through writing their versions of poetic history, which included evaluations of Tang and Song poetry; and II) how they emphasized two concepts “nature and emotion” (*xingqing* 性情) and “natural inspiration and sensibility” (*xingling* 性靈) in poetic writing and used them as criteria in poetic evaluation. This dissertation thus reconstructs the theoretical framework of the debate over Tang and Song poetry and demonstrates the developments of both theoretical trends and writing styles in Qing poetry.

My study of the debate over Tang and Song poetry will constitute a part of the efforts that endeavour to change the unbalanced development in research on Qing poetry. On the one hand, the past four decades have witnessed unprecedented new scholarship on women's literature in late imperial China, especially in the Qing dynasty, marked by the largest number of women

writers and women's publications in the literary history of the world.¹⁷ Scholars have investigated various aspects of women's literary culture in the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing dynasties: the legitimation and contents of women's education and literary production, the subjectivity and agency constructed in women's writing, and women's confidence in or anxiety about the legitimacy of their literary engagement, their literary achievements and networks, et cetera.¹⁸ This new scholarship has enabled a multilevel, multiperspective understanding of women's literary culture in late imperial China and is supported by the numerous republication of women's literature in China, including *Qingdai guixiu ji congkan* 清代閨秀集叢刊 (A Series of Genteel Women's Collections of the Qing Dynasty) and its sequel edited by Xiao Yanan 肖亞男, *Jiangnan nüxing bieji* 江南女性別集 (Individual Collections of Jiangnan Women) edited by Hu Xiaoming 胡曉明 and Peng Guozhong 彭國忠, and *Qingdai guixiu shihua congkan* 清代閨秀詩話叢刊 (A Series of Remarks on Poetry of Genteel Women from the Qing Dynasty) edited by Wang Yingzhi 王英志.

On the other hand, scholars have only paid attention to a limited number of male poets of

¹⁷ Hu Wenkai's 胡文楷 (1901-1988) *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao* 歷代婦女著作考 (Catalog of Women's Writings through the Ages) includes around three hundred women writers from the Ming dynasty and four thousand from the Qing dynasty. See Ellen Widmer, "The Rhetoric of Retrospection: May Fourth Literary History and the Ming-Qing Woman Writer," in *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital: Chinas May Fourth Project*, 193. According to Wilt Idema and Beata Grant, there were four hundred women writers from the Ming dynasty and more than three thousand from the Qing dynasty; more than two thousand collections and anthologies produced during the Qing dynasty are extant. See Idema and Grant, *The Red Brush: Writing Women of Imperial China*, 347. Also see Kang-I Sun Chang, "Ming and Qing Anthologies of Women's Poetry and Their Selection Strategies," 147.

¹⁸ Accomplished scholars are Kang-I Sun Chang, Grace Fong, Dorothy Ko, Maureen Robertson, Susan Mann, Ellen Widmer, and Wai-yee Li. The new generation of young scholars includes Xiaorong Li, Haihong Yang, and Sufeng Xu. Their studies are listed in the bibliography.

the Qing dynasty, including Wang Shizhen 王士禛 (1634-1711) (style names Ruanting 阮亭 and Yuyang shanren 漁洋山人) of the early Qing period, Yuan Mei 袁枚 (1716-1798) (style names Jianzhai 簡齋 and Suiyuanlaoren 隨園老人) of the High Qing, and Zheng Zhen 鄭珍 (1806-1864) of the late Qing.¹⁹ Their discoveries and arguments, although substantial, are still insufficient to demonstrate the remarkable quantity of Qing poetry and poetic theories and criticisms, the variety of Qing poet-critics' literary views and styles, the frequency and diversity of their interactions, and the poetic trends led by them in the context of the evolution of Qing poetry. The overwhelming majority of male Qing poets and their poems still await overall, thorough investigation and interpretation, to be comparable to recent scholarship on Ming-Qing women writers. This gap in Western scholarship is especially vast when compared to the extensive research of Qing poetry and the abundant republication of Qing textual materials in China, such as the 800-volume *Qingdai shiwenji huibian* 清代詩文集彙編 (Collectanea of Poetry and Prose Collections of the Qing Dynasty). In view of the wide range of poetry and the great number of poet-critics involved in the debate, my study of the debate focusing on the High Qing era will not only enrich the knowledge of women's writing by analyzing women poets' literary views and writing practices as an important component in this debate, but also it will for the first time provide a comprehensive, multifaceted study of Qing poetry and poetics in English scholarship.

In this introduction, the first section explores the critical approaches of two of the earliest

¹⁹ Active scholars in this area include Jerry Schmidt, Richard Lynn, and Lynn Struve. Their studies are included in the bibliography.

exemplary works of Chinese literary criticism, Liu Xie's *Wenxin diaolong* and Zhong Rong's 鍾嶸 (fl. 502-519) *Shi pin* 詩品 (An Evaluation of Poetry). Both works emphasize the importance of *xingqing* and *xingling* in poetic production and trace the evolution of certain subgenres of classical poetry (and those of prose in *Wenxin diaolong*), thus establishing models of poetic evaluation for later generations throughout the imperial period. Literati in the debate over Tang and Song dynasty widely applied Liu Xie's and Zhong Rong's approaches, demonstrating the literati's determination to follow and continue classical orthodoxy in the literary tradition. The second section is a literature review examining the rich scholarship on Tang, Song, Yuan (1271-1368), Ming, and Qing poetry and poetic theories relevant to this topic in Japanese, Chinese, and English. My examination of these studies focuses on scholars' investigation of some important themes and perspectives as subjects mainly discussed and analyzed in the debate: the characteristics of Tang and Song poetry, post-Song poet-critics' emulation and criticism of Tang and Song poets as well as their followers, their application and interpretation of *xingqing* and *xingling* in poetic criticism, and the evolution of post-Tang poetry. In the last section, I state the objectives, methodology, structure, primary sources, and main thesis of this dissertation.

Establishing a Poetic Tradition: Two Early Models

This section explores and compares the approaches and criteria employed in Liu Xie's *Wenxin diaolong* produced in the Qi dynasty (479-502) and Zhong Rong's *Shi pin*, two systematic works of literary criticism produced in the Liang dynasty (503-557). As exemplars in the first

flourishing of Chinese literary criticism during the Southern Dynasties (420-589),²⁰ these two works each established an orthodox poetic tradition and both applied two important concepts, *xingqing* and *xingling*, to characterize what poetic models express and reflect, thus providing early models of literary theory, criticism, and evaluation for later generations, including those in the debate over Tang and Song poetry.

Wenxin diaolong is a comprehensive study of deliberately designed structure. Stephen Owen summarizes that it is composed of four opening chapters, twenty-one chapters on major genres, twenty-four chapters on basic concepts in literary theory, and a concluding afterword.²¹ In his “Introduction” to *Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, Vincent Yu-chung Shih points out that Liu Xie in the opening chapters establishes the classics compiled and completed by Confucius, including the *Shijing*, the anthology of 305 ancient poems, as the authority and orthodoxy of literature; one of the basic characteristics of these classics is the expression of one’s emotions.²² From the fifth to the twenty-fifth chapter, Liu Xie examines the evolutions and generic features of various genres of poetry and prose and enumerates the exemplary writers and their styles and representative works. The fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters are devoted

²⁰ Karl-Heinz Pohl, “Ye Xie’s ‘On the Origin of Poetry’ (*Yuan Shi*): A Poetic of the Early Qing,” 1. The history of Chinese poetic theory and criticism can be traced back to the pre-Qin period. From the Han dynasty (206 BCE- 220 CE) to the Jin dynasty (265-420), some relatively short works of literary criticism emerged. For the works of Chinese literary criticism before the Southern Dynasties, the “Great Preface” 大序, Cao Pi’s 曹丕 (187-226) “A Discourse on Literature” 論文 from his *Dianlun* 典論 (Authoritative Discourses), and Lu Ji’s 陸機 (261-303) “The Poetic Exposition on Literature” 文賦, see Stephen Owen’s translations and analyses in *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 19-181. For the *Wending diaolong*, see Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 183-298.

²¹ Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 185.

²² Shih, introduction to *Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, xxxv.

respectively to the genres that are categorized under classical Chinese poetry in contemporary scholarship: *sao* 騷 (*sao* poetry), *shi* 詩 (quadrisyllabic and pentasyllabic poetry), and *yuefu*. Liu Xie's examination of their histories show how Chinese poetry, following the earliest models, developed from the Warring States period (475-221 BCE) to the Liu Song dynasty (420-479). The exemplary works of poetry produced during this long period include the *Chuci*, the first anthology of *sao* poems in which the first and most significant poem, "Encountering Sorrow," *Li Sao* 離騷, is attributed to Qu Yuan 屈原 (340?-278 BCE); the *yuefu* ballads from the Han dynasty; and poetry of the Jian'an period represented by Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220) and his sons, Cao Pi 曹丕 (187-226) and Cao Zhi 曹植 (192-232).

Shi pin discusses pentasyllabic poetry exclusively. Zhong Rong classifies the "Nineteen Old Poems" and more than 120 poets from the Han to the Liang dynasty into three grades and divides the whole work into three parts accordingly.²³ The three prefaces to these three parts examine the history of pentasyllabic poetry as well as the important poets and their achievements and representative works, similar to the chapters on poetic genres in *Wenxin diaolong*. Zhong Rong's comments on the poets explore the origins of writing styles of the first-grade poets and some of the second-grade poets. For example, the first grade is composed of the "Nineteen Old

²³ The number of the poets discussed in *Shi pin* has been controversial. Cao Xu 曹旭 in his study on *Shi pin* examines the different conclusions from the Song to the mid-twentieth century on the number of the poets rated in *Shi pin* and argues that Zhong Rong evaluates 122 poets in addition to the "Nineteen Old Poems." See Cao Xu, *Shi pin yanjiu*, 94-99. Li Daoxian's 李道顯 earlier study, which is not included in Cao Xu's examination, provides a chart of 122 poets by considering the "Nineteen Old Poems" as being composed by only one anonymous poet. See Li Daoxian, *Shi pin yanjiu* 詩品研究, 8-17. The difference between Cao Xu's and Li Daoxian's conclusions lie in their different identifications of the poet Ying Qu 應璩 (190-252), whose name appears in *Shi pin* twice, in both the second and third grades.

Poems” and eleven poets. The “Nineteen Old Poems” and poems by Li Ling 李陵 (d. 74 BCE), Cao Zhi, and Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210-263) are seen as derived from the *Shijing* or *Chuci*. The poems of Ban Jieyu 班婕妤 (48-ca. 6 BCE), Liu Zhen 劉楨 (d. 217), Wang Can 王粲 (177-217), Lu Ji 陸機 (261-303), and Xie Lingyun 謝靈運 (385-433) have their origins in the “Nineteen Old Poems,” Li Ling’s, or Cao Zhi’s poems. The poems of the remaining three poets are said to have derived from those of Wang Can or Liu Zhen.²⁴ In this way, Zhong Rong constructs a “genealogy” of pentasyllabic poetry. It is noteworthy that four women poets are listed in this genealogy. Ban Jieyu, or the Consort Ban, ranks third in the first grade.²⁵ Xu Shu 徐淑 (fl. mid-second century) and her husband, Qin Jia 秦嘉, rank first among the thirty-nine second-grade poets.²⁶ Bao Linghui 鮑令暉 (fl. 464) and Han Lanying 韓蘭英 (fl. mid-fifth century), although listed in the third grade, are praised as being comparable to Ban Jieyu.²⁷ The high ranks and evaluations Zhong Rong gives these women poets legitimize women’s importance in the Chinese poetic tradition.

Both Liu Xie and Zhong Rong employ the terms *qingxing* 情性, *xingqing*, and *xingling* to define the features of literary classics and masterpieces. These terms have long, complex histories, which are closely interrelated. The two separated terms, *xing* 性, human nature, and *qing* 情, feeling or emotion, are first discussed by philosophers from Confucius to Mencius and

²⁴ Cao Xu provides a chart of the lineage of these poets. See Cao Xu, *Shi pin yanjiu*, 154; Zhong Rong, *Shi pin jizhu*, 24. Curiously, he omits Liu Zhen in his chart.

²⁵ Ban Jieyu is famous for her single extant poem and rhapsodies, but her authorship of this poem is arguable. For her life and writing, see Wilt Idema and Beata Grant, *The Red Brush*, 77-82.

²⁶ For Xu Shu, see Idema and Grant, *The Red Brush*, 132-36.

²⁷ For Han Lanying and Bao Linghui, see Idema and Grant, *The Red Brush*, 49-52.

Xunzi.²⁸ Both Chinese and English scholarship shows that the burgeoning of the *xingqing* theory in the field of classical Chinese literary theory is found in the *Shangshu* 尚書 (*The Book of Documents*). An example is Shih's "Introduction" to *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, which provides a history of Chinese literary theory and criticism from the *Shangshu* to *Wenxin diaolong*. Shih demonstrates that "the classical definition of poetry as the expression of the sentiments ruled supreme" before *Wenxin diaolong*, and this definition developed several versions.²⁹ The first version is *Shi yan zhi* 詩言志 in the *Shangshu*, which is generally translated into "poetry expresses intent" or "poetry expresses intention."³⁰ Stephen Owen translates this statement into "poem articulates what is on the mind intently,"³¹ while Shih's translation is "poetry is the expression of sentiments."³² The first elaboration of this idea is found in the "Great Preface" 大序 to the *Shijing*, which was probably written during the Western Han dynasty (202 BCE-8 CE): "The poem is that to which what is intently on the mind goes. In the mind it is 'being intent'; coming out in language, it is a poem" 詩者，志之所之也。在心為志，發言為詩。³³ Another description of the process of forming poetry is that the *Shijing*

²⁸ Wu Zhaolu 吳兆路, *Zhongguo xingling wenxue sixiang yanjiu* 中國性靈文學思想研究, 1-2; Maurizio Scarpari, "The Debate on Human Nature in Early Confucian Literature."

²⁹ Shih, introduction to *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, xviii.

³⁰ These translations, for example, can be found in James J.Y. Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, 72; Zong-qi Cai, ed., *How to Read Chinese Poetry: A Guided Anthology*, 211; Zong-qi Cai and Shengqing Wu, "Introduction: Emotion, Patterning, and Visuality in Chinese Literary Thought and Beyond," 3; Zong-qi Cai, "The Rethinking of Emotion: The Transformation of Traditional Literary Criticism in the Late Qing Era," 65; Karl-Heinz Pohl, "Ye Xie's 'On the Origin of Poetry' (*Yuan Shi*)," 28.

³¹ Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 26.

³² Shih, introduction to *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, xi.

³³ Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 40.

poets “sang their feelings” (*yinyong qingxing* 吟詠情性) in the “Great Preface.”³⁴ During the Western Jin dynasty (265-316), Lu Ji in “The Poetic Exposition on Literature” 文賦 gave a new version of this definition: *shi yuan qing* 詩緣情, which is translated as “poetry traces emotions,”³⁵ or “the poem follows from the affections.”³⁶ While Western and Chinese scholars discuss the respective emphases of these statements and divergences between them, Shih reveals the interrelations between these terms and statements. According to his examination, before *Wenxin diaolong*, the origin and content of poetry had been understood as a poet’s inner self, or, more precisely, what a poet feels, expects, and desires, and the function of poetry was to convey and depict them. The aspects of inner self were interpreted as *zhi* 志 (intent, intention, sentiment), *qing* 情 (emotion, affection), and *qingxing* 情性 (feeling), whose connotations differ yet overlap. His examination constructs a “genealogy” of the interpretation of the origin, content, and function of poetry in classical Chinese literary criticism. Chen Lichun 陳麗純 clearly identifies these arguments as important versions in the evolution of the *xingqing* theory.³⁷

These three versions are all included in *Wenxin diaolong*, which repeatedly applies the three terms and a new one, *xingqing* 性情, a compound of *xing* and *qing* in reverse order of

³⁴ Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 47.

³⁵ James J.Y. Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, 72; Zong-qi Cai, “The Rethinking of Emotion,” 65. Zong-qi Cai and Shengqing Wu translate this statement into “The *shi* poetry arises with emotion.” See Cai and Wu, “Introduction,” 4.

³⁶ Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 130. Shih’s translation is: “The Lyric (*Shih*) born of pure emotion, [...]” See Shih, introduction to *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, xxix. For Shih’s examination of the history of “the classical definition of poetry as the expression of the sentiments,” see his introduction to *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, xi-xxxiii.

³⁷ Chen Lichun 陳麗純, “Mingmo Qingchu xingqing shilun yanjiu: yi Chen Zilong Qian Qianyi wei kaocha duixiang” 明末清初性情詩論研究——以陳子龍、錢謙益為考察對象, 18-20, 27.

qingxing. Shih summarizes Liu Xie's two sets of evaluative criteria of literature, which both include an emphasis on the importance of emotions, feelings, and sentiments in literary works. In Shih's translation of *Wenxin diaolong*, these three words are translations of *zhi*, *qing*, *qingxing*, and *xingqing*. Shih generally translates *zhi* as "sentiment," sometimes as "feeling" or "emotion" and occasionally "idea."³⁸ *Qing* is translated as "feeling" or "emotion," occasionally as "sentiment."³⁹ *Qingxing* is "human emotion," "human emotions and nature," "emotion," or "temperament and nature,"⁴⁰ while *xingqing* is "inner feeling and emotion" or "human nature and emotions."⁴¹ In *The Book of Literary Design*, another translation of *Wenxin diaolong* by Siu-kit Wong, Allan Chung-hang Lo, and Kwong-tai Lam, *zhi* is "emotion," "feeling," "thought," "mind," or "passion,"⁴² and *qing* is "feeling," "emotion," and sometimes "sentiment."⁴³ *Xingqing* is "human nature" or "emotion," sometimes "personality,"⁴⁴ and *qingxing* is "temperament," "human nature," or "personality."⁴⁵ Stephen Owen translates *zhi* mainly as "intent,"⁴⁶ and *qing* is mostly translated as "affection," "mind," "feeling," or "sentiment."⁴⁷

³⁸ For example, see Shih, trans., *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons: A Study of Thought and Pattern in Chinese Literature*, 11, 14, 18, and 36.

³⁹ For example, see Shih, trans., *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, 13-14, 20, and 30-31.

⁴⁰ For example, see Shih, trans., *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, 11, 32, 159, and 160.

⁴¹ For example, see Shih, trans., *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, 13, 17, 176.

⁴² For example, see Siu-kit Wong, Allan Chung-hang Lo, and Kwong-tai Lam, trans., *The Book of Literary Design*, 5, 17-19, 22, 23.

⁴³ For example, see Siu-kit Wong, Allan Chung-hang Lo, and Kwong-tai Lam, trans., *The Book of Literary Design*, 4-5.

⁴⁴ For example, see Siu-kit Wong, Allan Chung-hang Lo, and Kwong-tai Lam, trans., *The Book of Literary Design*, 4, 8, and 118.

⁴⁵ For example, see Siu-kit Wong, Allan Chung-hang Lo, and Kwong-tai Lam, trans., *The Book of Literary Design*, 3 and 104-5.

⁴⁶ For example, see Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 202-3 and 214.

Qingxing is “affections and individuating nature,”⁴⁸ and *xingqing* is “human nature,” “human nature and the affections,” “one’s nature and disposition,” “a person’s affections and nature,” or “affections”⁴⁹ Scholars’ interpretations of these terms, on the one hand, confirm James Liu’s observation that *xingqing* and *qingxing* in many cases are synonymous in *Wenxin diaolong*. On the other hand, they contrast James Liu’s argument that *xingqing* and *qingxing* denote “personal nature” rather than “emotion and personal nature,” because *qing* is sometimes a synonym of *xing*, or “human nature” drawn from a Confucian context.⁵⁰

Qingxing in Liu Xie’s statement of the emergence of folk songs, which were included in the *Shijing*, shows that the term in *Wenxin diaolong* could refer to “nature and emotion”:

Because the rise of the *feng* and *ya* was due to the fact that the Ancient Poets,
full of real emotions and opinions, sang of these emotions and opinions in
satirical remonstrances against their superiors: this is what is meant by
building literary forms on emotion.⁵¹

⁴⁷ For example, see Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 200, 208, 216, and 219.

⁴⁸ For example, see Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 242.

⁴⁹ For example, see Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 191, 195, 212, 215, and 242.

⁵⁰ James Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, 74.

⁵¹ Liu Xie, *Wenxin diaolong yizhu* 文心雕龍譯註, 287; Vincent Yu-chung Shih, trans. *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, 176. Authur Waley in *The Book of Songs* translates the titles of the three sections of the *Shijing* into the “Airs of the States” (*guofeng* 國風), the “Major Odes” (*da ya* 大雅) and “Minor Odes” (*xiao ya* 小雅), and the “Hymns” (*song* 頌). In *How to Read Chinese Poetry: A Guided Anthology*, the three titles, *feng*, *ya*, and *song*, are translated into “Airs,” “Odes” or “Elegantiae,” and “Hymns” or “Laudes.” See Zong-qi Cai, ed., *How to Read Chinese Poetry: A Guided Anthology*, 4, 13. In this dissertation, I follow the translations applied by them both. It is noteworthy that *fengya* 風雅 is frequently used together to refer to literary elegance and charm in imperial China. By translating *fengya* as a compound of “Airs” and “Odes” in this dissertation, I attempt to call attention to the importance of the *Shijing* as the origin of literary grace in Chinese literati’s understanding.

風雅之興，志思畜憤，而吟詠情性，以諷其上，此為情而造文也。

The process of forming poetry is described as either singing of their *qingxing* or composing poems because of their *qing*. Therefore, the term *qingxing* is thought to comprise both human nature, *xing*, and emotion, *qing*. One can interpret *xingqing* also as “nature and emotion” in another passage, which sketches how Confucius (supposedly) compiled the *Shijing* (and other classics):

[They] present the refined principles chiseling human emotions and nature, as they furnish outlines for all literary forms.⁵²

雕琢性情，組織辭令。

Like *qingxing* in the above passage, *xingqing* here is also what the poems in the *Shijing* depict and convey. Liu Xie also declares that the principles of the classics, including the *Shijing*, are “absolute in regard to human nature and emotions” 挺乎性情 and that poetry “disciplined human emotion” 持人情性.⁵³ *Wenxin diaolong* serves as a model that interprets the origin, content, and function of poetry by using these two terms frequently, sometimes interchangeably, thus establishing the importance of the term *xingqing*.

Xingling also has a time-honoured history. Chinese scholars argue that the *xingling* theory originated from Zhuangzi, who cherished genuineness and naturalness in one’s personality.⁵⁴ Wu

⁵² Liu Xie, *Wenxin diaolong yizhu*, 4; Shih, trans. *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, 11.

⁵³ Liu Xie, *Wenxin diaolong yizhu*, 17, 41; Shih, trans. *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, 17, 32.

⁵⁴ Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu* 性靈派研究, 9; Wu Zhaolu, *Zhongguo xingling wenxue sixiang yanjiu*, 37-41; Chen Lichun, “Mingmo Qingchu xingqing shilun yanjiu,” 23.

Zhaolu 吳兆路 notes that *Wenxin diaolong* is the first work that employs the term *xingling* repeatedly.⁵⁵ He and Wang Yingzhi both designate Liu Xie as the first critic who uses *xingling* in literary theory.⁵⁶ Shih translates *xingling* into “spirituality,” “nature and spirit,” “human nature and spirit,” and “inner spirits.”⁵⁷ In *The Book of Literary Design*, *xingling* is “sensitive intelligence,” “soul,” “wit,” and “human feelings.”⁵⁸ Owen translates *xingling* into “divine spark of consciousness,” “soul,” “[human] spirit,” and “spiritual nature.”⁵⁹ These interpretations, on the one hand, suggest that *xingling* is closely related to personal nature and thus overlaps with *xingqing* or even a synonym of *xingqing*. On the other hand, they emphasize innate sensibility, creativity, ingenuity, and inspiration with which a person, especially a writer, is endowed by Nature. Both aspects confirm the observations of scholars including James Liu, Wang Yingzhi, and Wu Zhaolu.⁶⁰

Liu Xie uses *xingling* in the context of the production of Confucian classics, including the *Shijing*, same as those of *xingqing* and *qingxing* in *Wenxin diaolong*:

The five Classics are art masters moulding human nature and spirit,

⁵⁵ Wu Zhaolu, *Zhongguo xingling wenxue sixiang yanjiu*, 30-31.

⁵⁶ Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 10; Wu Zhaolu, *Zhongguo xingling wenxue sixiang yanjiu*, 49. Before Liu Xie, scholar Yan Yanzhi 顏延之 (384-456) for the first time used this term. In his family precepts, it is used as a synonym of *xingqing*. See Wu Zhaolu, *Zhongguo xingling wenxue sixiang yanjiu*, 30.

⁵⁷ For example, see Shih, trans., *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, 9, 17, 21, 174

⁵⁸ For example, see Siu-kit Wong, Allan Chung-hang Lo, and Kwong-tai Lam, trans. 1, 7, 10, 117.

⁵⁹ For example, see Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 189, 201, 240, and 293.

⁶⁰ James Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, 77; Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 8-17; Wu Zhaolu, *Zhongguo xingling wenxue sixiang yanjiu*, 9-26; Chen Lichun, “Mingmo Qingchu xingqing shilun yanjiu,” 5.

And the great treasure house of literature, [...]⁶¹

性靈熔匠，文章奧府。

[T]he depiction of our inner spirits, or the description of physical objects, [...].⁶²

綜述性靈，敷寫器象。

In both passages, *xingling* is the source of the classics and subjects of their depiction, thus a near synonym of *xingqing*. In another passage, Liu Xie uses *xingling* when emphasizing profundity, subtlety, and depth of the *Shijing* and other classics:

[The classics] faithfully reflect heaven and earth, spirits and gods. They help to articulate the order of things and to set up the rules governing human affairs. In them is found both the secret of nature and spirit and the very bone and marrow of fine literature.⁶³

象天地，效鬼神，參物序，制人紀，洞性靈之奧區，極文章之骨髓者也。

Liu Xie here emphasizes the “secret” realm (*aoqu* 奧區) of *xingling*, which parallels various mysterious, divine entities, such as Heaven, Earth, gods, ghosts, and ethics. Therefore, *xingling* signifies human intelligence and sentience in addition to human nature and emotion, or *xingqing*.

In Zhong Rong’s *Shi pin*, *qingxing*, *xingqing*, and *xingling* are used in contexts similar to those in Liu Xie’s *Wenxin diaolong*. Zhong Rong in his preface to *Shi pin* applies *xingqing* to explain the emergence of poetry:

⁶¹ Liu Xie, *Wenxin diaolong yizhu*, 23; Shih, trans. *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, 21.

⁶² Liu Xie, *Wenxin diaolong yizhu*, 284; Shih, trans. *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, 174.

⁶³ Liu Xie, *Wenxin diaolong yizhu*, 17; Shih, trans. *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, 17.

The vital force stirs things, and things move people; thus, people's nature and emotion are stimulated and take shape in dance and chanting.⁶⁴

氣之動物，物之感人，故搖蕩性情，形諸舞詠。

In Zhong Rong's views, the stirring of nature and emotion result in writing and chanting. In other words, *xingqing* is the origin and content of poetry. When he compares the features of different literary genres, Zhong Rong declares that poetry is for “singing of emotion and nature” 吟詠情性,⁶⁵ a statement of poetry's contents and function verbatim to those from the “Great Preface” and *Wenxin diaolong*. In his comments on Ruan Ji's poems, “Expressing My Feelings” 詠懷, Zhong Rong says:

[Ruan Ji's] “Expressing My Feelings” can cultivate nature and inspiration and arouse hidden thoughts.⁶⁶

詠懷之作，可以陶性靈，發幽思。

Used with *yousi* 幽思, “hidden thoughts,” *xingling* here signifies both a first-grade poet's nature and his ingenuity and creativity.

Liu Xie and Zhong Rong both attempted to construct an orthodox tradition of poetry. They both esteemed the early models of poetry (especially the *Shijing* and *Chuci*) and attached importance to the poets' expression of *xingqing/qingxing* (individual nature and emotion) and their demonstration of *xingling* (originality and personal creativity), which, as the basic features of these models, became the desired qualities for later poems. Literati of later generations

⁶⁴ Zhong Rong, *Shi pin jizhu*, 1.

⁶⁵ Zhong Rong, *Shi pin jizhu*, 174.

⁶⁶ Zhong Rong, *Shi pin jizhu*, 123.

followed Liu Xie and Zhong Rong, writing their own versions of the tradition with their individualized criteria and perspectives, including their varied understandings of *xingqing/qingxing* and *xingling* in poetry. These developments in critical discourse demonstrate increasing diversity and complexity from the eleventh century, exemplified by the newly emerging debate on Tang and Song poetry, issues that will be taken up in this dissertation.

A Literature Review

I) Japanese and Chinese Scholarship

Japanese scholars always play an important role in the studies of classical Chinese literature. Among them, Yoshikawa Kōjirō's two translated studies enrich English scholarship of classical Chinese poetry with a general history from the Song to the Ming dynasty. His *An Introduction to Sung Poetry* begins with a summary of the characteristics of Song poetry and the contrast between Tang and Song poetry. His *Five Hundred Years of Chinese Poetry, 1150-1650: The Chin, Yuan, and Ming Dynasties* calls attention to the growing imitation of previous poetic models during this long period. According to Yoshikawa, the esteem for Tang poets arose during the Song and reached its height during the Ming, especially the sixteenth century. He further points out that Song poetry, which had been respected as a good but inferior model, became for the first time the exclusive model for some poets during the late Qing. Yoshikawa's highlight of the heights of these two advocacies tallies with that in English scholarship, which will be examined in the next section. His summary of the characteristics of Tang and Song poetic styles, although overgeneralized, contextualizes the innovations in Song poetry and the debate. These two studies

also enrich the studies of Song and Ming poetry and fill the gap in the studies of Jin (Jurchen) (1115-1234) and Yuan poetry in English scholarship with chronological and systematic examinations of a long period of seven centuries.

Chinese scholars have produced three monographs on the history of the debate of Tang and Song poetry: Qi Zhiping's 齊治平 *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu* 唐宋詩之爭概述 (A Brief Overview of the Debate over Tang and Song Poetry) (1984), Dai Wenhe's 戴文和 *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu* “唐詩”“宋詩”之爭研究 (A Study of the Debate on “Tang Poetry” and “Song Poetry”) (1997), and *Qingdai Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi* 清代唐宋詩之爭流變史 (A History of the Evolution of the Debate over Tang and Song Poetry during the Qing Dynasty) (2012) edited by Wang Yingzhi. All three studies chronologically examine the poet-critics' views regarding Tang and Song poetry reflected in their poems and prose by textual analysis. The volume edited by Wang Yingzhi consists of three sections, authored respectively by Zhao Na 趙娜, Zhang Lihua 張麗華, and Guo Qiankong 郭前孔. Each author covers one stage of the debate in chronological order. They examine the debate from the perspective of the tension among the three groups of critics: the advocates of Tang poetry, those of Song poetry, and the poets who sought reconciliation between the two critical groups. They detail the development of the three groups, the conflicts among them, and the reasons for them. Together they present an overall picture of the whole debate during the Qing dynasty. In this dissertation, I analyze the poetic views of Qing poet-critics and demonstrate the tensions among these three critical groups in the debate through close reading of their poetics expressed in their writing. In this sense, my methodology is based on the findings and approaches of these three authors.

However, all three works lack a thesis, and they do not examine the reasons and motives of the poet-critics who launched and continued the debate. What drove this debate for a millennium must be significant and meaningful to Chinese literati, but these possible ideological, sociopolitical, aesthetic, and/or cultural causes have not been systematically explored. In this dissertation, I aim to identify and investigate some of these causes for this perennial debate.

In addition, various studies on the history of classical Chinese literature or poetry involve Qing poets' views of Tang and Song poetry, such as Zhu Zejie's 朱則傑 and Yan Dichang's 嚴迪昌 studies, which share the title *Qingshi shi* 清詩史 (A History of Qing Poetry); Zhang Jian's 張健 *Qingdai shixue yanjiu* 清代詩學研究 (A Study on Qing Poetics); and Liu Shinan's 劉世南 *Qingshi liupai shi* 清詩流派史 (A History of the Qing Schools of Poetry).⁶⁷ Another important study is Japanese scholar Aoki Masaru's 青木正兒 *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi* 清代文學評論史 (A Critical History of Qing Literature). Relevant studies also include those on certain Qing poets or topics of Qing poetry, including Wu Hongyi's 吳宏一 *Qingdai shixue chutan* 清代詩學初探 (A Preliminary Exploration of Qing Poetics) and *Qingdai wenxue piping lunji* 清代文學批評論集 (A Collection of Critical Essays on Qing Literature); Wang Yingzhi's studies, such as *Qingren shilun yanjiu* 清人詩論研究 (Studies on Qing Poetics) and *Xingling pai yanjiu* 性靈派研究 (A Study of the School of Natural Sensibility and Inspiration); and a

⁶⁷ Other studies include Wang Xiaoshu's 王小舒 volume on Qing poetry in *Zhongguo shige tongshi* 中國詩歌通史 (A General History of Chinese Poetry); Wang Zhenyuan 王鎮遠 and Wu Guoping's 鄔國平 *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi* 清代文學批評史 (A Critical History of Qing Literature); and Wang Yunxi 王運熙 and Gu Yisheng's 顧易生 and Guo Shaoyu's 郭紹虞 (1893-1984) studies, both titled *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi* 中國文學批評史 (A Critical History of Chinese Literature).

huge number of journal articles. These studies address numerous issues in Qing poetry, which include Qing literati's views and advocacies of previous poetry, especially Tang and Song poetry, in various ways. Their findings call attention to the important role of not only influential poetic leaders but also minor poets and "schools" of poetry (*shipai* 詩派) in Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry.

"School" (*pai* 派) is an ambiguous term in Chinese literature. The mainstream view in modern Chinese scholarship categorizes premodern Chinese literary "schools" into two types. Writers from the first type choose similar literary styles or the same literary models independently of one another. Their pursuits and views do not lead them to interact with one another proactively or form any association. Modern Chinese scholars characterize these schools as "unconscious" (*fei zijue* 非自覺, *bu zijue* 不自覺), which reminds us of the fact that they are classified and named by their contemporaries or literati of later generations. In the second type, writers with similar or the same literary views and styles associate with one another to advocate their views and engage in literary production.⁶⁸ The basic feature of a literary school is a literary style shared by its members.⁶⁹ In a literary school of the second type, there was usually a recognized "leader."⁷⁰ These literary schools are characterized by modern Chinese scholars as

⁶⁸ Zhong Linbin 鍾林斌 and Li Wenlu 李文祿, "Bianzhe qianyan" 編者前言, in Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 1-3; Chen Wenxin 陳文新, "Yinyan" 引言, in *Zhongguo wenxue liupai yishi de fasheng he fazhan: Zhongguo gudai wenxue liupai yanjiu daolun* 中國文學流派意識的發生和發展——中國古代文學流派研究導論, 4-5.

⁶⁹ Chen Wenxin, "Yinyan," in *Zhongguo wenxue liupai yishi de fasheng he fazhan*, 14.

⁷⁰ Chen Wenxin, *Zhongguo wenxue liupai yishi de fasheng he fazhan*, 141-202; Zhang Hongsheng, "Daoyan" 導言, in *Jianghu shipai yanjiu* 江湖詩派研究, 1; Wang Yingzhi, "Daoyan," in *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 1-2; Zhong Linbin and Li Wenlu, "Bianzhe qianyan," in Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 1-2.

“conscious” (*zijue* 自覺), which reveals the intention of the writers to build camaraderie for the benefit of their literary advocacies.

Schools of poetry played an important role in the debate over Tang and Song poetry. The literary views and ideals shared by the members of each school included or were mainly composed of those about Tang and Song poetry. For example, the Jiangxi School (*Jiangxi shipai* 江西詩派), which flourished during the late period of the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127) and influenced the poetry of the whole Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279), followed the poetic master Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105) to learn from Du Fu’s poetry and developed their own literary style representative of poetry of the Song dynasty. The River and Lake School (*Jianghu shipai* 江湖詩派), comprised of more than one hundred Southern Song poets including Liu Kezhuang 劉克莊 (1187-1269), mainly imitated late Tang poetry. Zhang Hongsheng 張宏生 considers both schools examples of the second type, or “conscious” literary school, while Ronald Egan argues that the poets of the Jiangxi School did not intend to form a school of poetry.⁷¹ During the Qing dynasty, dozens of schools of poetry emerged and became further associated with not only literary ideas of Tang and Song poetry but also localities. Some of them consisted of poets from different places across the empire and mostly followed famous masters, such as Wang Shizhen. More schools of poetry, including most of those examined in this dissertation, were formed in different places by local poets and were named after these places, whether or not they had any particular leaders. The three schools of poetry mainly investigated in

⁷¹ Zhang Hongsheng, “Daoyan,” in *Jianghu shipai yanjiu*, 2-3; Ronald Egan, “The Northern Song (1020-1126),” in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, 1:419.

this dissertation were groups largely composed of poets from the regions of their respective leaders, including Yuan Mei. Regardless of whether or not the poets discussed as members of these schools of poetry intended to organize a literary school, considered themselves part of any literary schools, or claimed themselves as followers of certain leading poets, their evaluations of Tang and Song poetry constituted an important part of the literary values and ideas respectively characterizing these schools of poetry. In such a way, they and their schools of poetry participated in this debate and constituted the majority of poets in the discourse. Chinese scholarship in these aspects supplements our knowledge of the Qing literary field of production, evaluation, and criticism, on which I draw in my analysis.

II) English Scholarship

From 1977 to 2006, Stephen Owen completed four studies on Tang poetry: *The Poetry of the Early T'ang* (1977), *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry: The High T'ang* (1981), *The End of the Chinese "Middle Ages": Essays in Mid-Tang Literary Culture* (1996), and *The Late Tang: Chinese Poetry of the Mid-Ninth Century (827-860)* (2006).⁷² These studies provide a history of Tang poetry by tracing the developments of various poetic themes and genres and explore innovations in style and rhetoric and the literary accomplishments of individual poets. In sum, Owen's studies delineate the evolution of poetry throughout the Tang dynasty. However, Western scholarship has not produced any such systematic study of poetry of any other dynasty, nor has

⁷² *The End of the Chinese "Middle Ages": Essays in Mid-Tang Literary Culture* is a study of seven essays on late Tang poetry and literary works of other genres.

there been extended study on the debate over Tang and Song poetry. Only the poetry of the Northern Song has received sustained critical examination. Among them, seven case studies deal with four literary masters: Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣 (1002-1060), Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) (courtesy name Yongshu 永叔), Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) (courtesy name Zizhan 子瞻, style name Dongpojushi 東坡居士), and Huang Tingjian. Jonathan Chaves' *Mei Yao-Ch'en and the Development of Early Sung Poetry* and Ronald Egan's *The Literary Works of Ou-yang Hsiu (1007-72)* examine these two poets' literary works in the literary context of the early Northern Song period. The first chapter of Michael Fuller's *The Road to East Slope: The Development of Su Shi's Poetic Voice* discusses the writing of these poets and their contemporaries as the background of Su Shi's poetic development. These studies thus each delineate a similar picture, detailed or cursory, of the evolution of poetry from the Tang dynasty to the Five Dynasties (907-960) and then to the first century of the Northern Song dynasty. They characterize the poetic history of the early Song as a divergence between those who imitated different Tang poets and poetic styles and those who forged the formation of a new style.

Su Shi's unique poetic styles and writing techniques are elaborated in Michael Fuller's *The Road to East Slope* and Ronald Egan's *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi*. Both studies highlight new stylistic and thematic aspects of Su Shi's verse, such as philosophical and social concerns and discussions as well as humorous styles. David Palumbo-Liu's *The Literary Theory and Practice of Huang Tingjian* and Yugen Wang's 王宇根 *Ten Thousand Scrolls: Reading and Writing in the Poetics of Huang Tingjian and the Late Northern Song* both expound on different aspects of Huang Tingjian's writing practices, such as the applications of theoretical notions and

allusive diction as well as the negotiation and balance between spontaneity and reference to literary, historical, and religious knowledge. These studies show how these two masters represent what is new in Song poetry and define how it differs from Tang poetry.

The study of individual Northern Song poets comprises a history of Northern Song poetry by Western scholars. Their investigations each cover some important aspects: the imitation of Tang poetry during the beginning of the Song dynasty, the most influential poets' reactions to these imitations, the attention paid to a poet's expression of his inner self, and the critical emulation of previous models and development of new styles. These studies also show how the poets of the older generation influenced those of the younger generations in the formation of the Song poetic style, until Huang Tingjian's impact on the Jiangxi School of Poetry (*Jiangxi shipai* 江西詩派), which became the new representative of Song poetry at the end of the Northern Song period. However, these scholars locate individual Song poets at the center of their analyses. They seldom observe the evolution of Northern Song poetry from the perspective of the tension between the imitation of Tang poetry and the forging and defining of the Song poetic style during this period.

Studies of Southern Song poets are also case studies (relatively short) of individual poets, Lu You 陸遊 (1125-1209) (style name Fangweng 放翁), Yang Wanli 楊萬里 (1127-1206) (style name Chengzhai 誠齋), and Fan Chengda 范成大 (1126-1193), represented by Michael Duke's *Lu You*, Jerry Schmidt's *Yang Wan-li* and *Stone Lake: The Poetry of Fan Chengda (1126-1193)*, and Jonathan Chaves' "Translator's Introduction" to *Heaven My Blanket, Earth My Pillow: Poems by Yang Wan-li*. Chaves' introduction provides a brief history of Song poetry,

stating the initial prevailing imitation of Tang poetry and the Song poets' characteristics and innovations from the early Song to the twelfth century. Michael Fuller's comprehensive study, *Drifting among Rivers and Lakes: Southern Song Dynasty Poetry and the Problem of Literary History*, deals with the interrelation between poetry and *Daoxue* 道學 (the Learning of the Way) from the late Northern Song throughout the Southern Song dynasty. His investigation involves the emulations of Tang poetry and developments of new poetic characteristics by a large number of poets during this long period of 150 years: Huang Tingjian, the Jiangxi School, Lu You, Yang Wanli, the Four Lings of Yongjia (*Yongjia si Ling* 永嘉四靈),⁷³ and the River and Lake School of Poetry. Generally speaking, scholars in the study of Southern Song poetry mainly explore poets' new characteristics that contributed to the development of classical Chinese poetry in later ages. How these poets were influenced by previous literature and how they understood and explained it are not the critical areas of concern.

Yuan poetry is one of the least studied topics of Chinese literature in English (and Chinese) scholarship. Richard Lynn points out this gap and initiates the studies of Yuan poetry in English scholarship. In his book *Kuan Yün-Shih*, Lynn provides a case study of Yuan poetry through analysis of Guan Yunshi's [Kuan Yün-Shih] 貫雲石 (1286-1324) poems.⁷⁴ Lynn shows how Guan's poetic characteristics exemplify the mainstream imitation of Tang poetry during the Yuan dynasty, especially of Li Bai and late Tang poets, and also the avoidance of typical literary

⁷³ All natives of Yongjia (in present-day Zhejiang province) and each having a character *ling* 靈 in his courtesy or style name, Weng Juan 翁卷 (fl. twelfth-thirteenth century), Zhao Shixiu 趙師秀 (*jinshi* 1190), Xu Zhao 徐照 (d.1211), and Xu Ji 徐璣 (1162-1214) were called "the Four Lings of Yongjia."

⁷⁴ See in particular Chapter 2.

devices in Song poetry. In another study by Richard Lynn, “Tradition and the Individual: Ming and Ch’ing Views of Yüan Poetry,” he examines Ming-Qing literati’s criticism and anthologization of Yuan poetry. He also analyzes other issues relevant to Yuan poetry, especially Yuan, Ming, and Qing poets’ evaluation, emulation, and criticism of Tang or Song poetry. Lynn’s studies point out Ming scholars’ ignorance of Yuan poetry and the esteem Yuan poetry gained in the Qing. Lynn demonstrates that the mainstream of Yuan poetry became an important component in the advocacy and admiration of Tang poetry. In these studies, Lynn, in fact, provides a brief history of Ming-Qing poetry from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. He especially reveals a dichotomy between a “conservative” advocacy of Tang poetry and a “progressive” promotion of Song poetic style throughout this long period. Furthermore, he calls attention to a special group represented by the early Qing poet Wang Shizhen, who appealed to synthesize the poetic criteria and achievements of Tang poetry with the post-Tang poetic innovations during the seventeenth century.⁷⁵ Lynn’s efforts should be considered an initial exploration of Ming-Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry, including the tripartite opposition among the three groups of literati during the High Qing era. Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that the gap of the studies of Yuan poetry in North America is still huge, since Lynn devotes a great proportion of his studies to Ming-Qing scholars’ criticism, instead of Yuan poetry itself.

In studies of Ming poetry, particular attention has been paid to certain representative groups of poets and critics. For example, Pauline Yu in “Charting the Landscape of Chinese Poetry” and Richard Lynn in both “Gao Bing’s *Tangshi pinhui* and the Concept of High Tang”

⁷⁵ Lynn, “Tradition and the Individual,” 375.

and “The Concept of ‘High Tang’ in Theory and Practice: Perfect and Timeless Style” examine the systematic evaluations and canonization of Tang poetry by the Southern Song advocate of High Tang poetry, Yan Yu, and the Ming literatus, Gao Bing 高棅 (1350-1423) (courtesy name Ziyu 子羽).⁷⁶ Their studies remind us of Yan Yu’s influence on Ming literary criticism. Lynn’s studies and Daniel Bryant’s chapter “Archaism” in *The Great Recreation: Ho Ching-ming (1483-1521) and His World* both highlight Yan Yu’s importance in the Ming archaist movement, which included Gao Bing, Li Dongyang 李東陽 (1447-1516), and the Former Seven Masters (*Qian qi zi* 前七子) led by Li Mengyang 李夢陽 (1473-1530) (courtesy name Xianji 獻吉, style name Kongtongzi 空同子) and He Jingming 何景明 (1483-1521) (courtesy name Zhongmo 仲默, style name Dafu shanren 大復山人). There are three noteworthy points in Bryant’s chapter. First, he stresses a concern shared by Li Mengyang and He Jingming, “the problem of the relationship between the past and the present in literature.”⁷⁷ Second, he notes He Jingming’s emphasis on expressing personal emotion in poetry. Third, he traces a lineage of the archaists: from Yan Yu to Ming literati Xie Zhen 謝榛 (1495-1575) (courtesy name Maoqin 茂秦), one of the Latter Seven Masters (*Hou qi zi* 後七子), and Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 (1551-1602), and then to the early Qing poet-critic Wang Shizhen. These three points—the evaluation and interpretation of previous poetry, the expression of a poet’s nature and emotion, or *xingqing*, and the creation of a “genealogy” of orthodox poetry—are all important components in the debate over Tang and Song poetry, which overlap with the discussion in the Archaist tradition in late

⁷⁶ Lynn analyzes Yan’s and Gao’s views and criteria in greater detail.

⁷⁷ Bryant, *The Great Recreation: Ho Ching-ming (1483-1521) and His World*, 389-90.

imperial China. Similar lineages of Ming-Qing literati are also found in Lynn's "Orthodoxy and Enlightenment: Wang Shih-chen's Theory of Poetry and Its Antecedents" and Chi-hung Wong's 黃自鴻 "*Shenyun* before Wang Shizhen: A Terminological Study of Hu Yinglin's and Lu Shiyong's Poetics." The lineage traced in Lynn's study is characterized by the poets' pursuit of poetic orthodoxy, which was shared by those in the debate over Tang and Song poetry. Among them, Li Mengyang's pursuit is also discussed in Chang Woei Ong's 王昌偉 *Li Mengyang, the North-South Divide, and Literati Learning in Ming China*. Ong's emphasis of expressing personal emotion in Li Mengyang's poetics echoes Bryant's observation of He Jingming's literary theories.

In *Yüan Hung-tao and the Kung-an School*, Zhou Zhiping [Chih-p'ing Chou] 周質平 draws attention to another group of poets, the Gong'an [Kung-an] School (*Gong'an pai* 公安派) around the brothers, Yuan Zongdao 袁宗道 (1560-1600), Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (1568-1610), and Yuan Zhongdao 袁中道 (1575-1630). Chou examines the divergence between the literary views of the Archaist School led by the Latter Seven Masters, as successors of the Former Seven Masters, and those of the Yuan brothers, such as their opposing perspectives on the necessity and effectiveness of imitating previous models to revive classical literary achievements. Chou also points out the views these two groups shared, especially the acknowledgement of particular Song masters' poetic achievements and the importance they attached to learning from previous masters and expressing innate sensibility, or *xingling*.

Studies of Ming poetry do not provide a systematic, thorough delineation of the evolution of Ming poetry, unlike those of Northern Song poetry. But they do cover most of the influential

Ming poets and critics, Gao Bing, Li Dongyang, the Former and Latter Masters, and the Gong'an School, as well as their literary views and ideals. On the one hand, instead of anti-archaists and other poet-critics, most of these Ming literati were archaists, who aimed to restore the poetic orthodoxy represented by Tang poetry. Scholars' focus on this group accords with the dynasty-long dominance of the Ming worship of High Tang poetry. In comparison to the studies of Song poetry, Western scholars pay more attention to the interrelations between these Ming literati's theories and views. They demonstrate not only how the archaists' views were passed down from the Ming to the Qing dynasty but also how they shared views with anti-archaists, especially the Yuan brothers. On the other hand, the rising opposition between the admirers of Tang poets and the promoters of the Song poetic style during the late Ming dynasty is also reflected in the scholarship. In addition to Chou Chih-p'ing's study, Lynn in "Orthodoxy and Enlightenment" notes the difference between the suppression of direct expression of individuality and strong emotion by the Ming-Qing archaists and the emphasis on such expression by the Gong'an School and Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582-1664) (style name Muzhai 牧齋), one of the most famous poets during the Ming-Qing transition (the mid-seventeenth century). The scholarship on Ming poetry thus outlines the basic pattern of the tensions and interactions in the Ming debate over Tang and Song poetry and pays significant attention to their two important criteria of poetic evaluation, *xingqing* and *xingling*, although some important Ming poet-critics, especially Zhong Xing 鍾惺 (1574-1625), Tan Yuanchun 譚元春 (1586-1637), and their Jingling School (*Jingling pai* 竟陵派), deserve further research. Lynn's and Bryant's attention to the relationship between the subjects of their studies and two

poet-critics flourishing during the early Qing period, Qian Qianyi and Wang Shizhen, further shows how the two dynasties were connected in the course of the debate.

Qing literati's poetry appears to be another understudied topic in Chinese literature. Among dozens of important Qing poets and critics, only a few have been explored deeply. Lynn Struve's "Huang Zongxi in Context: A Reappraisal of His Major Writings" compares the literary preferences and values of Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1610-1695) and his older contemporary Qian Qianyi, including their views on previous masters, such as the Yuan brothers and the poets of the Jingling School. For example, Huang and Qian shared their criticism of mimicry in the literature of the Former and Latter Seven Masters, and they both paid attention to the evolving literature and distinctive literary qualities and characteristics of each dynasty.⁷⁸ In "Ye Xie's 'On the Origin of Poetry' (*Yuan Shi*): A Poetic of the Early Qing," Karl-Heinz Pohl briefly traces the history of poetics from the late period (the sixth century) of the Six Dynasties (220-589) to the early Qing (the seventeenth century), elaborates on Ye Xie's 葉燮 (1627-1703) poetics, compares his theories with those of previous and contemporary critics, and highlights his uniqueness in Ming-Qing poetics. Pohl's article includes examinations of these critics' views on Tang and Song poetry, such as Ye Xie's preference for learning from the poetry of different periods instead of adhering to a particular dynasty.⁷⁹ In *Harmony Garden: The Life, Literary Criticism, and Poetry of Yuan Mei (1716-1798)*, especially in the chapters "The Principles of Poetry," "The Practice of Poetry," and "Evaluation," Jerry Schmidt analyzes Yuan Mei's poetics,

⁷⁸ See in particular Chapter 1.

⁷⁹ See in particular Chapter 1.

including his theories of *xingqing* (nature and feelings) and *xingling* (nature and inspiration), his views on previous poetry, and his rejection of the artificial periodization of poetry.⁸⁰ In *The Poet Zheng Zhen (1806-1864) and the Rise of Chinese Modernity*, Schmidt outlines the emergence of Song poetry and the controversies over Tang and Song poetry from the Song to Zheng Zhen's time in the chapter "Inspiration and Learning: Zheng Zhen and the Song School's Theory of Literature." However, Schmidt's review of Song poetry mainly summarizes Yoshikawa Kōjirō's observation of the main characteristics of Song poets' innovation in *An Introduction to Sung Poetry*. His examination of the controversies from the Song to the Qing dynasty is brief. Only three examples of Tang-poetry advocates are mentioned in this section: Yan Yu in the Song dynasty, the Former and Latter Seven Masters in the Ming dynasty, and Wu Weiye 吳偉業 (1609-1672) in the Ming-Qing transition; the Qing advocates after Wu are absent. While more attention is paid to the lineage of Song-style poets, those before the nineteenth century do not occupy an important position in Schmidt's examination. Schmidt focuses on members of the Song School of poetry flourishing mainly in the nineteenth century in Guizhou. The competition between the two groups of Tang and Song poetry advocates, especially that before the nineteenth century, is not his main concern.

On the one hand, many important Qing literati's poetic theories, especially their interpretation and evaluation of previous poetry, have not been systematically investigated, for example, the two prominent poet-critics Shen Deqian 沈德潛 (1673-1769) (style name Guiyu 歸愚) and Li E 厲鶚 (1692-1752) (style name Fanxie 樊榭). On the other hand, the studies

⁸⁰ See in particular Chapter 3.

discussed above have identified important aspects characterizing the Qing debate of Tang and Song poetry, one of which is the unprecedented strong advocacy of Song poetry in different periods of the Qing dynasty represented by Qian Qianyi, Huang Zongxi, Ye Xie, as well as Zheng Zhen and his friends. Another aspect discussed in these studies is the attempt to reconcile the competing promotions of Tang and Song poetry by employing two concepts, *xingqing* and *xingling*, which reached its height during the High Qing era because of Yuan Mei's influence. These studies thus provide a preliminary map marking the difference among the three critical groups in the debate, which I explore in-depth in this thesis.

The Debate in High-Qing Jiangnan: Objectives and Approaches

This dissertation analyzes the development of the debate over Tang and Song poetry during the High Qing era in the region to the south of the lower reaches of the Yangzi River, or Jiangnan. During the High Qing era, the three main critical groups of poet-critics, the admirers of Tang poets, the promoters of Song poetic style, and the poets who sought reconciliation between them, all developed empire-wide influence around their leaders, Shen Deqian, Li E, and Yuan Mei, who were also leading poet-critics of the time. These groups dominated the debate as rivals and together led it to the greatest complexity and intensity in Jiangnan, the native region of most of them, including the three leaders. By applying the classification of these literati in the study edited by Wang Yingzhi, I follow Qi Zhiping, Dai Wenhe, and Wang Yingzhi to examine the poetic ideals of these poet-critics, trace the competitions and disagreements among these three critical groups chronologically, and elaborate their changing and unchanging views and positions

in the debate.

My analyses of and arguments about these literati's theories and ideas are based on close reading and textual analysis of a large number of primary sources. The primary sources to be examined in this dissertation fall into two main categories. The first category is critical discourse found in poetry and prose of various genres, essays, letters, and paratexts, especially prefaces (*xu* 序), as well as critical remarks on poetry (*shihua* 詩話). In these texts, most of which were included in individual collections and large anthologies, Chinese literati, including some female writers, discussed their literary theories and views, including those about Tang and Song poetry as well as the debate itself. Among the texts analyzed in the main body of this dissertation, especially Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 5, those by the three leading poets are mainly from:

- a) Shen Qiqian's individual collection, *Shen Guiyu shiwen quanji* 沈歸愚詩文全集 (The Complete Works of Shen Guiyu), the four anthologies he compiled, *Gushi yuan* 古詩源 (Ancient Poetry as the Source), *Tangshi biecai ji* 唐詩別裁集 (A Discriminating Selection of Tang Poetry), *Mingshi biecai ji* 明詩別裁集 (A Discriminating Selection of Ming Poetry), and *Guochao shi biecai ji* 國朝詩別裁集 (A Discriminating Selection of Poetry of the Reigning Dynasty), and his remarks on poetry, *Shuo shi zuiyu* 說詩碎語 (Random Discussions of Poetry);
- b) Li E's individual collection, *Fanxie shanfang ji* 樊榭山房集 (The Collection of Fanxie's Mountain Studio);
- c) Yuan Mei's individual collections, *Xiaocang shanfang wenji* 小倉山房文集 (The Prose Collection of Xiaocang Mountain Studio) and *Xiaocang shanfang shiji* 小倉山房詩集

(The Poetry Collection of Xiaocang Mountain Studio), as well as his remarks on poetry, *Suiyuan shihua* 隨園詩話 (Suiyuan's Remarks on Poetry).

The second category of primary sources is composed of sixty-one local gazetteers of the Jiangnan region. My analyses in Chapter 4 mainly focus on biographies of poets in two editions of the gazetteer from Dantu County (in present-day Jiangsu province): *Jiaqing Dantu xianzhi* 嘉慶丹徒縣志 (The Dantu Gazetteer of the Jiaqing Reign) (1803) and *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi* 光緒丹徒縣志 (The Dantu Gazetteer of the Guangxu Reign) (1879). Dantu male and female poets, as a group of minor poets during the High Qing era, engaged in the debate under the influence of Shen Deqian and Yuan Mei and in competition with Li E. Their biographies in both editions record important details of their participation in the debate and their poetic styles and models.

My study on the debate over Tang and Song poetry focuses exclusively on the discussions of and arguments about the *shi* genre of classical Chinese poetry.⁸¹ I analyze the poet-critics' literary ideas and criticisms found in these texts in order to show the evolution, conflicts, and confluences of the literary theories and ideals during the High Qing era. The individual poets' writing practices in imitation of previous poetic models, the developments of their poetic styles, and the divergence and convergence among their poetic views and styles are issues too broad and complicated to be systematically examined in the same study. Therefore, the poems as samples of the authors' literary styles and achievements, in which they do not declare their literary views, and the analyses of these poems are excluded from this dissertation.

While my narrative of the debate draws on the studies by Qi Zhiping, Dai Wenhe, and

⁸¹ The *ci* 詞 (lyrics) and other genres are not relevant to this debate and are not considered.

Wang Yingzhi, I aim to scrutinize the poet-critics and texts involved in constructing the debate in greater depth, and to identify the underlying motives that sustain this long debate. To do so, I reexamine the approaches and criteria they employed to evaluate classical poetry in the debate. Therefore, I investigate the High Qing debate from two perspectives: I) how the poet-critics attempted to construct an orthodox tradition of classical Chinese poetry through writing their versions of poetic history, which included evaluations of Tang and Song poetry and views on the debate over Tang and Song poetry, and II) how they emphasized the importance of two concepts, *xingqing* (nature and emotion) and *xingling* (natural inspiration and sensibility), in poetic production and applied them as criteria in poetic evaluation.

In addition to the “Introduction” and “Conclusion,” this dissertation is divided into five chapters. In Chapter 1, “Two Alternating Models: Poetic Advocacies in Early Qing,” I show that Tang poetry was always a highly revered model during this period, while the emulation of Song poetry formed a new tide during the 1680s and the expression of the inner self was promoted by some poets over the concern with choosing a proper model from poetry of the past. This chapter provides a literary context of the High Qing debate.

Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate the intensity and complexity of the debate in High-Qing Jiangnan by exploring the developments of and conflicts among the three main critical groups in the debate. Chapter 2, “A Binary Opposition: Shen Deqian and Li E,” elucidates the divergence and competition between the two important leading poets, Shen Deqian and Li E, and their schools of poetry. Shen Deqian’s esteem for Tang poetry exerted great influence on his fellow countrymen from Jiangsu and the whole empire while Li E led the widespread emulation of Song

poetry among poets from the cities Yangzhou and Tianjin, as well as his native place, Hangzhou in Zhejiang.

Chapter 3, “A New Contingent: Yuan Mei and His School of Poetry,” analyzes the Jiangnan literatus Yuan Mei’s influential theory about the importance of spontaneity, originality, and inspiration in writing poetry and the controversy carried out in epistolary exchange between Yuan Mei and his opponents Shen Deqian and Shi Qian 施謙 (1688-1760) (style name Lancha 蘭垞), a radical admirer of Song poets from Zhejiang. Together the second and third chapters aim to demonstrate that, with the three renowned poets as leading advocates, the three groups developed into equal rivals, and the Jiangnan region became a center of the debate over Tang and Song poetry.

Chapters 4 and 5 investigate the poetic views and writing practices of local poets, both male and female, in High-Qing Jiangnan, in order to show the debate on a local level. Chapter 4, “Return to Tang Poetry: Qing Poetry in Dantu County,” traces the establishment of an orthodox poetic tradition in Dantu County, Jiangsu, by delineating the local poetic trends found in the biographies of literati in two editions of Dantu gazetteers. These biographies record the shift from imitating Song poetry to learning from Tang poetry under Shen Deqian’s influence, posing a challenge to Li E and his followers during the 1720s. They also give clues to Yuan Mei’s later influence in Dantu.

Chapter 5, “Writing with Authority: Jiangnan Women in Poetic Traditions,” focuses on the participation of women poets from Jiangnan elite families in constructing a poetic orthodoxy during the High Qing period. I examine the paratexts in their individual collections, especially

prefaces, which give evidence that these women were included in different versions of poetic history by male literati and legitimized as successors of the poetic traditions of their families, their native places, and the empire. Some of these women even attempted to continue the orthodox tradition by modeling their literary styles on previous masters, especially the Tang masters. These two chapters show that various lesser-known Jiangnan poets participated in the debate and gained recognition from their interactions with the leading poets.

This dissertation aims to reconstruct the theoretical framework of the debate over Tang and Song poetry, reveal the motives of Chinese literati to participate in this debate, demonstrate the composition of the major critical groups in it, and highlight the significance of the debate in the High Qing era in the history of classical Chinese poetry and poetics. As shown earlier, the two concepts, *xingqing* and *xingling*, constitute a theoretical basis in constructing a history of classical poetry as early as the Liang dynasty. From the Song dynasty on, literati engaged both concepts as criteria in their criticism and evaluation of Tang and Song poetry and produced different versions of poetic history by including certain poets and excluding others. While their selections of poetic models varied, they shared the aim to establish an orthodox tradition of poetry. Their views and practices became a part of this tradition and thus extended it. During the High Qing period, both influential masters and local poets from Jiangnan, including some female poets, participated in the debate over Tang and Song poetry. Their discursive records show the local and empire-wide engagement with this critical issue. The complexity and intensity of this long debate reached an unprecedented height, an index of the flourishing of Qing poetry and poetics, of which women's literary culture is a significant component.

In conclusion, I argue that the orthodox tradition of classical poetry that literati attempted to construct through this debate across time and region constituted an “imagined community.”⁸² The access to membership of this community depended on a poet’s ability to continue the tradition by choosing proper models and writing poems that meet the criteria of *xingqing* and *xingling*. Literati in this debate displayed their unity in upholding the tradition and its evaluative criteria. Participation in this “community” embodied Chinese literati’s agency and diversity in the debate over Tang and Song poetry, especially in the High Qing period.

⁸² This term is modified from Benedict Anderson’s famous term used in his *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.

Chapter 1 Two Alternating Models: Poetic Advocacies in Early Qing

Chinese scholars have argued for the achievements of Qing poetry, which had been underestimated for a long time. Qian Zhonglian 錢仲聯 declares that the quality of Qing poetry exceeds that of Yuan and Ming poetry and rivals that of the Tang and Song.¹ Zhou Xifu [Chow Sik Fuk] 周錫馥 regards the Qing dynasty as the period of innovation in the history of classical Chinese poetry, after the Yuan dynasty as the period of decline and the Ming dynasty as the period of archaism.² An issue more critical to the role of Qing poetic achievements in the history of classical poetry is stated by Wang Xiaoshu 王小舒, who maintains that the long literary tradition and splendid literary legacy raised a formidable question for Qing literati: how should they deal with the relationship between their own literature and their literary past? As he examines the question, during the Qing dynasty, production of poetry (and other literary genres) was guided by two trends. One of the trends was led by influential poets including Qian Qianyi, Huang Zongxi, Song Wan 宋琬 (1614-1673), Wang Shizhen, Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊 (1629-1709) (style name Zhucha 竹垞), Shen Deqian, and Li E. These poets learned from and synthesized previous literary achievements in poetic production, which was enriched by their own features. Poets of the other trend, represented by Yuan Mei and the School of Natural Sensibility and Inspiration (*Xingling pai* 性靈派), devoted efforts to challenging their predecessors in various aspects and to expressing their inner selves while referring to prior literary models.³ Wang's elaboration shows that the tension between tradition and innovation was thematized in both

¹ Qian Zhonglian, "Qianyan" 前言, in *Qingshi sanbai shou* 清詩三百首, 3.

² Zhou, *Chen Gongyin ji Lingnan shifeng yanjiu* 陳恭尹及嶺南詩風研究, 144.

³ Wang Xiaoshu, "Xulun," 5-33.

trends in Qing poetry.

According to Wang Xiaoshu, Qing poets' reflection on and imitation of Tang and Song poetry constituted an important aspect of their tradition and innovation. Yan Dichang points out that the debate over Tang and Song poetry extended through the Qing dynasty.⁴ In the introduction to the study edited by him on the development of this debate, Wang Yingzhi states explicitly that the history of Qing poetry was actually the history of the Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry.⁵ His study examines the Qing debate by tracing the developments of three critical groups: the advocates of Tang poetry, the followers of Song-style poetry, and the reconcilers of the two sides.⁶ These three groups can be subsumed in the two categories of Qing poets in Wang Xiaoshu's study: the advocates of Tang or Song poetry were the poets whose poetic production was dominated by tradition, while the reconcilers attached more importance to innovation.

Wang Yingzhi and Qi Zhiping divide the Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry into three periods. This periodization tallies with the periodization of Qing poetry in Wang Xiaoshu's and Yan Dichang's studies. As they outline the situation, the exultation and emulation of Tang poetry,

⁴ Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 1:46. His statement echoes Shu Chen 束忱, who argues that the conflicts between the advocacies of Tang poetry and Song poetry played a crucial role in the controversies happening in the whole history of Qing poetry. See Shu, "Zhu Yizun 'yang Tang yi Song' shuo" 朱彝尊“揚唐抑宋”說, 96.

⁵ Wang Yingzhi, "Zonglun" 總論, in *Qingdai Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi*, 2.

⁶ Wang Yingzhi, "Zonglun," 6. This classification of the Qing debaters is more critical than Ning Jiayu 寧稼雨 and Li Ruishan's 李瑞山 description of the dichotomy between Qing advocacies of Tang poetry and Song poetry, whose literary views and pursuits overlapped. See Ning Jiayu and Li Ruishan, *Mingdai wenxue, Qingdai wenxue, Jindai wenxue* 明代文學, 清代文學, 近代文學, 195.

which dominated the Ming dynasty, prevailed in the early Qing period up to the reign of Yongzheng (1723-1735), while the critical turn to Song-style poetry and reconciliation between the different period styles both began to flourish. During the Qianlong (1736-1795) and Jiaqing (1796-1820) reigns, the three groups grew to become rival powers in the field of poetry. In the subsequent phase from the Daoguang reign (1821-1850) to the Xuantong reign (1909-1911), the advocacy of Song-style poetry and rejection of the artificial separation between Tang and Song poetry continued to flourish, while the esteem for Tang poetry experienced decline and revival. Dai Wenhe offers a slightly different periodization by including the short Yongzheng reign in the second phase.⁷ These periodizations, coinciding with those of Qing poetry in both English and Chinese scholarship, reflect the persistence of the debate in Qing poetry and poetic criticism as well as their synchronization.⁸

Wang Yingzhi claims that the breadth and depth of the Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry, which is decried by Dai Wenhe as the “contention among hundreds of schools” (*baijia zhengming* 百家爭鳴),⁹ exceeded those in previous dynasties and chiefly characterized Qing poetry.¹⁰ The recognition of the achievements of Song poetry was one of the most important

⁷ Dai Wenhe’s examination of the Qing debate is less inclusive than those in Qi Zhiping’s and Wang Yingzhi’s studies. For his periodization of the Qing debate, see Dai, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 193-94.

⁸ In *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, Chapters 3, 4, and 6 review Qing literature in 1644-1723, 1723-1840, and 1841-1911 (Chapter 6 also reviews the literature in the Republic of China from 1912-1937). Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan in their study on Qing literary criticism examine three periods of Qing literary criticism: the Ming-Qing transition, the early Qing (from the Shunzhi to the Kangxi reign), and the mid-Qing (from the Qianlong reign to 1840). See Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi* 清代文學批評史.

⁹ Dai Wenhe, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 193.

¹⁰ Wang Yingzhi, “Zonglun,” 1.

contributions made by the Qing literati.¹¹ Indeed, the strong rejection of an artificial division between Tang and Song poetry during the High Qing era was also unprecedented. Qing literati's persistence or alterations in their poetic preferences and pursuits and the agreements and disagreements among them in this debate embodied an exceptional diversity, which is, I argue, one of the Qing's greatest contributions to the tradition of classical Chinese poetry.

This chapter traces how the debate developed from the Ming-Qing transition to the 1670s, the early stage of the Kangxi period (1662-1722). I examine the prose and poetry by the most famous scholars during this period and investigate their various views of Tang and Song poetry (including post-Song poets who learned from Tang and/or Song poetry). By writing their respective versions of the history of classical poetry and of histories of poetry from different regions, especially their native places, these scholars evaluated certain poets and poems from the Tang to the early Qing period as qualified successors of the orthodox tradition of poetry. An important criterion they applied is whether a poet expresses his unique nature and emotions in poetry. By identifying the differences and similarities between their views, in the first section, I demonstrate that the admiration of Tang poetry dominated the Qing empire from the Ming-Qing transition to the early Kangxi period. Then in the second section, I examine the rise and fall of the advocacy of Song poetry from the 1670s to the 1680s and the revival of the Tang poetic model. While following diverse poetic models and holding different poetic views, early Qing literati shared a critical reflection on previous literature, enthusiasm for prolonging the orthodox tradition of classical poetry, and attention to regional poetic traditions. Their concerns and

¹¹ Wang Yingzhi, "Zonglun," 6.

practices adequately prepared the debate for its complexity and comprehensiveness in the High Qing era.

From the Ming-Qing Transition to the Early Kangxi Reign: The Dominance of the Admiration of Tang Poetry and the Rising Advocacy of Song-style Poetry

I) Chen Zilong 陳子龍 (1608-1647), the Yunjian School of Poetry (*Yunjian shipai* 雲間詩派), and the Ming Loyalists

The pioneer of Qing poetry was the Yunjian School, which flourished in Yunjian (in present-day Jiangsu province) during the late Ming (from the late 1620s to the mid-1640s) and declined in the early Qing (from the mid-1640s to the early 1650s).¹² As the largest and most influential school of poetry at that time,¹³ the Yunjian School initiated the Qing debate on Tang and Song poetry by their continuation of the Former and Latter Seven Masters' admiration of Tang poetry, especially High Tang poetry.¹⁴ Chen Zilong (courtesy name Wozi 臥子), the leader of the Yunjian School, was considered the most famous and accomplished poet of his age¹⁵ and the most influential follower of the Former and Latter Seven Masters.¹⁶ As Kang-I Sun Chang

¹² Zhao Na 趙娜, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi" 順康雍時期唐宋詩之爭流變史, in *Qingdai Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi*, 31.

¹³ Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 29.

¹⁴ Zhu Lixia 朱麗霞, "Ming Qing zhi ji Songjiang Jishe de wenxue mingyun ye wenxueshi yiyi" 明清之際松江幾社的文學命運與文學史意義, 110; *Qingdai Songjiang fu wangzu yu wenxue yanjiu* 清代松江府望族與文學研究, 315.

¹⁵ Tina Lu, "The Literary Culture of the Late Ming (1573-1644)," in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, 2:74; Wai-yee Li, *Women and National Trauma in Late Imperial Chinese Literature*, 32.

¹⁶ Wang Yunxi and Gu Yisheng as well as Qi Zhiping all consider Chen Zilong the representative follower of the Former and Latter Seven Masters. See Wang Yunxi and Gu Yisheng, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 1:617; Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 66-67. Zuo Dongling 左東嶺 designates Chen Zilong as the most important poet at the end of Ming history who represented the highest achievements of Ming poetic revivalism. See Zuo Dongling

demonstrates, the preface dedicated to the poetry collection by the late Ming woman poet, Liu Shi 柳是 (1618-1644), reflects the literary pursuits of Chen Zilong and his Yunjian School. In this preface, Chen enumerates his literary models including poetry of the Han-Wei period, Six Dynasties, and Tang dynasty and lists the Former and Latter Seven Masters as the models of Ming poetry. He and the Yunjian School believed that “true poetry can be reborn only through a return to its origin, though returning to the past does not mean slavish imitation of the past.”¹⁷

In his preface to the anthology of Ming poetry, *Huang Ming shixuan* 皇明詩選 (A Selection of Imperial Ming Poetry), which he compiled with Li Wen 李雯 (1608-1647) (courtesy name Shuzhang 舒章) and Song Zhengyu 宋徵輿 (1618-1667),¹⁸ Chen Zilong praises Tang and Ming poets’ contributions to the return to the origin of poetry. In his view, poetry from the Qi and Liang dynasties is not far inferior to Tang poetry, which arose after Qi-Liang poetry. The quality of Song-Yuan poetry, immediately preceding Ming poetry, lowered the standards of the classical poetic tradition and thus had more deleterious effects on the tradition than Qi-Liang poetry. Therefore, Chen Zilong draws a radical conclusion that, while the quality of Ming poetry is comparable to that of Tang poetry, Ming poets’ contribution to the revival of the tradition is greater than that of Tang poets.¹⁹

ed, *Mingdai juan* 明代卷, 778, 796. Wai-ye Li also labels Chen Zilong the representative successor of mid-Ming classicism. See Li, “Early Qing to 1723,” in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, 2:223.

¹⁷ Chang, *The Late-Ming Poet Ch'en Tzu-lung: Crises of Love and Loyalism*, 22-23.

¹⁸ Together with Chen Zilong, they were called the Three Masters of Yunjian (*Yunjian san zi* 雲間三子).

¹⁹ Chen Zilong compares Qi-Liang poetry, Tang poetry, Song-Yuan poetry, and Ming poetry respectively to “mist-like gauze” (*wugu* 霧縠), “Jade” (*yingyao* 英瑤), “sand and gravel” (*shali* 砂礫), and “robes with flowery patterns” (*fufu* 黼黻). See Chen, “Huang Ming shixuan xu” 皇

Although, as Zhao Na points out, the Yunjian School's lauding of Ming poetry can be contrasted in the Qing literati's attacks on Ming poets' mimicry of their prior masters,²⁰ their literary views greatly influenced the poetic trends during the Ming-Qing transition and even the whole Qing dynasty.²¹ The early Qing poets under their influence included the Ten Masters of Xiling (*Xiling shi zi* 西陵十子), or the Xiling School (*Xiling pai* 西陵派).²² The overwhelming majority of Ming loyalist poets, such as Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619-1692)²³ and Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613-1682),²⁴ were also admirers of Tang poetry, especially early and High Tang poetry.²⁵ These two groups of poets constituted the dominant admirers of Tang poetry during the

明詩選序, in *Chen Zilong quanji* 陳子龍全集, 2:780. For the literary theories and production of Chen Zilong and the Yunjian School, for example, also see Chen Lichun, "Mingmo Qingchu xingqing shilun yanjiu," 105-8; Zuo Dongling, *Mingdai juan*, 788-96; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 11-20; Xie Mingyang 謝明陽, "Yunjian shipai de xingcheng: yi wenxue shequn wei kaocha mailuo" 雲間詩派的形成——以文學社群為考察脈絡.

²⁰ Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 40.

²¹ Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 42; Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 1:37; Zhou Xifu, *Chen Gongyin ji Lingnan shifeng yanjiu*, 144.

²² Zhao Erxun 趙爾巽 et al., *Qing shi gao* 清史稿, 44:13353; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 31-4; Zhao Na, *Qing chu Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian yanjiu* 清初唐宋詩之爭流變研究, 32-6. For these ten poets, see Zhu Zejie, "'Xiling shi zi' xilie kaobian" "西陵十子"系列考辨. Zhang Jian devotes a chapter to the Yunjian School and Xiling School, see *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 43-103.

²³ For Wang Fuzhi's literary theories, see Tao Shuiping 陶水平, *Chuanshan shixue yanjiu* 船山詩學研究; Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 94-7; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 124-6; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 264-326.

²⁴ For Gu Yanwu's literary views and achievements, especially his learning from Du Fu, see Richard Lynn, "Poetry of the Seventeenth Century," in *The Columbia History of Chinese Literature*, 419; Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 81-83; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 95-96; Zhao Na, "Shangbian: Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 47-52; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 44-59.

²⁵ Zhao Na, *Qingchu Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian yanjiu*, 39. Wang Xiaoshu also notes that most of early Qing poets modeled their poetry after Tang poets, especially Du Fu. See Wang Xiaoshu, "Xulun," 16. For Ming loyalist-poets' literary views and practices, including their learning from Tang or Song poetry, also see Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 1:57-338; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 34-168; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 1-9; Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 81-112.

early Qing period.²⁶

II) Wu Weiye

Wu Weiye enjoyed the highest poetic reputation among the Three Masters of the Lower Yangzi River (*Jiangzuo san dajia* 江左三大家).²⁷ Closely associated with Yunjian and Xiling poets, his literary views are recorded mainly in his letter to Song Zhengbi 宋徵璧 (d. 1672), Song Zhengyu's brother. In this letter, he states that "poetry originates from nature and emotion" 詩者本乎性情. Following this principle, he traces a tradition of poetry which expresses *xingqing*. His version of this tradition promotes two important models, the *Shijing* and High Tang poetry, especially Li Bai's and Du Fu's poetry.²⁸

Wu Weiye's esteem for the *Shijing* and High Tang poetry as the highest models and representatives of poetic orthodoxy is also found in his observation of poetry from the Mid-Ming to the early Qing period:

²⁶ Qi Zhiping, Wang Xiaoshu, and Zhao Na all claim the dominance of the admiration of Tang poetry during the early Qing. See Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 81; Wang Xiaoshu, "Xulun," 16; Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 42.

²⁷ The important anthologist Gu Youxiao 顧有孝 (1619-1689) along with Zhao Yun 趙澧 (d. 1676) compiled an anthology of three poets, Wu Weiye, Qian Qianyi, and Gong Dingzi 龔鼎孳 (1615-1673), and entitled it *Jiangzuo san dajia shichao* 江左三大家詩鈔 (Poems by the Three Masters of the Lower Yangzi). The eighteenth-century Qing poet-scholars Lin Changyi 林昌彝 (1803-1876) and Zhu Tingzhen 朱庭珍 (1841-1903) in their remarks on poetry both assert that Qian's and Gong's poetic achievements are inferior to those of Wu Weiye. See Lin Changyi, *Sheyinglou shihua* 射鷹樓詩話, *juan* 18, 1a, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書, 1706:473; Zhu Tingzhen, *Xiaoyuan shihua* 筱園詩話, *juan* 2, 8a-8b, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1708:22.

²⁸ Wu Weiye also points out that contemporary followers of the Former and Latter Masters and the Jingling School, who attacked each other, deviated from the origin and development of the ancients (*guren zhi yuanliu* 古人之源流). See Wu Weiye, "Yu Song Shangmu lun shi shu" 與宋尚木論詩書 in *Wu Meicun quanji* 吳梅村全集, 3:1089-91.

Master Yanzhou (Wang Shizhen) especially promoted High Tang [poetry] and devoted himself to returning to the Major Odes. What a hero of poetry! The Yunjian masters are those who arose after Yanzhou. Longmian (Fang Yizhi) and the Xiling [masters] are those who arose after the Yunjian [poets]. For [continuing] the way of the “Airs” and “Odes,” to whom [should people] return except the Kaiyuan (713-741) and Dali (766-779) [poets]?²⁹

弇州先生專主盛唐，力還大雅，其詩學之雄乎！雲間諸子，繼弇州而作者也；龍眠西陵，繼雲間而作者也。風雅一道，舍開元大曆其誰歸？

Wu uses “return” (*huan* 還) to highlight the role the *Shijing* plays in poetic history as the origin, orthodoxy, and final goal and traces the continuity of the orthodox tradition of classical poetry.

The Ming-Qing poets included in his version of the tradition are imitators of High Tang poetry:

Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-1590) (courtesy name Yuanmei 元美, style name Yanzhou shanren 弇州山人), one of the Latter Seven Masters; the Yunjian poets; the Ten Masters of Xiling; and the Longmian School of Poetry (*Longmian shipai* 龍眠詩派), whose leader Fang Yizhi 方以智 (1611-1671) (style name Longmianyuzhe 龍眠愚者) followed Wang Shizhen and shared literary views and interacted closely with Chen Zilong.³⁰

²⁹ Wu Weiye, “Zhi Fu she zhu zi shu” 致乎社諸子書, in *Wu Meicun quanji*, 3:1087.

³⁰ For Fang Yizhi’s literary views and styles as well as the literary interactions between Fang Yizhi and Chen Zilong, see Jerry Schmidt, *The Poet Zheng Zhen (1806-1864) and the Rise of Chinese Modernity*, 391-94; Xie Mingyang, “Chen Zilong Fang Yizhi de shixue lun jiao yu fenqu: yi “ya” de guannian wei taolun zhongxin” 陳子龍方以智的詩學論交與分趨——以“雅”的觀念為討論中心; Xie, “Fang Yizhi yu Longmian shipai de xingcheng” 方以智與龍眠詩派的形成; “Fang Yizhi yu Mingdai fugu shixue de chengbian guanxi kaolun” 方以智與明代復古詩學的承變關係考論; Xie, “Yunjian shipai de xingcheng,” 32-40.

Many Chinese scholars argue for the comprehensiveness of Wu Weiye's poetics and poetic styles. Zhao Na states that Wu Weiye consistently admired Tang poetry in his literary career³¹ but remarks that his poetry coincides with Song poetry in various aspects.³² Ning Jiayu 寧稼雨 and Li Ruishan 李瑞山 recognize him as the pioneer of Qing valorization of Tang poetry and also note that he incorporated in his writing the natural inspiration and sensibility in the Gong'an School's literary theories and the merits of Song poetry.³³ Richard Lynn, while declaring that Wu shared similar literary views with Chen Zilong and similar poetic styles with the mid-Tang poets Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779-831) and Bai Juyi, reminds us of the similarities between the poetry of Wu and the Song poet Lu You.³⁴

Under Wu Weiye's influence, the Loudong School of Poetry (*Loudong shipai* 婁東詩派) emerged and flourished in Taicang, Wu's native place, during the second half of the seventeenth century.³⁵ As Liu Shinan argues, this school initiated the Qing advocacy of Tang poetry.³⁶

³¹ Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 94. Wai-yee Li, Jerry Schmidt, Zhu Zejie, and Wang Xiaoshu further point out that he was influenced by poets of different Tang periods, including the Four Paragons of the Early Tang (*Chu Tang si jie* 初唐四傑), Wang Bo 王勃 (ca. 650-676), Yang Jiong 楊炯 (ca. 650-after 693), Lu Zhaolin 盧照鄰 (ca. 634-ca. 684), and Luo Binwang 駱賓王 (ca. 640-684); Du Fu, Bai Juyi, Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779-831); Li Shangyin 李商隱 (812/3-858); and Han Wo 韓偓 (844-923). See Li, "Confronting History and Its Alternatives in Early Qing Poetry: An Introduction," in *Trauma and Transcendence in Early Qing Literature*, 80; Schmidt, *The Poet Zheng Zhen (1806-1864) and the Rise of Chinese Modernity*, 392-93; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 64-65, Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 209, 216-17.

³² Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 95-99. For Wu Weiye's literary views and characteristics of his poetry, also see Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 92, 100-109; Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 141-45; Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 140-41; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 208-13.

³³ Ning Jiayu and Li Ruishan, *Mingdai wenxue, Qingdai wenxue, Jindai wenxue*, 199-201.

³⁴ Lynn, "Poetry of the Seventeenth Century," 416. For example, Wu frequently applies historical allusions and the narrative method borrowed from prose.

³⁵ For Wu Weiye's influence as well as the literary views and achievements of the Loudong

III) Shi Runzhang 施閏章 (1619-1693) and Song Wan

According to Wang Shizhen, the early Qing literary leader,³⁷ Shi Runzhang (style name Yushan 愚山) and Song Wan were the most outstanding poets of the first half of the Kangxi reign. In Wang's words, "During the Kangxi reign, no poet surpasses Shi from the South and Song from the North" 康熙已來詩人無出南施北宋之右.³⁸

Song Wan's literary career was divided into two halves by his imprisonment in 1661.³⁹ In the first half of his literary life, he admired early and High Tang poetry as carrying on the orthodox poetic tradition of the *Shijing* and considered mid and late Tang poetry mutations.⁴⁰ His version of this tradition was expanded to include the Ming-Qing followers of Tang poetry:

School, see Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 76-78; Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 1:391-400; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 92-93, 109-39; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 217-23; Zha Ziyang 查紫陽, "Shenghua gelü, bujian Tangren: Qingdai chunian de 'Loudong shipai'" "聲華格律, 不減唐人"——清代初年的"婁東詩派."

³⁶ Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 93. Wang Xiaoshu considers it one of the three important schools of poetry which followed the Former and Latter Seven Masters in Jiangnan in addition to the Yunjian School and Xiling School. See Wang, *Qingdai juan*, 219.

³⁷ He was compared by his contemporaries to the Mount Tai and the Big Dipper (*Taishan Beidou* 泰山北斗, or *yishi shan dou* 一時山斗). For example, see Song Luo 宋輦 (1634-1713), "Gaoshou zizheng dafu jingyan jiangguan xingbu shangshu Ruanting Wang gong ji yuanpei gaozeng furen Zhang furen hezang muzhiming" 誥授資政大夫經筵講官刑部尚書阮亭王公暨元配誥贈夫人張夫人合葬墓志銘. Also see Zheng Fangkun 鄭方坤, "Daijingtang shichao xiaozhuan" 帶經堂詩鈔小傳, in *Benchao mingjia shichao xiaozhuan* 本朝名家詩鈔小傳, *juan* 2, 6b, in *Congshu jicheng xinbian* 叢書集成新編, 101:318; Zhao Yi 趙翼, *Oubei shihua* 甌北詩話, *juan* 10, in *Qing shihua xubian* 清詩話續編, 1:1299.

³⁸ Wang Shizhen, *Chibei ou tan* 池北偶談, vol. 1, 253.

³⁹ For Song Wan's literary theories, models, and career, also see Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 274-77; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 143-52; Xu Hua 徐華, "Song Wan de shixue sixiang" 宋琬的詩學思想; Gao Lianlian 高蓮蓮, "Lun Song Wan shige de yuanyuan liubian" 論宋琬詩歌的淵源流變; Jia Ying 賈瑩 and Zhang Bing 張兵, "Song Wan de shixue sixiang ji shige chuanguo qingxiang tanxi" 宋琬的詩學思想及詩歌創作傾向探析, 64-65.

⁴⁰ Song Wan, "Zhao Yongke shi xu" 趙雍客詩序, in *Anyatang wenji* 安雅堂文集, *juan* 1, 9a-9b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian* 清代詩文集匯編, 44:607.

Ming poetry flourished for the first time during the reign of Hongzhi (1488-1505).

Li Kongtong (Li Mengyang) and He Dafu (He Jingming) were its champions.

Then it flourished again during the reign of Jiajing (1522-1566). Li Yulin (Li Panlong) and Wang Yuanmei (Wang Shizhen) were its champions. I thought that the Former Seven Masters were like Chen [Zi'ang], Du [Shenyan], Shen [Quanqi], and Song [Zhiwen] in the Tang dynasty;⁴¹ and the Latter Seven Masters were like Gao [Shi], Cen [Shen], Wang [Wei], and Meng [Haoran] in the Tang dynasty.⁴²

From the reign of Wanli (1573-1620), scholars were all easily swayed. So two masters, Zhong [Xing] and Tan [Yuanchun], arose but only continued their faults. [If we] trace their original intention, they also claimed that they came to save [the situation]. People who discussed poetry in the empire therefore even avoided talking about Wang [Shizhen] and Li [Panlong]. [...] The accomplishment of Chen Wozi (Chen Zilong) and Li Shuzhang (Li Wen) was to destroy and wipe clean the abuse. After that, the words of those in Beidi (Li Mengyang), Xinyang (He Jingming), Ji'nan (Li Panlong), and Loudong (Wang Shizhen) were once again believed in and followed by people in the world.⁴³

⁴¹ For the early Tang poets Chen Zi'ang 陳子昂 (661-702), Shen Quanqi 沈佺期 (656?-714), Song Zhiwen 宋之問 (656?-712), and Du Shenyan 杜審言 (d.708) and their poetry, see Stephen Owen, *The Poetry of the Early T'ang*, 15-223, 325-80.

⁴² For Gao Shi 高適 (707-765), Cen Shen 岑參 (715-770), Wang Wei 王維 (701-761), and Meng Haoran 孟浩然 (689-740), see Stephen Owen, *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry*, 147-61, 169-82, 27-51, 71-88.

⁴³ Song Wan, "Zhou Fushan shi xu" 周釜山詩序, in *Anyatang wenji*, juan 1, 1a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 44:603.

明詩一盛于弘治，而李空同何大復爲之冠；再盛于嘉靖，而李于麟王元美爲之冠。余嘗以爲前七子，唐之陳杜沈宋也；後七子，唐之高岑王孟也。萬曆以降，學者紛然波靡，于是鍾譚二子起而承其弊。跡其本初，亦云救也。而海內言詩者遂至以王李爲諱。[...] 陳臥子李舒章有廓清摧陷之功，於是北地信陽濟南婁東之言復爲天下所信從。

Song Wan highlights two culminations of Ming poetry: the first was led by Li Mengyang, whose birthplace was called Beidi county in the Qin dynasty, and He Jingming, who was from Xinyang (in present-day Henan province); and the second by Li Panlang 李攀龍 (1514-1570) (courtesy name Yulin 于鱗, style name Cangming 滄溟), a native of Ji'nan (in present-day Shandong province), and Wang Shizhen, whose native place was Loudong, or Taicang.⁴⁴ Xie Mingyang 謝明陽 in his study on early Qing poetry elaborates that the scholars of this period divided Ming poetry's revivalism into three stages: the Former Seven Masters, the Latter Seven Masters, and the Yunjian School. Xie and Jiang Yin 蔣寅 consider Song Wan's passage a concise summation of early Qing scholars' observation.⁴⁵ Furthermore, Song gives the Ming poets a position in the classical poetic history comparable to some early and High Tang poets, whose fame is only second to Li Bai and Du Fu.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Song's view follows that found in Chen Zilong's preface to Li Wen's poetry collection, *Fangfulou shigao* 彷彿樓詩稿 (Draft from the Pavilion of Likeness). See Chen Zilong, "Fangfulou shigao xu" 彷彿樓詩稿序, in *Chen Zhongyu gong quanji*, juan 25, in *Chen Zilong quanji*, 2:788; "Li Shuzhang Fangfulou shigao xu" 李舒章彷彿樓詩稿序, in *Anyatang gao* 安雅堂稿, juan 3, in *Chen Zilong quanji*, 2:1067.

⁴⁵ Xie Mingyang, "Yunjian shipai de xingcheng," 19; Jiang Yin, "Qingchu shitan dui Mingdai shixue de fansi" 清初詩壇對明代詩學的反思, 109.

⁴⁶ This high evaluation of Ming poets is even more radical than that by Chen Zilong.

In comparison to Song Wan, Shi Runzhang, who declares that “poetry is a product of nature and emotions” 詩爲性情之物,⁴⁷ more enthusiastically identifies Li Mengyang and He Jingming as the successors of the “correct beginning” (*zhengshi* 正始) of poetic orthodoxy, the *Shijing*, and compares them to Li Bai and Du Fu.⁴⁸ Zhao Na and Wang Xiaoshu state that Shi’s admiration of Tang poetry influenced his poetry writing throughout his life.⁴⁹

Significantly, Shi Runzhang and Song Wan in their late years both paid more attention to Song poetry. Song Wan turned to learn from mid and late Tang poetry and Song poetry after 1661.⁵⁰ He broadly absorbed the poetic achievements of different periods and emphasized the priority of expressing *xingqing*.⁵¹ Wang Xiaoshu even argues that he was the first advocate of Song poetry after the Ming-Qing transition.⁵² Shi Runzhang was influenced by the admiration of Song poetry arising in Beijing and especially claimed that Mei Yaochen was the poet who

⁴⁷ Shi Runzhang, “Chucun shiji xu” 楚村詩集序, in *Shi Yushan xiansheng xueyu wenji* 施愚山先生學餘文集, *juan* 4, 13a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 67:37.

⁴⁸ Shi Runzhang, “Chongke He Dafu shi xu” 重刻何大復詩序, in *Shi Yushan xiansheng xueyu wenji*, *juan* 3, 21a-21b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 67:30.

⁴⁹ Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 125-26, 128-29; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 252-53; Jiang Zenghua 江增華, *Qingchu lishi wenhua shiye zhong de Shi Runzhang yanjiu* 清初歷史文化視野中的施閏章研究, 128. The Tang poets Shi admired the most were Du Fu, Wang Wei, and Meng Haoran. See Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 29. Shi Runzhang also paid attention to mid-Tang poetry. See Shi Changyu, *Qingdai wenxue*, 20-21.

⁵⁰ The poetic models in the second half of his writing life included Du Fu, Han Yu, Su Shi, and Lu You. See Wang Shizhen, *Chibei ou tan*, 1:254. Also see Gao Lianlian, “Lun Song Wan shige de yuanyuan liubian,” 17.

⁵¹ For example, see Song Wan, “Xu Yong gong shi xu” 胥永公詩序, in *Anyatang wenji*, *juan* 1, 17a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 44:611; “Gao Wenduan gong wen xu” 高文端公文序, in *Chongke Anyatang wenji* 重刻安雅堂文集, *juan* 1, 18a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 44:687.

⁵² Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 165.

surpassed Ouyang Xiu and “capped” or “surpassed all” (*guan* 冠) in the Song dynasty.⁵³ As a native of Xuancheng (in present-day Anhui province), Shi admired Mei as the founder of Xuancheng literature and wrote a history of Xuancheng literature from the Northern Song dynasty to the end of the Ming. The main focus of this history is the descendants of Mei Yaochen in the Ming dynasty, who were highly praised by Wang Shizhen, one of the Latter Seven Masters.⁵⁴ Li Shenghua 李聖華 argues that Shi Runzhang and other Xuancheng poets, especially Mei Yaochen’s descendants, formed the Xuancheng School (*Xuancheng pai* 宣城派) during the beginning of the Shunzhi period (1644-1661), which flourished till the mid-Kangxi period as an influential poetic group in the early Qing.⁵⁵ This school of poetry laid stress on the combination of literary techniques and scholarly learning in poetry writing, like Song-style poetry, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the genuine expression of *xingqing*.⁵⁶

⁵³ Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 126. For Shi’s praise of Mei Yaochen, see “Baishan citing xing” 柏山祠堂行, in *Shi Yushan xiansheng xueyu shiji* 施愚山先生學餘詩集, *juan* 15, 2b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 67:360. For Shi’s literary views and poetic characteristics, also see Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 133-43; Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 261-74; Fu Mingjuan 符明娟, “Shi Yushan shixue yanjiu” 施愚山詩學研究; Zhang Lian 張蓮, “Qingchu shiren Shi Runzhang yanjiu” 清初詩人施閏章研究; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 234-41.

⁵⁴ Shi Runzhang, “Shudaiyuan ji xu” 書帶園集序, in *Shi Yushan xiansheng xueyu wenji*, *juan* 6, 12a-12b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 67:54.

⁵⁵ It became a rival of the Loudong School of Poetry, the Yushan School of Poetry (*Yushan shipai* 虞山詩派), whose leader was Qian Qianyi, and the School of “Ineffable Essence and Resonance” (*shenyun pai* 神韻派), which was led by Wang Shizhen. See Li Shenghua, “Lun Xuancheng pai” 論宣城派, 41, 45. For the important literary schools in the early Qing, also see Wai-ye Li, “Early Qing to 1723,” 163.

⁵⁶ Li Shenghua, “Lun Xuancheng pai,” 42-44. For this school of poetry, also see Zhang Jianwen 章建文, “Mingmo Qingchu Wanjiang zuojia huodong nianbiao” 明末清初皖江作家活動年表; Zhang Jianwen, “Mingmo Qingchu Wanjiang zuojiaqun lunlüe” 明末清初皖江作家群論略; Lan Qiuyang 蘭秋陽 and Xing Haiping 邢海萍, “Qingdai wenxue shijia jiqi jiaxue kaolue” 清代文學世家及其家學考略, 39.

In his *Guochao shihua* 國朝詩話 (The Remarks on Poetry of the Reigning Dynasty), the scholar Yang Jichang 楊際昌 (fl. eighteenth century) labeled both Shi Runzhang and Song Wan as mediating the Tang and Song poetic styles and expressing *xingqing*:

They melded Tang and Song [poetry] and expressed their own nature and emotions.⁵⁷

陶冶唐宋，自抒性情。

Contemporary scholars' views of the degree of Shi Runzhang's imitation of Song poetry vary.

Zhao Na and Wang Xiaoshu argue that Shi Runzhang persisted in his admiration of Tang poetry

while admitting his attention to Song poetry,⁵⁸ but Zhao Botao 趙伯陶 questions the

classification of Shi Runzhang in the early Qing poetic scene as a life-long advocate of Tang

poetry.⁵⁹ However, scholars acknowledge Song Wan's efforts and achievements in both

aspects.⁶⁰ Zhang Jian particularly claims that Song Wan's poetics represented the merging of the

previous opposition between Tang and Song advocates.⁶¹

IV) Qu Dajun 屈大均 (1630-1696), Chen Gongyin 陳恭尹 (1631-1700), and the Lingnan School of Poetry (*Lingnan shipai* 嶺南詩派)

The Lingnan School of Poetry in the Yue 粵 region, whose jurisdiction was almost identical to

⁵⁷ Yang Jichang, *Guochao shihua*, juan 1, in *Qing shihua xubian*, 1:1689. Wang Xiaoshu agrees with Yang's conclusion. See Wang, *Qingdai juan*, 252.

⁵⁸ Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 125-26. Wang Xiaoshu notes Shi's imitation of Song poetry and admiration of Mei Yaochen. At same time, Wang reminds us that Mei Yaochen was greatly influenced by Tang poetry and consequently argues that Shi mainly advocated Tang poetry. See Wang, *Qingdai juan*, 252-53.

⁵⁹ Zhao Botao, "Du Shi Yushan ji" 讀施愚山集, 109.

⁶⁰ Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 129-30; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 261-65.

⁶¹ Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 243.

present-day Guangdong province, started to emulate Tang poetry during the Ming dynasty.⁶² Its leading members in the early Qing period were the Three Lingnan Masters (*Lingnan san dajia* 嶺南三大家), Qu Dajun, Chen Gongyin, and Liang Peilan 梁佩蘭 (1629-1705).⁶³ Qu Dajun was generally acknowledged as the poet of the highest achievements among them.⁶⁴ He admired Qu Yuan, Li Bai, and Du Fu and was attentive to mid and late Tang poetry.⁶⁵ In his views, Song-Yuan poetry was a “nadir” (*ji* 極) in the decline of classical poetry, and Li Mengyang rejuvenated poetic orthodoxy, or “the way of ‘Airs’ and ‘Odes’” (*fengya zhi dao* 風雅之道) by learning from Tang poetry, especially Du Fu.⁶⁶

In the history of poetry he wrote for the Yue region, Qu Dajun still expresses his concern about the continuation of poetic orthodoxy, whose exemplar is Tang poetry:

The poetry of our Yue region began with Qujiang (Zhang Jiuling), who started the

⁶² For the admiration of Tang poetry as the main characteristic of the Lingnan School, see Yang Jichang, *Guochao shihua*, *juan* 1, in *Qing shihua xubian*, 1:1705; Chen Yongzheng 陳永正, “Lingnan shipai luelun”; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 15-16.

⁶³ For how Qing poet-scholars started to consider these three poets the representatives of Guangdong poetry and discuss them together, see Wang Fupeng 王富鵬, “Lingnan san dajia hecheng zhi shi ji xudi” 嶺南三大家合稱之始及序第, 17-18; He Tianjie 何天傑, “Lingnan san jia yu Qingchu shitan geju zhi xin bian” 嶺南三家與清初詩壇格局之新變, 150-54.

⁶⁴ Ning Jiayu and Li Ruishan, *Mingdai wenxue*, *Qingdai wenxue*, *Jindai wenxue*, 198; Shi Changyu, *Qingdai wenxue*, 19; Wang Fupeng, “Lingnan san dajia hecheng zhi shi ji xudi,” 18-21; Deng Zhicheng 鄧之誠, *Qingshi jishi chubian* 清詩紀事初編, 2:986. Also see Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 114-15; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 165-66; Zhou Xifu, “Qianyan” 前言, in *Chen Gongyin ji Lingnan shifeng yanjiu*, 3.

⁶⁵ Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 119-22; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 157-60. For Qu Dajun’s poetry and literary theories, also see Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 104-14; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 17-24; Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 1:317-26; Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 166-72; Zong Jinghua 宗靖華, “Lingnan shiren Qu Dajun yanjiu” 嶺南詩人屈大均研究.

⁶⁶ Qu Dajun, “Jingshan shiji xu” 荊山詩集序, in *Wenshan wenwai* 翁山文外, in *Qu Dajun quanji* 屈大均全集, 3:66.

custom [of poetic writing] with a correct beginning and pure tone. For more than one thousand years, many writers emerged. They took the three Tang periods and the Han and Wei (220-265) dynasties as their foundation and all followed Qujiang's rules carefully. None of them dared to corrupt [the style of] the "Major Odes" by a new tone or wild style and [to produce] mutated tones with the poets who wrote like the Yuan [brothers] and Xu [Wei], like Zhong [Xing] and Tan [Yuanchun], and like Song and Yuan [poets] in the world. Therefore, [if one] advances a representative of the correct poetic style, our Yue region should be the first.⁶⁷

吾粵詩始曲江，以正始元音先開風氣。千餘年以來作者彬彬，家三唐而漢魏，皆謹守曲江規矩，無敢以新聲野體而傷大雅，與天下之為袁徐，為鍾譚，為宋元者俱變。故推詩風之正者，吾粵為先。

Qu Dajun admires the Tang poet Zhang Jiuling 張九齡 (678-740), a native of Qujiang (in present-day Guangdong province), as the precursor of Yue poetry.⁶⁸ He uses a series of terms, such as "correct beginning," "pure tone" (*yuanyin* 元音), and the Major Odes, to characterize Yue poetry and differentiate it from the "mutations" (*bian* 變) exemplified by some Ming poets, including those famous for their pursuit of *xingling* and imitators of Song-Yuan poetry. Yue poetry from the Tang to the early Qing dynasty is thus legitimized as a representative successor

⁶⁷ Qu Dajun, "Fanli" 凡例, in "Guangdong wenxue zixu" 廣東文選自序, in *Wenshan wenwai*, in *Qu Dajun quanji*, 3:43.

⁶⁸ For Zhang Jiuling's poetry, see Owen, *The Poetry of the Early T'ang*, 413-16; *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry*, 23-26, 58-59, 133.

of the orthodox poetic tradition originating from the *Shijing*.

Chen Gongyin, who ranked second among the Three Lingnan Masters, imitated Han-Wei ancient-style poetry and Tang poetry, especially recent-style poetry. In his poetics, on the one hand, he admired Tang poetry and, on the other hand, opposed the artificial division between Tang and Song dynasty poetry and highlighted the priority of the expression of *xingqing*.⁶⁹ In his preface to Liang Peilan's poetry collection, he asserts that nature and emotion are the "source" (*quanyuan* 泉源) of poetry and encourages poets to depict their own nature and emotion by developing their unique features (*mianmu* 面目). He enumerates famous poets who revived Yue poetry during the late Ming and early Qing periods. The last three poets on this list are Qu Dajun, Liang Peilan, and himself, who "convey their natural sensibility and inspiration" (*fashu xingling* 發攄性靈) and have their unique features.⁷⁰ The conventional praise of his friends and the unusual self-approval imply his confidence in Lingnan poets' exemplary conveyance of *xingqing* and *xingling*.

Chen emphasizes exclusively the expression of *xingqing* and its fundamental importance as stated in this poem:

The great way of literature is for everyone,

文章大道以為公

How can we force the present and past to be the same?

今昔何能強使同

⁶⁹ For Chen Gongyin's literary views and achievements, see Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 161-65; Zhou Xifu, *Chen Gongyin ji Lingnan shifeng yanjiu*, 137-252; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 24-34; Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 1:327-33; Du Qiaoyue 杜巧月, "Chen Gongyin shige yanjiu" 陳恭尹詩歌研究.

⁷⁰ Chen Gongyin, "Liang Yaoting shi xu" 梁藥亭詩序, in *Dulutang wenji* 獨漉堂文集, *juan* 3, 3a-4a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 125:562-63.

Only write about nature and emotion and inscribe them on paper, 只寫性情留紙上

Do not let concerns about the Tang or Song occupy your mind.⁷¹ 莫將唐宋滯胸中

Chen aims at pursuing “the great way of literature” (*wenzhang dadao* 文章大道), or poetic orthodoxy, which develops and varies constantly, and opposes to mimicry, which leads to repetition and sameness.

Zhou Xifu in his monograph on Chen Gongyin and Lingnan Poetry claims that Chen’s literary theories are the most systematic among the Three Lingnan Masters and thus the most representative of the Lingnan School’s achievements.⁷² Chen inherited and revised the Gong’an School’s advocacy of *xingling*, influenced the contemporary critic Ye Xie’s poetic views, and pioneered Yuan Mei’s School of Natural Sensibility and Inspiration.⁷³ The interactions between the Lingnan School and other literati shown in Zhou’s study suggests the complexity of the Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry.

V) Qian Qianyi

Qian Qianyi was a literary collaborator and close friend of Chen Zilong and Wu Weiye. In the early stage of his literary career, like the Yunjian poets, he imitated Li Mengyang and He Jingming. Although his esteem for Tang poetry as the highest model of classical poetry lasted

⁷¹ Chen Gongyin, “Ciyun da Xu Zining” 次韻答徐紫凝, no.4, in *Dulutang shiji* 獨漉堂詩集, juan 13, 33a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 125:530.

⁷² Zhou Xifu, “Qianyan,” in *Chen Gongyin ji Lingnan shifeng yanjiu*, 3.

⁷³ Zhou Xifu, *Chen Gongyin ji Lingnan shifeng yanjiu*, 137-252. For Chen Gongyin’s broad absorption from different masters and periods, see Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 122-23.

throughout his literary life, from his mid-twenties, he turned to learning from poets of different periods, among whom he most cherished Du Fu, Han Yu, Bai Juyi, Li Shangyin 李商隱 (812/3-858) (courtesy name Yishan 義山),⁷⁴ Su Shi, and Lu You.⁷⁵ Consequently, as Richard Lynn claims, he avoided following poetic styles of any particular periods, including the High Tang style, and attacked various aspects the Former and Latter Seven Masters.⁷⁶

In different stages of his literary career, Qian Qianyi was persistently concerned about the origin and continuation of the orthodox poetic tradition:

The Three Hundred poems changed into “[Encountering] Sorrow”;

“[Encountering] Sorrow” changed into the ancient poetry of the Han-Wei. [These poems] originate from nature and emotion and encompass all phenomena.⁷⁷

三百篇變而為騷，騷變為漢魏古詩，根柢性情，籠挫物態。

The poetry of past and present converged in the Tang dynasty and flourished in

⁷⁴ For Li Shangyin’s poetry, see Owen, *The Late Tang*, 335-526.

⁷⁵ Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 115-19; Zhu Limei [Lin-Meei Ju] 朱莉美, “Mingdai shilun de zongjie he chongjian: lun Qian Qianyi de bie cai weiti” 明代詩論的總結和重建——論錢謙益的別裁偽體, 76. For Qian’s poetic models, also see Xu Shichang 徐世昌, *Wanqingyi shihui* 晚晴簃詩匯, 1:544; Dai Wenhe, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 194-97; Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 54-65; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 71-80; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 180-200.

⁷⁶ Lynn, “Poetry of the Seventeenth Century,” 414. Ning Jiayu and Li Ruishan also note that he criticized the Former and Latter Seven Masters’ revivalism, appreciated Song and Yuan poetry, and combined the styles of Tang and Song poetry. See Ning and Li, *Mingdai wenxue, Qingdai wenxue, Jindai wenxue*, 199.

⁷⁷ Qian Qianyi, “Ji Cangwei shi xu” 季滄葦詩序, in *Muzhai youxue ji* 牧齋有學集, *juan* 17, in *Qian Muzhai quanji* 錢牧齋全集, 5:758. For other texts about nature and emotion as the origin of poetry, for example, see Qian Qianyi, “Wang Yuanzhao ji xu” 王元昭集序, in *Muzhai chuxue ji* 牧齋初學集, *juan* 32, in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 2:932.

the Song. During the Jin and Yuan, it developed extravagantly.⁷⁸

古今之詩，總萃於唐，而暢遂於宋，至金元則靡矣。

These passages piece together Qian Qianyi's version of the classical poetic tradition. It shares with the versions of many previous and contemporary literati in Qian's identification of early poetic models, from the *Shijing* and *Chuci* to Han and Wei poetry, as exemplars of *xingqing* and in his recognition of Tang poetry as the summation of poetic achievements in all aspects. At the same time, it differs from other versions in the depiction of poetic developments from the Song to the Yuan dynasty: Song poetry is defined as a progressive step in the transformation of poetry after the Tang and thus a successor of the orthodox tradition. Even poetry of the Jin (Jurchen) and Yuan periods is considered an extension of this tradition, although not a proper one, rather than a deviation from it. Qian further evaluates Song, Jin (Jurchen), Yuan, and Ming poets by invoking Tang poetry as the standard. Su Shi, Jin (Jurchen) and Yuan poets, and the Ming master Li Dongyang are classified as the successors of Tang poetry. Huang Tingjian is identified as being slightly far from (*shao yuan* 少遠) Tang poetry, and the Former Seven Masters are even farther (*mi yuan* 彌遠) from it.⁷⁹ Qian's evaluation not only confirms the supremacy of Tang poetry but also demonstrates his cautious, critical reflection on poetry of every period.

Qian Qianyi's applause for poems of any historical period is based on an argument: they

⁷⁸ Qian Qianyi, "Xuetang xuanji tici" 雪堂選集題辭, in *Muzhai youxue ji wenchao buji* 牧齋有學集文鈔補遺, in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 7:501. Qian also maintains that Du Fu's poetry embodies all these achievements and outstanding poets from the reign of Dali all learn from him. See Qian Qianyi, "Zeng Fangzhong shi xu" 曾房仲詩序, in *Muzhai chuxue ji*, juan 32, in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 2:928-29.

⁷⁹ Qian Qianyi, "Xuetang xuanji tici," in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 7:501-2.

are all products of poets' "spirited mind and subtle wisdom" (*lingxin miaozhi* 靈心妙智), a near synonym of *xingling*. Thus Qian particularly despises Yan Yu's and Gao Bing's exclusive admiration of High Tang poetry.⁸⁰ He appeals to poets to learn from Du Fu as the model, who "reaches back to the 'Airs' and 'Odes' and down to embrace Shen [Quanqi] and Song [Zhiwen]" 上薄風雅下該沈宋 and "distinguishes and eliminates the false styles and turns to benefit from various masters" 別裁偽體轉益多師.⁸¹ Zhu Limei's [Lin-Meei Ju] 朱莉美 demonstrates that "distinguishing and eliminating the false styles" was Qian Qianyi's strategy to purify the orthodox tradition of poetry.⁸² As I will show below, I further argue that "benefiting from various masters" was another strategy applied by Qian to prolong the tradition.⁸³

Qian Qianyi's criticism of Ming poetry, according to Ju's analysis, includes his dissatisfaction with two examples of "false styles" (*weiti* 偽體): the Former and Latter Seven Masters, whose imitation of High Tang poets fails to demonstrate their *xingling*; and the Jingling

⁸⁰ Qian Qianyi, "Ti Xu Jibai shijuan hou" 題徐季白詩卷後, in *Muzhai youxue ji* 牧齋有學集, juan 47, in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 6:1563. He also criticizes Liu Chenweng 劉辰翁 (1232-1297), a poet-critic in the late Song and early Yuan. Hu Yinglin compared Liu's poetics with those of Yan Yu and Gao Bing and considered Liu a follower of Yan Yu's poetics. See Hu Yinglin, "Waibian juan si" 外編卷四, in *Shi sou* 詩藪, 184; "Zabian juan wu" 雜編卷五 in *Shi sou*, 308.

⁸¹ Qian Qianyi, "Zeng Fangzhong shi xu," in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 2:929. The first quotation is borrowed from Du Fu's epitaph by Yuan Zhen. See Mo Lifeng 莫礪鋒, *Du Fu pingzhuan* 杜甫評傳, 7. The second quotation is borrowed from Du Fu's poem. See Du Fu, "Xi wei liu jueju" 戲為六絕句, no. 6, in *Quan Tang shi*, 7:2453; cf. "Six Quatrains Done Playfully," in Du Fu, *The Poetry of Du Fu*, trans. and ed. Stephen Owen, 3:114-15.

⁸² Zhu Limei, "Mingdai shilun de zongjie he chongjian," 60-62. Also see Liang Lin 梁琳, "Shen Deqian yu Qian Qianyi 'weiti' guan de yitong: jian lun Shen Qian 'biecai' bianshi de desh" 沈德潛與錢謙益"偽體"觀的異同——兼論沈、錢"別裁"編詩的得失.

⁸³ Wang Yingzhi also argues for the importance of "benefiting from various masters" in Qian's poetics. See Wang, "Qian Qianyi de 'shi you ben' shuo" 錢謙益的"詩有本"說, in *Qingren shilun yanjiu* 清人詩論研究, 20.

poets, who confine their attention to an extremely limited number of previous poets.⁸⁴ At the same time, he agrees with the Gong'an poets about the emphasis on *xingling* and resistance to classifying poems on the basis of their historical periods.⁸⁵ Historian Lynn Struve even labels Qian Qianyi the main supporter of the Yuan brothers' views.⁸⁶

Qian Qianyi's views of Ming poets are also systematically recorded in his brief review of Ming poetry.⁸⁷ He applauds three poets, Liu Ji 劉基 (1311-1375) (courtesy name Bowen 伯溫), Gao Qi 高啟 (1336-1374) (courtesy name Jidi 季迪, style name Qingqiuzi 青丘子), and Li Dongyang, who all referred to a wide range of poetic models from different dynasties.⁸⁸ Li Mengyang is described as a reactionary, who ostracized Li Dongyang and misled Ming poets by his influence as the leading poet of the Former and Latter Seven Masters, the literary group Qian Qianyi criticized most frequently and fiercely.⁸⁹ It is noteworthy that Gao Qi was a native of Suzhou (in present-day Jiangsu Province) and Li Dongyang shared with Jiangsu poets the emulation of both Tang and Song poetry as the leader of the Chaling School (*Chaling pai* 茶陵

⁸⁴ For Qian Qianyi's attacks on the Jingling poets, also see Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 117-18; Wai-yee Li, "Early Qing to 1723," 159.

⁸⁵ Qian asserts that poetry "cultivates nature and inspiration" 陶冶性靈. See Qian Qianyi, "Fan Xiqing shiji xu" 范璽卿詩集序, in *Muzhai chuxue ji*, *juan* 31, in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 2:910.

⁸⁶ Lynn Struve, "Huang Zongxi in Context: A Reappraisal of His Major Writings," 485. For Qian's poetry and poetics, also see Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 67-71; Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 110-31; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 104-47; Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 3-14.

⁸⁷ Qian Qianyi, "Shu Li Wenzheng gong shoushu Dongsi lulüe *juan* hou" 書李文正公手書東祀錄略卷後, in *Muzhai chuxue ji*, *juan* 83, in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 3:1759.

⁸⁸ Qian also "discerns a 'rueful and spent' air in Liu Chi's later poetry." See John Timothy Wixted, "Poetry of the Fourteenth Century," in *The Columbia History of Chinese Literature*, 398.

⁸⁹ Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 117. Qian Qianyi also stated that Li Dongyang's poetry inherited Tang poetry more than Li Mengyang's poetry did. See Qian, "Xuetang xuanji tici," in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 7:501.

派), in which many poets were from Jiangsu, as noted by the scholar Bai Yijin 白一瑾.⁹⁰

Therefore, Qian's review of Ming poetry also illustrates how he, a native of Changshu (in present-day Jiangsu), identifies the poetry of the Wu region, whose jurisdiction was almost identical with the present-day Jiangsu province, as an exemplar of the classical poetry tradition. In his writings, Qian Qianyi summarizes the characteristics of Wu poetry, one of which is Wu poets' wide learning from different periods and models.⁹¹ He also traces the history of Wu poetry during the Ming dynasty.⁹² In his *Liechao shiji* 列朝詩集 (An Anthology of Poetry from Successive Reigns), which consists of more than 2,000 Ming poets, Qian attempts to establish an orthodox poetic tradition represented by Wu poets.⁹³

Under Qian Qianyi's influence, poets of Changshu formed the Yushan School of Poetry (*Yushan shipai* 虞山詩派).⁹⁴ Lawrence Yim designates Qian Qianyi as "the leader of the literary world composed during the Ming-Qing transition" and "a poet of great poetic vision and verbal

⁹⁰ Bai Yijin, "Lun Liechao shijie de Wuzhong shixue benwei guan" 論《列朝詩集》的吳中詩學本位觀, 143.

⁹¹ Bai Yijin, "Lun Liechao shijie de Wuzhong shixue benwei guan," 140-2. For Qian Qianyi's writings in which he discusses Wu literary tradition and characteristics, for example, see "Suzhou fu chongxiu xuezhixu" 蘇州府重修學志序, in *Muzhai chuxue ji*, juan 17, in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 2 :852-54; "Jiading si jun ji xu" 嘉定四君集序, in *Muzhai chuxue ji*, juan 32, in *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 2:921-22.

⁹² Zhou Xinglu 周興陸, "Qian Qianyi yu Wuzhong shixue chuantong" 錢謙益與吳中詩學傳統, 108-13; Bai Yijin, "Lun Liechao shijie de Wuzhong shixue benweiguan," 145-47.

⁹³ Zhou Xinglu, "Qian Qianyi yu Wuzhong shixue chuantong," 108-10; Bai Yijin, "Lun Liechao shijie de Wuzhong shixue benwei guan," 142-47.

⁹⁴ For this school of poetry, see Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 129-38; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 52-54; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 81-87; Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 105-7; Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 14-28; Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 132-41; Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 100-103; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 148-204.

power.”⁹⁵ Qian’s reputation lasted for more than one century before the Qianlong Emperor’s denouncement of him.⁹⁶ Qiao Yi 喬億 (1702-1788), a mid-Qing scholar who felt more intensely Qian’s influence, claimed that Qian “vigorously attacked the masters of the Hong[zh] and Zheng[de] (1506-1521) reigns and was the first to carry on the legacy of Song poets. The master poets succeeded him; they all claimed that they were [followers of] Tang [poets] but actually were [imitators of] Song [poets]. This is a great change in trend” 力詆弘正諸公，始纘宋人餘緒，諸詩老繼之，皆名唐而實宋，此風氣一大變也。⁹⁷ His comments confirm that the valorization and emulation of Song poetry began to prevail with Qian Qianyi. Zheng Fangkun 鄭方坤 (*jinsshi* 1723), another mid-Qing scholar who was probably older than Qiao Yi and closer to Qian Qianyi’s time, highlighted Qian Qianyi’s great influence on poetry of the whole Qing dynasty and his role as a preserver of poetic orthodoxy: “Poets emerged generation after generation during our dynasty; none of them was able to resist his influence. He truly upheld the Major Odes and was the bedrock in midstream” 本朝詩人輩出，要無能出其範圍。誠大雅之扶輪，中流之砥柱也。⁹⁸ The contemporary scholar of Ming and Qing poetry, Zhu Zejie, declares

⁹⁵ Lawrence Yim, introduction to *The Poet-historian Qian Qianyi*, 2. His designation follows Xu Shichang’s identification of Qian Qianyi’s role as a commander who “steered literature of the southeast circle and served as a key figure in the field of poetry of both the Ming and the Qing dynasties” 主持東南壇坫，為明清兩代詩派一大關鍵。See Xu Shichang, *Wanqingyi shihui*, 1:544. Lynn notes that Qian in the last several years of his life (the late 1650s and early 1660s) was still admired as the leader of Qing poetry. See Lynn, “Poetry of the Seventeenth Century,” 421.

⁹⁶ Kang-I Sun Chang also notices Qian Qianyi’s leading role during his time. See Chang, “Qian Qianyi and His Place in History,” 199, 204-6.

⁹⁷ Qiao Yi, *Jianxi shuo shi* 劍谿說詩, *juan* 2, in *Qing shihua xubian*, 1:1104.

⁹⁸ Zheng Fangkun, “Dongjian shichao xiaozhuan” 東澗詩鈔小傳, in *Jiangyunlou tiba* 絳雲樓題跋, in *Qingren shumu tiba congkan* 清人書目題跋叢刊, 10:470.

that Qian Qianyi opened up a new prospect for Qing poetry⁹⁹ and considers Qian the forerunner of Qing poetry.¹⁰⁰ From Luo Shijin 羅時進 and Dai Wenhe to Zhu Limei, Wang Xiaoshu, and Zhao Na, Chinese scholars esteem Qian Qianyi as the pioneer advocating learning from both Tang and Song poetry, the third force in the debate on Tang and Song poetry.¹⁰¹

VI) Huang Zongxi

With Qian Qianyi's advocacy, the trend of Song-style poetry can be said to have arisen during the early Qing period. Scholars such as Wu Guoping 鄔國平 and Wang Zhenyuan 王鎮遠 classify the poets mainly influenced by Song poetry into a literary school and name it the School of Song Poetry (*Songshi pai* 宋詩派).¹⁰² Liu Shinan coins the term, the School with a Song Lineage (*Zong Song pai* 宗宋派). Important members of this school included Huang Zongxi, Song Wan, Wang Wan 汪琬 (1624-1691), Lü Liuliang 呂留良 (1629-1683), Song Luo 宋肇 (1634-1713), Wu Zhizhen 吳之振 (1640-1717), and Zha Shenxing 查慎行 (1650-1727).¹⁰³ Zhang Zhongmou 張仲謀 classifies the Zhejiang poets, mainly Huang Zongxi and his teachers,

⁹⁹ Zhu Zejie, "Xulun" 緒論, in *Qingshi shi*, 5. However, Shu Chen thinks he underestimates the complexity of early Qing poetry and overstates Qian Qianyi's influence. See Shu Chen, "Zhu Yizun 'yang Tang yi Song' shuo," 104.

¹⁰⁰ Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 34, 56.

¹⁰¹ Luo Shijin, "Qian Qianyi Tang Song jian zong de xin qixiang yu Qingdai shifeng xin bian" 錢謙益唐宋兼宗的新祈向與清代詩風新變, 67-71; Dai Wenhe, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 197; Zhu Limei, "Mingdai shilun de zongjie he chongjian," 76; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 185-87; Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 54-56. Wang Xiaoshu reminds us of Qian's influence on both Song Wan's and Wang Shizhen's turn to Song poetry. See Wang, *Qingdai juan*, 187. Liu Shinan especially claims that the lyricism in the Qing poetry of the Song style and the intellectualization of the Qing poetry in Tang styles were both initiated by Qian Qianyi. See Liu, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 81.

¹⁰² Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 340-41.

¹⁰³ Liu Shijin, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 211-47.

friends, and disciples, as the Zhe School (*Zhe pai* 浙派).¹⁰⁴ There is a great deal of overlap among the members of all three schools designated by modern scholars. This coincidence supports Yan Dichang's conclusion: since mostly Zhejiang poets initiated the promotion of Song poetry, the term "Zhe School" is actually another name for the non-regional term, "the School of Poetry with a Song Lineage" (*Zong Song shipai* 宗宋詩派).¹⁰⁵

Huang Zongxi was a senior poet in this school, although he was younger than Qian Qianyi, who exerted a greater influence on the rising trend of Song-style poetry. When he was a young scholar, Huang learned from senior poets to write poetry in Han, Wei, and High Tang styles.¹⁰⁶ Greatly influenced by contemporary scholars such as Qian,¹⁰⁷ he rejected his earlier works after the dynastic change.¹⁰⁸ His poetic views are characterized by his critical appreciation of poems of different periods. He criticizes Li Dongyang, Li Panlong, and their followers because their dynasty-oriented imitation and debate about poetry of which period was of higher quality "never had even one word originating from nature and emotions" 未嘗毫髮出於性情.¹⁰⁹ Song poetry and Yuan poetry are praised for "having their own merits" (*ge you youchang* 各有優長), and Song poetry is especially identified as "being able to [trace the lineage to] Tang [poetry] (*neng*

¹⁰⁴ Zhang Zhongmou, "Qingdai Songshi shicheng lun" 清代宋詩師承論, 25-34; *Qingdai wenhua yu Zhepai shi* 清代文化與浙派詩, 80-81.

¹⁰⁵ Yan Dichang's term combines Liu Shinan's term and that used by Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan. See Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 1:541.

¹⁰⁶ Huang Zongxi, "Tici" 題辭, in *Nanlei shili* 南雷詩曆, in *Huang Zongxi quanji* 黃宗羲全集, 11:204. Also see Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 98; Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 67.

¹⁰⁷ Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 186; Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 67-69; Lynn, "Poetry of the Seventeenth Century," 420.

¹⁰⁸ Huang Zongxi, "Tici," in *Huang Zongxi quanji*, 11:204.

¹⁰⁹ Huang Zongxi, "Tianyue chanshi shiji xu" 天嶽禪師詩集序, in *Nanlei shiwen ji*, in *Huang Zongxi quanji*, 10:67.

Tang 能唐)¹¹⁰:

The whole empire knows to venerate Tang poetry. I think the only poets who were good at learning from Tang [poetry] were Song [poets]. [...] [They] wandered back over thousands of years, and then achieved the learning of a master. Therefore [I] say the only poets who were good at learning from Tang [poetry] were Song [poets].¹¹¹

天下皆知宗唐詩，余以爲善學唐者唯宋。[...] 上下於數千年之間，始成其爲一家之學，故曰善學唐者唯宋。

According to Huang's criterion, a poet's success in learning from literary models is embodied by the establishment of his own poetic style on the basis of established literary achievements. This criterion is another expression of "benefiting from various masters," one of Qian Qianyi's strategies to carry on the classical poetic tradition. Huang's own poetry, according to Richard Lynn, is a combination of "scholarly erudition," the main characteristic of Song poetry, with "a powerful emotional impact in emulation of the formal style of the High T'ang."¹¹²

Ming poetry in Huang Zongxi's observation was a contrast to Song poetry because Ming poets, such as the Former and Latter Masters, the Gong'an and Jingling Schools, and Chen Zilong, "were not good at learning from Tang [poetry]" (*bu shan xue Tang* 不善學唐) and only

¹¹⁰ Huang Zongxi, "Zhang Xinyou shi xu" 張心友詩序, in *Nanlei shiwen ji*, in *Huang Zongxi quanji*, 10:50-51.

¹¹¹ Huang Zongxi, "Jiang Shanqi Penshan shigao xu" 姜山啟彭山詩稿序, in *Nanlei shiwen ji*, in *Huang Zongxi quanji*, 10:60.

¹¹² Lynn, "Poetry of the Seventeenth Century," 419.

composed poems “similar to [Tang poems] in appearance” (*xing si* 形似).¹¹³ Ming poets’ disagreements on Tang or Song poetry from the sixteenth century on were defined by practices resulting from their neglect of nature and emotions.¹¹⁴

As a native of the Yue 越 region, whose jurisdiction was almost identical with the present-day Zhejiang province, Huang Zongxi declared proudly that Yue poetry was an exception to the Tang trend in the Ming dynasty:

Our Yue region has never been influenced by current trends and common taste. When He [Jingming] and Li [Mengyang] launched the imitation of Tang poetry, [Wang] Yangming exchanged poems and matched rhymes with them, but gave up and left before long. He [Jingming] and Li [Mengyang] and their followers sighed and pitied him for his failure to succeed [in writing], but they did not know that he despised them. When Taicang (Wang Shizhen) led Ming poetry, all within the empire were under his influence. He knew Xu Wei’s and Yang Ke’s talents and wanted to recruit them. Xu and Yang were both averse to approaching him; Taicang thus satirized and attacked them, but finally he could not harm Xu’s and Yang’s reputation. Ignorant people, according to what they have heard and seen in twenty years in the countryside, say presumptuously that our Yue region does not have poetry. It is not that the Yue region does not have poetry; it just does not have today’s fake Tang poetry.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Huang Zongxi, “Jiang Shanqi Penshan shigao xu,” in *Huang Zongxi quanji*, 10:61.

¹¹⁴ Huang Zongxi, “Tianyue chanshi shiji xu,” in *Huang Zongxi quanji*, 10:67.

¹¹⁵ Huang Zongxi, “Jiang Shanqi Penshan shigao xu,” in *Huang Zongxi quanji*, 10:61.

吾越自來不爲時風衆勢所染，當何李創爲唐詩之時，陽明與之更唱迭和，未幾棄去。何李而下，歎惜其未成，不知其心鄙之也。太倉之執牛耳，海內無不受其牢籠，心知徐渭楊珂之才而欲招之，徐楊皆不屑就，太倉遂肆其譏彈，而徐楊之名終不可掩。顧昧者鄉邑二十年之聞見，妄謂吾越無詩。越非無詩也，無今日之假唐詩也。

In this history of Yue poetry, the poetic tradition of the Yue region is independent from the mainstream of Ming poetry led by He Jingming, Li Panlong, and Wang Shizhen, a native of Taicang; it is represented by Wang Shouren 王守仁 (1472-1529) (style name Yangming 陽明), Xu Wei 徐渭 (1521-1593), and Yang Ke 楊珂 (fl. the Jiajing reign).¹¹⁶ Huang's statement that Yue poets resisted "fake Tang poetry" (*jia Tangshi* 假唐詩) represented by Ming poetic mainstream in fact emphasizes Yue poetry as an exceptional successor of Tang poetry.

Lynn Struve compares the literary views of Huang Zongxi and Qian Qianyi and reveals several similarities between them. Influenced by the Gong'an School, Huang and Qian claimed *xingqing* as the source of masterpieces and detested the Former and Latter Seven Masters' imitation of Tang poetry. They appreciated literary accomplishments of each historical period, including post-Tang poetry, recognized the evolution of poetry as a basic feature of poetic history, opposed the exclusive worship of Han and Tang models, and appealed to poets to combine their

¹¹⁶ For their poetry, see Hua Jianxin 華建新, *Wang Yangming shige yanjiu* 王陽明詩歌研究; Yu Bowen 喻博文, "Jianlun Wang Yangming de shizuo" 簡論王陽明的詩作; Daniel Bryant, "Poetry of the Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries," in *The Columbia History of Chinese Literature*, 407; Lynn, "Poetry of the Seventeenth Century," 411; Zhang Miao 張淼, "Xu Wei shige yanjiu" 徐渭詩歌研究; Lai Zhilong 賴智龍, "Yuezhong shizi shige chuanguozuo fengmao" 越中十子詩歌創作風貌, in "Yezhong shi zi yanjiu" 越中十子研究, 35-54.

own merits with those inherited from previous literature.¹¹⁷ As she argues, Huang Zongxi founded intellectual trends, including poetic trends of his time.¹¹⁸ Zhang Zhongmou demonstrates that Huang initiated the Zhe School by supervising many young Zhejiang poets.¹¹⁹ The Zhe School is one of the largest and most long-lasting schools of poetry in Chinese history.¹²⁰ Huang Zongxi's poetics established the school's theoretical framework and directed its development more systematically than Yuan Hongdao and more enthusiastically than Qian Qianyi did for their "schools." With Huang Zongxi's advocacy, Song poetry became a force that competed with the time-honoured admiration of Tang poetry. Thus, he launched the Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry.¹²¹

The Reign of Kangxi: The Rise and Fall of the Advocacy of Song Poetry and the Revival of the Tang Poetic Model

I) The Publication of *Songshi chao* 宋詩鈔 (The Anthology of Song Poetry)

In 1663, Huang Zongxi joined several young scholars, led by Wu Zhizhen, Lü Liuliang, and Wu Zimu 吳自牧 (fl. second half of the seventeenth century), to compile an anthology of Song poetry in Zhejiang. From 1667, Wu Zhizhen and Wu Zimu continued to compile the anthology

¹¹⁷ Struve, "Huang Zongxi in Context," 484-89. Also see Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 68.

¹¹⁸ Struve, "Huang Zongxi in Context," 493. For Huang Zongxi's poetic production and literary theories, also see Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 126-28; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 97-101; Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 66-71; Guo Shaoyu, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 407-15; Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 70-74.

¹¹⁹ Zhang Zhongmou, "Qingdai Songshi shicheng lun," 56-84.

¹²⁰ Zhang Zhongmou, "Xulun" 緒論, in *Qingdai wenhua yu Zhepai shi*, 2.

¹²¹ Zhang Zhongmou, *Qingdai wenhua yu Zhepai shi*, 82-84. Qian Zhonglian also states that the admiration of Song poetry in the Zhe School benefited from Huang Zongxi's encouragement. See "Sanbai nian lai de Zhejiang gudian shige" 三百年來的浙江古典詩歌, 3.

after their colleagues left. In 1671, Wu Zhizhen published the anthology, *Songshi chao chuji* 宋詩鈔初集 (The First Anthology of Song Poetry), which included poems by 84 poets.¹²²

In the preface to *Songshi chao chuji*, Wu Zhizhen, on the one hand, argues that Song poetry “was transformed from Tang [poetry]” (*bianhua yu Tang* 變化於唐) and inherited the “spirit” (*jingshen* 精神) of Tang poetry. On the other hand, he criticizes the Latter Seven Masters’ imitation of Tang poetry in the sixteenth century for their lack of Song poets’ “proficiency” (*jing* 精) and “specialty” (*zhuan* 專); he also attributes Qing scholars’ denigration of Song poetry and admiration of the Latter Seven Masters to their ignorance of the “origin and development” (*yuanliu* 原流) of poetry.¹²³ Wu shares with Huang Zongxi the esteem for Tang poetry’s supremacy, the disdain for Ming poets’ imitation of Tang poetry, and the positioning of Song poets as the successors of Tang poetry. While considering this preface a new version of the poetic views of the Gong’an School, Richard Lynn reminds us of Wu’s attempts that “lessened” the pre-eminence of Tang poetry and equated the importance of Song poetry with its Tang counterpart in the history of classical poetry.¹²⁴

Contemporary scholar Shentu Qingsong 申屠青松 designates this anthology as the first Qing “document” about Song poetry, the most important reference for Qing learners of Song

¹²² For the process of the compilation and publication of this anthology, see Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 80-82. For these poets’ literary views and production, also see Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 81-90; Zhang Zhongmou, “Qingdai Songshi shicheng lun,” 48-73; Yan Dicheng, *Qingshi shi*, 1:578-81; Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 343-49; Dai Wenhe, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 206-7; Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 74-77.

¹²³ Wu Zhizhen, “Xu” 序, in *Song shichao chuji* 宋詩鈔初集, in *Song shichao*, 1:3-4.

¹²⁴ Lynn, “Tradition and the Individual,” 350.

poetry, and the vehicle for advocating Song-style poetry.¹²⁵ Jerry Schmidt says it is “still a major source for the study of Song literature.”¹²⁶ In the year of *Songshi chao*’s publication, Wu Zhizhen brought many copies to Beijing and presented them to famous scholars there. In Beijing, he befriended dozens of poets congenial to him, such as Shi Runzhang, Song Wan, Wang Wan,¹²⁷ Song Luo,¹²⁸ Tian Wen 田雯 (1635-1704),¹²⁹ and Wang Shizhen. His literary associates also included the critic Ye Xie.¹³⁰ As Zhao Na and Zhang Zhongmou point out, the publication and circulation of *Songshi chao* bridged the followers of Song poetry from Zhejiang and those from Beijing and other places and spread their views to the whole empire, thus

¹²⁵ Shentu Qingsong, “Songshi chao yu qingdai shixue” 《宋詩鈔》與清代詩學, 82-83.

¹²⁶ Schmidt, *The Poet Zheng Zhen (1806-1864) and the Rise of Chinese Modernity*, 255.

¹²⁷ Wang Wan started his poetic production by following Tang poetry and turned to modeling his poetry after Song poetry in his middle age. In his late years, he changed to combine his advocacies of the two periods. See Jiang Yin, “Qingchu Jiangnan shixue sanlun: yi Wu Meicun, You Tong, Wang Wan wei zhongxin” 清初江南詩學論——以吳梅村、尤侗、汪琬為中心, 160. His poetic models included Su Shi, Huang Tingjian, and Fan Chengda. See Shen Deqian, *Qingshi biecai ji* 清詩別裁集, 1:143; Deng Zhicheng, *Qingshi jishi chubian*, 1:323. He equated Su Shi’s poetic achievements with those of Du Fu and identified Huang Tingjian and Chen Shidao as Du’s successors. See Wang Wan, “Du Songren shi liu shou” 讀宋人詩六首, in *Dunweng qianhou leigao* 鈍翁前後類藁, juan 8, in *Wang Wan quanji jianjiao* 汪琬全集箋校, 1:254-55.

¹²⁸ According to his remarks on poetry, *Mantang shuo shi* 漫堂說詩 (Mantang’s Discussion of Poetry), Song Luo learned from Tang poetry in the early stage of his writing life. In his late thirties, he started to explore Song poetry. His poetry writing relied on mimicry of his models. In 1680, when he was in his mid-forties, Song Luo became aware of the weakness of his poetic production. See Song Luo, *Mantang shuo shi*, 8a-8b, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, 1699:625. His admiration of Su Shi exerted a great influence on contemporary poets who followed Song poetry. See Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 139. Also see Lynn, “Tradition and the Individual,” 351-53, 357-58, 364-68.

¹²⁹ Tian Wen started his poetic production by imitating Du Fu and later explored Tang poetry comprehensively. He also broadly learned from Song poetry and particularly appreciated Su Shi and Huang Tingjian. See Zhao Na, *Qingdai Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi*, 135-38. For Tian Wen’s poetic views, also see Dai Wenhe, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 205; Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 191.

¹³⁰ Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 80-82, 90, 131-32.

challenging the leading role of Tang poetry.¹³¹

II) The Promoters of Song Poetry in Beijing

When Wu Zhizhen arrived in Beijing, the advocacy of Song poetry had already emerged there.

The advocates, including Tian Wen, Wang Wan, Song Luo, and Shao Changheng 邵長蘅

(1637-1704), interacted with one another during the 1670s. They shared the emphasis on nature and emotions as the origin of poetry, the opposition to the artificial periodization of the history of poetry, and the attention to the lineage between Tang and Song poets.¹³² Wang Wan's preface to an anthology of Qing poetry, *Huang Qing shixuan* 皇清詩選 (A Selection of Imperial Qing Poetry), provides a good example of those views:

For poets in ancient times, their pursuit of learning necessarily had its basis, and their rules for stanza, line, and word necessarily had models passed down from teacher to disciple—there was no Tang or Song dynasty but only one [poetry].

Nowadays, [people] distinguish between the early, High, mid, and late Tang periods and thus divide Tang poetry into four. They further distinguish between the Tang and

¹³¹ Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 91, 132; Zhang Zhongmou, *Qingdai wenhua yu Zhepai shi*, 28-29, 105-9. Dai Wenhe, Wang Xiaoshu, and Aoki Masaru each provide a sketch of the prosperous admiration of Song poetry during the Kangxi period, see Dai Wenhe, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 207-10; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 236-40; Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 57-61. Zhang Jian devotes a chapter to the development of the Song-poetry admiration during this period. See “Zhu zhen zhong bian yu Qingchu de Songshi re” 主真重變與清初的宋詩熱, in *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 362-403.

¹³² For example, see Tian Wen, “Lusha shiji xu” 鹿沙詩集序, in “Xu,” *juan* 2, 3a-3b, in *Guhuantang ji* 古歡堂集, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 138:399; Song Luo, *Mantang shuo shi*, 1b-2a, 621-22; Shao Changheng, “Jin sheng shi xu” 金生詩序, in *Qingmen lugao* 青門麓稊, *juan* 7, 20b-21a, in *Shao Zixiang quanji* 邵子湘全集, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 145:213-14.

Song dynasties and thus divide poetry into two. How is this situation different from what I heard? Moreover, there is no Song poem which did not originate from Tang [poetry]. Yang [Yi] and Liu [Yun] learned from Wen [Tingyun] and Li [Shangyin];¹³³ Ouyang Yongshu (Ouyang Xiu) learned from Taibai (Li Bai); Su [Shi] and Huang [Tingjiang] learned from Zimei (Du Fu); and Ziyou (Su Zhe) and Wenqian (Zhang Lei) learned from Letian (Bai Juyi).¹³⁴

古之為詩者，問學必有所據依，章法句法字法必有所師承——無唐宋，一也。今且區唐之初盛中晚而四之，繼而又區唐與宋而二之，何其與余所聞異也？且宋詩未有不出於唐者也。楊劉則學溫李也，歐陽永叔則學太白也，蘇黃則學子美也，子由文潛則學樂天也。

The principle of poetic production emphasized in this preface is the legacy and unity (yi 一) of the classical poetic tradition, which is embodied by the successive master-disciple transmission (*shicheng* 師承). The popular practices of periodizing poetry, which sever the integral relationship between poetry of different historical periods, are identified as a deviation from the tradition. By claiming that all Song poems had their Tang origins, Wang Wan positions the whole Song dynasty, represented by literary masters including Ouyang Xiu, Su Shi, and Huang Tingjian,

¹³³ For Wen Tingyun's 溫庭筠 (ca. 801-866) poetry, see Stephen Owen, *The Late Tang*, 527-65.

¹³⁴ Wang Wan, "Huang Qing shixuan xu" 皇清詩選序, in *Yaofeng wenchao biele* 堯峰文鈔別錄, in *Wang Wan quanji jianjiao* 4:2141. The rest of the poets in this list are Yang Yi 楊億 (974-1020) and Liu Yun 劉筠 (970-1030), two representative poets of the Xikun style during the early Northern Song period; Su Zhe 蘇轍 (1039-1112) (courtesy name Ziyou 子由), Su Shi's younger brother; and Zhang Lei 張耒 (1054-1114) (courtesy name Wenqian 文潛), one of Su Shi's most famous disciples.

as the direct inheritors of the Tang dynasty.

In the early 1680s, the valorization of Song poetry had developed for more than ten years. Many scholars began to reflect on the achievements and faults in this empire-wide advocacy and the orthodox poetic tradition. Taking into account the wide spectrum of opinions on Tang and Song poetry, in 1686, Ye Xie completed his treatise, *Yuan shi* 原詩 (Tracing the Origins of Poetry), in which he systematically theorizes the production and evaluation of poetry in the context of the debate of Tang and Song poetry.¹³⁵ Zha Shenxing arose as the major poet in the advocacy of Song poetry during the early Qing period.¹³⁶ While the valorization of Tang poetry re-emerged as a center force led by Wang Shizhen, the leader of early Qing poets, Song poetry reached a higher historical status than before, as scholar Zhang Jian points out.¹³⁷

III) Ye Xie

Jiang Fan 蔣凡 in his study on Ye Xie and *Yuan shi* states that Ye Xie in his poetry mainly followed Du Fu, Han Yu, and Su Shi but was able to learn from various masters and develop his

¹³⁵ Scholars such as Wu Hongyi and Wang Zhenyuan claim that one of the reasons for which Ye Xie wrote *Yuan shi* was to criticize Wang Wan's literary views. See Wu Hongyi, "Ye Xie 'Yuan shi' yanjiu" 葉燮《原詩》研究, in *Qingdai wenxue piping lunji*, 84; Wang Zhenyuan, "'Yuan shi' xiezuo yuanqi kao" 《原詩》寫作緣起考, 52.

¹³⁶ "Tiyao" 提要 in *Jingyetang shiji* 敬業堂詩集, 3a, in *Yingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu*, 1326:2; Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 154, 165; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 226; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 184-85. For his writing career, literary styles, and poetic models, see Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 91-93; Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 202; Bryant, "Poetry of the Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries," 434; Zhao Na, "Shangbian: Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 156-65; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 227, 230-41; Li Shenghua, "Lun Zha Shenxing de 'shi bu fen Tang Song' shuo: jian ji Chubai 'zong Lu' zhi bian" 論查慎行“詩不分唐宋”說——兼及初白“宗陸”之辨, 37-73; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 182-84; Lynn, "Tradition and the Individual," 353-54.

¹³⁷ Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 403.

own style.¹³⁸ As Guo Shaoyu 郭紹虞 notes, Ye Xie begins his treatise with a claim about the origin of classical poetry, the *Shi jing*, and the main characteristic of classical poetry, evolution¹³⁹—or “continuous organic historicity” as Stephen Owen interprets it.¹⁴⁰ He regrets the decline of the orthodox poetic tradition and argues for the necessity of correct principles in tracing the tradition. One of these principles is the expression of personal emotions in poetry, although he rarely discusses this canonized rule, as Karl-Heinz Pohl points out.¹⁴¹

An important component of Ye Xie’s theoretical system is his division of the tradition into orthodoxy (*zheng* 正) and mutation (*bian* 變).¹⁴² This dichotomy is applied to describe the evolution of poetic styles through the ages and to position the styles in the tradition of classical poetry. Ye starts his description from categorizing poems in the “Airs” and “Odes” into the orthodox and mutated ones and maintains that mutation is the inevitable tendency in the evolution of poetry. Then he traces the continuation of the orthodox line and enumerates the mutations in the history of poetry chronologically. The passage on the period from the Tang to the Ming dynasty reads:

There was a lesser mutation in the Ching-lung and Ching-yün reigns [708-712], which can be seen in the poetry of Sun Chih-wen and Shen Ch’üan-ch’i. Then a major mutation occurred in the K’ai-yüan [713-742] and T’ien-pao [712-756] reigns in the poetry of Kao Shih, Ts’en Shen, Wang Wei, Meng Hao-jan, and Li

¹³⁸ Jiang Fan, *Ye Xie he Yuan shi* 葉變和原詩, 27-28.

¹³⁹ Guo Shaoyu, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 430.

¹⁴⁰ Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 539.

¹⁴¹ Pohl, “Ye Xie’s ‘On the Origin of Poetry’,” 20-21, 28.

¹⁴² Jiang Fan, *Ye Xie he Yuan shi*, 65-86.

Po. Although the work of each of these poets had aspects that were developed from earlier poetry, every one of them was able to originate something in his own right. In the succeeding generations, there were a number of poets who established some distinct quality of affect: foremost among these were Tu Fu, who achieved the supreme synthesis, and Han Yü, the most striking; in addition there were those who were masters of some single quality, such as Liu Tsung-yüan [773-819], Liu Yü-hsi [772-842], Li Ho [791-817], Li Shang-yin [813-858], Tu Mu [803-852], and Lu Kuei-meng [d. ca. 881].¹⁴³ [...] At the beginning of the Sung, poets followed closely the former T'ang manner, and the generations of Hsü Hsüan [916-991] and Wang Yü-ch'eng [954-1001] represented pure music of the T'ang. A major mutation did not occur until the appearance of Su Shun-ch'in [1008-1048] and Mei Yao-ch'en [1002-1060], both of whom Ou-yang Hsiu [1007-1072] tirelessly praised in the highest terms. Afterwards various authors appeared in succession, each of whom achieved supremacy in some particular quality. Modern critics simply lump them all together as "Sung poetry." Nor is there uniformity in the poetry of Southern Song, Chin, and Yüan writers. Each of the major poets, such as Lu Yu [1125-1210], Fan Ch'eng-ta [1126-1193], and Yüan Hao-wen [1190-1257], was able to show this own distinct talent. Of the early Ming writers,

¹⁴³ For Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫 (772-842), or Liu Yü-hsi, see Owen, *The Late Tang*, esp. 67-76. For Li He 李賀 (790-816), or Li Ho, and Du Mu 杜牧 (803-53), or Tu Mu, see Owen, *The Late Tang*, 156-82, 255-314. For the late Tang poet Lu Guimeng 陸龜蒙 (d. 881), see Owen, *The Late Tang*, 236, 541, and 567,

Kao Ch'i [1336-1374] was the most outstanding; his work integrated the various strengths of T'ang, Sung, and Yüan poetry, and cannot be ranked at a disadvantage in comparison to T'ang, Sung, and Yüan poetry simply on the grounds that he is a Ming poet. Ever since the appearance of Li Meng-yang's position—that a person shouldn't read anything after the T'ang—whoever is good at poetry will inevitably have his work described as "T'ang poetry"; as if someone's poetry is described as being "Sung poetry," it's just like spitting on him.¹⁴⁴

小變於沈宋雲龍之間，大變於開元天寶高岑王孟李。此數人者，雖各有所因，而實一一能為創。而集大成如杜甫，傑出如韓愈，專家如柳宗元如劉禹錫如李賀如李商隱如杜牧如陸龜蒙諸子，一一皆特立興起。[...] 宋初詩襲唐人之舊，如徐鉉王禹偁輩，純是唐音；蘇舜卿梅堯臣出，始一大變，歐陽修亟稱二人不置。自後諸大家迭興，所造各有至極，今人一槩稱為宋詩者也。自是南宋金元作者不一；大家如陸遊范成大元好問為最，各能自見其才。有明之初，高啓為冠，兼唐宋元人之長。初不於唐宋元人之詩有所為軒輊也。自不讀唐以後書之論出，於是稱詩者必曰唐詩。苟稱其人之詩為宋詩，無異於唾罵。

Owen and Pohl argue that the importance attached to the continuous transformation of poetry shows Ye Xie's opposition to the rigid beliefs in the fixed poetic norms, modes, and models represented by the Former and Latter Seven Masters.¹⁴⁵ According to Pohl's analysis, the

¹⁴⁴ Ye Xie, "Neipian shang" 內篇上, in *Yuan shi*, juan 1, 3a-3b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 104:528. The translation is by Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 544-46.

¹⁴⁵ Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 538-42; Pohl, "Ye Xie's 'On the Origin of Poetry'," 3.

continuous transformation of poetry, “change” or “mutation,” is the dynamics which revive literary orthodoxy, or “correctness,” and saves poetry from rigidity and decline in Ye’s poetics.¹⁴⁶ Ye’s dichotomized view of the classical poetic tradition (orthodox and mutated) and his particular attention to the line of “mutation” legitimize diverse poetic styles and poetic innovations as heirs of the classical poetic tradition. He gives Song poetry a position parallel to Tang poetry: the early Song poetic innovation and the zenith of poetry in the High Tang period are both designated as “major mutations” (*dabian* 大變) in the evolution of poetry.

As a thorough investigation of the poetic achievements of each historical period, *Yuan shi* is acknowledged by many scholars both in China and the west as the most comprehensive, systematic treatise on poetics.¹⁴⁷ Zhao Na argues that the impartial advocacy of Tang and Song poetry and the high status given to Song-style poetry in *Yuan shi* not only promoted the valorization of Song-style poetry in the early Kangxi period but also constituted an important step towards the height of the harmonization of Tang and Song poetry represented by Yuan Mei

¹⁴⁶ Pohl, “Ye Xie’s ‘On the Origin of Poetry’,” 5-6. For Ye Xie’s literary theories, especially his arguments about *zheng* and *bian* and his appreciation of Song poetry, also see Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 278-99; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 327-61; Guo Shaoyu, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 430-6; Wang Yunxi and Gu Yisheng, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 2:921-41; Dai Wenhe, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 199-205; Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 77-81; Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 145-53; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 237-38; Wu Hongyi, “Ye Xie ‘Yuan shi’ yanjiu,” 89-102.

¹⁴⁷ Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 168; Hong Limei [Hong Li-Mei] 洪麗玫, “Ye Xie *Yuan shi* lilun tixi tanxi” 葉燮《原詩》理論體系探析, 115; Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 493. Owen even declares that Ye Xie provides a more inclusive theoretical framework than Liu Xie’s *Wenxin diaolong*. Wang Xiaoshu labels *Yuan shi* a milestone in the history of Chinese poetic criticism. See Wang, *Qingdai juan*, 237. However, Pohl thinks *Yuan shi* does not “reach the same level of structural sophistication” as *Wenxin diaolong*. See Pohl, “Ye Xie’s ‘On the Origin of Poetry’,” 3-4.

during the High Qing era.¹⁴⁸

IV) Wang Shizhen and Zhu Yizun

Parallel in stature as poets, Zhu Yizun and Wang Shizhen were called “Zhu from the South and Wang from the North” (*nan Zhu bei Wang* 南朱北王) during the Kangxi period.¹⁴⁹ They both worshiped Tang poetry as the orthodoxy of classical poetry throughout their literary careers. But in their middle age, they both produced poems of the Song style. A significant difference between their poetic views and practices resided in their attitudes towards Song poetry.

Wang Shizhen’s important role in the advocacy of Song poetry is well recognized. During the 1670s, he energetically interacted with many followers of Song poetry, such as Song Luo, Tian Wen, and Shao Changheng, and influenced some advocates of Tang poetry, especially Shi Runzhang.¹⁵⁰ Jiang Yin proclaims that Wang Shizhen was the real leader of this advocacy.¹⁵¹ Wang Xiaoshu points out that Wang Shizhen was the first poet who advocated learning from Song-Yuan writers and argued for the merits of Song poetry during this period.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 154.

¹⁴⁹ They were the most influential poets among the Six Masters of the Reigning Dynasty (*Guochao liu jia* 國朝六家). See Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 212.

¹⁵⁰ For Wang Shizhen’s literary interactions, especially his promotion of Song poetry, see Gao Lianlian, “Wang Shizhen de wenren yaji yu Kangxi shitan fengshang de bianqian: yi Qing Kangxi yiwei (1679 nian) boxue hongru ke qianhou wei zhongdian kaocha shidian” 王士禛的文人雅集與康熙詩壇風尚的變遷——以清康熙乙未(1679年)博學鴻儒科前後為重點考察時段, 85-88; Huang Jinyuan 黃金元, “Wang Shizhen yu Tian Wen jiaoyou kaolun” 王士禛與田雯交游考論, 140-46; Jiang Yin, “Wang Yuyang yu Qingchu Songshi feng zhi xingt” 王漁洋與清初宋詩風之興替, 82-97; Zhao Na, “Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 200-201.

¹⁵¹ Jiang Yin, “Wang Yuyang yu Qingchu Songshi feng zhi xingt,” 83.

¹⁵² Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 237.

However, Wang Shizhen should not be classified as a follower of Song-style poetry. Many of the literary views throughout Wang's literary career can be found in his earliest extant work of poetics, the series of thirty-two quatrains on the poetry of previous generations. Richard Lynn in his study of these quatrains exposes Wang's esteem of Han, Wei, and High Tang poets, especially Li Bai and Du Fu; his selective appreciation of certain Song, Yuan, Ming, and early Qing poets; and his contempt for Bai Juyi, Yuan Zhen, and the Jiangxi School of Poetry.¹⁵³ Ning Jiayu and Li Ruishan point out that he admired Wang Wei 王維 (701-761), Meng Haoran 孟浩然 (689-740), Wei Yingwu 韋應物 (741-830), and Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819)¹⁵⁴ as the highest models of his School of Ineffable Essence and Resonance (*Shenyun pai* 神韻派),¹⁵⁵ which was characterized by decorous charm and lingering aftertaste.¹⁵⁶ In fact, his writing career fell into three periods because of changes in the choice of models. Yu Zhaosheng's 俞兆晟 (fl. 1725) preface to Wang Shizhen's remarks on poetry, *Yuyang shihua* 漁洋詩話 (Yuyang's Remarks Poetry), records Wang's review of his own writing life.¹⁵⁷ Wang emulated early and High Tang poetry and associated with the poets congenial to his taste when he was a young poet.

¹⁵³ For Wang Shizhen's literary views, achievements, and influences also see Richard Lynn, "Wang Shizhen's Poems on Poetry: A Translation and Annotation of the *Lunshi jueju*," in *Chinese Literary Criticism of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1911)*, 55-6; Wai-yee Li, "Early Qing to 1723," 221; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 266-84; Wang Yunxi and Gu Yisheng, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 2:898-911; Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 308-32; Guo Shaoyu, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 454-72; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 243-63; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 365-66, 381-83, 392-99; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 183-206; Yan Zhixiong [Yim Chi Hung] 嚴志雄, *Qiuliu de shijie: Wang Shizhen yu Qingchu shitan ceyi* 秋柳的世界——王士禛與清初詩壇側議.

¹⁵⁴ For Wei Yingwu's poetry, see Owen, *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry*, 303-16. For Liu Zongyuan's poetry, see Owen, *The Late Tang*, 3, 46, 185n4, 512.

¹⁵⁵ Ning Jiayu and Li Ruishan, *Mingdai wenxue, Qingdai wenxue, Jindai wenxue*, 203.

¹⁵⁶ Wai-yee Li, "Early Qing to 1723," 221.

¹⁵⁷ Yu Zhaosheng, "Xu" 序, in *Yuyang shihua*, in *Qing shihua*, 163.

At the beginning of the Kangxi reign, the middle-aged poet turned to Song poetry and facilitated the rise of the Song poetic style during the 1670s. During the late 1670s, his poetic fame and official promotions enabled him to become the leading poet of the empire. From the late 1670s or early 1680s, while still learning from Song poetry, he returned to the overt advocacy of Tang poetry and compiled several influential, widely circulated anthologies of Tang poetry.¹⁵⁸

Written in 1682, Wang Shizhen's preface dedicated to the collection by his contemporary Wang Youdan 王又旦 (1636-1686)¹⁵⁹ reflects his conclusive views of Tang and Song poetry, which embody two related principles in his poetry evaluation: his expectation of a comprehensive synthesis of previous poetic achievements and opposition to forming poetry cliques (*menhu* 門戶).¹⁶⁰ Wang Shizhen's contemporaries differed from one another in the identification of his position in the debate over Tang and Song poetry.¹⁶¹ The coexistence of his esteem for the sovereignty of High Tang poetry and his critical appreciation of certain poets after

¹⁵⁸ Pan Wuzheng 潘務正 argues that Wang Shizhen returned to promote Tang poetry after 1678. See Pan, "Wang Shizhen jinru Hanlinyuan de shishi yiyi" 王士禎進入翰林院的詩史意義, 105-14. Scholars slightly differ from one another in when Wang Shizhen turned to advocate Song-style poetry. See Jiang Yin, "Wang Yuyang yu Qingchu Songshi feng zhi xingt," 84-91; Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 200; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 237, 269; Bai Yijin, "Wang Yuyang zong Song lun" 王漁洋宗宋論, 18-19. The anthologies Wang compiled include *Shizhong tangshi xuan* 十種唐詩選 (A Selection from Ten Anthologies of Tang Poems) (1687), *Tang xian sanmei ji* 唐賢三昧集 (A Collection of the Essence of Tang Sages) (1688), and *Wanshou Tangren jueju xuan* 萬首唐人絕句選 (Ten Thousand Selected Tang Quatrains) (1708).

¹⁵⁹ For Wang Youdan, see Bai Yijin, "'Jingshi san dajia' dui Qingchu Jintai shiren qunti de yingxiang" "京師三大家"對清初金臺詩人群體的影響, 60-63; Huang Jinyuan, "Wang Shizhen yu Tian Wen jiaoyou kaolun," 141.

¹⁶⁰ Wang Shizhen, "Huangmei shixuan xu" 黃湄詩選序, in *Yuyang wen ji* 漁洋文集, *juan* 2, 7b-8a, in *Daijingtang ji* 帶經堂集, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 134:320-21.

¹⁶¹ Jiang Yin, "Wang Yuyang yu Qingchu Songshi feng zhi xingt," 88; Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 201; Guo Shaoyu, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 455-56; Wai-yee Li, "Confronting History and Its Alternatives in Early Qing Poetry," 85.

it is the main cause of this divergence.

Wang Shizhen's admiration of High Tang poetry is suggested in his attribution of the highest achievement of Ming poetry to four of the Former Seven Masters, Li Mengyang, He Jingming, Xu Zhenqing 徐禎卿 (1479-1511) (courtesy name Changgu 昌穀), and Bian Gong 邊貢 (courtesy name Tingshi 庭實, style name Huaquan 華泉):

Ming poetry reached its height during the Hong[zhi] and Zheng[de reigns], and the height of the poetry of the Hong[zhi] and Zheng[de reigns] can be found in [the poetry of] the four paragons. The four paragons are Li Kongtong (Li Mengyang) from Beidi, He Dafu (He Jingming) from Runan, and Xu Changguo (Xu Zhenqing) from Wujun; one of them is Master Bian Huaquan (Bian Gong) from our county. [...] Therefore, it has long been accepted that Li and He have the highest merit, and Bian and Xu are next. [...] Our Ji'nan School of Poetry flourished greatly in Huaquan and Cangming (Li Panlong). But the pioneering effort should first go to Master Bian.¹⁶²

明詩莫盛於弘正，弘正之詩莫盛於四傑。四傑者，北地空同李氏，汝南大復何氏，吳郡昌國徐氏，其一則吾郡華泉邊公。[...] 故千秋論定，以李何爲首庸，邊徐二家次之。[...] 吾濟南詩派大昌於華泉滄溟二氏，而輩路藍縷之功，又以邊氏爲首。

Wang labels Bian Gong the forerunner of the Ji'nan School of Poetry (*Ji'nan shipai* 濟南詩派)

¹⁶² Wang Shizhen, "Huaquan xiansheng shixuan xu" 華泉先生詩選序, in *Canwei xuwen ji* 蠶尾續文集, *juan* 1, 2a-3a, in *Daijingtang ji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 134:716.

and Li Panlong, the leader of the Latter Seven Masters, another of its representative poets. The brief poetic history of Ji'nan, their hometown, calls attention to the importance of Ji'nan poetry in Ming poetry and qualifies it as an heir of Tang poetry and of the orthodox poetic tradition.¹⁶³

During the Kangxi period, Wang Shizhen “steered the field of the ‘Airs’ and ‘Odes’ for dozens of years” 主持風雅數十年¹⁶⁴ as “a grand master of literary orthodoxy of his times” (*yidai zhengzong* 一代正宗)¹⁶⁵ whose “canonical status enjoyed the seal of imperial approval.”¹⁶⁶ Jerry Schmidt designates him as the leading poet of his times who “seemed to have won a final victory for proponents of Tang verse” in the early Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry.¹⁶⁷ Aoki Masaru considers him and Song Luo the most successful early Qing poets who learned from both Tang and Song poetry.¹⁶⁸ Zhu Zejie claims that he represented the culmination of early Qing poetry by his poetry of ineffable essence and resonance, which broke the obsession with the comparison of Tang and Song poetry.¹⁶⁹ Richard Lynn characterizes Wang Shizhen and

¹⁶³ However, Li Shenghua claims that Shandong was one of the three centers, in addition to Zhejiang and Jiangsu, in the admiration of Song poetry during the Kangxi reign. See Li, “Lun Zha Shenxing de ‘shi bu fen Tang Song’ shuo,” 38.

¹⁶⁴ Zhao Erxun et al., *Qing shi gao*, *juan* 266, 33:9954. Deng Zhicheng also claims that Wang Shizhen “steered the field of ‘Airs’ and ‘Odes’ for nearly fifty years” 主持風雅近五十年. See Deng, *Qingshi jishi chubao*, 2:679.

¹⁶⁵ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 2, in *Yuan Mei quanji* 袁枚全集, 3:47.

¹⁶⁶ Wai-ye Li, “Confronting History and Its Alternatives in Early Qing Poetry,” 91. Wang Shizhen’s biography in the official history of the Qing dynasty labels him a grand master of literary “orthodoxy” (*zhengzong* 正宗). See Zhao Erxun et al., *Qing shi gao*, *juan* 266, 33:9954. Wai-ye Li also points to Wang Shizhen’s “canonical status” in her “Early Qing to 1723,” 221; *Women and National Trauma in Late Imperial Chinese Literature*, 96. For Wang’s leading role, also see Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 1:411-14.

¹⁶⁷ Schmidt, *The Poet Zheng Zhen (1806-1864) and the Rise of Chinese Modernity*, 254.

¹⁶⁸ Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 55. For his examination of Wang Shizhen’s poetic production, see 47-68.

¹⁶⁹ Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 215. For his exploration of Wang Shizhen’s literary achievements and influences, see 202-8, 213-15.

his followers of the time as a group who “knew how to use the entire tradition in a creative and vital way” by synthesizing the standards and exemplars Tang poetry set for later generations and the post-Tang poetic innovations, instead of exclusive advocates of either Tang or Song poetry.¹⁷⁰ Wang Shizhen’s veneration of Tang poetry and critical acceptance of Song poetry, I argue, influenced the whole empire and the whole dynasty and led the debate over Tang and Song poetry to a stage of greater diversity and complexity.

Different from Wang Shizhen, who strongly advocated Song-style poetry for a short period, Zhu Yizun, as many scholars have stated, always “forcefully denounced Song poetry” (*li di Song shi* 力詆宋诗)¹⁷¹ and exclusively advocated Han, Wei, and Tang poetry.¹⁷² At the same time, Wang Xiaoshu notes that Zhu attempted to combine poetic achievements of the Han, Wei, Six Dynasties, Tang, Song, and Yuan periods in his later years.¹⁷³ Zhu Zejie claims that in the late 1670s, Zhu Yizun started to learn from Song poetry while continuing to model his writing after Tang poetry.¹⁷⁴ He considers Zhu Yizun representative of the Zhe School’s imitation of Song poetry after Huang Zongxi.¹⁷⁵ Qian Zhonglian points out that Zhu Yizun particularly imitated

¹⁷⁰ Lynn, “Tradition and the Individual,” 354-56, 375.

¹⁷¹ Qian Zhongshu 錢鍾書, *Tan yi lu* 談藝錄, 108. For Qian’s examination of Zhu’s poetic views and practices, see *Tan yi lu*, 106-10.

¹⁷² For example, see Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 1:496-98; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 479-88. It is noteworthy that Liu Shinan reminds us of Zhu’s appreciation of certain Song, Yuan, and Ming poets. See Liu, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 153-57.

¹⁷³ Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 308-10.

¹⁷⁴ Zhu Zejie claims this by quoting Qu Dajun, Song Luo, Zhu’s contemporary, and Hong Liangji 洪亮吉 (1746-1809), a scholar of a younger generation. See Zhu, *Qingshi shi*, 171-74. For his discussion of Zhu Yizun’s literary career and influence, see *Qingshi shi*, 156-79. For Zhu Yizun’s literary theories, styles and models, also see Wu Guoping and Wang Zhenyuan, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 299-308.

¹⁷⁵ Zhu Zejie, “Lun Li E de shi,” 57.

Huang Tingjian, while mainly following Tang poetry, and criticized early Qing poets' defects in imitations of both Tang and Song poetry.¹⁷⁶ Yan Dicheng, however, criticizes their conclusions as superficial observation and maintains Zhu's disdain for Song poetry.¹⁷⁷ Zhao Na examines the recent scholarship on Zhu Yizun's contradictory relation to Song poetry—denigration in his poetics and imitation in his composition. She follows Qian Zhongshu's 錢鍾書 conclusion: the Song poetic style found in some of Zhu's poems was a result of his esteem for Du Fu and Han Yu, the Tang predecessors of the Song poetic style, and of his unconscious exhibition of his literary and historical learning as an erudite scholar. As such, his poetic practice did not conflict with his lifetime advocacy of Tang poetry.¹⁷⁸ Liu Shinan, on the one hand, refutes Qian Zhongshu's conclusion by illustrating Zhu's frequent adaptation of Song poetry. On the other hand, he demonstrates that Zhu's writing career can be divided into three stages: Zhu began his poetry with a broad imitation of the poetry from the Han to the High Tang period and turned to focusing on High Tang poetry in the late 1670s; in his later years, he also learned from late Tang poetry.¹⁷⁹

One possible cause for the differences between their observations of Zhu Yizun's poetic preferences is Zhu's critical appreciation of both Tang and Song poetry and of poetry which expresses a poets' unique nature and emotion:

¹⁷⁶ Qian Zhonglian, "Sanbai nian lai de Zhejiang gudian shige," 4.

¹⁷⁷ Yan Dicheng, *Qingshi shi*, 1:498.

¹⁷⁸ Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 188-89. For Zhu Yizun's literary theories, production, and influences, also see Wang Yunxi and Gu Yisheng, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 2:913-14; Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 200-201; Wu Hongyi, "Zhu Yizun wenxue piping yanjiu" 朱彝尊文學批評研究, in *Qingdai wenxue piping lunji*, 113-53.

¹⁷⁹ Liu quotes Hong Liangji's, Zhang Taiyan's 章太炎 (1868-1936) and Qian Zhonglian's claims of Zhu's learning from Song poetry. See Liu, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 167.

For thirty years, the scholars who talked about poetry within the empire often imitated ancient poets excessively, or echoed people's voices and chased people's shadows to follow the interests of the times; therefore, their nature and emotion were submerged and could not be expressed. Only the poets of my hometown [...] each have formed their own styles. These poets did not expect to be identical with one another, and the critics did not criticize them for being different from one another. They were not moved by the trends and did not attach themselves to the schools of poetry of different places.¹⁸⁰

三十年來海內談詩者每過于規仿古人，又或隨聲逐影，趨當世之好，于是己之性情汨焉不出。惟吾里之詩 [...] 人各一家。作者不期其同，論者不斥其異。不爲風會所移，附入四方之流派。

Written in 1676,¹⁸¹ this text sketches a thirty-year contrast between the prevalence of imitation in the new empire and the poetic trend in Zhejiang. Zhu Yizun criticizes the former for suppressing the expression of a poet's nature and emotion. His identification of the variety of individual poetic styles in Zhejiang as the only exception to this prevalence suggests Zhejiang poetry's exemplarity in expression of *xingqing* in early Qing poetry. The refusal to blindly follow an empire-wide literary fashion constitutes an important theme in this account, echoing Huang Zongxi's outline of Zhejiang poetry in the mid and late Ming periods. Zhu's account, from which

¹⁸⁰ Zhu Yizun, "Ye zhihui shi xu" 葉指揮詩序, in *Pushuting ji*, juan 37, 4a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, vol. 116, 311.

¹⁸¹ For the date of Zhu Yizun's preface, see Zhang Zongyou 張宗友, *Zhu Yizun nianpu* 朱彝尊年譜, 215.

the early Qing poets' names are absent, conveys his fair judgement of poets of this period, during which the followers of Tang poetry ruled the empire while the followers of Song-style poetry had begun to flourish.

In 1677, Zhu Yizun dedicated a preface to a contemporary's collection, *Ding wuxuan shiji* 丁武選詩集 (A Poetry Collection of Appointed Military Officer Ding),¹⁸² in which he wrote the poetic history of the Min region. In this preface, Zhu also attacks the fault of poetry of the same period. He contrasts the variety of the poetic trends in the Wu region with the persistence in learning from Tang poetry in the Min and Yue (Guangdong) regions, in both of which the famous advocates of Tang poetry emerged successively throughout the entire Ming dynasty. His opposition to contemporary poets' deviation from Tang poetry and imitation of Song poetry is more explicitly conveyed in his attacks on early Qing poetry "during the past thirty years" (*sanshi nian lai* 三十年來). His criticism, in which several passages are nearly verbatim accounts of those from his outline of Zhejiang poetry, proves the consistency of his views. There are two noteworthy points in his views. First, Zhu Yizun admires "the poetry of the whole Tang period" (*quan Tangren zhi shi* 全唐人之詩), instead of the poetry of a certain Tang period. Second, what he denigrates is the excessive imitation of Song poetry without examining it within the context of classical poetry, instead of the achievements of Song poetry. Zhu Yizun defines the comprehension of the evolution of poetry as the precondition of learning from previous literature. In this evolution, Tang poetry is labeled "orthodox" (*zheng* 正), whose authority is prior to Song

¹⁸² Zhang Zongyou, *Zhu Yizun nianpu*, 222.

poetry, which is seen as “mutation” (*bian* 變).¹⁸³

These accounts conflict with Qian Zhongshu’s conclusion of Zhu Yizun’s “forceful denunciation of Song poetry” and its followers. In these accounts, Zhu Yizun considers Song poetry a mutation of the poetic orthodoxy and applauds Zhejiang poets and critics, among whom there were definitely followers of Song poetry, because their poems express their unique nature and emotion. Zhu’s appreciation of some representative poets of Song-style poetry can be found in his version of the history of Jiangxi poetry in the preface he wrote for an individual collection of an official from Jiangxi. In this text, the representative Jiangxi poets consist of two types: the Jiangxi School of Poetry, who are the strongest challengers of Tang poetry; and the admirers of Tang poetry from the Yuan to the early Ming period. Zhu designates all these Jiangxi poets as the successors of the *Chuci*, a canonized model which was admired next to the *Shijing* in traditional theories of poetics.¹⁸⁴ This passage exemplifies Wu Hongyi’s conclusion about Zhu Yizun’s “tolerant language” (*shuci* 恕詞) towards the Jiangxi School as an exceptional case in his general attacks on Song poetry.¹⁸⁵ Since Huang Tingjian and the Song-style poetry learned from Tang masters including Du Fu and Han Yu, it is inevitable that Zhu Yizun, like many other advocates of Tang poetry, including Wang Shizhen, critically affirmed the accomplishments of

¹⁸³ Zhu Yizun, “Ding Wuxuan shiji xu” 丁武選詩集序, in *Pushuting ji* 曝書亭集, *juan* 37, 4b-5a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 116:311-12. Zhu examines the development of poetry from the mid-Ming to the early Qing in Taicang and describes the flourishing of early Qing poetry in Guanzhong (in present-day Shaanxi province), which is in northwest China. See Zhu Yizun, “Wang Heyin shi xu” 王鶴尹詩序, in *Pushuting ji*, *juan* 38, 7b-8a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 116:319; “Wang Chongan shi xu” 王崇安詩序, in *Pushuting ji*, *juan* 39, 9b-10a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 116:328.

¹⁸⁴ Zhu Yizun, “Shiyuanji xu” 石園集序, in *Pushuting ji*, *juan* 38, 1a-1b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 116:316.

¹⁸⁵ Wu Hongyi, “Zhu Yizun wenxue piping yanjiu,” 137.

Song poetry. Zhao Na, Shi Changyu 石昌渝, and Zhu Zejie all declare that Zhu Yizun's poetry exemplified the transformation from the admiration of Tang poetry to the imitation of Song poetry in the early Qing period.¹⁸⁶

Liu Shinan admits that Zhu was the founder of the Xiushui School of Poetry (*Xiushui shipai* 秀水詩派), the school of his native place, Xiushui (in present-day Zhejiang province).¹⁸⁷ Many other Chinese scholars think highly of Zhu's contribution to early Qing poetry. While admitting that Huang Zongxi was the precursor of the Zhe School, Zhu Zejie does not object to many scholars who earlier designated Zhu Yizun as another forerunner of the Zhe School, because Zhu Yizun's literary achievements, his influence on later Zhejiang poets, and his contribution to the rise of the Zhe School's reputation were prior to those of Huang.¹⁸⁸ Wang Xiaoshu also states that later generations of Zhejiang poets followed Zhu Yizun's originality on the basis of his synthesis of previous literary achievements,¹⁸⁹ the feature which is understood by Zhao Na as an explanation of Qian Zhonglian's comments on Zhu Yizun¹⁹⁰: his poetry "was able to bring together the forked ways of Tang and Song [poetry]" 能結唐宋分弛之軌.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁶ Zhu Zejie, *Zhu Yizun yanjiu* 朱彝尊研究, 101; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 187; Zhao Na, "Shangbian: Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 188-89; Shi Changyu, *Qingdai wenxue*, 24.

¹⁸⁷ Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 146.

¹⁸⁸ Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 178-79, 186-87. Wu Hongyi and Liu Shinan also consider him the initiator of the Zhe School. See Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 200; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 168. However, Yan Dicheng disagrees with the classification of Zhu as a member of the Zhe School, which is characterized by its admiration of Song poetry. See Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 1:498.

¹⁸⁹ Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 310.

¹⁹⁰ Zhao Na, "Shun Kang Yong shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 194.

¹⁹¹ Qian Zhonglian, *Mengtiaoan shihua* 夢苕庵詩話, 83.

Conclusion

Qing literati inherited the shared writing goals and evaluative criteria as well as important advocacies in the pre-Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry. Like their predecessors, the early Qing poet-critics had the sense of responsibility to protect and prolong the orthodox tradition of classical poetry, in which the models of unquestionable authority were the *Shijing* and *Chuci* as well as Han, Wei, and High Tang poetry. They also expected a poet's expression of his unique nature and emotion in writing. They wrote down different versions of classical Chinese poetry by including the poets who met their criteria and excluding those who failed to do so. Poets including Chen Zilong, Wu Weiye, Shi Runzhang, and Qu Dajun persistently promoted Tang poets as models, especially High Tang poets, and the most famous followers of High Tang poetry, the Former and Latter Seven Masters. Qian Qianyi, Song Wan, and Huang Zongxi pioneered the great attention paid to the achievements of Song poetry. This period witnessed the first high tide of the advocacy of Song poetry in the 1660s and 1670s, marked by the publication of *Songshi chao*, the gathering of kindred spirits around Wang Shizhen in Beijing, and the completion of Ye Xie's *Yuan Shi*.

During this period, the demarcation between the admirers of Tang poetry and those of Song poetry is not clear. It is nearly impossible to find any literatus who advocated either Tang poetry or Song-style poetry exclusively and maintained his unchanged views of Tang and Song poets. With various preferences in poetic model and style, many of them shared broad interest in poetry from different historical periods and of diverse styles. When they realized the shortcomings and limitations in their literary production, they did not hesitate to change their

writing styles and models. Therefore, they claimed similar views that avoided adherence to any models defined by dynasty, tended to reconcile the advocacies of Tang and Song poetry, and opposed artificial divisions between them. Chen Gongyin was representative of such a collective inclination.

Many large and small schools of poetry participated in the debate over Tang and Song poetry during this period. These literary schools can be categorized into two types. Some of them were composed of poets from different places for shared literary goals or styles and sometimes around a famous leader, such as the School of Ineffable Essence and Resonance led by Wang Shizhen. More schools of poetry formed in different places by local poets and were named after these places. According to Wai-yee Li, during the early Qing period, literary schools “continued to be associated with locality.”¹⁹² The influences of five rival regions in South China, Wu, Yue (Zhejiang), Min, Yue (Guangdong), and Jiangxi, which ruled early Ming literary production,¹⁹³ continued in the Qing dynasty. From South China to North China (Shandong), cities and towns in these regions nurtured literary schools, in which the most famous poets, some of them also influential figures in the empire, usually became the heads and led the local poetic trends. The Yunjian School, Loudong School, Yushan School, and Lingnan School all belonged to this type. In both types of literary schools, the shared choice of Tang or Song models by the members, often under the influence of their leaders, resulted in their similar literary pursuits and styles as the basic

¹⁹² Wai-yee Li, “Early Qing to 1723,” 163.

¹⁹³ Zhang Tao 張濤, “Wenxue shequn yu Ming Qing diyu wenxue liupai” 文學社群與明清地域文學流派, 33. Also see Wang Xuetai 王學泰, “Yi diyu fenye de Mingchu shige paibie lun” 以地域分野的明初詩歌派別論, 98.

features of the school.

The importance of various regions in Qing poetry was also embodied by Qing literati's eagerness to establish local poetic traditions, including those of their hometowns. They recorded the poetic histories of these places and their local schools of poetry by claiming them as important branches of classical poetic orthodoxy. The authors' views of Tang and Song poetry served as an important criterion in their identification of local poetic leaders. Through this process, local poetic histories, in addition to poetry and works of literary criticism, constituted an important component of the Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry.

The aspects examined above further developed and maintained their importance in the debate during the High Qing era and led to a competition of greater intensity and complexity. While Tang poetry continued to be a model of the highest poetic quality and exerted influence on many poets, the second high tide of Song-style poetry rose, following the first one led by Wang Shizhen and the poets around him. The attempts to synthesize poetic achievements of different historical periods and abandon the excessive concern about the periodization of poetry, as the third critical group in the debate, also reached its culmination. These three critical groups, in the shared pursuit of the poetic orthodoxy and expressing *xingqing*, developed into one another's equal competitors pioneered by Shen Deqian, Li E, and Yuan Mei. Great proportions of these groups, including some female poets, were the members of the schools of poetry under the leadership of these three poetic masters: the School of Form and Tone (*gediao pai* 格調派) led by Shen Deqian, the Zhe School led by Li E, and the School of Natural Sensibility and Inspiration led by Yuan Mei. In addition to the Zhe School, a school of poetry of Zhejiang poets,

the School of Form and Tone was in fact composed of poets from Jiangsu, especially Suzhou, Shen Deqian's hometown, although the school was named after the term frequently used in Shen Deqian's literary theories. The members of the School of Natural Sensibility and Inspiration were mainly from both Zhejiang, Yuan Mei's native place, and Jiangsu, in which he lived since his mid-twenties.¹⁹⁴ These three schools of poetry were thus combined the characteristics of the two types of literary schools in the early Qing period: clear poetic ideals, celebrated and accomplished leaders, and centers of varied geographic ranges, which made the Jiangnan region an important point of the debate over Tang and Song poetry during the High Qing era.

¹⁹⁴ Wang Yingzhi, "Qingdai Xingling pai nai Jiangnan shipai" 清代性靈派乃江南詩派, 100.

Chapter 2 A Binary Opposition: Shen Deqian and Li E

The High Qing era, which was defined by Frederic Wakeman as the period from 1683 to 1839,¹ spanned the second third of the Kangxi reign to the second third of the Daoguang reign.

Historians have described this long eighteenth century as “the rare century of prosperity and benevolent despotism,”² the height of the Qing Empire’s “stability, power, and wealth,”³ and “the last brilliant epoch of the old Chinese imperial order.”⁴ This period witnessed intellectual attainments in various aspects and different forms, including poetic accomplishments, which experienced a new height. From the sheer number of poets to the vast quantities of poetic collections and anthologies, poetic annotations, and remarks on poetry published all surpassed those of previous periods.⁵ Taking place in this vibrant cultural milieu and expressed in poetic practice, criticism and anthologization, the debate over Tang and Song poetry was “one of the most violent literary controversies” in the eighteenth century.⁶ The three critical groups in the debate, the advocates of Tang poetry, the followers of Song poetry, and the mediators who

¹ Wakeman, “High Ch’ing, 1683-1839,” in *Modern East Asia: Essays in Interpretation*, 1-28. Also see Ping-ti Ho, “The Significance of the Ch’ing Period in Chinese History,” 189-95. Charles Horner defines this era as the period from 1683 to 1800 and examines it in general. See Horner, “The Qing Dynasty and the *Pax Manjurica*,” in *Rising China and Its Postmodern Fate: Memories of Empire in a New Global Context*, 57. Susan Naquin and Evelyn Rawski in their study examine a “long eighteenth century” between about 1680 and 1820 in the history of imperial China. See their preface to *Chinese Society in the Eighteenth Century*, x-xi.

² Ho, “The Significance of the Ch’ing Period in Chinese History,” 194.

³ Robert E. Hegel, introduction to *True Crimes in Eighteenth-century China: Twenty Case Histories*, 4.

⁴ Harold Kahn, “A Matter of Taste: The Monumental and the Exotic in the Qianlong Reign,” in *The Elegant Brush: Chinese Painting under the Qianlong Emperor 1735-1795*, 288.

⁵ Zhang Lihua, “Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi” 乾嘉時期唐宋詩之爭流變史, in *Qingdai Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi*, 238.

⁶ Jerry Schmidt, *Harmony Garden: The Life, Literary Criticism, and Poetry of Yuan Mei (1716–1798)*, 245.

attempted to reconcile them, all developed and formed a tripartite opposition, which reached the greatest intensity and complexity in the debate. From the second half of the Kangxi reign to the first half of the Qianlong reign, a group of Jiangsu poets, represented by Shen Deqian, advocated Tang poetry as the model. Shen became the leader of Qing poets from the late 1730s and advanced his advocacy to a new height. Almost at the same time as the rise of Shen Deqian, the group advocating Song poetry developed especially in Hangzhou, Yangzhou, and Tianjin under the influence of Li E, a native of Zhejiang. From the 1760s to the end of the eighteenth century, Yuan Mei, also a native of Zhejiang, gained influence. He opposed the artificial division between Tang and Song poetry and attempted to mediate the two. The participation of Yuan Mei and his disciples turned the structure of the debate over Tang and Song poetry from a binary opposition into the only tripartite opposition in the history of the debate. From the last third of the eighteenth century, the promotion of Tang poetry declined, and the conflict between the other two groups led the debate. Headed respectively by Weng Fanggang 翁方綱 (1733-1818) and Yuan Mei's adherents, this conflict lasted through the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the epilogue of China's long eighteenth century.⁷

In this chapter and the next, I will examine the formation and development of the tripartite opposition of the debate over Tang and Song poetry in the Jiangnan region led by Shen Deqian,

⁷ Zhang Lihua outlines the history of the debate in the High Qing period by tracing the rise and fall of different advocacies and their agreements and disagreements in it. See Zhang, "Jieyu" 結語, in "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 469-71. Her research greatly enriches the relatively sketchy examinations of the mid-Qing period, which focus on Shen Deqian, Yuan Mei, and Weng Fanggang as three representatives, in Qi Zhiping's *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu* and Dai Wenhe's *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*. See Qi, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 112-22; Dai, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 235-42.

Li E, and Yuan Mei, who exerted different influences on their contemporaries, including the poets from Dantu (in present-day Jiangsu province), the subjects of Chapter 4. In this chapter, I focus on the literary views, practices, and influence of Shen Deqian and Li E from the 1690s to the mid-eighteenth century. This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, I outline Shen's and Li's literary careers, showing that their views of Tang and Song poetry spread widely and competed with each other through their writing and anthologizing practices as well as their comparable influence. The second and third sections respectively explore Shen's and Li's views of Tang and Song poetry. I analyze their versions of the orthodox poetic tradition and their application of the criteria, *xingqing*, in evaluation of poetry. Then, I investigate the regional poetic histories they wrote for their own native places and other areas, in which they also expressed their views of Tang and Song poetry. The conclusion of this chapter delineates the conflicts and disagreements between Shen and Li and their followers. By doing so, I demonstrate that the advocacies of Tang or Song poetry both thrived in the first half of the High Qing era and, instead of dominating Qing poetry alternatively as in previous dynasties, became contending forces based respectively in Jiangsu and Zhejiang. Sharing the enthusiasm for continuing the orthodox tradition of classical poetry and critical appreciation in poetic evaluation, they heralded the growing rejection of the artificial periodization of classical poetry and appealed to poetry's potential to express a poet's unique nature and emotion as promoted by Yuan Mei. This turn led to the tripartite opposition in the second half of the High Qing era.

Shen Deqian's and Li E's Literary Careers

As a young scholar, Shen Deqian learned poetry from Ye Xie in the 1690s and received Wang Shizhen's praise as being Ye Xie's disciple.⁸ Therefore, he was also considered a disciple of Wang.⁹ He founded two poetry societies in 1707 and 1722 in Jiangsu, his native place, with poets who almost all modeled their poetry on Tang styles.¹⁰ Meanwhile, Shen started his anthologizing career and completed two anthologies of pre-Song poetry: *Tangshi biecai ji* (1717) and *Gushi yuan* (1719).¹¹ According to Wang Xiaoheng 王小恒, Shen was well-known within Jiangsu during this period, while Li E and the Zhe School arose and developed into the only influential group at the beginning of the mid-Qing period in the history of Qing poetry, marked

⁸ According to Shen Deqian's self-written chronology, Wang Shizhen wrote to Ye Xie and designated Shen as an inheritor of the essence of Ye's literary achievements. In addition, Shen stated in the title of a series of four poems that Wang had evaluated him as a true poet. See Shen Deqian, "Nianpu" 年譜, 8b, in *Shen Guiyu shiwen quanji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:5; "Wang Xincheng shangshu ji shu You Cangmei gongzan, shu zhong chuiwen biren, yun Hengshan menxia shang you shiren, bu sheng jinxi zhi gan. Mo bing shu qu guan zhi you, yun yu Hengshan tong shou mou gong zhongshang. Ci Xincheng bing zhong kou shou yu ye. Ganfu si zhang, mo zhang jian zhi aiwan" 王新城尚書寄書尤滄湄宮贊，書中垂問鄙人，云橫山門下尚有詩人，不勝今昔之感。末并述去官之由，云與橫山同受某公中傷。此新城病中口授語也，感賦四章，末章兼志哀挽，in *Guiyu shichao* 歸愚詩鈔, *juan* 12, in *Shen Guiyu shiwen quanji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:155.

⁹ Zhu Tingzhen asserted that Shen Deqian "depended on Yuyang's poetic clique" 門戶依傍漁洋. See Zhu Tingzhen, *Xiaoyuan shihua*, *juan* 2, 22b, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1708:29. Wang Yuyuan 王玉媛 claims that scholars generally agree with Zhu Tingzhen about Wang Shizhen's influence on Shen Deqian. See Wang Yuyuan, "Shen Deqian dui Wang Shizhen shenyun shuo de jicheng he gaizao" 沈德潛對王士禛神韻說的繼承和改造, 8.

¹⁰ They are the Poetry Society of the Southern City (*Chengnan shishe* 城南詩社) and the Poetry Society of the Northern City (*Beiguo shishe* 北郭詩社). For these two poetic societies, see Shen Deqian, "Nianpu," 9a, 15a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:5, 8; Hu Meimei 胡媚媚, "'Chengnan shishe' kaolun" "城南詩社" 考論, 42-45; Hu Meimei, "Qingdai shishe yanjiu" 清代詩社研究, 110-20; Wang Yuyuan, "Qingdai gediaopai yanjiu" 清代格調派研究, 82-84.

¹¹ *Tangshi biecai ji* was completed in 1715 and published in 1717. The compilation of *Gushi yuan* was started in 1717 and completed in 1719.

by Wang Shizhen's death in 1711.¹²

From the 1720s, Li E frequently interacted with Yangzhou poets and expanded his literary and social networks as a young scholar.¹³ His associates, who flourished in Zhejiang and Yangzhou, included Hang Shijun 杭世駿 (1696-1765), Jin Nong 金農 (1687-1763), Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705-1755), Zhao Yu 趙昱 (1689-1747) and his younger brother, Zhao Xin 趙信 (b. 1701), as well as Ma Yueguan 馬曰琯 (1688-1755) and his younger brother, Ma Yuelu 馬曰璐 (1697-1766).¹⁴ The Zhao and Ma families provided villas as locales for their literary activities.¹⁵ In 1725, Li E, as the chief of seventy-six compilers,¹⁶ started to compile *Songshi jishi* 宋詩紀事 (The Records of Song Poetry),¹⁷ one of the most important anthologies of Song

¹² According to Wang Xiaoheng's periodization, the mid-Qing period lasted for around one hundred years. His periodization basically coincides with Dai Wenhe's periodization of the Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry. He also labels mid-Qing poetry unlively and tedious. This conclusion is questionable. See Wang Xiaoheng, "Li E jiqi Zhepai yu Qing zhongqi Jiang Zhe shiren jiqun yanjiu" 厲鶚及其浙派與清中期江浙詩人集群研究, 115.

¹³ Wu Huafeng 吳華峰, "Li E wenxue jiaoyou wenti san kao" 厲鶚文學交遊問題三考, 206-9; Zhang Bing and Wang Xiaoheng 王小恆, "Li E Yangzhou jiaoyou kaolue" 厲鶚揚州交游考略, 49-55; Fang Shengliang 方盛良, "Qingdai shishang hudong zhi wenhua yuanshengtai ge'an kaolun: Li E yu Xiaolinglong shanguan" 清代士商互動之文化原生生態個案考論——厲鶚與“小玲瓏山館,” 115; Yan Dichang, "Wangshi jingxin jiao duanhong: Yangzhou Mashi Xiaolinglong shanguan yu Yong Qian zhiji Guangling wenxue jiqun" 往事驚心叫斷鴻——揚州馬氏小玲瓏山館與雍、乾之際廣陵文學集群, 108.

¹⁴ For example, see Wang Xiaoheng, "Zhepai shi wenhua huodong quanzhen: yi Li E wei zhongxin" 浙派詩文化活動詮真——以厲鶚為中心, 29-31; Fang Shengliang, "'Xiaolinglong shanguan' shiren qunti kaolue" "小玲瓏山館"詩人群體考略, 27-30.

¹⁵ Tu Lien-chê, "Li Ê," in *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, 454-55; Tu, "Ma Yüe-kuan," in *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, 559-60; Wang Xiaoheng, "Zhepai shiren jiqun yanjiu shuping" 浙派詩人集群研究述評, 68.

¹⁶ Xie Hailin 謝海林, "Songshi jishi wenxian lai yuan yu Yangzhou Mashi Xiaolinglong shanguan ma?" 《宋詩紀事》文獻來源於揚州馬氏小玲瓏山館嗎, 86.

¹⁷ Wang Yousheng, "Qingren bianzhuan de san bu Songshi zongji shuping" 清人編撰的三部宋詩總集述評, 72.

poetry and source material.¹⁸ Compiled on the basis of the books owned by the Jiangnan bibliophiles, including the Ma brothers and the Zhao brothers, this anthology included poems and biographies of 3,812 Song poets.¹⁹

During the 1730s, Shen Deqian finished *Shuo shi zuiyu* (1731), a work of poetic criticism belonging to the genre *shihua*, and compiled a new anthology, *Mingshi biecai ji* (1734). In 1739, he gained recognition from Qianlong Emperor and consequent fame and influence²⁰ and became the acknowledged leader of the Qing poets, especially of the School of Form and Tone, *gediao pai*.²¹ As noted by Shang Wei, Shen Deqian's poetics is characterized by his emphasis on the four elements found in his preface to the second edition of *Tangshi biecai ji*: "purport (ethical content and concerns)" (*zongzhi* 宗旨), "form (style)" (*ticai* 體裁), "tone" (*yingjie* 音節), and

¹⁸ Bryant, "Poetry of the Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries," 432; Shang Wei, "The Literati Era and Its Demise (1723-1840)," in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, 2:259. Xie Hailin claims that the compilers quoted more than 1,030 philosophical, historical and literary works. See Xie, "Songshi jishi wenxian lai yuan yu Yangzhou Mashi Xiaolinglong shanguan ma?" 87.

¹⁹ Tu Lien-chê and Wang Xiaoheng state that the sources of *Songshi jichi* were mainly from the Ma brothers' private library. See Tu, "Li Ê," 455; Tu, "Ma Yüe-kuan," 560; Wang Xiaoheng, "Lun 'Yangzhou er Ma' de tushu shoucang shiye jiqi wenhua gongxian" 論 "揚州二馬" 的圖書收藏及其文化貢獻, 86. For the number of poets included in this anthology, see Wang Yousheng, "Qingren bianzhu de san bu Songshi zongji shuping," 72.

²⁰ Li Man-kuei, "Shên Tê-ch'ien," in *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, 645; Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 231, 237; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 515; Wang Yunxi and Gu Yisheng, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 2:943; Jiang Yin, "Shen Deqian shixue de yuanyuan, fazhan ji mingming" 沈德潛詩學的淵源、發展及命名, 130-31. Shen became a presented scholar (*jinshi* 進士) and was received by the Qianlong Emperor in this year. See Shen Deqian, "Nianpu," 25a-25b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:13.

²¹ Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 447; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 429; Ning Jiayu and Li Ruishan, *Mingdai wenxue, Qingdai wenxue, Jindai wenxue*, 204-5; Jiang Yin, "Shen Deqian shixue de yuanyuan, fazhan ji mingming," 128. Shen's biography in the official history of the Qing dynasty, *Qing shi gao* (A Draft of Qing History), states that he "established his own school" (*zi cheng zongpai* 自成宗派). See Zhao Erxun et al., *Qing shi gao*, 35:10513. For Shen's accomplishments and influence, also see Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 286-91.

“spiritual resonance” or “ineffable essence and resonance” (*shenyun* 神韻).²² Zhang Jian in his examination of these four elements demonstrates how they reconcile the Former and Latter Seven Masters’ and the Yunjian School’s advocacies of *gediao* 格調, or “form and tone,” Wang Shizhen’s encouragement of *shenyun*, and Qian Qianyi’s emphasis on *xingqing*. According to him, the greatest significance attached to the expression of genuine nature and emotion in Shen’s judgment of the purport of poetry follows that of Qian Qianyi, who criticizes the Former and Latter Seven Masters and their followers, the Yunjian School, for laying more emphasis on “form and tone” rather than on nature and emotion.²³ Modern scholars Chen Anfeng [Chen Ngonfung] 陳岸峰, Wang Yuyuan, as well as Wu Zhaolu and Li Shouxuan 李受琰 concur that Shen seeks the integration of *gediao* and *shenyun* under the supremacy of *xingqing*.²⁴ Chen Anfeng particularly points out that Shen’s incorporation of *shenyun* into *gediao* relies on his application of *xingling*, which to a great extent conforms with Yuan Mei’s theory of *xingling* in the stress laid on a poet’s creativity and originality.²⁵ Shen used his poetic theories to instruct the School of

²² Shang Wei, “The Literati Era and Its Demise,” 256. Shang labels Shen’s pursuit of honouring Confucian poetic doctrine his “purport” and calls attention to Shen’s moral concerns in this aspect.

²³ Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 524-70; Wang Yuyuan, “Qingdai gediao pai yanjiu,” 35-37.

²⁴ Chen Anfeng, “Gediao de zhuiqiu: lun Shen Deqian dui Ming Qing shixue de chuancheng yu tupo,” 243-50; Wu Zhaolu and Li Shouxuan, “Shen Deqian de shenmei lixiang xintan” 沈德潛的審美理想新探, 126-30; Wang Yuyuan, “Qingdai gediao pai yanjiu,” 19-20, 67-9. Also see Wang Wei 王煒, “Gediao dui shenyun de jianrong: Cong Qingshi biecai ji xuan Wang Shizhen shi kan Shen Deqian de ‘gediao shuo’” 格調對神韻的兼容——從《清詩別裁集》選王士禛詩看沈德潛的“格調說”, 498-502.

²⁵ Chen Anfeng, “Gediao de zhuiqiu: lun Shen Deqian dui Ming Qing shixue de chuancheng yu tupo,” 247-50. Also see Wang Yuyuan, “Qingdai gediao pai yanjiu,” 134-35; Wang Wei, “Shen Deqian Yuan Mei de jiaowang ji shixueguan luelun” 沈德潛、袁枚的交往及詩學觀略論, 31-32. For Shen Deqian’s poetic production, also see Shi Changyu, *Qingdai wenxue*, 150-51; Ning Jiayu and Li Ruishan, *Mingdai wenxue, Qingdai wenxue, Jindai wenxue*, 205; Fan Jianming 范

Form and Tone, the majority of whose members were Jiangsu poets, in their advocacy of Tang poetry.

Li E's influence also continued to grow. Although unsuccessful in his official career, he was "one of the prominent literary figures of his time, particularly in the field of poetry."²⁶ The compilation of *Songshi jishi* was completed in 1746.²⁷ Then in his later years, he befriended the Tianjin poets, Zha Weiren 查為仁 (1694-1749) (style name Lianpo 蓮坡) and his younger brother, Zha Li 查禮 (1715-1783); they received visits from him and his associates in their villa in 1748.²⁸ Tianjin became the third site of Li's literary gatherings and activities, in addition to Hangzhou and Yangzhou.²⁹ Qing scholars often compared Li's literary accomplishments and reputation to those of two leading masters of the early Qing period: Wang Shizhen, a native of Xincheng (in present-day Shandong province), and Zhu Yizun, who was called Changshui 長水 because of his famous poem about romantic love which depicts the image of the Changshuitang

建明, "Lun Shen Deqian de shi" 論沈德潛的詩, 42-46.

²⁶ Tu Lien-chê, "Li Ê," 455.

²⁷ Wang Yousheng, "Qingren bianzhuan de san bu Songshi zongji shuping," 72.

²⁸ Wu Huafeng, "Li E wenxue jiaoyou wenti san kao," 209-11; Zhang Bing and Wang Xiaoheng, "Tianji Zhashi Shuixizhuang yu Qingdai Yong Qian zhiji wentan zouxiang" 天津查氏水西莊與清代雍、乾之際文壇走向, 47; Chen Yulan 陳玉蘭 and Xiang Shuzhen 項姝珍, "Tianjin Zhashi Shuixizhuang yaji de Jiangnan weihua tezhi" 天津查氏水西莊雅集的江南文化特質, 135-36; Chen Yulan and Xiang Shuzhen, "Tianjin Zhashi Shuixizhuang shiren qun de wenhua xintai ji yanji neihan" 天津查氏水西莊詩人群的文化心態及雅集內涵, 109.

²⁹ For these three literary centers and Li E's literary associations and influences, see Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 287-91; Wang Xiaoheng, *Li E de wenxue sixiang he shici chuangzuo* 厲鶚的文學思想和詩詞創作, 34-67; Li Ruihao 李瑞豪, "Shuixizhuang yaji yu Yong Qian zhiji de jifu shitan" 水西莊雅集與雍、乾之際的畿輔詩壇, 78-84; Hu Xiangyun 胡祥雲 and Fang Shengliang, "Lun 'Xiaolinglong shanguan' wei zhongxin de wenxue huodong" 論"小玲瓏山館"為中心的文學活動, 91-95.

River (*Changshuitang* 長水塘).³⁰ For example, Zha Weiren in his remarks on poetry stated that Li “was famous for his poetry for thirty years within the empire. [...] [His poems] established his own banner in addition to those of Xincheng (Wang Shizhen) and Changshui (Zhu Yizun), and scholars who succeeded him regarded him as a model for emulation” 以詩名海內者三十年. [...] 於新城長水外自樹一幟，承學之士奉為圭臬.³¹ The nineteenth-century Qing poet-scholar Zhu Tingzhen 朱庭珍 (1841-1903) stated that Li E developed the styles of Zhejiang poetry. In his words, with Li E “a school was formed and most later poets followed him” 自成一派，後來多宗之.³² Modern scholar Zhu Zejie claims that the poets around Li E who shared with him his poetic views formed a school of poetry, the Li School (*Li pai* 厲派).³³

After Li E died, both the Zhe School and Shen Deqian continued to flourish. Shen in the last decade of his life enlarged his first anthology, *Tangshi biecai ji* (1763), and compiled two more anthologies: *Guochao shi biecai ji* (1761)³⁴ and *Song Jin san jia shixuan* 宋金三家詩選

³⁰ See Zhu Yizun, “Yuanyanghu zhaoge yibai shou” 鴛鴦湖櫂歌一百首, no. 31, in *Pushuting ji*, *juan* 9, 6a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 116:109.

³¹ Zha Weiren, *Lianpo shihua* 蓮坡詩話, *juan* 3, 15b, in *Xubian Siku quanshu*, 1701:143. Also see Li Fusun 李富孫, *Hezheng houlu* 鶴徵後錄, *juan* 5, 5a, in *Siku wei shou shu jikan: Shi 02 ji* 四庫未收書輯刊: 史 02 輯, 23:691.

³² See Zhu Tingzhen, *Xiaoyuan shihua*, *juan* 2, 26b, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1708:31. Zhu Zejie even says that the term, the Zhe School, was first applied to Li. See Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 230.

³³ For the Li School, see Zhu Zejie, “Lun Li E de shi,” 58. For Li E’s poetry and influence, also see Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 2:856-63; Wang Xiaoheng, *Li E de wenxue sixiang he shici chuanguzuo*, 68-77, 87-120; Li Yupeng 李玉鵬, “Li E Fanxie shanfang ji shige yanjiu” 厲鶚《樊榭山房集》詩歌研究.

³⁴ In 1725, Shen started to compile *Mingqing biecai ji* and finished his compilation in 1734. Then he started to compile *Guochao shi biecai ji* in 1754, completed it in 1757, and published it in 1759. In 1760, Shen Deqian started to revise and enlarge *Guochao shi biecaiji* and republished it in 1761. In 1763, the revised and enlarged edition of *Tangshi biecai ji* was published. For the process of the compilation of these anthologies, see Shen Deqian, “Nianpu,” 12a, 13a-13b, 17a, 21b, 52b, 57b, 59a, 61a, 65b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:7, 9 11, 27, 29-31, 33; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 283. For Shen Deqian’s anthologizing career, also see Li Man-kuei, “Shên

(The Selected Poems of Three Masters of the Song and Jin (Jurchen) Dynasties) (1769).³⁵ His focus on Han, Wei, and High Tang poetry as the desired poetic values spread to different regions of the empire and different fields of literature. In Zhang Jian's view, Shen created the last upsurge of the revival of Han, Wei, and High Tang poetry in late imperial China after the Former and Latter Seven Masters and Wang Shizhen.³⁶ Yan Dichang points out that Shen deviated from the emphasis on the evolution of poetry and poetics through the dynasties by his mentor, Ye Xie.³⁷

Shen Deqian's and Li E's literary careers followed similar trajectories. Through their literary production, compilations, and associations, they established their leadership in their native places simultaneously and then exerted influence on the empire. Because of the divergences between their poetic views and values, they flourished as two opponents during the first half of the eighteenth century. Jiangsu and Zhejiang, their native places, adjoining each other and constituting the main part of the Jiangnan region, became the bases of their conflicting advocacies and jointly turned the Jiangnan region into a center of the debate over Tang and Song

Tê-ch'ien," 646.

³⁵ Shen started to compile *Song Jin san jia shixuan* in 1769 but was not able to finish compiling. This anthology was completed and published in the same year after he died. See Tan Zhuopei 譚卓培, "Shen Deqian Song Jin san jia shixuan yanjiu" 沈德潛《宋金三家詩選》研究, 43-44; Wang Honglin 王宏林, "Chongshang Du shi, tuizun shijiao: Song Jin san jia shixuan shulüe" 崇尚杜詩, 推尊詩教——《宋金三家詩選》述略, 76. For more details of the compilations of these anthologies as well as Shen Deqian's poetic views, see Bryant, "Poetry of the Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries," 430-31; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 426.

³⁶ Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 570. Zhang Lihua claims that the advocacy of Tang poetry reached its second summit during the first half of the Qianlong period after the Former and Latter Seven Masters. She labels Shen the most energetic Qing advocate of Tang poetry and the last master of poetic criticism during the Yongzheng-Qianlong period. See Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 231, 236, and 251.

³⁷ Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 2:660-72.

poetry. The tension between Li and Shen is reflected in Li's biography written by Wang Chang

王昶 (1725-1806), one of Shen's disciples:

[Li E's poems] were mainly modeled after those by Tao [Qian] and Xie [Lingyun] as well as Wang [Wei], Meng [Haoran], Wei [Yingwu], and Liu [Zongyuan] but had a charm of his own. [...]. He gathered the essence of Song poetry and discarded its superficiality and incoherence. Mister Shen Wenque (Shen Deqian) at that time was advocating [poetry of] the Han, Wei, and High Tang periods in the Wu region; [however, his voice] was unable to drown out [that of Li E].³⁸

大抵取法陶謝及王孟韋柳而別有自得之趣. [...] 擷宋詩之精詣而去其疎蕪.

沈文愨公方以漢魏盛唐倡吳下，莫能相掩也。

According to Wang Chang, Li E was broadly interested in literary models of different periods and particularly enthusiastic for learning from Song poetry; his reputation and influence were comparable to those of Shen. In view of Wang's relationship with Shen, his praise of Li's literary achievements is reliable. His declaration that Shen was unable to “drown out” (*yan* 掩) Li implies a keen competition between them and their native places.

Shen Deqian: the Last Master-Advocate of High Tang Poetry

I) Shen Deqian's Poetic Views

Throughout his literary life, Shen Deqian was a determined advocate of Tang poetry. His

³⁸ See Wang Chang, *Huhai shizhuan* 湖海詩傳, *juan* 2 1a, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1625:543. Wenque 文愨 was Shen Deqian's posthumous title. Also see Xu Ke 徐珂, *Qingbai leichao* 清稗類鈔, 8:82.

biography written by Wang Chang includes a record of his poetic models and principles in poetic learning and writing, more detailed than the brief description found in Li E's biography:

[His poetry] originated from Han and Wei [poetry] and was modeled after High Tang [poetry]. [He] first followed Old Du (Du Fu), then Changli (Han Yu), Yishan (Li Shangyi), Dongpo (Su Shi), and Yishan (Yuan Haowen), and later Qingqiu (Gao Qi), Kongtong (Li Mengyang), Dafu (He Jingming), Wozi (Chen Zilong), and Ruanting (Wang Shizhen)—he was able to synthesize them all and combine [their achievements].³⁹

本源漢魏，效法盛唐。先宗老杜，次及昌黎義山東坡遺山，下至青邱崢峒大復臥子阮亭，皆能兼綜條貫。

Judging from this passage, on the one hand, Shen Deqian “combines the ancient and contemporary [poetic accomplishments]” (*du zong jingo* 獨綜今古),⁴⁰ which synthesize a wide temporal range of poetic models. His poetic models extend from the Han-Wei period to his own time. On the other hand, Tang poets and their adherents constitute an overwhelming majority of this lineage, although Du Fu and Han Yu⁴¹ are considered pioneers of the Song poetic style. This quotation to a great extent suggests Shen's preference, which is more clearly illustrated in his literary career, including his anthologization of poetry.

In his preface to *Tangshi biecai ji* written in 1717, Shen Deqian avows twice that it is “poetry compilers' responsibility” (*bian shi zhe ze* 編詩者責, *bian shi zhe ze* 編詩者之責) to

³⁹ Wang Chang, *Huhai shizhuan*, juan 8, 1a, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1625:604.

⁴⁰ Wang Chang, *Huhai shizhuan*, juan 8, 1a, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1625:604.

⁴¹ Han Yu claimed that his family came from Changli (in present-day Hebei province).

lead learners of poetry to “seek the origin of the poetic doctrine” (*qiu shijiao zhi benyuan* 求詩教之本原).⁴² Modern Chinese scholars view Confucian “poetic doctrine” (*shijiao* 詩教) as one of the principles of Shen Deqian’s poetic theories.⁴³ Confucian poetic doctrine could be understood as another expression of the orthodox tradition of classical poetry, which in many versions of poetic history, including those examined in this dissertation, started with the *Shijing*. Therefore, the anthologies compiled by Shen Deqian constitute his version of a relatively complete history of classical Chinese poetry. As Zhang Jian argues, they, rather than only the *Tangshi biecai ji*, according to Shang Wei, construct the criteria of a poetic orthodoxy by which poets are able to “trace back to the *Airs and Odes*, and the way of poetry is thus honoured” 仰溯風雅，詩道始尊。⁴⁴ Zhang Jian further points out that the term *biecai* 別裁, or “discrimination and excision,” in the titles of four of Shen’s anthologies implies Shen’s intention to continue the poetic tradition originating from *Shijing*, because it derives from Du Fu’s claim of his learning principle, “Excise fake forms, stay close to the *Airs and Odes*” 別裁偽體親風雅。⁴⁵ By using

⁴² Shen Deqian, “Yuan xu” 原序, 1a-1b, in *Tangshi biecai ji*, 1.

⁴³ Wu Hongyi, “Shen Deqian Shuo shi zuiyu yanjiu” 沈德潛《說詩碎語》研究, *Qingdai wenxue piping lunji*, 219-21; Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 215-6; Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 433-41; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 515-20; Wang Yunxi and Gu Yisheng, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 2:945-49; Guo Shaoyu, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), 446-47; Wang Honglin, “Qingshi biecai ji xuan shi zongzhi yu gediao xingling zhi zheng” 《清詩別裁集》選詩宗旨與格調性靈之爭, 67-68.

⁴⁴ Shen Deqian, *Shuo shi zuiyu*, *juan* 1, 1a, in *Shen Guiyu shiwen quanji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 235:225. For Zhang Jian’s argument, see Zhang, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 520-24. Zhang also declares that Shen established his own system of poetic history through these anthologies. See Zhang, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 514. For Shang Wei’s statement, see Shang, “The Literati Era and Its Demise,” 257.

⁴⁵ Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 520-21. For the poem, see Du Fu, “Xi wei liu jueju,” no. 6, in *Quan Tang shi*, 7:2453; cf. “Six Quatrains Done Playfully,” in Stephen Owen, *The Poetry of Du Fu*, 3:114-15.

this term, the anthologist shows his meticulous selection of poems close to the *Shijing* poems by “excising fake forms.”

Shen Deqian’s efforts at mapping out a poetic history, including the chronological order of his compilations, the anthology titles, and the proportion of poems he selected for each period in the history, reveal his admiration for Tang poetry and his desire to construct an orthodox poetic order. His esteem for pre-Song poetry as the origin and exemplar of the orthodox poetic tradition is reflected in the original title of *Tangshi biecai ji*, *Tangshi zong* 唐詩宗 (Tang Poetry as the Model),⁴⁶ and *Gushi yuan*, which includes poems from antiquity to the Sui dynasty (581-618). The dynasties which have their own anthologies also include the Ming, the period famous for its poets’ enthusiastic admiration and imitation of Tang poetry, and the Qing, Shen’s own dynasty. The anthology of the Song and Jin (Jurchen) dynasties, *Song Jin san jia shixuan*, not only combine two dynasties but also include only three especially accomplished masters, Su Shi, Lu You, and Yuan Haowen 元好問 (1190-1257); according to Wang Chang, Su Shi and Yuan Haowen are both Shen’s poetic models. The Yuan dynasty is absent from Shen’s anthology series either because he was unable to begin the last compilation in the series or because he disregarded Yuan poetry. As Aoki Masaru argues, the unequal efforts devoted to these dynasties show Shen Deqian’s esteem for Tang poetry and contempt for Song poetry.⁴⁷ Disagreeing with Aoki, Chinese scholar Hou Benta 侯本塔 follows the explanation by Shen’s disciple, Gu Zongtai 顧宗泰 (*jinsshi* 1775), who in his preface to *Song Jin san jia shixuan* attributes the absence of a

⁴⁶ Han Sheng 韓勝, “Cong *Tangshi biecai ji* de chong ding kan Shen Deqian shixue de fazhan” 从《唐詩別裁集》的重訂看沈德潛詩學的發展, 106.

⁴⁷ Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 101.

large anthology of Song poetry to its vast quantity.⁴⁸ Also drawing on Gu's preface, Wang Shungui 王順貴 argues for Shen's attempt to finish a complete history of classical Chinese poetry by his anthologization. According to the introductory remarks on *Song Jin san jia shixuan* by another disciple of Shen, Chen Mingshan 陳明善, Shen accepted poetry of diverse styles. Therefore, Wang Shungui argues that Shen revised his views on Song poetry.⁴⁹ However, Wang Honglin 王宏林 and Tan Zhuopei 譚卓培 still maintain that Shen actually advocates imitation of Tang poetry in his *Song Jin san jia shixuan* because the poems in it all follow Du Fu's poetic styles, as Chen Mingshan declares in his introductory remarks.⁵⁰

Shen's preface to *Tangshi biecai ji* written in 1717 states his persistent belief in Tang poetry as the "correct path" (*zhenggui* 正軌) and reveals his gratification at his contemporaries' recent return to Tang poetry from the prevalent admiration of Song-style poetry during the 1670s and 1680s.⁵¹ Shen's discrimination between Tang and Song poetic qualities is clearly expressed in the beginning of the "Editorial Principles" of *Tangshi biecai ji*:

When poetry entered the Tang period, the essence [of poetry] flourished and poetic forms developed fully. Scholars often started [their study of poetry] from Tang poetry because Song and Yuan [poetry] became vulgar and weak and they might not understand all the masters of the Han as well as those of the Wei and Jin

⁴⁸ Hou Benta, "Shen Deqian Song Jin san jia shixuan tanxi" 沈德潛《宋金三家詩選》探析, 43.

⁴⁹ Wang Shungui, "Shen Deqian yu Song Jin san jia shixuan" 沈德潛與《宋金三家詩選》, 137.

⁵⁰ Wang Honglin, "Chongshang Du shi, tuizun shijiao," 79-81; Tan Zhuopei, "Shen Deqian Song Jin san jia shixuan yanjiu," 47, 109.

⁵¹ Shen Deqian, "Yuan xu," 2a, in *Tangshi biecai ji*, 1.

dynasties.⁵²

詩至有唐，菁華極盛，體制大備。學者每從唐人詩入，以宋元流於卑靡，而漢京暨當塗典午諸家未必槩能領略。

Shen declares that Tang poetry is the most suitable exemplar for later poets because it is more understandable than Han, Wei, and Jin poetry and is of higher quality than Song and Yuan poetry. It is uncommon to see such a plain explanation of the exemplarity of Tang poetry among the literati who competed in advocating their Tang or Song poetic models.

In the 1717 edition of *Tangshi biecai ji*, according to Wang Yuyuan and Wang Yingzhi's examination, Shen Deqian's literary views were restricted to Yan Yu's and the Former and Latter Seven Masters' advocacy of Han, Wei, and High Tang poetry.⁵³ However, Chen Anfeng argues that Shen's evaluation in this edition deviated from the Seven Masters' exclusive advocacy, especially that of Li Panlong, and attached importance to discovering the *Shijing* as the origin of classical poetry.⁵⁴ This inclination becomes clearer in *Gushi yuan*.

Shen Deqian begins his preface to *Gushi yuan* with an argument about the importance of being aware of the origin of classical poetry and then examines the genealogy of poetry:

Poetry reached its summit when it entered the Tang period; however, the summit of

⁵² Shen Deqian, "Fanli" 凡例, 1a, in *Tangshi biecai ji*, 3. *Dangtu* 當塗 refers to the Wei dynasty and *dianwu* 典午 refers to the Jin dynasty. See Hu Yinglin 胡應麟, "Shishu zhanbi si" 史書佔畢四, in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢, 161.

⁵³ Wang Yuyuan and Wang Wenzhi, "Lun Shen Deqian shige fugu lun dui Ming qi zi fugu lun de xiuzheng ye wanshan" 論沈德潛詩歌復古論對明七子復古論的修正與完善, 137.

⁵⁴ Chen Anfeng, "Tangshi biecai ji yu Gujin shishan zhong 'Tangshi xuan' de bijiao yanjiu: lun Shen Deqian dui Li Panlong shixue linian de chuancheng yu pipan" 《唐詩別裁集》與《古今詩刪》中“唐詩選”的比較研究——論沈德潛對李攀龍詩學理念的傳承與批判, 404.

poetry was not the source of poetry. Now, those who watch bodies of water stop when they are able to see the sea. However, if one reaches back from the sea, the closest are the nine rivers; [if one goes] upstream, there are the Jiang River and the Meng Ford; [if one goes] further upstream from the Jishi Mountain, one reaches the source at the Kunlun Mountain. [...] Poetry before the Tang is like water descending from the Kunlun Mountain. The Wei poets from the Han capital were not far from the “Airs” and “Odes.” There is no dissenting view to this. Even with the pretty embellishment of the poetry of the Qi and Liang dynasties and the trivial charm of the poetry of the Chen and Sui dynasties, in their styles and qualities they would likely yield to Tang poetry. However, [if one] says that these dynasties are not where Tang poetry originated from because of this, [that is as much as to say] the waters of the four seas do not flow from the Meng Ford. Is this reasonable? The beginning of the Ming dynasty continued the practices bequeathed from the Song and Yuan. Since Li Xianji (Li Mengyang) rose up to promote Tang poetry, the whole world followed his style. The Former and Latter Seven Masters supported each other and were praised for their substance and refinement. However, their shortcoming resided in their over-punctilious imitation [of Tang poetry], [like] a clay sculpture with cap and gown. Scholars criticized them for confining themselves to Tang [poetry] and being unable to move back to the source of [poetry] [...]. Therefore, Tang poetry was the upstream of Song and Yuan [poetry], and ancient poetry was Tang poets’

progenitor.⁵⁵

詩至有唐爲極盛；然詩之盛，非詩之源也。今夫觀水者，至觀海止矣，然由海而溯之，近者爲九河，其上爲泲水爲盟津，又其上由積石以至崑崙之源。[...] 唐以前之詩，崑崙以降之水也。漢京魏氏，去風雅未遠，無異辭矣。即齊梁之綺縟，陳隋之輕艷，風標品格，未必不遜於唐；然緣此遂謂非唐詩所由出，將四海之水非盟津以下所由注，有是理哉？有明之初承宋元遺習，自李獻吉以唐詩振，天下靡然從風。前後七子互相羽翼，彬彬稱盛。然其敝也，株守太過，冠裳土偶。學者咎之由守乎唐而不能上窮其源，[...]. 則唐詩者，宋元之上流，而古詩又唐人之初祖也。

According to Wang Yuyuan and Wang Yingzhi's analysis, there are three noteworthy ideas in this passage. First, Shen Deqian requires poets to keep in mind the origin of Tang poetry, from the poetry of the Han and Wei periods to the poetry of the Qi, Liang, Chen (557-589), and Sui periods, although the latter group is not necessarily of higher quality than Tang poetry. Second, Shen reminds poets of the role of Song and Yuan poetry as the successor of Tang poetry. Thus he draws a poetic lineage—ancient poetry-Tang poetry-Song and Yuan poetry—and enlarges the range of poetic models, continuing the practice of his mentor, Ye Xie. Third, he criticizes the Former and Latter Seven Masters, with whom he shared the worship of Tang poetry, for their rigid imitation resulting from ignorance of the early poetic models.⁵⁶ Wang Yuyuan also argues

⁵⁵ Shen Deqian, "Gushi yuan xu" 古詩源序, 1a-1b, in *Guiyu wenchao* 歸愚文鈔, *juan* 11, in *Shen Guiyu shiwen quanji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:539.

⁵⁶ Wang Yuyuan and Wang Wenzhi, "Lun Shen Deqian shige fugu lun dui Ming qi zi fugu lun de xiuzheng ye wanshan," 139. Also see Wang Yuyuan, "Qingdai gediaopai yanjiu," 42-43.

that Shen turned to imitating both Tang and Song poetry after he compiled *Gushi yuan*.⁵⁷

However, they seemingly exaggerate Shen's affirmation of Song and Yuan poetry's values. In view of Shen's evaluation of the poetry of the Qi, Liang, Chen, and Sui periods (the predecessor of Tang poetry), Song and Yuan poetry (the successor of Tang poetry) is likewise not necessarily of a literary quality comparable to that of Tang poetry (and also Han-Wei poetry). From *Tangshi biecai ji* to *Gushi yuan*, Shen upholds high esteem for Tang poetry and its precursors, whose antiquity and profundity hinders Ming-Qing learners from understanding them; at the same time, his relatively negative evaluation of Song and Yuan poetry persists.

In his preface to *Mingshi biecai ji*, Shen Deqian's version of poetic history extends to the end of the Ming dynasty:

Song poetry is rather pedantic, and Yuan poetry is rather trivial. Ming poetry revived ancient [poetry]. There were differences between rise and fall, waxing and waning in the two-hundred-and-seventy-odd years [in the development of Ming poetry]. I had discussed the poetry of the Ming dynasty: at the beginning of the Hongwu reign (1368-1398), Liu Bowen (Liu Ji), who had a noble style, and poets including Gao Jidi (Gao Qi) and Yuan Jingwen (Yuan Kai) respectively displayed their talents and matched one another well. However, their poems still had the remnant of Yuan poetic style and had not advanced to the correct path of the flourishing era. After the Yongle reign (1403-1424), the style of the Censorate and Grand Secretariat was

⁵⁷ Wang Yuyuan, "Qingdai gediao pai yanjiu," 42-44. Her analysis is based on a series of texts, including this preface and Wang Chang's passage on Shen Deqian's literary achievements and models quoted at the beginning of this section.

admired; [the poetry of this period was] weak and dispirited. During the reigns of Hong[zhi] and Zheng[de], Xianji (Li Mengyang) and Zhongmo (He Jingming) energetically pursued the tones of the “Odes” and Tingshi (Bian Gong) and Changgu (Xu Zhenqing) followed. The ancient mode thus did not decline. The rest, such as Yang Yongxiu’s (Yang Shen) brilliance, Xue Juncai’s (Xue Hui) elegant correctness, and Gao Ziye’s (Gao Shusi) modest simplicity, were all remarkable. Yulin (Li Panlong) and Yuanmei (Wang Shizhen) as well as Maoqin (Xie Zhen) closely followed the past worthies. They over-strictly observed poetic norms and metres and were unable to vary [their poetic styles]. Insightful people criticized them for lacking creative interests. However, if we single out their essence, they are the works of both literary grace and substantial content, like the works in the “Major Odes.” Since this period, the orthodox voice gradually faded, and various sounds emerged and competed with one another. Until the Yuan brothers from Gong’an as well as Zhong [Xing] and Tan [Yuanchun] from Jingling, like the music of the Kuai State, poetry did not deserve any comments.⁵⁸ [...] I put together a total of ten fascicles of more than one thousand two hundred poems. They are all profound, deep, peaceful, and elegant; and they all conform to the principles that [poetry] expresses intention and [songs] make language last forever. [...] Ming poetry really

⁵⁸ In 544 BCE, Zha 札, a noble scion of the Wu state, visited the Lu State and appreciated the music of different states of the Zhou dynasty (ca.1027-256 BCE). He did not stop making remarks until the music of the Kuai State started. His silence implied that the music of the Kuai State was of a lower level and did not deserve his comments. See Yang Bojun 楊伯峻, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhu* 春秋左傳注, 3:1161-64.

surpasses Song and Yuan, and seeks to follow ancient [poetry].⁵⁹

宋詩近腐，元詩近纖；明詩其復古也，而二百七十餘年中又有升降盛衰之別。嘗取有明一代詩論之：洪武之初，劉伯溫之高格，並以高季迪袁景文諸人，各逞才情，連鑣並軫；然猶存元紀之餘風，未極隆時之正軌。永樂以還，體崇臺閣，猷猷不振。弘正之間，獻吉仲默力追雅音，庭實昌穀，左右驂靳，古風未墜。餘如楊用修之才華，薛君采之雅正，高子業之沖淡，俱稱斐然。于麟元美，益以茂秦，接踵曩哲。雖其間規格有餘，未能變化，識者咎其矜自得之趣焉；然取其菁英，彬彬乎大雅之章也。自是而後，正聲漸遠，繁響競作。公安袁氏，竟陵鍾氏譚氏，比之自鄆無譏。[...] 得詩十卷，凡一千二百餘篇，皆深造渾厚，和平淵雅，合於言志永言之旨。[...] 有明之詩，誠見其陵宋躐元而上追前古也。

In this passage, Shen Deqian also holds a basically negative view of the Song and Yuan periods by labeling their poetry “pedantic” (*fu* 腐) or “trivial” (*xian* 纖). His conclusion about the mainstream of Ming poetry is balanced in regard to the archaist trend, or “reviving ancient [poetry]” (*fugu* 復古). His praise or criticism of Ming poets greatly depends on their choice of literary models. He appreciates early Ming poetic accomplishments, represented by the poetic qualities of Liu Ji, Gao Qi, and Yuan Kai 袁凱 (fl. 1370) (courtesy name Jingwen 景文),⁶⁰ while dissatisfied with the influence from Yuan poetry found in them. The poetry from the late

⁵⁹ Shen Deqian, “Mingshi biecai ji xu” 明詩別裁集序, 1a-1b, in *Guiyu wenchao*, *juan* 11, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:542; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 266.

⁶⁰ He Jingming praises Yuan Kai as the “champion of the early era of our empire” (*guo chu shiren zhi guan* 國初詩人之冠). See He Jingming, “Haisouji xu” 海叟集序, in *Dafu ji* 大復集, *juan* 34, 4a, in *Yingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu*, 1267:302; Wang Xuetai, “Yi diyu fenye de Mingchu shige paibie lun,” 102. For Yuan Kai’s imitation of Tang poetry, especially Du Fu, see Zhao Tongzeng 趙同增, “Yuan Kai shige yanjiu” 袁凱詩歌研究, 31-35.

1480s to the early 1590s is identified as “orthodox” (*zhengsheng* 正聲) and as a continuation of “the tone of the ‘Odes’” (*yayin* 雅音) and of the “ancient mode” (*gufeng* 古風). The representative poets enumerated are mainly imitators of High Tang poetry: Li Mengyang, He Jingming, Bian Gong, and Xu Zhenqing, who were four of the Former Seven Masters, as well as Li Panlong, Wang Shizhen, and Xie Zhen, who were among the Latter Seven Masters. The rest of the representative poets Shen names include the poets who followed the Six Dynasties and early Tang styles, such as Yang Shen 楊慎 (1488-1559) (courtesy name Yongxiu 用修), and those who modeled themselves after mid-Tang poetry, such as Xue Hui 薛蕙 (1489-1591) (courtesy name Juncai 君采) and Gao Shusi 高叔嗣 (1501-1537) (courtesy name Ziyue 子業).⁶¹ In other words, poets’ imitation of models from the orthodox poetic tradition, especially Tang poetry, serves as an important criterion in Shen Deqian’s evaluation of poetry, although he avoids uncritically praising the admirers of High Tang poetry by belittling the poets of the Censorate and Grand Secretariat style, or *taige ti* 臺閣體, and criticizing the Former and Latter Seven Masters’ simple, excessive imitation. The Yuan brothers, who advocated Song and Yuan poetry in addition to Tang poetry and demanded a demonstration of inspiration and sensibility in poetry writing, as well as late Ming poets Zhong Xing and Tan Yuanchun, who also emphasized *xingling* while preferring pre-Song poetry, are excluded from the “correct path” traced in this anthology.

⁶¹ Liao Kebin 廖可斌 points out that during the early sixteenth century, Yang Shen led the imitation of the Six Dynasties and early Tang literature and Xue Hui and Gao Shusi imitated mid-Tang poets; Xue Hui turned to admire Chen Yuyi in his late years. See Liao Kebin, *Mingdai wenxue fugu yundong yanjiu* 明代文學復古運動研究, 82-84, 87, 176-86.

As Shen Deqian claims, the Ming poems included in this anthology all abide by “the canonical statement of what poetry ‘is’”: “The poem articulates what is on the mind intently; song makes language last long” 詩言志，歌詠言。⁶² These poems make Shen confident of Ming poetry as masterpieces comparable to ancient poetry and superior to Song and Yuan poetry. Because of Shen’s disdain of Song-Yuan poetry and praise of Ming poetry’s achievements in “reviving ancient [poetry],” Aoki Masaru asserts that this preface and anthology embody Shen’s persistent admiration of Tang poetry and constant denigration of Song poetry.⁶³ Zhang Jian in his analysis of this preface notes that Shen designates ancient poetry, instead of Song-Yuan poetry, as the predecessor of Ming poetry, unlike his designation of Tang poetry as the predecessor of Song-Yuan poetry. He argues that Shen connects the Ming poems by the Former and Latter Seven Masters to Han, Wei, and Tang poetry and encourages Qing poets to extend the poetic orthodoxy by following these predecessors.⁶⁴ Song-Yuan poetry is excluded from the orthodox poetic tradition.

As shown above, in Shen Deqian’s poetry selection and evaluation, an important component of imitating ancient poetic models is the expression of poets’ nature and emotion. Aoki Masaru and many Chinese scholars also note that one of his most important poetic views is his preservation of Confucian “poetic doctrine” by requiring the expression of gentle, temperate

⁶² The translation is by Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 26. Owen expounds it and compares the differences of the statements about *shi yan zhi* in the *Shangshu* and the “Great Preface.” See Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 26-28, 40-41.

⁶³ Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 101.

⁶⁴ Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 523-24.

nature and emotion as an important criterion in poetic production, compilation, and evaluation.⁶⁵

Yu Haian 于海安 in his study on the framework and evaluative criteria of *Tangshi biecai ji* argues that Shen bases his “discriminating selection” (*biecai* 別裁) of poems on two standards, “poetic doctrine” and “nature and emotion.”⁶⁶ As I have pointed out above, Confucian poetic doctrine refers to the orthodox tradition of classical poetry. In other words, in Shen’s belief, the orthodox poetic tradition is established on the basis of a proper expression of *xingqing* which conforms to the *Shijing*. Wu Hongyi notes that from the first edition of *Tangshi biecai ji* and *Gushi yuan* to *Shuo shi zuiyu* and *Guochao shi biecai ji* and then to the second edition of *Tangshi biecai ji*, Shen made increasingly clear claims about the poetic doctrine’s importance for cultivating mild, sincere nature and emotion.⁶⁷ Briefly, Shen consciously advocated poetic models which exemplified the gentle, restrained expression of *xingqing* in order to preserve and prolong the orthodox tradition starting from the *Shijing*, although his interpretation of *xingqing* changed and scholars’ observations on his interpretation vary.⁶⁸

In both *Shuo shi zuiyu* and *Guochao shi biecai ji*, Shen Deqian employs *xingqing* as a

⁶⁵ See Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 104-6; Tan Zhuopei, “Shen Deqian Song Jin san jia shixuan yanjiu,” 24-32; Wang Yuyuan, “Qingdai gediaopai yanjiu,” 57-71; Wang Yuyuan and Wang Yingzhi, “Lun Shen Deqian shige fugu lun dui Ming qi zi fugu lun de xiuzheng ye wanshan” 138; Wu Hongyi, “Shen Deqian Shuo shi zuiyu yanjiu,” 220-21; Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 433-41, Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 426-28; Guo Shaoyu, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 446-47.

⁶⁶ Yu Haian, “Shen Deqian Tangshi biecai ji zhi biecai yanjiu” 沈德潛《唐詩別裁集》之“別裁”研究, 3-14.

⁶⁷ Wu Hongyi, “Shen Deqian Shuo shi zuiyu yanjiu,” 220-21.

⁶⁸ Han Sheng elaborates that the revised and enlarged edition of *Tangshi biecai ji* attaches a greater importance to *xingqing* than the first edition by claiming that the function of poetry is to cultivate human nature and emotions and by including more poems that resonate with the nature and emotions of different types of poetry learners. See Han, “Cong *Tangshi biecai ji* de chong ding kan Shen Deqian shixue de fazhan,” 106.

basic criterion. In *Shuo shi zuiyu*, Shen Deqian claims:

Poetry values nature and emotion.⁶⁹

詩貴性情。

In the “Editorial Principles” of *Guochao shi biecai ji*, he also asserts:

Poetry must originate from nature and emotion.⁷⁰

詩必原本性情。

His evaluation of Tang and Song poetry in the “Editorial Principles” appears to be constructed on the basis of this view shared by many of his predecessors and contemporaries:

Tang poetry is implicit and reserved, while Song poetry is explicit and straightforward. When poetry is implicit and reserved, its resonance flows between the lines. When it is explicit and straightforward, meaning is exhausted in the words.

I never denigrate Song poetry, but my interest was always in Tang poetry.⁷¹

唐詩蘊蓄，宋詩發露。蘊蓄則韻流言出，發露則意盡言中。愚未嘗貶斥宋詩，而趣向舊在唐詩。

The characteristic of Tang poetry, “implicit and reserved” (*yunxu* 蘊蓄), satisfies Shen Deqian’s expectation of the proper way of expressing a poet’s nature and emotion, while the characteristic of Song poetry, “explicit and straightforward” (*falou* 發露), is opposite to this way of expression.

While Shen avows that he does not denigrate (*bianchi* 貶斥) Song poetry,⁷² he admits that his

⁶⁹ Shen Deqian, *Shuo shi zuiyu*, juan 1, 2b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 235:226.

⁷⁰ Shen Deqian, “Fanli” 凡例, in *Qingshi biecai ji*, 2.

⁷¹ Shen Deqian, “Fanli,” in *Qingshi biecai ji*, 2.

⁷² Tan Zhuopei asserts that this editorial principle is the only neutral, pertinent comment on Song poetry found in Shen Deqian’s poetic theories. See Tan Zhuopei, “Shen Deqian Song Jin

personal taste dominates his selection and evaluation of poetry in this anthology. This passage, on the one hand, shows his efforts at maintaining impartiality to the poetry of every dynasty, and, on the other hand, positions himself in the debate of Tang and Song poetry as an admirer of Tang poetry because of his belief in Tang poetry as exemplary in the expression of nature and emotion.⁷³ Wang Wei 王煒 argues that Shen does not totally negate the Song poetic style but marginalizes it by minimizing the number of Song-style poems in his *Guochao shi biecai ji*, which implies that the imitation of Song-style poetry ultimately prevents poets from becoming grand masters of the highest poetic quality.⁷⁴ Compared to these conclusions, Wang Yuyuan's analysis of this editorial principle appears to overstate Shen's impartial respect for both Tang and Song poetry.⁷⁵ Similarly, Dai Wenhe's conclusion that Shen does not denigrate Song poetry on the basis of a few short passages from Shen's accounts, including this editorial principle and the preface to *Gushi yuan*, is also overstated and even questionable.⁷⁶ The evidence for Qi Zhiping's assertion of Shen's consistent disparagement of Song poetry and perhaps occasional concealment of this is more convincing.⁷⁷

Zhang Lihua in her investigation of Shen Deqian's poetic theories points out that Shen maintains a critical attitude towards both Tang and Song poetry and avoids indiscriminating praise or denigration in his literary criticism. At the same time, she demonstrates that his praise

san jia shixuan yanjiu," 46.

⁷³ Wang Honglin in his study on Shen's evaluative criterion in *Guochao shi biecai ji* also demonstrates Shen's preference for Tang poetry. See Wang, "Qingshi biecai ji xuan shi zongzhi yu gediao xingling zhi zheng," 68-70.

⁷⁴ Wang Wei, "Lun Shen Deqian de Songshi guan" 論沈德潛的宋詩觀, 54-55.

⁷⁵ Wang Yuyuan, "Qingdai gediao pai yanjiu," 43.

⁷⁶ Dai Wenhe, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 237-38.

⁷⁷ Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 112-15.

of Tang poetry and denigration of Song poetry run through his literary career.⁷⁸ My research supplements hers by probing chronologically Shen's evaluation of poetry of different periods and consequent expansion of the orthodox poetic tradition, including in his own time. It shows that Shen, through his life-long career as a critic and anthologist, constructs a poetic orthodoxy of which the main force after the *Shijing* and Han-Wei poetry is composed of Tang poetry and its Ming-Qing followers and from which Song poetry is excluded.

II) The Poetic Histories of the Wu and Min Regions by Shen Deqian

The Wu region (Jiangsu), Shen Deqian's native place, fostered a large number of advocates of Tang poetry. According to Zhang Lihua, thirty-seven famous advocates of Tang poetry appeared from the 1690s to the 1780s. The Wu region produced fourteen of them, including Shen.⁷⁹ The chief members of Shen's School of Form and Tone included poets in the two poetry societies he organized for learning from Tang poetry and his disciples, the Seven Masters of Wuzhong (*Wuzhong qi zi* 吳中七子).⁸⁰ As Aoki Masaru notes, Shen Deqian was proud of the poetic accomplishments of the Wu region.⁸¹ His pride must have greatly originated from his fellow townsmen's learning from Tang poetry.

Shen's efforts to preserve and publicize poetry in the Wu region were accompanied by his esteem for Tang poetry and his enthusiasm for Confucian poetic doctrine. In 1753, he compiled

⁷⁸ Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 251-61.

⁷⁹ Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 238-39.

⁸⁰ According to Wang Yuyuan, the Poetry Society of the Southern City, the Poetry Society of the Northern City, and the Seven Masters of Wuzhong were important members of the School of Form and Tone. See Wang, in "Qingdai gediaopai yanjiu," 81-92, 93-130.

⁸¹ Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 101.

Qi zi shixuan 七子詩選 (Selection of Seven Masters' Poetry), an anthology of the poetry of his seven disciples, who became known as the Seven Masters of Wuzhong because of the wide circulation of this anthology.⁸² In the preface to this anthology, Shen treats them as parallel to the Former and Latter Seven Masters of the Ming:

During the Hongzhi period of the previous Ming dynasty, Li Xianji (Li Mengyang) and He Zhongmo (He Jingming) organized a poetry society with seven people, who were called the Former Seven Masters. During the Jiajing period, Wang Yuanmei (Wang Shizhen) and Li Yulin (Li Panlong) organized another poetry society also with seven people, who were called the Latter Seven Masters. Although their poetic qualities differed from one another, their principles were basically the same. How could [they be] the seven masters by accident? Or did they spring up because they admire the styles of the seven masters of Nanpi? At present, among poets of the Wu region [we] also have seven masters. [...] I engaged in poetry when I was twenty-some years old. At that time, people esteemed the flowing and simple, superficial and hackneyed, coarse and rough, dry and insipid styles. Owing to the independence and perseverance of the gentlemen in the poetry society, we together eradicated them. After more than fifty years, the poets from far and near all knew to revive ancient [poetry]. Now these

⁸² Li Man-kuei, "Shên Tê-ch'ien," 646. For these poets, see Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 2:675-81; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 439-45; Sun Wenjuan 孫文娟, "Wang Chang jiaoyou kao: yi Wuzhong qi zi wei daibiao" 王昶交遊考:以 "吳中七子" 為代表, 92-95; Wei Xin 衛新, "Qingdai Wumen xuepai he Wuzhong shipai yanjiu" 清代吳門學派和吳中詩派研究; Wang Yuyuan, "Qingdai gediaopai yanjiu," 93-144.

gentlemen have passed away one by one, but the seven masters arose after them.

They were the only group who could sharpen their weapons and match the talents represented by Li [Mengyang], He [Jingming], Wang [Shizhen], and Li [Panlong].

I, in my old age, have been able to see poets thrive generation after generation and hope that they would support [the transmission of] the Major Odes. This is why I end here to celebrate.⁸³

前明弘治時李獻吉何仲默結詩社，共得七人，稱前七子；嘉靖時王元美李于麟復結詩社，亦共得七人，稱后七子。詩品雖異，指趣略同，豈偶然七子耶？抑慕南皮七子之風而興起耶？今吳地詩人復得七子 [...]。余年二十餘從事於詩，時方相尚以流易淺熟粗梗枯竭之體，賴同社諸君子中立不回，相與廓清摧陷。閱五十餘年，遠近作者皆知復古。今諸君子漸次零落，而七子繼起，獨能矯尾厲角，驂駕李何王李諸賢。而予以老髦之年，得睹代興有人，冀以扶大雅之輪，斯其所輟簡而深慶也夫。

Shen Deqian suggests that the Ming masters admired the Seven Masters of Nanpi (*Nanpi qi zi* 南皮七子), whose literary gatherings around Cao Pi in Nanpi (in present-day Hebei province) in 211 heralded the culmination of Jian'an literature, a component of Han-Wei literature as an important model in the history of classical Chinese literature.⁸⁴ Similarly, Shen declares that his

⁸³ Shen Deqian, "Qi zi shixuan xu" 七子詩選序, 1a, 2a-2b, in *Guiyu wenchao*, juan 14, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:588-89.

⁸⁴ For these masters and their gatherings, see Yu Shaochu 俞紹初, "'Nanpi zhi you' yu Jian'an shige chuanguo: Du Wenxuan Cao Pi Yu changeling Wu Zhi shu" "南皮之遊"與建安詩歌創作——讀《文選》曹丕《與朝歌令吳質書》，13-20; Ying Chao 應超, "Nanpi zhi you xiaoyi" 南皮之遊小議, 259-60, 262.

seven disciples followed the members of his own poetry society, who fought against the prevailing poetic trends, which according to his characterization were likely influenced by the Song poetic style, and brought the empire's poetic production to the archaist style. The seven disciples thus shared with the Ming masters the identity as followers of previous literary masters. Shen also emphasizes his disciples' literary heights as comparable to those of the Ming masters. The similarities between these two groups of poets lead to another role they share as transmitters of the orthodox poetic tradition. In this narrative, Shen draws a new poetic lineage: the Nanpi masters—the Former and Latter Seven Masters—the members of Shen's poetry society—Shen's disciples. In this lineage, the Ming archaists and the Jiangsu poets of the Qing dynasty equally qualify to be successors of Jian'an poetry, a model earlier than Tang poetry, and the classical poetic tradition, from which Song poetry is excluded.

Shen Deqian also prefaced the collections and anthologies of scholars in the Wu region. In the preface dedicated to the collection by Wang Mingsheng 王鳴盛 (1722-1797), one of the Seven Masters of Wuzhong, he explains “the anxiety of our group” (*wudang zhi you* 吾黨之憂) about “the decline of the poetic doctrine” (*shijiao zhi huai* 詩教之壞). It is caused by the poetic trend of the first half of the eighteenth century which “regarded Song [poetry] as a direct progenitor and Tang [poetry] as a remote ancestor” (*mi Song tiao Tang* 襮宋桃唐). As scholar Zhang Zhongmou argues, *tiao* 桃 refers to temples for sacrifices to ancestors, and *mi* 襮 refers to temples for sacrifices to deceased fathers; therefore, *mi Song tiao Tang* means that a poet

chooses to “keep distance from Tang poetry” and “stay close to Song poetry.”⁸⁵ Shen Deqian also points out that “the decline of the poetic doctrine” results from the absence of poets who could “excise fake forms” (*bie cai weiti* 別裁偽體) and develop the poetic style of grand, spectacular images, like “a whale in the emerald sea” (*jingyu bihai* 鯨魚碧海),⁸⁶ a feature of masterpieces first claimed by Du Fu⁸⁷ and later by Shen himself.⁸⁸ Jiang Yin conjectures that Shen in this preface criticizes the poets from the Ming-Qing transition to the beginning of the Qianlong reign (the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century): Qian Qianyi and Wang Shizhen, whose literary views include appreciation of Song poetry; Li E, an advocate of Song poetry; and Yuan Mei, who encouraged poets to show their inspiration and spontaneous sensibility.⁸⁹ Although Shen does not clarify the targets of his criticism, it is clear that Shen compares the intensity and severity of the conflict between the poets of different literary preferences to those of a political struggle between different factions, or *dang* 黨, and that he regards the poets who do not belong to his group and imitate Tang poetry as violators of Confucian poetic doctrine.

⁸⁵ Zhang Zhongmou, “Xulun,” in “Qingdai Songshi shicheng lun,” 3.

⁸⁶ Shen Deqian, “Wang Fengjie shi xu” 王鳳喈詩序, 1a-1b, in *Guiyu wenchao*, *juan* 14, *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:587. Shen also criticizes the trend of “regarding Tang [poetry] as a remote ancestor and Song [poetry] as a direct progenitor” (*zu Song tiao Tang* 祖宋桃唐) in the preface to the collection by another Jiangsu poet, Xu Tingheng 許廷鑠 (*juren* 1721). See “Xu Zhusu shi xu” 許竹素詩序, 1b, in *Guiyu wenchao*, *juan* 14, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:584.

⁸⁷ Du Fu, “Xi wei liu jueju,” no. 4, in *Quan Tang shi*, 7:2453; cf. “Six Quatrains Done Playfully,” in Stephen Owen, *The Poetry of Du Fu*, 3:114-15.

⁸⁸ For example, see Shen Deqian, “Chongding Tangshi biecai ji xu” 重訂唐詩別裁集序, 1a, in *Tangshi biecai ji*, 2; *Shuo shi zuiyu*, *juan* 2, 19a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, vol. 235, 248; “Zhu Nianzu shi xu” 朱念祖詩序, 2a, in *Guiyu wenchao yuji* 歸愚文鈔餘集, *juan* 2, in *Shen Guiyu shiwen quanji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 235:127.

⁸⁹ Jiang Yin, “Shen Deqian shixue de yuanyuan, fazhan ji mingming,” 130.

Shen Deqian's preface to Zhang Xijue's 張錫爵 (1692-1774) (courtesy name Danbo 擔伯) collection expresses his concern about the continuity of the poetic tradition in Jiading (in present-day Shanghai), a county of the Wu region:

Danbo (Zhang Xijue) lived in Jiading. The elders of his hometown Tang Shuda, Cheng Mengyang, Li Changheng, and Lou Zirou were called the Four Masters of Jiading. At that time, the Minister [of Rites] Qian Muzhai (Qian Qianyi) excelled Wang [Shizhen] and Li [Panlong] and denounced Zhong [Xing] and Tan [Yuanchun], but he did not have any criticism of the Four Masters. For more than a hundred years, [their] prevailing styles were already fading, and the poetic doctrine gradually declined. Grass has grown on Pucun's (Zhang Yunzhang) and Yaoting's (Zhu Houzhang) tombs for a long time, and Nanhua (Zhang Pengchong) is holding a post at court and goes farther and farther away from his hometown. Therefore, to advocate the poetic craft on the bank of the lonely, desolate river—who but Danbo can be entrusted with this task?⁹⁰

擔伯故家嘉定，鄉之前輩如唐叔達程夢陽李長蘅婁子柔稱嘉定四先生。時錢牧齋尚書凌轅王李，麾斥鍾譚，而與四先生獨無間言。今百餘年來，流風既邈，詩教漸微，樸村葯亭墓草久宿，而南華又官於朝，去鄉日遠。然則以詩學之工倡導於荒江寂寞之濱者，舍擔伯將誰屬？

In this passage, Shen Deqian enumerates representative poets of Jiading from the late Ming to his

⁹⁰ Shen Deqian, “Wuyouyu zhai shi xu” 吾友于齋詩序, 1b-2a, in *Guiyu wenchao*, *juan* 12, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:565.

own time. The first group were the Four Masters of Jiading (*Jiading si xiansheng* 嘉定四先生), who flourished from the second half of the sixteenth century to the first half of the seventeenth century.⁹¹ Shen highlights how Qian Qianyi, a Jiangsu poet who “excelled” (*lingli* 凌轍) and “denounced” (*huichi* 麾斥) the late Ming poets of empire-wide influence and reputation, respected the four masters. Similarly, in his preface to the collection of another Jiading scholar, his friend Hou Quan 侯銓 (fl. eighteenth century), Shen compares the four masters’ poetry to that by the Ming masters Wang Shizhen and Li Panlong and records them with pride in Qian Qianyi’s appreciation of them: “At that time, Qian Muzhai (Qian Qianyi), who was from Yushan, steered poetic production. He affirmed a few and denigrated most [of the poets] of the three hundred years of the Ming dynasty and only esteemed and bowed to the Four Masters of Jiading” 皆虞山錢牧齋主詩盟，有明三百年中少可多否，獨于嘉定四先生斂手推服。⁹² Qian Qianyi’s reputation and authority further confirm the four masters’ literary achievements, which surpass those of most Ming poets and even the Seven Masters, the exemplary advocates of Tang poetry in Shen’s poetic evaluation.

The second generation of the poetic representatives of Jiading is represented by the early

⁹¹ They were Tang Shisheng 唐時升 (1551-1636) (courtesy name Shuda 叔達), Cheng Jiasui 程嘉燧 (1565-1643) (courtesy name Mengyang 孟陽), Li Liufang 李流芳 (1575-1629) (courtesy name Changheng 長蘅), and Lou Jian 婁堅 (1567-1631) (courtesy name Zirou 子柔). Shi Zhecun 施蟄存 (1905-2003) classifies them as the last school of poetry of the late Ming dynasty. See Shi, “Du Tanyuanji” 讀《檀園集》, in *Shi Zhecun qishi nian wenxuan* 施蟄存七十年文選, 621. For their literary accomplishments, for example, see Wang Rong 王蓉, “‘Jiading si xiansheng’ yanjiu” “嘉定四先生”研究; Wu Qiulan 吳秋蘭, “Wan Ming Jiading si xiansheng yanjiu” 晚明嘉定四先生研究.

⁹² See Shen Deqian “Hou Bingheng shi xu” 侯秉衡詩序, 1a, in *Guiyu wenchao*, *juan* 12, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:561.

Qing poet Zhang Yunzhang 張雲章 (1648-1726) (style name Pucun 樸村). Zhang Yunzhang in his postscript to the anthology of the Four Masters of Jiading expresses his pride in the exceptionality of Jiading in Ming literature: “The scholars of my county do not change [their preferences] by following prevailing practices, but are able to change prevailing practices. [Their independence and capability] have a long history” 吾邑之士類不隨世俗為轉移，而且能轉移乎世俗，其所由來漸矣。⁹³ Jiading scholars’ independent thinking and strong influence praised in Zhang Yunzhang’s preface is also embodied by Shen Deqian’s description of the Four Masters’ reputation.

The third generation of Jiading poets are Zhu Houzhang 朱厚章 (d. 1735) (style name Yaoting 藥亭), Zhang Pengchong 張鵬翀 (1688-1745) (style name Nanhua shanren 南華山人),⁹⁴ and Zhang Xijue. At the beginning of this preface, Shen Deqian particularly states how Zhu Houzhang, Zhang Yunzhang, and Zhang Pengchong recognized Zhang Xijue’s talents.⁹⁵ Their recognition exemplifies the support and appreciation among Ming-Qing Jiading poets, which enabled them to jointly establish a unique poetic tradition of the county.

Shen Deqian’s preface provides a picture of the poetry in Ming-Qing Jiading. He regards the first generation of Jiading poets as the highest models of Ming poetry and considers the second and third generations qualified to revive the poetic doctrine. His identification of these Jiading poets validates the county’s great importance in the continuation of the orthodox tradition

⁹³ Zhang Yunzhang, “Jiading si xiansheng houxu” 嘉定四先生後序, in *Pucun wenji* 樸村文集, juan 9, 2a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 75:67.

⁹⁴ Zhang Pengchong was famous for his literary talent during the reign of Qianlong. See Chen Wenxin and Wang Wei, “Xijie beihou de wenxueshi guan,” 63, 67n9.

⁹⁵ Shen Deqian, “Wuyouyu zhai shi xu,” 1a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:565.

of classical poetry. The significance of Jiading in Ming-Qing literature also resides in the exceptionality of the county's literary tradition and the literati's attempts to preserve it.

As the leading poet of empire-wide influence, Shen Deqian paid attention to poetry in other regions. In the preface to the collection by his contemporary, Wang Dao 王道 (courtesy name Zhifu 直夫), he examines the poetic history of the Min region:

The Min School of Poetry of the preceding Ming dynasty was initiated by Master Lin Hong, whose courtesy name was Ziyu, during the beginning of the empire. At that time, Gao Bing, whose courtesy name was Yanhui, Wang Gong, whose courtesy name was Anzhong, Wang Cheng, whose courtesy name was Mengyang, Lan Ren, whose courtesy name was Jingzhi, and Lan Zhi, whose courtesy name was Mingzhi, gave support to one another. Their tones were peaceful and gentle; they followed the Tang poets. Later, Cao Xuequan, whose courtesy name was Nengshi, and Xu Tong, whose courtesy name was Weihe, rose to succeed them. [Their poetic styles were] different from the vulgar and wild styles at that time. However, they did not dare to claim their styles to be like the spirit of a whale in the emerald sea or a sky-scraping sword. Among them, only Zheng Shanfu, whose courtesy name was Jizhi, tried to develop his own features; however, he only learned the surface [characteristics] of Du [Fu]'s poetry. [...] Ancient people thought that Bai Letian's (Bai Juyi) poetry and Su Zizhan's (Su Shi) prose were able to exhaust the principles of the past and present. Although they have faulty

formulations, they were still masters. Zhifu's poetry is also only like this.⁹⁶

前明閩中詩派，國初開於林子羽鴻。時高彥恢棟，王安中恭，王孟揚偁，藍靜之仁，藍明之智，共相羽翼，其音安和溫順，步趨唐人。後曹能使學徐惟和燴起而紹承之，別於時下鄙體野體，而鯨魚碧海，巨刃摩天之概，未敢以之自任焉。中間惟鄭繼之善夫欲別開面目，然學杜祇得其皮毛。[...] 昔人以白樂天詩蘇子瞻文爲能說盡古今道理，雖有語病，不害爲大家。直夫之詩亦若是焉而已。

Shen Deqian classifies the Min poets of the Ming dynasty as the Min School of Poetry (*Minzhong shipai* 閩中詩派). This school of poetry was initiated by Lin Hong, and the first generation of this school included Lin's colleagues, represented by Gao Bing. The main characteristics of this school are "peaceful and gentle" (*anhe wenrun* 安和溫順), a quality which is judged by Shen to have been inherited from Tang poetry and meets his expectation of proper expression of poets' nature and emotion.⁹⁷ Zheng Shanfu 鄭善夫 (1485-1523), a poet of the second generation, is evaluated as a relatively superficial imitator of Du Fu. The literary styles of the poets of the third generation, Cao Xuequan 曹學佺 (1574-1646) and Xu Tong 徐

⁹⁶ Shen Deqian, "Wang Zhifu shi xu" 王直夫詩序, 1a-1b, in *Guiyu wenchao yuji*, juan 1, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 235:113.

⁹⁷ For the poetic production of this school of poetry, also see Chen Qingyuan 陳慶元, "Mingchu Minzhong shi zi shipai xingqi zhi kaocha" 明初閩中十子詩派興起之考察, 72-75; Chen Qingyuan, "Minzhong shi zi yanjiu guankui" 閩中十子研究管窺, 147-48; Zuo Dongling, "Minzhong shipai yu zhuliu shitan guanxi yanjiu" 閩中詩派與主流詩壇關係研究, 16-23; Chen Guanghong, "Mingchu Min shipai yu taiga wenxue" 明初閩詩派與臺閣文學, 63-76; Yang Da 陽達, "Minzhong shipai jieshe shulun" 閩中詩派結社述論, 67-71; Cai Yipeng 蔡一鵬, "Lun Minzhong shipai" 論閩中詩派, 20-25.

燭 (1561-1599),⁹⁸ received a higher evaluation than Zheng for being close to the moderate, honest style, rather than “vulgar” (*bi* 鄙) and “wild” (*ye* 野) styles. However, they are still considered relatively unsuccessful at learning from Du Fu, because their poetry lacks grand, spectacular images “a whale in the emerald sea” and “a sky-scraping sword” (*juren mo tian* 巨刃摩天). Shen classifies Wang Dao’s poetry at the level of Bai Juyi’s poetry and Su Shi’s prose, which achieve the level of “masters” (*dajia* 大家) but are inferior to High Tang poetry, especially. In his evaluation of Min poetry, Shen continues his advocacy of High Tang poetry by taking Du Fu as a representative model. Consequently, the poets after Lin Hong and his associates who failed to inherit the poetic merits of Tang poets, especially Du Fu, receive his praise tempered with criticism. None of them is evaluated as a successor of the “poetic doctrine,” a role Shen assigns to Jiangsu poets, his fellow countrymen.

Shen Deqian’s examination of poetry of the Wu and Min regions shares with his evaluation of Tang and Song poetry the goal of reviving the Confucian poetic doctrine, the high esteem of the Tang poetic models, and the practices of tracing a poetic history and drawing a genealogy of poets. Through these strategies, he legitimizes local traditions as components of the empire’s orthodox poetic tradition and includes his discussions of regional poetry into the empire-wide debate over Tang and Song poetry, in which he shows his pride in, or partiality to, his hometown.

⁹⁸ Wang Shizhen states that Cao Xuequan “obtained the styles of the Six Dynasties and the early Tang period” 得六朝初唐之格. See Wang, *Chibei ou tan*, vol. 2, 402. For studies on Cao Xuequan and Xu Tong, for example, see Wang Shichang 王士昌, “Cao Xuequan shiwen yanjiu” 曹學佺詩文研究; Li Mei 李梅, “Cao Xuequan shige lilun yanjiu” 曹學佺詩歌理論研究; Sun Wenxiu 孫文秀, “Cao Xuequan wenxue huodong yu wenyi sixiang yanjiu” 曹學佺文學活動與文藝思想研究; Chen Qingyuan, “Wan Ming shiren Xu Tong lun: jian lun Jingshan Xu shi xuye yu wenxue zhi xingshuai” 晚明詩人徐燭論——兼論荊山徐氏儒業及文學之興衰.

Li E: The Grand Master of the Last Stage of the Zhe School⁹⁹

D) Li E's Poetic Views

Li E is widely acknowledged as being a representative advocate of Song poetry.¹⁰⁰ According to Shang Wei, the most important characteristic of Li E's poetry is his "wide-ranging textual references and allusions to the Song."¹⁰¹ His characterization can be seen as a modern version of Shen Deqian's comments on Li E's poetry in *Guochao shi biecai ji*: "Fanxie is of profound learning and especially proficient in historical allusions and facts of the two Song periods" 樊榭學問淹洽，尤精熟兩宋典實。¹⁰² Douglas Howland highlights Li E's imitation of Song poetry and application of literary and historical scholarship in his poetic writing.¹⁰³ At the same time, scholars note that Li E never declared that he modeled his poetry after Song masters and did not compose works of poetic criticism or encourage poets to learn from Song poetry.¹⁰⁴ Several

⁹⁹ Zhang Zhongmou in his study on the Zhe school designates Li E as "the Grand Master of the Last Stage of the Zhe School" (*Zhepai houqi jujiang* 浙派後期巨匠). See Zhang, *Qingdai wenhua yu Zhepai shi*, 222-47.

¹⁰⁰ Wu Huafeng and Xia Piaopiao 夏飄飄 both declare that Chinese scholars have always acknowledged Li E's emulation of Song poetry. See Wu Huafeng, "Tang Song jian zong: Li E shige yuanyuan xinlun" "唐宋兼宗"——厲鶚詩歌淵源新論, 98; Xia Piaopiao, "Tang Song hu can lun' bian: Li E zong Tang shuo xianyi" "唐宋互參論"辨——厲鶚"宗唐說"獻疑, 96.

¹⁰¹ Shang Wei, "The Literati Era and Its Demise," 259.

¹⁰² Shen Deqian, *Qingshi biecai ji*, 2:969.

¹⁰³ Howland, *Borders of Chinese Civilization: Geography and History at Empire's End*, 118-19. The explanation of these characteristics is also included in Zhang Lihua's, Liu Shinan's and Zhang Zhongmou's investigation of Li E's poetry. See Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 304-10; Liu Shinan, "Li E yu Zhepai" 厲鶚與浙派, 45-46; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 265-68; Zhang Zhongmou, *Qingdai wenhua yu Zhepai shi*, 234-36.

¹⁰⁴ Wu Huafeng, "Chaoye lili' beijing xia de shixue lunzheng: Shen Deqian yu Li E guanxi bian" "朝野離立"背景下的詩學論爭: 沈德潛與厲鶚關係辯, 66-67; "Tang Song jian zong," 98. Also see Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 91-93; Zhang Zhongmou, *Qingdai wenhua yu Zhepai shi*, 246; Zhao Xinggen 趙杏根, "Lun Zhepai shiren Li E" 論浙派詩人厲鶚, 77; Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 302, 304.

prefaces he dedicated to literary collections and anthologies are considered the declarations of his views on poetry and are quoted and discussed frequently.¹⁰⁵ One of these prefaces is dedicated to Zha Weiren's collection:

Poetry must have styles, but should not have schools. Poetic styles come to maturity in [different] historical periods; they are related to [poets'] nature and emotion, and are where vitality is stored. [They] cannot be imitated by copying [but] can be acquired through [literary] cultivation. Therefore, one should discard the low and aim for the lofty, avoid embellishment and turn to purity, keep distance from mediocrity and vulgarity, and tend toward elegance and orthodoxy. This is what Shaoling (Du Fu) means by taking many teachers as mentors and what the Duke of the Jing [State] (Wang Anshi) means by observing widely and selecting few. These statements stress discernment on poetic styles. [When a poet] clearly understands styles, forges himself, absorbs and chooses [the merits of] previous masters, creates unique ideas and concepts, and supplements [these practices] by a wealth of reading, pure talent and efficacious understanding are thus in [his poetry]. [He] combines the styles of various authors and thus gains his own style; then [he] can understand and discuss poetic styles. Since Lü Ziwei (Lü Benzhong) classified the Xijiang School of Poetry and Xie Gaoyu (Xie Ao) wrote a preface for the Muzhou School of Poetry, poetry started to have schools. However, [they] are only the descendants' esteem

¹⁰⁵ Xia Piaopiao, “‘Tang Song hu can lun’ bian: Li E zong Tang shuo xianyi,” 97.

and forced classifications. The masters in their own time did not loudly proclaim themselves as members of those schools. When Tieya (Yang Weizhen) started to [lead a school], he initiated bad practices. During the middle period of the Ming dynasty, Li [Mengyang] and He [Jingming] created waves first, and Wang [Shizhen] and Li [Panlong] expanded their trends. They rashly classified the talents within the empire by schools, and people who were greedy for fame followed them in swarms. The schools named “Seven Masters” or “Five Masters” emerged one after another. In our dynasty, the teaching of poetry prospers widely, and great talents have emerged. People who are only good at patching together words and sentences of previous generations do not forget their desire for fame. They either admire the residue of Beidi’s (Li Panlong) and Ji’nan’s (Wang Shizhen) views so that they limit their spirit, or they imitate the features left by one or two grand masters but fail to innovate. Although there are a vast number of their works, very few qualify for study and appreciation. Are those not outstanding scholars who are firmly established by themselves and are not deluded by this situation? Master Zha Lianpo [...] has profound cultivation and selected broadly [from previous literature]; he combined almost all poetic styles, and thus developed his own poetic style.¹⁰⁶

詩不可以無體，而不當有派。詩之有體，成於時代，關乎性情，真氣之所存，

¹⁰⁶ “Zha Lianpo Zhetang weiding gao xu” 查蓮坡蔗塘未定藁序, in *Fanxie shanfang wenji* 樊榭山房文集, *juan* 3, 4b-5a, in *Fanxie shanfang ji* 樊榭山房集, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 271:429.

非可以剽擬似，可以陶冶得也。是故去卑而就高，避縛而趨潔，遠流俗而嚮雅正。少陵所云多師爲師，荊公所謂博觀約取，皆於體是辨。體製旣明，爐鞴自我，吸攬前修，獨造意匠，又輔以積卷之富，而清能靈解卽具其中。蓋合羣作者之體而自有其體，然後詩之體可得而言也。自呂紫微作西江詩派，謝皋羽序睦州詩派，而詩於是乎有派。然猶後人瓣香所在，強爲臚列耳，在諸公當日未嘗斷斷然以派自居也。迨鐵雅濫觴，已開陋習。有明中葉，李何揚波于前，王李承流於後，動以派別概天下之才俊；噉名者靡然從之，七子五子疊牀架屋。本朝詩教極盛，英傑挺生，綴學之徒名心未忘；或祖北地濟南之餘論以錮其神明，或襲一二鉅公之遺貌而未開生面。篇什雖繁，供人研玩者正自有限。於此有卓然不爲所惑者，豈非特立之士哉？查君蓮坡[...] 陶冶深而采擇富，殆無體不苞，以成爲蓮坡之詩體歟！

In their analysis of this preface, Zhang Bing and Wang Xiaoheng argue that Li E's opposition to classifying schools (*pai* 派) of poetry here reflects his dissatisfaction with slavish devotion to either Tang or Song poetry and the antagonism between the two sides during the Qing period.¹⁰⁷ This view applies to the first third of this passage, in which Li attacks the false classification of schools of poetry, claims the importance of a poet's nature and emotion in writing, and suggests learning from masters of different periods. Li's evaluation of the individual poets in the rest of this passage supports the analyses by many other Chinese scholars that his dissatisfaction is aimed at the Ming-Qing admiration of Tang poetry, represented by the Former

¹⁰⁷ Zhang Bing and Wang Xiaoheng, "Li E yu Zhepai shixue sixiang tixi de chongjian" 厲鶚與浙派詩學思想體系的重建, 83.

and Latter Seven Masters and Shen Deqian.¹⁰⁸

Those who were attacked most fiercely in this passage are the Yuan, Ming, and Qing poets who chose certain schools of poetry as their models. The “pioneer” is Yang Weizhen 楊維禎 (1296-1370) (style name Tieya 鐵崖), who, with his Tieya School of Poetry (*Tieya shipai* 鐵崖詩派 or 鐵雅詩派), advocated Tang poetry and supposedly rejuvenated classical literature.¹⁰⁹ Some Qing poets, who are described as restricting (*gu* 錮) their spirit (*shenming* 神明), seem to exemplify strict imitation, or copying (*piaoni* 剽擬). These Qing poets are the followers of the Former and Latter Seven Masters as well as several other poetic masters. According to Liu Shinan, the former group appears to be Shen Deqian and his school of poetry, and the latter group is the admirers of Wang Shizhen and Zhu Yizun,¹¹⁰ the two early Qing poets whose writing criteria were violated by Li, as Tu Lien-chê states.¹¹¹ Briefly, the poets sharply criticized in this preface are imitators of Tang poetry, although, in view of his esteem for Tang poetry, Li E belittles these poets’ imitative writing rather than their choice of poetic models.

Li E’s encouragement of cultivating individual poetic styles (*ti* 體) reveals his esteem for

¹⁰⁸ Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 456; Wang Yingzhi, “Li E shanshuishi chutan” 厲鶚山水詩初探, 43-44; Wang Yingzhi, “Li E shanshuishi tedian chutan” 厲鶚山水詩特點初探, 37; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 230-31; Liu Shinan, “Li E yu Zhepai,” 46; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 267; Zhao Xinggen, “Lun Zhepai shiren Li E,” 79; Zhang Lihua, “Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 299.

¹⁰⁹ For Yang Weizhen and the Tieya School of Poetry, see Richard Lynn, “Mongol-Yüan Classical Verse,” in *Columbia History of Chinese Literature*, 387; John Timothy Wixted, “Poetry of the Fourteenth Century,” 393-94; Wang Huibin 王輝斌, “Yang Weizhen yu Yuan mo ‘Tieya yuefu shipai’” 楊維禎與元末“鐵崖樂府詩派,” 90-95.

¹¹⁰ See Liu Shinan, “Li E yu Zhepai,” 44; *Qingshi liupai shi*, 263. Similarly, Zhao Xinggen and Zhang Lihua think the second group is the poets who learned from Wang Shizhen. See Zhao Xinggen, “Lun Zhepai shiren Li E,” 79; Zhang Lihua, “Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 299.

¹¹¹ Tu Lien-chê, “Li Ê,” 455.

the classical poetic tradition. He expects all individual poetic styles to have the same particular qualities, especially elegance and orthodoxy (*yazheng* 雅正), and show a deep understanding and synthesis of previous poetic accomplishments.¹¹² In his poetic theories, these qualities are the basis of a poet's "pure talent and efficacious understanding" (*qingneng lingjie* 清能靈解), which can be understood as natural sensibility and inspiration, or *xingling*, and as the precondition of the uniqueness and originality of a poetic style.¹¹³ In other words, the inheritance of the poetic legacy is of greater importance than the demonstration of a poet's individual nature, emotion, inspiration, and creativity. This emphasis corresponds to Li's display of literary and historical scholarship in poetry, the characteristic which he shared with Song poetry. Wu Hongyi reminds us that although Li disagrees with classification of poets by schools of poetry, he was a follower of Song poetry.¹¹⁴ This preface corroborates this assessment.

Another indication of Li's favouritism for Song poets is his leniency towards the Southern Song initiators of school classification, Lü Benzhong 呂本中 (1084-1145), who once held a post of Drafter of Central Drafting office, or *Ziwei lang* 紫微郎, and composed *Ziwei shihua* 紫微詩話 (Ziwei's Remarks on Poetry), and Xie Ao 謝翱 (1249-1295) (courtesy name Gaoyu 皋

¹¹² "Broadly observing and selectively absorbing" (*bo guan er yue qu* 博觀而約取) is Su Shi's advice on literary studying. In *Shilin shihua* 石林詩話 (Shilin's Remarks on Poetry) by Ye Mengde 葉夢得 (1077-1148) (style name Shilinjushi 石林居士), it is a description of the process by which Wang Anshi, who was awarded the title of the Duke of the Jing State (*Jing guo gong* 荊國公), learned poetry. See Su Shi, "Jia shuo" 稼說, in *Su Shi quanji jiaozhu* 蘇軾全集校註, 11:1061; Ye Mengde, *Shilin shihua*, in *Zhongguo lidai shihua xuan* 中國歷代詩話選, 423.

¹¹³ Zhao Xinggen considers Li E's encouragement of a poet demonstrating his originality and genius as a herald of Yuan Mei's expectation of *xingling*. See Zhao Xinggen, "Lun Zhepai shiren Li E," 78.

¹¹⁴ Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 202.

羽). This leniency contrasts with his stringent criticism of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing poets, who mainly learned from Tang poetry. Li's appreciation of Song poetry is also revealed by the designation of Zha Weiren, a poet of "ornate composition"¹¹⁵ who had learned poetry from Zha Shenxing, an advocate of Song poetry from Zhejiang,¹¹⁶ as an exemplary poet whose individual poetic style meets Li's expectations.

Another example of Li E's poetic views is the preface dedicated to the collection by Chen Yu 陳煜 (fl. eighteenth century) (style name Lanyuan 懶園), an early Qing poet from Hangzhou. In this preface, Li E identifies the successes and failures in learning from Tang and Song poetry:

When these masters say they are writing Tang poetry, they are good at it. When clumsy poets do it, they obtain its appearance but miss its spirit. Then Tang poetry is exhausted. Therefore, capable poets refer to Su [Shi], Huang [Tingjian], Fan [Chengda], and Lu [You]; they frequently produce innovations. The epigones [followed them like] chasing after flowing waves and do not discipline themselves any longer. Then the poets who do not imitate Tang poetry are also exhausted.¹¹⁷

諸君言為唐詩，工矣；拙者為之，得貌遺神，而唐詩窮。於是能者參之蘇黃

¹¹⁵ Fang Chao-ying, "Cha Li," 20.

¹¹⁶ Zha Shenxing and his poetry are mentioned in Chapter 1, 68 and 76. For Zha Weiren's poetry and life experience, including his learning poetry from Zha Shenxing, see Xiang Shuzhen 項姝珍, "Lun Zha Weiren gugao chouku de shixin" 論查為仁孤高愁苦的詩心, 74; Wang Zhiwang 王之望, "Zhengui de shiliao, boqia de shangping: Zha Weiren de Lianpo shihua pingxi" 珍貴的史料，博恰的賞評——查為仁的《蓮坡詩話》評析, 71-75.

¹¹⁷ Li E, "Lanyuan shichao xu" 懶園詩鈔序, in *Fanxie shanfang wenji*, juan 3, 4a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 271:429.

范陸，時出新意，末流遂瀾倒無複繩檢，而不為唐詩者又窮。

While “these masters” (*zhujun* 諸君) whose imitation of Tang poetry is praised in this passage are the early Qing poets from Zhejiang, Howland takes this preface as an example of Qing poets’ attacks on the archaist trend, which had prevailed during the Ming dynasty and concentrated on imitation of language and rhetoric.¹¹⁸ Read within the historical context of Ming poetry, this passage is aimed probably at many Ming masters who led important poetic trends in succession: the Former and Latter Seven Masters, the Chaling School, the Jingling School, and the Yuan brothers. On the basis of dividing these poets between followers of Tang poetry and admirers of Song poetry, Li E distinguishes the poetry of high quality from that of low quality in both groups. He bases his evaluation on criteria including innovative imitation and the inheritance of previous poets’ “spirit” (*shen* 神), or the thoughts, moods, and moral character conveyed in poetry, rather than the choice of models between Tang and Song poetry and mimicry of “appearance” (*xing* 形), or wording and syntax. This preface illustrates Li E’s sober awareness of the achievements and shortcomings of both groups.

According to Xia Piaopiao’s 夏飄飄 examination of contemporary Chinese scholars’ discussions of this preface, Wang Yunxi 王運熙, Zhang Bing, and Zhang Lihua all consider this preface to be Li E’s exhortation to learn from both Tang and Song poetry on the basis of his consciousness of the vicissitudes in poetic trends. Xia agrees with them, concluding that Li recognizes and accepts the merits of Tang poetry. However, Xia insists that Li E’s admiration of

¹¹⁸ Howland, *Borders of Chinese Civilization*, 120, 274n24.

Tang poetry did not lead to his equal efforts to learn from Tang and Song poetry.¹¹⁹ In addition to these contemporary scholars, Wu Huafeng 吳華峰 and Wang Xiaoshu argue that Li E's pentasyllabic poetry combines the merits of Tang and Song poets and that his heptasyllabic regulated poetry, which is of higher quality, possesses the characteristics of Song poetry.¹²⁰ Wu particularly notices that Li imitated the Tang poets who foreshadowed the Song poetic style, including Du Fu, Bai Juyi, Meng Jiao 孟郊 (751-814), and Jia Dao 賈島 (779-843).¹²¹ Consequently, Wu emphasizes that the composition of a poet's literary affiliation is complex and difficult to trace and differentiate.¹²² Wu's astute observation applies to every poet examined in this dissertation. However, Li E in contemporary scholarship on classical Chinese poetry is generally classified as a devotee of Song poetry. Daniel Bryant seems to be the only scholar who states that Li E's poetry was influenced by Tang and pre-Tang poetry more than by Song poetry.¹²³

II) The Poetic Histories of Hangzhou and Xuancheng (in Present-day Anhui Province) by Li E

¹¹⁹ Xia Piaopiao, "'Tang Song hu can lun' bian: Li E zong Tang shuo xianyi," 97-99. Fan Mengjiao 范夢姣 in her analysis of this preface also argues that Li's appreciation of the poets who imitated Tang poetry and referred to Song poetry reveals his preference to Song poetry. See Fan, "Li E wenxue sixiang yanjiu" 厲鶚文學思想研究, 19.

¹²⁰ Wu Huafeng, "Tang Song jian zong," 101-5, 107; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 456-58.

¹²¹ Stephen Owen discusses Meng Jiao's poetry in *The Poetry of Meng Chiao and Han Yü and The Late Tang*. For Jia Dao's poetry, see Stephen Owen, *The Late Tang: Chinese Poetry of the Mid-Ninth Century (827-860)*, 94-99, 123-31.

¹²² Wu Huafeng, "Tang Song jian zong," 108. Wang Yingzhi also states that Li E learned from both the Southern Song poets, Chen Yuyi and the Four Lings of Yongjia, and the Tang poets including Wang Wei, Meng Haoran, Wei Yingwu, Liu Zongyuan, and Jia Dao. See Wang Yingzhi, "Li E shanshuishi chutan," 49; "Li E shanshuishi tedian chutan," 42.

¹²³ Bryant, "Poetry of the Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries," 432.

As an influential poet with a broad range of associations, Li E, like Shen Deqian, was enthusiastic about local poetic traditions of different regions. He starts the preface to Chen Yu's collection with a brief review of poetry in Hangzhou during the Qing period:

[If we talk about] our Hangzhou poets in the past, [we] must praise the Ten Masters of Xiling. The Ten Masters' poems were all epitomes of Tang poetry. The poets who continued their learning include Master Wu Zhishang (Wu Yunjia) and Master Xu Zishan (Xu Fengji), who both learned from Master Zhang Qinting (Zhang Dan); as well as Master Jiang Jingshan (Jiang Shu), Xueqiao (Jiang Hongdao), and Master Chen Lanyuan (Chen Yu), who all learned from Master Mao Zhihuang (Mao Xianshu). Master Shen Fangzhou (Shen Yongji) alone learned from the Five Masters of Lingnan, and his theories also agreed with those of the Ten Masters. Their poetry echoed one another's sounds, corresponded in rhythm, and possessed musicality. Therefore, they belonged to the same poetic school, and their friendship became more profound day by day. [...] These poets all humbled themselves to befriend me. I knew Lanyuan through Jingshan. [...] When I read his poetry, [I found that] his ancient-style poems were vigorous and similar to those by Jiazhou (Cen Shen) and Dongchuan (Li Qi); his pentasyllabic and heptasyllabic recent-style poems were between Qian [Qi] and Liu [Changqing].¹²⁴

往時吾杭言詩者必推西泠十子。十子之詩，皆能自爲唐詩者也。承其學者，吳文

¹²⁴ Li E, "Lanyuan shichao xu," in *Fanxie shanfang wenji, juan 3*, 4a-4b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, vol. 271, 428-29.

志上徐丈紫山師張先生秦亭，蔣丈靜山雪樵陳丈懶園師毛先生稚黃，沈丈方舟獨師嶺南五子，而說亦與十子合。諸君之詩，聲應節赴，宮商訢合，故流派同而交誼亦日以篤。[...] 諸君皆折節而下予。因靜山以識懶園。[...] 及讀其詩，則歌行排鼻，仿佛嘉州東川；五七言近體，亦在錢劉之間。

In this passage, the lineage of Hangzhou poets, or “these masters” (*zhu jun* 諸君) in this preface, is composed of successors of Tang poetry: the Ten Masters of Xiling, five of their disciples, and Shen Yongji 沈用濟 (fl. the Kangxi reign) (courtesy name 方舟), who was congenial to them.¹²⁵ Developing in parallel to the advocacy of Song poetry, this lineage confirms Zhu Yizun’s statement of the diversity of Zhejiang poets’ literary styles and interests examined in Chapter 1. The associations and appreciation between Li E and these poets also illustrate Zhu’s declaration about the cordial and harmonious atmosphere of the Zhe poetic circle nurtured by literati with various poetic preferences.

Li E also paid attention to literary achievements of Xuancheng in Anhui, also known as Wanling, when he wrote a preface to *Wan ya* 宛雅 (The Literary Elegance of Wanling), an anthology of the poems by Xuancheng poets from the Tang to the Qing period:

Lu Fangweng’s (Lu You) preface to the poems by Li [Xiaoxian], who held a post at the Bureau of Forestry and Crafts, reads: “Among those who came to be governors

¹²⁵ Zhishang 志上 was Wu Yunjia’s 吳允嘉 (fl. the Kangxi reign) courtesy name; Zishan 紫山 was Xu Fengji’s 徐逢吉 (1656-1740) courtesy name; Jingshan 靜山 was Jiang Shu’s 蔣淑 (fl. eighteenth century) courtesy name; and Xueqiao 雪樵 was Jiang Hongdao’s 蔣宏道 (fl. eighteenth century) style name. For these poets’ literary lives, see Zhu Zejie, “‘Xiling shi zi’ xilie kaobian,” 78. Qinting 秦亭 is Zhang Dan’s 張丹 (1619-1687) style name, and Zhihuang 稚黃 is Mao Xianshu’s 毛先舒 (1620-1688) style name. They are two of the Ten Masters of Xiling, who are mentioned in Chapter 1, 50-52.

and composed poems with literary grace, Xie Xuancheng (Xie Tiao) was actually the champion. Among those who were born here and revived the ancient style of songs and poetry, Mei Wanling (Mei Yaochen) was the only progenitor.” [...] In our dynasty, Master Shi Yushan (Shi Runzhang), the Reader-in-waiting [of the Hanlin Academy], emerged to follow the traces of the Kai[yuan] and [Tian]bao reigns in order to reach back to the Han and Wei dynasties. The pure tone and supreme flavour [of his poetry] is rarely seen among his peers. I have said Yuyang’s (Wang Shizhen) and Changshui’s (Zhu Yizun) [poems] are excessively embellished, like the beauty of morning flowers that wither with time; only the voice of the Master [Shi Runzhang] does not fall.¹²⁶

陸放翁序李虞部之詩云：“來爲守者，風流吟詠，謝宣城寔爲之冠。生其鄉者，歌詩復古，梅宛陵獨擅其宗。”[...] 我朝施侍讀愚山先生出而嗣蹤開寶以溯漢魏，淳音至味，流輩所希。予嘗謂漁洋長水過於傳采，朝華容有時謝，惟先生獨無墜響。

At the beginning of this passage, Li E quotes Lu You’s preface, in which Lu applauds the literary culture of Xuancheng and identifies two superlative representatives: Xie Tiao 謝朓 (464-499), a famous poet of the Qi dynasty who once held a position in Xuancheng,¹²⁷ and Mei Yaochen, who is named Master Wanling (*Wanling xiansheng* 宛陵先生) after the alternate name of his native place. This quotation provides an example of Shen Deqian’s statement of Li E’s

¹²⁶ Li E, “Wanya xu” 宛雅序, in *Fanxie shanfang wenji*, juan 2, 14a-14b, in *Fanxie shanfang ji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 271:425.

¹²⁷ For Xie Tiao’s poetry, see Kang-I Sun Chang, *Six Dynasties Poetry*, 112-45.

familiarity with and appreciation of Song literature. In Li E's preface, the poetic tradition of Xuancheng is regarded as having its height in Shi Runzhang, an early Qing admirer of Mei Yaochen. Li E's eulogy of Shi's imitation of High Tang, Han, and Wei poetry clearly shows his admiration of pre-Song poetry. Simultaneously, he claims Shi's superiority to Wang Shizhen and Zhu Yizun. The reason for doing so is possibly because Wang Shizhen and Zhu Yizun did not end their writing careers with an appreciation of Song-style poetry, as Shi Runzhang did, but more consistently admired Tang poetry or more sternly attacked Song-style poetry. As Liu Shinan and Fan Mengjiao 范夢姣 argue, Li's criticism of Wang and Zhu reveals his attempt to correct the misconception of the essence of Tang poetry in Wang, Zhu, and their followers.¹²⁸ Tang poetry and Song poetry possess equally important roles as the precursors in this tradition, which extended to Li's times.

In the second half of this preface, Li E exalts Xuancheng literati's preservation and continuation of their poetic tradition and laments the absence for an anthology of poetry from his hometown, where "the flourishing of literary elegance is not inferior to [that in] Wanling" 風雅之盛不減宛陵.¹²⁹ This preface thus embodies his critical comprehension of seventeenth-century Qing poetry represented by Shi Runzhang, Wang Shizhen, and Zhu Yizun, his impartial appreciation of poetry from another region, and his pride in and anxiety about the poetic tradition in his native place.

¹²⁸ Liu Shinan, "Li E yu Zhepai," 44; Liu Shinan, "Zhepai," in *Qingshi liupai shi*, 263; Fan Mengjiao, "Li E wenxue sixiang yanjiu," 19.

¹²⁹ Li E, "Wanya xu," in *Fanxie shanfang wenji*, juan 2, 15a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 271:426.

From his writing of classical poetic history to his construction of local poetic traditions, Li E's critical views of both Tang and Song poetry persist. Like Shen Deqian, he integrates his reflections on Tang and Song poetry with his efforts at establishing local poetic traditions.

Conclusion

Shen Deqian and Li E both display enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility for preserving and continuing the orthodox poetic tradition in their writing and anthologizing of poetry. Shen Deqian's poetic criticism in his writings and the poems in his anthologies constitute a complete, detailed history of Chinese poetry. Li E traces the poetic history from the perspective of poetic schools. In spite of his negative view on literati's practices of classifying poetic schools, his version of the poetic history outlines the evolution of post-Tang poetry. Shen and Li both uphold the well-accepted view of nature and emotion as the origin of poetry. Applied to commentary on the *Shijing* poems in the early canonized work of literary criticism, *Wenxin diaolong*, this view shows their desire to follow the orthodox poetic tradition. Another indication of this desire is their expectation of a poet to learn from various poetic masters. In their records of the poetry of different regions—not only their own hometowns—they highlight the continuation of poetic achievements through generations in these places. Shen Deqian particularly suggests that some poets from Jiangsu bear the responsibility of continuing the orthodox poetic tradition. By devoting efforts to both tracing the mainstream of classical Chinese poetry and identifying the characteristics of its branches, Shen Deqian and Li E functioned as leaders in the Qing Empire and among their fellow townsmen.

With the same goal and similar approaches, Shen Deqian and Li E demonstrate their divergent poetic inclinations and preferences. Shen Deqian persists in his advocacy of Tang poetry and denigration of Song poetry. His version of poetic history is mainly composed of pre-Song masters and their works. In the poetic history of the Min region, he employs Tang poetic merits as the evaluative criterion. Li E has diverse criteria. In his regional poetic histories, he praises Zhejiang poets for their learning from Tang poetry; however, he claims the Song poet Mei Yaochen as the precursor of Xuancheng poets, pays a high compliment to Shi Runzhang, who learned from both Tang and Song poetry, and criticizes Wang Shizhen and Zhu Yizun, who adhered mainly to Tang poetry in their literary careers.

The tension between Shen's favoritism for Tang poetry and Li's appreciation of both Tang and Song poetry and imitation of Song poetry in writing led to their competition and debate. In 1731, Li E and Shen Deqian were both hired to compile the local gazetteer of Zhejiang. According to Yuan Mei's *Suiyuan shihua*, they worked together but "were in disagreement over their schools of poetry" (*shipai bu he* 詩派不合).¹³⁰ On the basis of this record, Zhang Lihua concludes that they must have had a face-to-face dispute.¹³¹ Their dispute probably was the first direct personal conflict between important masters on record in the history of the debate over Tang and Song poetry. Scholar Liu Shinan notes the opposition between the two masters and their schools of poetry and reminds us that most of the negative remarks in their conflicts were

¹³⁰ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua buyi* 隨園詩話補遺, *juan* 10, in *Yuan Mei quanji*, 3:796.

¹³¹ Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 296.

from Shen's side.¹³² The most frequently mentioned criticism from Shen's side is found in one of Yuan Mei's letters to Shen, which was probably written in 1759, seven years after Li E's death¹³³:

You satirized poetry from the Zhe region and claimed that the continuation of the Song practices and corruption of the Tang trend started from Fanxie (Li E).¹³⁴

先生誚浙詩，謂沿宋習敗唐風者自樊榭爲歷階。

Zhang Zhongmou argues that Shen's mocking of Li E and the Zhe School marked their conflicts' emerging into the open.¹³⁵ In addition to Shen's mockery, Zhang Lihua elaborates how Fang Zhenguan 方貞觀 (1679-1747), another advocate of Tang poetry, criticized the Zhe School.¹³⁶

It is noteworthy that Li E also voiced his dissatisfaction with Shen Deqian's poetic inclination. As shown above, Li E criticized Shen Deqian without mentioning Shen's name in his preface written for Zha Weiren's collection. Additionally, in his preface to his poetry collection written in 1751, the next to the last year of his life, Li E expresses his rejection of critics' "evaluating me by the characteristics of the School of Form and Tone" (*yi gediao paibie sheng*

¹³² Liu Shinan, "Li E yu Zhepai," 44.

¹³³ Fan Jianming, "Qingdai shiren Shi Lancha jiqi wenxue huodong kaolun: jian tan Yuan Mei 'Da Shen da zongbo lun shi shu' de xiezuoshijian wenti" 清代詩人施蘭垞及其文學活動考論——兼談袁枚《答沈大宗伯論詩書》的寫作時間問題, 140. Zhang Lihua argues that his letter was written in 1757 at the earliest. See Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 297. However, it is unclear in which year Shen Deqian satirized Li E when he discussed poetry with Yuan Mei.

¹³⁴ Yuan Mei, "Da Shen da zongbo lunshi shu" 答沈大宗伯論詩書, in *Xiaocangshanfang wenji* 小倉山房文集, juan 17, in *Yuan Mei quanji*, 3:283; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 262, 190, 246.

¹³⁵ Zhang Zhongmou, *Qingdai wenhua yu Zhepai shi*, 245.

¹³⁶ Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 250-51.

wo 以格調派別繩我).¹³⁷ Zhang Zhongmou considers this rejection to be Li E's discontent about Shen Deqian's poetic values.¹³⁸ Zhang Lihua and Wu Huafeng further argue that this preface marked their tension breaking out into open conflict.¹³⁹ Therefore, Zhang Lihua claims that the opposition between their advocacies became intense in the last few years of Li E's life.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, Zhang Zhongmou, Wu Huafeng, and Zhang Lihua all point out that these conflicts to a great extent originated from their contradictory poetic views.¹⁴¹

During the first half of the eighteenth century, poets' locality and membership in schools of poetry, as in the early Qing period, were still closely interrelated with their poetic preferences and pursuits. The Jiangnan region brought together two dominant critical groups in the Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry: Jiangsu poets around Shen Deqian, who constituted the main force of the School of Form and Tone, and the Zhe School pioneered by Li E. After the participation of Yuan Mei, another native of Zhejiang, and his school of poetry, the debate reached the greatest intensity and complexity in Jiangnan in the second half of the eighteenth century.

¹³⁷ Li E, "Fanxie shanfang xuji zixu" 樊榭山房續集自序, in *Fanxie shanfang wenji*, juan 4, 9a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 271:441.

¹³⁸ Zhang Zhongmou, *Qingdai wenhua yu Zhepai shi*, 245.

¹³⁹ Wu Huafeng, "'Chaoye lili' beijing xia de shixue lunzheng," 67; Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 296.

¹⁴⁰ Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 297-98.

¹⁴¹ They also remind us that another reason of the opposition between Shen and Li is the sharp contrast between Shen's success and Li's failure in an official career. See Zhang Zhongmou, *Qingdai wenhua yu Zhepai shi*, 246-47; Wu Huafeng, "'Chaoye lili' beijing xia de shixue lunzheng," 68; Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 297-98.

Chapter 3 A New Contingent: Yuan Mei and His School of Poetry

This chapter examines the literary views and practices of Yuan Mei, a native of Zhejiang who spent the majority of his life in Jiangsu, and the influence he exerted throughout the Qianlong reign into the beginning of the Jiaqing reign. It is organized into three sections. The first section concentrates on Yuan's establishment of a classical poetic tradition in which *xingqing* and *xingling* served as the most important criteria. Through close reading of passages from his *Suiyuan shihua*, I first analyze Yuan's arguments for the importance of the concepts, *xingqing* and *xingling*, as the origin, content, and goal of poetic expression. My analysis traces the history of these two concepts to the poetic models of legendary sages predating the *Shijing*. Furthermore, I demonstrate Yuan's opposition to the division between Tang poetry and Song poetry and his emphasis of poetic merits in any period based on *xingqing* and *xingling*, rather than any period style, as the highest model. Thus, I show how Yuan Mei authorizes the criteria of his poetic evaluation and his version of the classical poetic tradition. The second section focuses on Yuan's views of the debate over Tang and Song poetry, which are related to the poetic tradition of his native place, Zhejiang. Most of the texts analyzed in this section are Yuan Mei's epistolary exchanges in the late 1750s with the leading advocate of Tang poetry from Jiangsu, Shen Deqian, and with a follower of Song poetry from Zhejiang, Shi Qian. In addition, Yuan Mei's texts under examination include a passage from *Suiyuan shihua*, a poem on Li E's poetry, and two passages from the prefaces written for the individual collections of two contemporary poets, Yu Baoyin 俞葆寅 (fl. mid-eighteenth century) (courtesy name Cangshi 蒼石) and Jiang Shiquan 蔣士銓 (1725-1785). These texts, on the one hand, systematically expound Yuan Mei's poetic theories in

relation to the debate over Tang and Song poetry. On the other hand, they reveal his dissatisfaction with the prevalent emulation of Song poetry in Zhejiang represented by Li E and embody his impartial critical attitudes towards both the adherents of Tang poetry and imitators of Song poetry. In the third section, I elaborate on Yuan's high reputation and wide influence as the leader of the School of Natural Sensibility and Inspiration, the third critical group in the debate, which enabled his poetic theories to spread all over the empire. In sum, I intend to show the formation of the tripartite opposition in the debate over Tang and Song poetry by tracing Yuan Mei's rise and the direct personal conflicts between him and important figures of the other two critical groups as articulated in their epistolary exchanges.

Yuan Mei's Poetic Views

Yuan Mei's poetic views are mainly recorded in his *Suiyuan shihua* and other prose works. Jerry Schmidt devotes three chapters of his voluminous monograph, *Harmony Garden: The Life, Literary Criticism, and Poetry of Yuan Mei (1716–1798)*, to a systematic examination of Yuan Mei's poetic theory and production. The meaning and significance of *xingqing* and *xingling* in Yuan's poetics are elaborated in Chapter 4 "The Principles of Poetry." Chapter 5 "The Practice of Poetry" and Chapter 6 "Evaluation" include sections analyzing Yuan's views of the debate over Tang and Song poetry as well as of poetry and certain poets of the Tang, Song, Ming, and Qing periods. Chapter 6 also briefly discusses Yuan's opinions of Zhejiang poetry. In this section, I will synthesize these aspects under the theme of the debate over Tang and Song poetry. My further exploration will demonstrate how Yuan Mei mediated and, at the same time, intensified

the debate with his version of orthodox poetic tradition and his evaluation of poetry of different periods on the basis of his interpretations of *xingqing* and *xingling*.

The use of the terms *xingqing*, nature and emotions, and *xingling*, natural sensibility and inspiration, characterizes Yuan Mei's poetics. As I have demonstrated in both the "Introduction" and previous chapters, Chinese poet-critics' invocation of *xingqing* became indispensable and formulaic in poetic criticism and evaluation at the latest in the Ming dynasty. Ming-Qing literati understood *xingqing* as what poetry expresses and that from which poetry originates, although their claims differed from one another in wording. While their evaluations varied as to whether or not a poet or poem genuinely expressed *xingqing*, it served as their shared criterion.

Represented by Yuan Hongdao, the application of *xingling* prevailed in the late Ming cult of individuality and originality in poetic production and evaluation. After generations of renowned figures, Yuan Mei, "the foremost literary man of the age,"¹ became the new leading representative advocate of *xingqing* and *xingling*.

Suiyuan shihua, which was written between 1785 and 1788, epitomizes and synthesizes Yuan Mei's poetic views.² Like his predecessors and contemporaries, he states that a poet's *xingqing* is the source of poetry:

The person who is the most skillful in poetry in history is Yu Shun.³ [He]

¹ Arthur Waley, *Yuan Mei: Eighteenth Century Chinese Poet*, 210. Schmidt also designates Yuan Mei as "the most popular poet and critic of his age" and "the most widely read poet of the age." See Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 159; *The Poet Zheng Zhen (1806-1864) and the Rise of Chinese Modernity*, 255.

² Wu Hongyi, "Yuan Mei *Suiyuan shihua* kaobian" 袁枚《隨園詩話》考辨, in *Qingdai wenxue piping lunji*, 256-93.

³ Emperor Shun was the fifth of "a legendary sequence of rulers known as the Five Emperors."

appointed Kui as the minister of music and said, “Poetry expresses intention.”

This means that poetry must be based on nature and feelings.⁴

千古善詩者，莫如虞舜。教夔典樂曰：詩言志。言詩之必本乎性情也。

As Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping argue, this statement connects two orthodox statements of the essential quality of poetry, “poetry expresses intention” (*shi yan zhi* 詩言志) and “poetry derives from emotions” (*shi yuan qing* 詩緣情), which had been dichotomized the understanding of poetry for centuries.⁵ *Zhi* 志, literally “intention” or “what is intently on the mind” as Stephen Owen interprets it, mainly refers to poets’ social, moral, and political concerns and expectations.⁶ The first statement, which is from the *Shangshu* (The Book of Documents), predominated in the history of classical Chinese poetry.⁷ The second one is from Lu Ji’s “The Poetic Exposition on Literature” produced during the Western Jin dynasty. It resembles those by many literati of later generations, poetry “originates from nature and emotions” (*ben xingqing* 本性情, *ben hu xingqing* 本乎性情, *ben yu xingqing* 本於性情). Owen asserts that Lu Ji’s version widened the understanding of the range of poetry’s themes, contents, and subjects.⁸ As Zhu Ziqing 朱自清 shows, by the Qing period, the idea that poetry derives from emotion had

See Charles Hucker, *China’s Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture*, 23-24.

⁴ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 3, 86; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 183.

⁵ Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 480.

⁶ Both Owen and Zhu Ziqing 朱自清 (1898-1948) examine the development of the meaning of *zhi*. See Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 130-31; Zhu Ziqing, *Shi yan zhi bian* 詩言志辨, 1-47.

⁷ Roy Bing Chan, “The Edge of Knowing: Dreams and Realism in Modern Chinese Literature,” 76.

⁸ Owen states that Lu Ji’s substitution of “emotion” for “intention” “account[s] more perfectly for poetry’s true range” and has served as “a watershed in the understanding of poetry.” See Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 130-31.

become an entrenched definition of poetry parallel to *shi yan zhi*, although its authority and influence could not be compared to the latter.⁹ Li Bairong 李百容 in his study on the evolution of these two statements demonstrates that an antithesis between them was formed during the Ming period: Li Dongyang's revivalist poetic views conformed to the orthodox *shi yan zhi* tradition, and the late Ming philosopher Li Zhi's 李贄 (1527-1602) expectation of masterpieces springing from a pure, childlike heart (*tongxin* 童心) echoed *shi yuan qing* and exemplified the valorization of *xingling* during the Ming-Qing transition.¹⁰

Modern scholars note as well the compatibility between these two understandings of poetry. Zhu Ziqing reminds us that in the "Great Preface," the claim of *shi yan zhi*—"[i]n the mind it is 'being intent'; coming out in language, it is a poem"—is followed by a statement similar to *shi yuan qing*, "[t]hey sang their feelings" 吟詠情性. He argues that what are sung of are actually poets' intentions; therefore, *zhi* and *qing* here are nearly synonymous.¹¹ In his narrative, the late imperial period is a critical era when these two understandings converged. For example, during the Ming dynasty, the Jingling poets Zhong Xing and Tan Yuanchun affirmed both concepts in their writing.¹² Zhu Zejie notes that the early Qing poet Zhu Yizun relates poets' expression of his intention to their nature and emotion in his *Jingzhiju shihua* 靜志居詩話 (Remarks on Poetry from the Dwelling of Quiet Intention) and a letter to his friend Gao

⁹ Zhu Ziqing, *Shi yan zhi bian*, 35-47.

¹⁰ Li Bairong, "Cong 'qunti yishi' yu 'geti yishi' lun wenxueshi 'shi yan zhi' yu 'shi yuan qing' zhi duiju guanxi: yi Mingdai gediao xingling shixue fenliu qidian wei lunzheng hexin" 從“群體意識”與“個體意識”論文學史“詩言志”與“詩緣情”之對舉關係——以明代格調、性靈詩學分流起點為論證核心, 3-30.

¹¹ Zhu Ziqing, *Shi yan zhi bian*, 20-21.

¹² Zhu Ziqing, *Shi yan zhi bian*, 42.

Yousi 高佑鈺 (1627-1712).¹³ Grace Fong's study on the nineteenth-century woman poet, Shen Shanbao 沈善寶 (1808-1862), suggests that Shen's writing embodied the convergence to these two interpretations. Fong argues that "the orthodox view of the nature and function of poetry" in the "Great Preface" led to the interpretation that "poetry as a discursive mode has always been predicated on expressing or embodying the 'true' feelings and 'genuine' voice of the enunciating subject." In Shen Shanbao's time, poetry already "retained and further developed its canonical potential as the vehicle for self-expression associated with the *Shijing*," which is embodied in a high proportion of Shen Shanbao's poetry focusing on her personal life.¹⁴ In other words, a poetic subject's self-expression comprised his/her "true" feelings, or *qing*, and "genuine" voice, or *zhi*. Women writers, represented by Shen Shanbao, constituted a part of this poetic self-expression in late imperial China. These scholars' research supports Zhu Ziqing's conclusion.

Zhu Ziqing in his examination of the late imperial period also points out that Yuan Mei expanded the meaning of *shi yan zhi*, almost equating it with *shi yuan qing*, and thus elevated the status of *shi yuan qing*.¹⁵ Indeed, in the above passage, Yuan Mei directly (rather than "almost") identifies *shi yan zhi* with *shi yuan qing*. By pointing out this identification, Jerry Schmidt argues

¹³ Zhu Zejie, "Lun Zhu Yizun de wenxue sixiang" 論朱彝尊的文學思想, 82. For the relationships and differences of these two versions, also see Yang Ming 楊明, "Yan zhi yu yuan qing bian" 言志與緣情辨, 39-49; Zhu Enbin 朱恩彬, "Yan zhi yu yuan qing" 言志與緣情, 57-62; Tang Yanling 唐燕玲, "Yan zhi yu yuan qing: shi lun zhongguo gudian shixue de benzhi tezheng" 言志與緣情——試論中國古典詩學的本質特征, 187-88.

¹⁴ Fong, "Writing Self and Writing Lives: Shen Shanbao's (1808-1862) Gendered Auto/biographical Practices," 262.

¹⁵ Zhu Ziqing, *Shi yan zhi bian*, 42-44.

that Yuan Mei expands the function of poetry from the moral, social and political uses to the individual's concern: the expression of the inner self.¹⁶ The generally acknowledged statement about poetry's origin, *xingqing* or *qingxing*, along with the related *shi yuan qing* advocacy, thus attains the highest authority, equal to that of the oldest claim by the legendary Emperor Shun, or Yu Shun 虞舜 (r. 2255-2205 BCE): *shi yan zhi*.

The importance attached to the role of *xingqing* in poetry writing also resides in Yuan Mei's claim of their homogeneity: *xingqing* is, instead of the source of poetry, poetry itself:

Poems in the *Shijing* started from Yu Shun and were compiled by Confucius. Our Confucian scholars do not follow the instruction of the two sages, but quote from afar, from Buddhist and Daoist [texts]. Why? [...] Poetry is the nature and emotion of human beings. It is enough to find them in ourselves. [Those] whose language is touching, whose colours are dazzling, whose flavours are delicious, and whose tones are melodious are good poems. Confucius said: "If you do not learn poetry, you cannot converse." He also said: "Poetry can inspire [people]." These two sentences echo each other. Only because what he said is exquisite and ingenious, it can make people's feelings flow and interests flourish.¹⁷

詩始于虞舜，編于孔子。吾儒不奉兩聖人之教，而遠引佛老，何耶？[...] 詩者，人之性情也。近取諸身而足矣。其言動心，其色奪目，其味適口，其音悅耳，便是佳詩。孔子曰：“不學詩，無以言。”又曰：“詩可以興。”兩句相應。惟其言

¹⁶ Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 168.

¹⁷ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua buyi*, *juan* 1, 546; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 164.

之工妙，所以能使人感發而興起。

On the basis of this homogeneity, Yuan Mei states his criteria of highest-quality poetry. As I understand it, he thinks that poets should write about their personal experiences, everyday life, sentiments, and moods; high poetic quality is featured by moving expressions, refined rhetoric, melodious rhythms, and harmonious metres. These aspects of content and style reflect the poets' natural instincts, feelings, interests, and tastes, or in a word, *xingqing*. This kind of poetry meets Confucius' expectation of poetry, for whose authority, along with that of Emperor Shun, Yuan shows utmost respect. Yuan Mei thus traces the origin of the argument of *xingqing* as the source and content of poetry to Emperor Shun and Confucius, the models more authoritative than the "Great Preface." Yuan Mei's explanation of the content of *xingqing* here also confirms Schmidt's analysis of the last passage in which Yuan expands his understanding of *xingqing* beyond the moral and ethical concerns in hermeneutics.¹⁸

Yuan Mei esteems the *Shijing*, which was supposedly compiled and edited by Confucius, as the model of *xingqing*. His esteem is embodied in his quotation of Zhu Yun's 朱筠 (1729-1781) poetic views, which accord with his (*yi he* 意合)¹⁹:

"The Three Hundred Poems concentrate on [expressing] nature and emotion.

¹⁸ Scholars point out that Yuan's understanding of *xingqing* also includes romantic love between men and women. See Shang Wei, "The Literati Era and Its Demise," 262; Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 53-54; Wang Yingzhi, "Yuan Mei 'xingling shuo' neihan xintan" 袁枚"性靈說"內涵新探, in *Qingren shilun yanjiu*, 214-19; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 735-37; Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 483-6; Gu Yuanxiang 顧遠蕓, *Suiyuan shishuo de yanjiu* 隨園詩說的研究, 112-17; Yang Honglie 楊鴻烈, *Da sixiangjia Yuan Mei pingzhuan* 大思想家袁枚評傳, 173-75.

¹⁹ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 14, 487.

Nature and emotions differ in profundity; therefore, poems also vary in depth. For people who have a superficial nature and emotions, their language is abstruse but [their poems] turn out to be shallow; for people who have a profound nature and emotions, their language is plain but [their poems] turn out to be deep. [...] What I argue is the point at which Tang poetry and Song poetry diverge.”²⁰

“《三百篇》專主性情。性情有厚薄之分，則詩亦有淺深之別。性情薄者，詞深而轉淺；性情厚者，詞淺而轉深。[...] 某所論，即詩家唐宋之所由分也。”

By taking “concentrating on expressing nature and emotion” (*zhuan zhu xingqing* 專主性情) in the *Shijing* as a supreme criterion, Zhu Yun evaluates poets’ expression of *xingqing* and grades them into two types: poets who are superficial in nature and emotion (*xingqing bao* 性情薄) and write shallow (*qian* 淺) verse in abstruse language (*ci shen* 詞深) and those who are profound in nature and emotion (*xingqing hou* 性情厚) and write deep (*shen* 深) verse in plain language (*ci qian* 詞淺); they are respectively represented by Tang and Song poets. Although Yuan Mei does not tell us which poets and poems belong to which group or label them as superior or inferior, Song-style poets appear to be categorized into the first group in view of their penchant for embellishing their poetry with philosophical discussions as well as literary and historical learning, or “abstruse language.” Tang poetry, consequently, belongs to the second group. This categorization is similar to Shen Deqian’s comparison between Tang and Song poetry examined in Chapter 2. They share a preference for expression of abundant, sincere nature and emotion and aversion to obscure, argumentative language. Yuan Mei is partial to Tang poetry.

²⁰ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 14, 487; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 183.

Another passage in *Suiyuan shihua* also disapproves of poets' showing off their extensive learning and writing skills, characteristic of Song-style poetry:

From the Three Hundred Poems to the present day, all poetry that has been transmitted to posterity is based on nature and inspiration and has nothing to do with piling up knowledge.²¹

自三百篇至今日，凡詩之傳者，都是性靈，不關堆垛。

In this passage and the aforementioned one about Emperor Shun's instruction for Kui, Yuan Mei uses both *xingling* and *xingqing* within the same context. Both terms are designated as the core and essence of poetry represented by the *Shijing*. The antithesis of demonstrating *xingling* is poets' flaunting of their erudition; in other words, poems laden with literary and historical knowledge, or abstruse language, were of a superficial nature and emotion. Therefore, Schmidt argues that these two terms are "largely identical" in Yuan's poetics.²² The authority and antiquity of the demonstration of *xingling* thus match those of the expression of *xingqing* in the orthodox poetic tradition. As the poems heavily loaded with knowledge were excluded from the poetic orthodoxy, Yuan Mei's dislike for Song-style poetry is more clearly suggested.

Yuan Mei's definition of *xingling* follows that of the Southern Song poet Yang Wanli, who admired many Tang and Song masters but excluded the Jiangxi School from his version of the poetic orthodoxy:

Yang Chengzhai (Yang Wanli) said: "People of low and crude natural ability

²¹ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, juan 5, 141; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 184.

²² Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 183.

always love to speak of forms and tones but do not understand tastes and interests.

Why is that? Forms and tones are empty frameworks with an “accent” which can be copied easily. Tastes and interests specially convey a person’s nature and inspiration, which only a man of genius can accomplish.” I love his words deeply.

One must know that if you have nature and emotion, you have forms and metres.

Forms and metres are not something outside of nature and emotion. Half of the

Three Hundred Poems are laborers’ and lovesick wives’ straightforward

expressions of their emotions. Who designed their forms? Who designed their

metres? Can those who talk about forms and tones today go beyond them?

Furthermore, Gao[yao]’s²³ and Yu’s songs are different from the Three Hundred

Poems; the metres of the “Airs of the States” are different from [those in] the

“Odes” and “Hymns.” How could poetic metres be fixed?²⁴

楊誠齋曰：“從來天分低拙之人，好談格調，而不解風趣。何也？格調是空架子，有腔口易描；風趣專寫性靈，非天才不辦。”余深愛其言。須知有性情，便有格律；格律不在性情外。三百篇半是勞人思婦率意言情之事，誰為之格？誰為之律？而今之談格調者，能出其範圍否？況皋禹之歌，不同乎三百篇；國風之格，不同乎雅頌：格豈有一定哉？

²³ Gao is Gaoyao 皋陶, a legendary judge of the twenty-first century BC.

²⁴ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, juan 1, 2; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 228, 264. However, Schmidt, Aoki, as well as Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping keenly notice that neither the term *xingling* nor the quotation is found in Yang Wanli’s extant texts. See Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 228-29; Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 109; Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 491.

In Yang Wanli's interpretation, what *xingling* generates is not literary works in accordance with established rules and standards. In other words, *xingling*, the monopoly of the talented (*tiancai* 天才), is a poet's originality, innovation, inspiration, and imagination. Schmidt and Wang Yingzhi take the alternate application of *xingling* and *xingqing* in this passage as another example of the homogeneity and interchangeability of the two terms in Yuan Mei's poetics.²⁵ Another pair of synonyms in this passage is "forms and metres" (*gelü* 格律) and "forms and tones" (*gediao* 格調), two terms frequently employed by the Ming-Qing admirers of Tang poetry, especially the Former and Latter Seven Masters as well as Shen Deqian and his school of poetry. Yuan Mei declares the subordination of *gelü/gediao* to *xingqing*, or ordinary people's straightforward expressions of their emotions (*shuaiyi yanqing* 率意言情) represented by the poems in the *Shijing* as the highest models of *gelü/gediao*. As Wang Yunxi and Gu Yisheng 顧易生 as well as Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping assert, this subordination is aimed at Shen Deqian,²⁶ although it coincides with the precedence of "purport" (*zongzhi* 宗旨), which requires calm expression of sincere nature and emotion over "form" and "tone" in Shen's criteria of poetry evaluation. Yuan Mei de-emphasizes *gelü/gediao* and agrees with the definition by Yang Wanli, a Song poet, thus showing how he critically reflects on both sides.²⁷

²⁵ Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 2, 183; Wang Yingzhi, "Yuan Mei 'xingling shuo' neihan xintan," 201. Zhang Jian and Yan Dichang also highlight the synonymity of the two terms. See Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 754; Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 2:754.

²⁶ Wang Yunxi and Gu Yisheng, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 2:964; Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 498-99.

²⁷ Schmidt interprets this passage as Yuan Mei's disinterest in the technical or formal aspects of poetry. At the same time, he devotes a short section to Yuan Mei's discussion of rhyme and metre, which shows Yuan Mei's concern about them. See Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 220-22. Also see Gu Yuanxiang, *Suiyuan shishuo de yanjiu*, 131-49.

Yuan Mei's explicit comparison of Tang and Song poetry is made through a metaphor:

The prose by the Eight Masters of the Tang and Song dynasties and poetry of the three Tang periods are gold and silver. They are not fused with copper and tin; therefore, they are of noble quality. The poetry and prose of the Song and Yuan periods and later times mix up everything, including gold, silver, copper, and tin. Their language is not elegant and refined enough; therefore, it is dismissed by those who uncritically believe what others say; they despise even its essence, gold and silver. What a pity!²⁸

唐宋八家之文，三唐之詩，金銀也，不攙和銅錫，所以品貴。宋元以後之詩文，則金銀銅錫，無所不攙，字面欠雅馴，遂爲耳食者所擯，并其本質之金銀薄之。可惜也！

In this metaphor, Tang poetry is characterized as being pure and of high quality, superior to the impurity of Song poetic quality in which substance and dross intermingle. At the same time, Yuan Mei still recognizes and calls attention to substance as the essence (*benzhi* 本質) of Song poetry, whose high quality is equivalent to that of Tang poetry but is covered by inelegant and unrefined language (*zimian* 字面). Here I disagree with Schmidt's conclusion that Yuan was "highly ambivalent" towards Song poetry as conveyed by this metaphor.²⁹ While agreeing with Zhang Lihua's argument about Yuan Mei's preference for Tang poetry reflected in this passage,³⁰

²⁸ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, juan 7, 219-20; cf. *Harmony Garden*, 254.

²⁹ Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 254.

³⁰ Zhang Lihua maintains the view that Yuan Mei gives a higher evaluation to Tang poetry than to Song poetry, while reminding us that Yuan Mei opposes the exclusive imitation of Tang poetry. For her exploration of Yuan Mei's poetic theories, especially his comparison of Tang and Song

I argue that the metaphor discloses several important points of Yuan Mei's poetic theories shown in the previously quoted passages: his appreciation as well as denigration of Song poetry, his constant admiration of Tang poetry, and his unprejudiced, critical attitudes in poetic evaluation.

On the basis of the above description of the essence of Song poetry, it can be argued that the essence of poetry in Yuan Mei's literary criticism refers to the content of poetry, a significant component of which must be the expression of a poet's inner self and the demonstration of his/her inspiration and originality. Yuan Mei's criticism of the longstanding debate over Tang and Song poetry also invokes the sovereignty of *xingqing*:

Poetry is divided into Tang [poetry] and Song [poetry]. At present, people still scrupulously abide by this division. They do not know that poetry is people's nature and emotion and the Tang and Song are [only] the titles of reigning dynasties. How could people's nature and emotion change because of the titles of reigning dynasties? Also, it is like the Way which is the path everyone follows. However, the Song Confucian scholars persistently labelled themselves the orthodoxy of the Way and said that no one knew the Way before the Song dynasty unless it could be traced back to Mencius. [...] The Seven Masters proclaimed themselves [the successors of] High Tang [poetry] and said that there was no [real] poetry after the Tang dynasty. This is in fact the Song Confucian scholars' manner of speaking. If any meddlesome person repeats their false analogy, how would it not be possible to

poetry, see "Zhongbian: Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 376-82. Qi Zhiping argues that Yuan Mei actually likes Tang poetry and dislikes Song poetry because he attacks Song poets frequently and wantonly. See Qi, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 116-18.

divide Song, Yuan, and Ming poetry into the early, mid, high, and late periods?³¹

詩分唐宋，至今人猶恪守。不知詩者人之性情，唐宋者帝王之國號。人之性情，豈因國號而轉移哉？亦猶道者人人共由之路，而宋儒必以道統自居，謂宋以前直至孟子，此外無一人知道者。[...] 七子以盛唐自命，謂唐以後無詩，即宋儒習氣語。倘有好事者學其附會，則宋元明三朝，亦何嘗無初盛中晚之可分乎？

When he opposes the artificial periodization of poetry and the consequent exclusive advocacy of poetry of a certain period as the representative of the orthodox poetic tradition, Yuan Mei, like previous objectors, invokes the permanence of human nature and emotion, which *is* poetry itself (instead of the origin of poetry). He stringently criticizes the Former and Latter Seven Masters' pretensions to be the inheritors of the poetic orthodoxy represented by High Tang poetry by comparing them to the Song Confucian philosophers, who considered themselves the only heirs of Confucian orthodoxy after Mencius. This comparison provides another example of his consistent critical attitude towards both Tang and Song literary cultures. Yuan Mei actually rejects any monopoly on the exemplification and interpretation of the orthodox literary tradition; instead, he adheres to diversity and liberty in literary production under the guidance of the only orthodoxy, the earliest literary models characterized by *xingqing* and *xingling*.

According to Schmidt's counting, Yuan Mei in his remarks on poetry only uses the term *xingling* around twenty times, far less frequently than the term *xingqing*.³² However, when scholars discuss Yuan Mei, they use *xingling* to label his literary theories, works, and poetry of

³¹ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, juan 6, 190.

³² Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 184.

school. Although Schmidt surmises that scholars use this term as a “catchword” to summarize Yuan Mei’s literary thoughts for convenience,³³ it still can be plausibly argued that their use of *xingling* results from the great importance attached to sensibility and inspiration as Yuan Mei’s “distinctive emphasis” in his poetics.³⁴ When Arthur Waley summarizes the spirit of Yuan Mei’s poetics, he writes:

Literature and especially poetry, Yuan Mei maintained, is above all an expression of individual temperament and feeling and, within the general framework of traditional technique, that temperament must find its own phrasing, its own idiom.³⁵

A poet’s “own phrasing” and “idiom,” which embody his originality and creativity, or *xingling*, serves as the only channel through which a poet expresses his “individual temperament and feeling,” or *xingqing*. By attaching unprecedented importance to these two key concepts, which consist of a poet’s nature, emotions, sensibility, and inspiration, Yuan Mei withstood the discrimination between poetry of different periods and called the exclusive attention to poetic quality and individual creativity.

Divergent Views on Tang and Song Poetry: Three Jiangnan Scholars

From the Northern Song to the High Qing, the debate over Tang and Song poetry lasted for almost eight hundred years. However, the arguments most frequently quoted and discussed by

³³ Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 184.

³⁴ Shang Wei, “The Literati Era and Its Demise,” 262. For Yuan Mei’s poetic production, also see Shi Changyu, *Qingdai wenxue*, 146-48; Ning Jiayu and Li Ruishan, *Mingdai wenxue*, *Qingdai wenxue*, *Jindai wenxue*, 206-8.

³⁵ Waley, *Yuan Mei*, 167.

modern scholars are mainly the debaters' pronouncements in their essays as they seldom refuted one another. Several cases of disputes in person emerged during the High Qing era. As I have shown in Chapter 2, Shen Deqian and Li E met each other and argued about poetry in 1731. Scholar Qian Yong 錢泳 (1759-1844) contrasts Yuan Mei's emphasis on natural sensibility and inspiration with Shen Deqian's concern with form and tone: "The Chief Minister [of the Ministry of Rites] Shen Guiyu (Shen Deqian) and the Hanlin Bachelor Yuan Jianzhai (Yuan Mei) are as different from each other as water and fire. The Chief Minister exclusively talks about form and tone, and the Hanlin Bachelor exclusively invokes natural sensibility and inspiration" 沈歸愚宗伯與袁簡齋太史論詩判若水火，宗伯專講格律，太史專取性靈。³⁶ His description of their divergence suggests a collision between their views. The leaders of the three main critical groups in the debate during the High Qing era, Shen Deqian, Li E, and Yuan Mei, then, all participated in the disputes.

The conflict among the three critical groups can also be found in Yuan Mei's correspondence with Shen Deqian and Shi Qian, a scholar from Zhejiang. Yuan's collection includes two letters to Shen and two to Shi. Dai Wenhe underscores the epistolary controversy between Yuan and Shen as a significant event in the history of the debate over Tang and Song poetry.³⁷

In these letters, Yuan Mei more systematically elaborated his views of poetry's origin, evolution, function, and quality. In his first letter to Shen Deqian, Yuan Mei writes:

³⁶ Qian Yong, *Lüyuan tan shi* 履園譚詩, in *Qing shihua* 清詩話, 871; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 264, 267.

³⁷ Dai Wenhe, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 235.

You satirized poetry from the Zhe region and claimed that the continuation of the Song practices and corruption of the Tang trend started from Fanxie (Li E). I am a person from the Zhe region; however, I also detest Zhe poetry. Fanxie falls short in heptasyllabic ancient-style poetry. All poems of this form in his collection are just piling up allusions; they are tedious and lacking in sincere energy. It is quite proper that you dismiss them. However, his recent-style poetry is clear and exquisite and has few matches at present. Your poetic theories are pure. What else can one say [about it]? However, my opinions are not totally identical with yours. Therefore, I make bold to express a few doubts. I once said there are well-written poetry and badly written poetry but there are no [difference between] past poetry and present poetry. From the songs of Getian to the present, there are well-written poems and badly written ones. It is not necessarily the case that poems of the ancient are all well-written and those in the present are all badly written. Even among the Three Hundred Poems, there are a considerable number of poems that are not well-written, and there is no need to imitate them; it is not only the case with Han, Jin, Tang, and Song poems. Among poems by people nowadays, there are also extremely well-written ones worthy of study; it is also not only the case with Han, Jin, Tang, and Song poems. However, poetic metres and tonal patterns cannot be better-established than [those in] ancient times. Scholars and grand masters have their own models. As for nature and emotion as well as circumstances, each person

is distinct. Do not imitate ancient people and copy them or be in awe of ancient people and confine yourself to them. [...] When people in the Tang learned from Han and Wei [poetry], they transformed [the styles of] Han and Wei [poetry]. When people in the Song learned from Tang [poetry], they transformed [the styles of] Tang [poetry]. Their transformations are not because they purposely transformed [the styles], but rather because they had to transform them. If they had not transformed the styles, their poetry would not have been qualified as Tang poetry or Song poetry. [...] When you commend Tang people's transformation of Han and Wei [poetry] but do not commend Song people's transformation of Song [poetry], you are misguided. Furthermore, do you also know that Tang people transformed their own poetry and it had nothing to do with Song people? During the early and High Tang periods, poetry transformed for the first time; during the mid and late Tang periods, poetry transformed again. With the two masters, Pi [Rixiu] and Lu [Guimeng],³⁸ poetry had already become close to the [future] Song style. [...] I once said the people who transformed [the statecrafts of] Yao and Shun are Tang [of Shang] and [King] Wu [of Zhou]; however, no one learned from Yao and Shun better than Tang [of Shang] and [King] Wu or worse than Kuai of the Yan State. The people who transformed [the style of] Tang poetry are Song and Yuan poets; however, no one learned from Tang poetry better than Song and Yuan poets or worse than the Seven Ming Masters.

³⁸ For the late Tang poet Pi Rixiu 皮日休 (ca. 834-ca. 883), see Owen, *The Late Tang*, 12, 45, 237, 239, 335, 537.

Why is this? If [people] transform when it is time to transform, what is transmitted is the heart [of the predecessors]. If [people] do not transform when it is time to transform, what they scrupulously follow is the traces [of the predecessors]. [...]

Generally speaking, ancient people studied first and then wrote poetry; people of later generations establish cliques first and then write poetry. For the division between Tang and Song poetry, the Song and Yuan periods did not have it, and the early Ming period did not have it either. There was not a division between Tang and Song poetry until the Cheng[hua] (1465-1487) and Hong[zhi] reigns. At that time, in discussions of ritual regulations and lectures on [Confucian] knowledge, [scholars] all established cliques and considered [this practice as a sign of] high reputation. The Seven Masters adhered rigidly to this practice. Therefore, they stuck to High Tang [poetry] superficially and felt confident to sing their own praises; [but] they really lacked discernment. However, Muzhai (Qian Qianyi) dismissed them too much. Why is this? The Seven Masters' poems are not necessarily all bad. Even the poems of Gong'an and Jingling [poets] are also like this. [...] It is only because Muzhai wanted to challenge them and seize the standard. Therefore, he did not take the time to discuss their poetry with a fair attitude. This is also a bias of a clique. You do not like Fanxie, yet your anthology preserves his poems. Your judgement far surpasses that of Muzhai.³⁹

³⁹ Yuan Mei, "Da Shen da zongbo lunshi shu," 283-84; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 262, 190, 246.

先生誚浙詩，謂沿宋習敗唐風者自樊榭爲歷階。枚，浙人也，亦雅憎浙詩。樊榭短於七古，凡集中此題，數典而已，索索然寡真氣。先生非之甚當。然近體清妙，于近今少偶。先生詩論粹然，尚復何說？然鄙意有未盡同者，敢質之左右。嘗謂詩有工拙，而無今古。自葛天氏之歌至今日，皆有工有拙；未必古人皆工，今人皆拙。卽《三百篇》中，頗有未工不必學者，不徒漢晉唐宋也。今人詩有極工極宜學者，亦不徒漢晉唐宋也。然格律莫備於古，學者宗師，自有淵源。至於性情遭際，人人有我在焉，不可貌古人而襲之，畏古人而拘之也。[...]唐人學漢魏變漢魏，宋學唐變唐。其變也，非有心於變也，乃不得不變也。使不變，則不足以爲唐，不足以爲宋也。[...]先生許唐人之變漢魏，而獨不許宋人之變唐，惑也。且先生亦知唐人之自變其詩，與宋人無與乎？初盛一變，中晚再變，至皮陸二家，已浸淫乎宋氏矣。[...]枚嘗謂變堯舜者，湯武也；然學堯舜者，莫善於湯武，莫不善於燕噲。變唐詩者，宋元也；然學唐詩者，莫善於宋元，莫不善於明七子。何也？當變而變，其相傳者心也；當變而不變，其拘守者迹也。[...]大抵古之人先讀書而後作詩，後之人先立門戶而後作詩。唐宋分界之說，宋元無有，明初亦無有，成宏後始有之。其時議禮講學，皆立門戶以爲名高。七子狃於此習，遂皮傅盛唐，搯擊自矜，殊爲寡識。然而牧齋之排之，則又已甚。何也？七子未必無佳詩，卽公安竟陵亦然。[...]惟其有意摩壘奪幟，乃不暇平心公論。此亦門戶之見。先生不喜樊榭而選則存之，所見過牧齋遠矣。

Yuan Mei's views and values elaborated in this letter include: the uneven quality of poems from

any periods or by any poets, even the songs by the legendary ancient clan, Getianshi 葛天氏,⁴⁰ much earlier than the *Shijing*; the evolutionary feature of poetry; the unique nature and emotion of every poet which generate his poetry; and poets' innovation of previous literary attainments. Like Ye Xie, Yuan identifies “change” (*bian* 變) as a basic feature of the evolution of poetry, which is embodied by innovation in tradition. He calls attention to transformations effected by both Tang and Song poets and compares them to the necessity and legitimacy in changes to the statecraft of two ancient sages, Tang of Shang and King Wu of Zhou.⁴¹ These values lead to his rejection of the shortcomings in recent poetic theory: the inflexible periodization of poetry and indiscriminate promotion of a period, represented by the Former and Latter Seven Masters as well as Shen Deqian, as Wang Yingzhi points out;⁴² and the related classification of literary cliques, which, according to Schmidt's reading of this passage, results in the debate over Tang and Song poetry.⁴³ The last third of this passage particularly reveals Yuan Mei's aversion to the debate. Yuan does not regard this debate as academic discussion and scholarly communication. Instead, he considers the advocacies of Tang or Song poetry pursuits of fame and establishment of literary cliques, which deviated from ancient scholars' exemplary practices of literary learning, studying (*dushu* 讀書). Therefore, the Former and Latter Seven Masters as well as Qian Qianyi, who denigrated these Ming masters and attempted to surpass their influence, are all criticized, in

⁴⁰ The Getian clan produced eight pieces of music. See John Knoblock and Jeffrey Riegel trans., *The Annals of Lü Buwei: A Complete Translation and Study*, 146.

⁴¹ King of Wu was the first ruler of the Zhou dynasty. See Charles Hucker, *China's Imperial Past*, 31.

⁴² Wang Yingzhi, “Yuan Mei ‘xingling shuo’ neihan xintan,” 236.

⁴³ Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 246. Dai Wenhe also notes Yuan Mei's identification of the debate over Tang and Song poetry as the conflicts among different literary cliques. See Dai Wenhe, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 239.

spite of their conflicting poetic views. It is noteworthy that Yuan Mei designates fifteenth-century Ming poets, rather than the Song poets and critics who praised Tang poetry and detested Song poetry, as the initiators of the debate. His relatively lenient attitude towards these Song scholars is probably because the Song literati were not narrowly partisan or because they shared some views of poetry with him.⁴⁴ In his critique, Yuan Mei undermines the necessity and importance of the debate over Tang and Song poetry. His arguments challenge many of his predecessors and contemporaries in many aspects of the debate, such as the belief in the unquestionable quality of the earliest poetic models, especially the *Shijing*.

While summarizing basic principles of poetic production and evaluation and reflecting Yuan Mei's general attitude towards the controversies over Tang and Song poetry, this letter provides a clue to his views on Zhejiang poetry. Shen Deqian's dismissal of Li E and the Zhe School recorded in this letter is the most frequently quoted passage taken as the example of the opposition between Shen's and Li's advocacies in the debate.⁴⁵ Aoki Masaru also uses this sarcastic disparagement to illustrate Shen's pride in Jiangsu poetry and criticism of Zhejiang poetry.⁴⁶ Yuan Mei's response to Shen's sarcasm indicates his dissatisfaction with the poetic production in Zhejiang, his native place, pioneered by Li E.

Another clue to Yuan Mei's dislike of Zhejiang poetry is the absence of a history of Zhejiang poetry in his literary works. Yuan's collected works do not show his interest in recording the poetic histories and achievements of his native place, to which the similar accounts

⁴⁴ For example, the Song critic, Yan Yu.

⁴⁵ For example, see Liu Shinan, "Li E yu Zhepai," 44.

⁴⁶ Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 101.

can be found in the collections of writings by many Qing scholars, such as Wang Shizhen, Zhu Yizun, Shen Deqian, and Li E, as shown in Chapters 1 and 2. However, an exceptional sketch of the poetic production in Zhejiang is included in his *Suiyuan shihua*:

The poets of my hometown mainly belonged to the Zhe School, and they particularly pursued the path of obscurity of Song poets; only Xiaotong (Chen Zishun) saved it by the styles of the Ming Seven Masters.⁴⁷

吾鄉詩多浙派，專趨宋人生僻一路；惟小同以明七子風格救之。

Schmidt takes the first half of this passage as an example of Yuan's "quite ambiguous" attitude towards Zhejiang poets, not only Li E but also Zhu Yizun.⁴⁸ However, the last sentence of this passage, which Schmidt omits in his study, discloses Yuan's anxiety about Zhe poets' imitation of Song poetry by identifying the early Qing poet Chen Zishun 陳自舜 (1634-1711) (courtesy name Xiaotong 小同), whose emulation of the Former and Latter Seven Masters "saved" (*jiu* 救) Zhejiang poetry.

Another example of Yuan Mei's ambiguous attitude towards Zhejiang poetry noted by Schmidt is a poem on Li E's poetry in a series of quatrains as poetic criticism:

With the talents of both the Major and Minor Odes,	小雅才兼大雅才
Sengqian's use of allusions produces new arrangements. ⁴⁹	僧虔用典出新裁
His deep thoughts, wondrous techniques, and the principles of the authors of the <i>Airs</i> —	幽懷妙筆風人旨

⁴⁷ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua buyi*, juan 4, 648; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 262.

⁴⁸ Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 261-62.

⁴⁹ Wang Sengqian 王僧虔 (426-485) is evaluated as a second-grade poet in Zhong Rong's *Shi pin*. He is famous for applying historical allusions in literary works. See Wu Ziguang 吳子光, *Yi dupi ji* 一肚皮集, 3:182.

Schmidt considers the first couplet in praise of Li E's writing style and the second couplet a criticism of the Zhe School.⁵¹ Chinese scholars also consider this poem a compliment or excessive praise of Li, whose poetry is characterized by allusions from Song textual materials.⁵² Wang Xiaoheng concludes that Yuan basically affirms the Zhe School's poetic achievements.⁵³ In spite of these divergent views, in the last line of this quatrain, Yuan Mei clearly denounces the Zhe School, which deviates from the classical poetic orthodoxy originating in the *Shijing*.

In a rare instance in the preface dedicated to the collection by Yu Baoyin, Yuan Mei shows his relationship to Zhejiang poetry and sketches Zhejiang poets' literary lives:

Our Zhe region originally had many poets. It is regretful that I left my hometown for a long time and knew only a few of them. Last year I met Yu Cangshi (Yu Baoyin) [...]. His thoughts are deep, and his learning is profound. He can echo ancient poets in order to follow their examples and can depart from them in order to preserve his sincerity. [...] He often associates with the two Masters, Wu Xilin (Wu Yingfang) and Zhai Qingjiang (Zhai Hao), to investigate the principles of the *Shi[jing]* [...].⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Yuan Mei, "Fang Yuan Yishan 'Lun shi'" 仿元遺山《論詩》, no. 13, in *Xiaocang shanfang shiji* 小倉山房詩集, juan 27, in *Yuan Mei quanji*, 1:595; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 261.

⁵¹ Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 261.

⁵² For example, see Wang Yingzhi, "Yuan Mei yu Qingdai shixue piping" 袁枚與清代詩學批評, 61; Zhu Zejie, "Huang Zongxi yu Zhepai shi" 黃宗羲與浙派詩, 24; Dai Liang 代亮, "Yuan Mei dui Songshi de taidu" 袁枚對宋詩的態度, 46. For Li E's use of allusions from Song literature, see Wu Huafeng, "Li E shige yong dian yanjiu" 厲鶚詩歌用典研究.

⁵³ Wang Xiaoheng, "Li E yanjiu zongshu" 厲鶚研究綜述, 101.

⁵⁴ Yuan Mei, "Yu Cangshi shi xu" 俞蒼石詩序, in *Xiaocang shanfang wenji*, juan 31, in *Yuan Mei quanji*, 3:559.

吾浙故多詩人，惜余離鄉久，寡所省識。昨年遇蒼石俞君[...]. 其思深，其學邃，

能和古人以就範，能離古人以存真。[...] 常交吳西林翟晴江兩先生，研究詩旨[...].

Yu Baoyun's appropriate choices between imitation and innovation guarantee his sincerity (*zhen* 真), in contrast with Li E's "piling up allusions" (*shu dian* 數典) and "lacking in sincere energy" (*gua zhenqi* 寡真氣) criticized in Yuan Mei's letter to Shen Deqian. His poetry thus meets with Yuan's expectation of *xingqing* and *xingling*. The joint exploration of the *Shijing* by Yu Baoyun, Zhai Hao 翟灝 (d. 1788) (courtesy name Qingjiang 晴江), and Wu Yingfang 吳穎芳 (1702-1781) (courtesy name Xilin 西林), a poet of the Zhe School and a disciple of Li E,⁵⁵ conform with Yuan Mei's pursuit of the origin of classical poetry. Yuan's approbation of these poets' practices in this preface not only corroborates his general views on poetry but also provides an example of his impartial evaluation of different poetic advocacies and his pride in certain Zhejiang poets. Yuan's regret for his ignorance of the overwhelming majority of Zhejiang poets implies his awareness of and gratification at their presence in the poetic scene. A similar awareness and gratification can be found in his applause for the appearance of women poets in Zhejiang found in *Suiyuan shihua*: "Gentlewomen flourish most in our Zhe region" 閨秀吾浙為盛.⁵⁶ Yuan's contradictory attitude towards Zhejiang poetry thus raise interesting questions: is his lack of critical comments on the history of Zhejiang poetry due to his unfamiliarity with Zhejiang poets or his dissatisfaction with at the Zhe School? What is his general evaluation of Zhe poetry? While it is almost impossible to know the answer to the first question, the different

⁵⁵ For Wu's literary and artistic achievements, see Huang Chucheng 黃俶成, "Qing zhongye dongnan wenren qunti yu Yangzhou ba guai" 清中葉東南文人群體與揚州八怪, 70.

⁵⁶ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua buyi*, *juan* 1, 553.

emotional colourings of the words used to describe the abundance of male or female Zhejiang poets, “many” (*duo* 多) and “flourish” (*sheng* 盛), and of the harsh word used to criticize Zhe poetry, “detest” (*zeng* 憎), suggest Yuan’s dissatisfaction with the major trend of Zhe poetry as represented by the Zhe School’s imitation of Song poetry, in which women seemed not to play an important role.

Yuan Mei’s dissatisfaction was also reflected in his epistolary exchange with Shi Qian. As a native of Zhejiang poet, Shi interacted with Zhejiang poets, including Li E, Hang Shijun, and Jin Nong. He participated in their poetic gatherings, exchanged poems with them, won Zha Shenxing’s recognition, and helped Li E to compile *Songshi jishi*.⁵⁷ Not aware of Yuan Mei’s dissatisfaction with Zhe poetry, Shi Qian considered Yuan Mei congenial to himself because Yuan’s two letters to Shen Deqian seemingly showed that Yuan “did not admire Tang [poetry] very much” (*bu shen zong Tang* 不甚宗唐), according to Yuan’s summary of Shi’s misunderstanding. What is surprising in Shi’s literary life is not his admiration of Song-style poetry, but his radical denigration of Tang poetry, which diverged from the mainstream esteem for Tang poetry among Song-style practitioners from the Song to the Qing dynasty. According to Yuan Mei’s first letter to him, Shi Qian opposes poets’ learning from Tang poetry because “Tang poetry is old, and Song poetry is new” 唐詩舊宋詩新.⁵⁸ Yuan Mei reapplies the two major principles of poetic production and evaluation in his theories, *xingqing* as the core of poetry and

⁵⁷ Fan Jianming, “Qingdai shiren Shi Lancha jiqi wenxue huodong kaolun,” 137-39; Liu Zhengping 劉正平, “Nanping shishe kaolun” 南屏詩社考論, 49.

⁵⁸ Yuan Mei, “Da Shi Lancha lun shi shu” 答施蘭垞論詩書, in *Xiaocang shanfang wenji*, *juan* 17, in *Yuan Mei quanji*, 3:286-87.

the poetic tradition as an evolutionary continuum, to refute Shi's views and mediate the conflicts between the followers of Tang and Song poetry:

As for poetry, it does not matter whether it is from the Tang or Song dynasty. The Tang or Song is the title of a reigning dynasty and has nothing to do with poetry. Poetry is everyone's nature and emotion, and it has nothing to do with the Tang and Song dynasties. If [you] scrupulously hold Tang and Song poetry to be antagonistic to each other, it is because you have the dead titles of reigning dynasties in your mind but have not obtained your own nature and emotion. Thus you have already lost the basic principle of poetry. [...] Tang poets' rules originated from [those] in the Han and Jin periods; Song poets' rules originated from [those] in the three Tang periods. Throughout the Song dynasty, no one denigrated Tang poetry. You suddenly want to admire Song [poetry] and denigrate Tang [poetry]; it is like leading the sons and younger brothers to attack their father and older brothers.⁵⁹

夫詩，無所謂唐、宋也。唐、宋者，一代之國號也，與詩無與也。詩者各人之性情耳，與唐宋無與也，若拘拘焉持唐宋以相敵，是子之胸中有已亡之國號，而無自得之性情，於詩之本旨已失矣。[...] 唐人之法，本乎漢晉；宋人之法，本乎三唐。終宋之世，無斥唐人者。子忽欲尊宋而斥唐，是率其子弟攻其父兄也。

By asserting the irrelevance of the titles of certain dynasties to poetry, Yuan Mei attributes

⁵⁹ Yuan Mei, "Da Shi Lancha lun shi shu," 287.

supremacy to *xingqing*, “the basic principle of poetry” (*shi zhi benzhi* 詩之本旨). He also reminds Shi of the essential features of poetry, evolution and continuity, which are defined by the fact that every dynasty’s poetry derives, rather than being separated, from previous periods, especially regarding Song poets’ respect for Tang poetry. From both perspectives, Yuan Mei exposes the debaters’ ignorance of the essence of the classical poetic tradition, which makes the debate over Tang and Song poetry meaningless.

In his second letter, Yuan Mei once again asserts the irrelevance of dynastic titles to poetry:

You already know Tang poetry’s shortcomings; do you also know the shortcomings of Song poetry? Because it does not follow chanting, its poetic metres die. Because it is not embellished, its colors fade. Furthermore, it often has double rhymes like the croaking of frogs and toads, making racket for no reason. Sometimes the allusions applied are too uncommon like a strange guest whose arrival makes all the other guests unhappy. Other problems like Chan barriers and hindrances to intelligibility as well as slang and jargon all stay far from nature and emotion day by day. Among the poets who have these shortcomings, [those from] our Zhe region at present are especially representative. [...] For history writers, talent, learning, and discernment are all necessary, but discernment is the most important. [...] If [a poet] possesses discernment when composing poetry, [he] does not follow other people, does not become overconfident, is not oppressed by ancient [poetry], and is not

restricted by common practices. Du [Fu] declared, “Take many teachers as mentors,” and the *Shangshu* says, “Take those whose dominant aspects are good as mentors.” Since Tang [Yao] and Yu [Shun], thousands of masters are different streams from the same source that runs through [history]. How do we have time to bother to set boundaries on the basis of the titles of reigning dynasties, “Tang” and “Song,” in our minds?⁶⁰

唐詩之弊，子既知之矣；宋詩之弊，而子亦知之乎？不依永，故律亡；不潤色，故彩晦。又往往疊韻如蝦蟆繁聲，無理取鬧。或使事太僻，如生客闖入，舉座寡歡。其他禪障理障，度詞替語，皆日遠夫性情。病此者，近今吾浙爲尤。[...] 作史者才學識缺一不可，而識爲尤。[...] 作詩有識，則不徇人，不矜己，不受古欺，不爲習囿。杜稱多師爲師，書稱主善爲師。自唐虞以來，百千名家，皆同源異流，一以貫之者也；何暇取唐宋國號而擾擾焉分界於胸中哉？

Still maintaining his unprejudiced critical attitude towards both Tang and Song poetry, Yuan Mei in this letter concentrates on criticizing Song poetry because of Shi’s radical partiality for it and his ignorance of its shortcomings. Schmidt feels that Yuan’s dissatisfaction with the deviation from poetic metre in Song poetry echoes “more conservative contemporaries” (probably including Shen Deqian, as I understand it), and that Yuan’s criticism of the exhibition of learning in Song-style poetry as a deviation from *xingqing* accords with his poetic theories and practices

⁶⁰ Yuan Mei, “Da Lancha di er shu” 答蘭垞第二書, in *Xiaocang shanfang wenji*, juan 17, in *Yuan Mei quanji*, 3:288; cf. Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 252.

(coinciding with Yan Yu's opinion in his *Canglang shihua*).⁶¹ Yuan Mei's designation of the Zhe School as the example of the most serious demerit in his poetics once again unveils his disappointment in Zhe poetry.

While criticizing Song poetry and the Zhe School for their display of erudition, Yuan Mei emphasizes the importance of digesting previous literature, similar to his esteem for ancient poets' studying, or *dushu*, expressed in his letter to Shen Deqian. These statements confirm Wu Hongyi's and Zhang Jian's summary of Yuan's poetics: while claiming the prominent position of *xingqing*, he pays sufficient attention to poetic metre as a condition of poetic quality and to literary learning as a preparation for poetry writing.⁶² Yuan Mei rejected the shortcomings in both Shen Deqian's and Li E's advocacies and practices and combined the merits in them; thus he lived up to the reputation as a mediator of the two critical groups and a devotee of the essence of poetic production, *xingqing* and *xingling*.

In this letter, Yuan Mei expects a poet to have the basic quality of a historian, "discernment" (*shi* 識), the ability by which a poet chooses his way of writing confidently and innovatively on the basis of a comprehension of previous and contemporary literature. Aoki Masaru reminds us that this emphasis on discernment conforms to Ye Xie, Shen Deqian's mentor.⁶³ In his preface dedicated to Jiang Shiquan's poetry collection, Yuan also treats poetic

⁶¹ Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 252.

⁶² Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 238-40; Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 744, 768-70. Their arguments conform to those of Schmidt. See Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 172-78. Also see Guo Shaoyu, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 494, 500-501. Wu Hongyi and Wang Xiaoshu also highlight Yuan Mei's emphasis of a poet's literary learning. See Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai wenxue piping lunji*, 281; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 515.

⁶³ Aoki, *Qingdai wenxue pinglunshi*, 112. Wu Hongyi also notices that Yuan Mei quotes Ye Xie

production as historical writing and requires a poet to have the basic qualities of a historian:

Writing poetry is like writing history. A writer should have all the three qualities:

talent, learning, and discernment, and talent is the most important.⁶⁴

作詩如作史也，才學識三者宜兼，而才爲尤先。

Yuan Mei borrows these basic qualities from the Tang historian Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661-721).⁶⁵

This appropriation suggests that he sees the similarity between the two genres, poetry and

history.⁶⁶ The collocation of the names of the two genres as a new term “poet-historian” or

“poetry-history” (*shishi* 詩史) emerged and was used to label Du Fu and his poetry in the Tang

dynasty. During the Song dynasty, this term was broadly applied to Du, and its connotation was

gradually extended. From the Ming-Qing transition to the late Qing, it was more widely applied

to poets who recorded and judged historical events as well as reflected on their memories. These

poets included not only various male poets but also woman poets, such as Wang Duanshu 王端

淑 (1621-ca. 1685) and Bian Sai 卞賽 (ca. 1620s-after 1663), although these women were not

frequently. See Wu, *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 239.

⁶⁴ Yuan Mei, “Jiang Xinyu Zangyuan shi xu” 蔣心餘藏園詩序, in *Xiaocang shanfang wenji*, *juan* 28, in *Yuan Mei quanji*, 2:489. For scholars’ discussion of the importance of talent, learning, and discernment in Yuan Mei’s theories, also see Zhang Jian, *Qingdai shixue yanjiu*, 746-48; Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping, *Qingdai wenxue pinglungshi*, 486-88; Yang Honglie, *Da sixiangjia Yuan Mei pingzhuan*, 175-77.

⁶⁵ Liu Xu 劉昫 et al, *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書, 10:3173. Liu Zhiji in his *Shi tong* 史通 (*The Comprehensive Guide to History*) “addresses issues of narrative and the way in which language encodes historical meaning.” See Stephen Owen, “The Cultural Tang,” in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, 1:304. Chinese scholars summarize Liu’s principles of historiography in *Shi tong* into these three qualities. For example, see Guo Zongnan 郭宗南, “Cong Liu Zhiji *Shi tong* lun shijia san chang” 從劉知幾《史通》論史家三長, 123.

⁶⁶ For Chinese scholars’ understanding of the interrelation of these two genres in Chinese history, for example, see Zhao Yili 趙一力, “Qiantan shi yu shi de xiangguanxing yu dulixing” 淺談詩與史的相關性與獨立性, 50; Mao Xuanguo 毛宣國, “Handai *Shijing* lishihua jiedu de shixue yiyi” 漢代《詩經》歷史化解讀的詩學意義, 169-74.

addressed by this title, a male monopoly.⁶⁷ Yuan Mei's equivalent expectations for poets and historians implies his awareness of the origin and initial function of poetry and intention to expand this tradition. In Yuan Mei's argument, the principle of comprehensively learning from previous literature, the basis of a poet's discernment, is traced to the *Shangshu*, an exemplar much earlier than Du Fu, to whom the principle is often attributed by many poet-critics, including Shen Deqian. The range of poetic models is expanded to the legendary Emperor Yao, or Tang Yao 唐尧 (r. 2357-2256 BCE),⁶⁸ and Emperor Shun. Guiding poets to the earliest models of greatest longevity and absolute orthodoxy, Yuan Mei always frees them from the anxiety about the artificial boundaries between poems of different periods. The priority he gives to talent and discernment further leads poets to concern with their inner selves, feelings, creativity, and spontaneity, or *xingqing* and *xingling*.

With his acknowledgement of the flourishing of Zhe poetry, Yuan Mei maintained a critical, impartial attitude towards poetry of all historical periods, geographical regions, and literary styles. This attitude enabled him to discuss poetry with various poets about a wide range of issues objectively and open-mindedly, instead of being partisan and sectarian and agreeing or disagreeing with them irrationally and radically. His letters provided their discussions a venue and bridged the adherents of Tang poetry, the devotees of Song poetry, and the mediators between them. The collective appearance of the mediators as the third critical group led to the

⁶⁷ For example, see Wai-ye Li, "Confronting History and Its Alternatives in Early Qing Poetry," 73-98; Li, "History and Memory in Wu Weiye's Poetry," in *Trauma and Transcendence in Early Qing Literature*, 99-148; Li, *Women and National Trauma in Late Imperial Chinese Literature*, 112-30, 331-56; Yim, *The Poet-historian Qian Qianyi*.

⁶⁸ Emperor Yao was the fourth of "a legendary sequence of rulers known as the Five Emperors." See Charles Hucker, *China's Imperial Past*, 23-24.

forming of the tripartite opposition in the High Qing debate. As the native places and major spheres of activity and influence of the majority of the three groups, including their leaders, the Jiangnan region continued to be a significant a center of the debate.⁶⁹

Yuan Mei's Influence

As Chapter 2 demonstrates, the debate over Tang and Song poetry during the first half of the Qianlong period was dominated by the opposition between the advocacy of Tang poetry led by Shen Deqian in Jiangsu and the admiration of Song poetry represented by Li E in Zhejiang. Their opposing views formed the historical and literary background within which Yuan Mei and his poetics emerged. In the view of some scholars, Yuan Mei developed his poetic theories about *xingling* in order to correct the faults in the poetic theories and practices of his contemporaries, especially Shen Deqian and the Zhe School.⁷⁰ Others view Yuan Mei's esteem for poetry of every period was actually a ploy by which he exposed Shen's and Li's vulnerabilities in order to compete with them.⁷¹ In spite of these opinions on Yuan Mei's ulterior motives, the general assessment of Yuan Mei's poetry and poetics is summed up by Shang Wei in this statement: "Yuan Mei embodied a liberating force that breathed new life into classical poetry."⁷² Indeed, Yuan Mei's theories and approach to poetry made a significant impact on the widespread practice of poetry among men and women. He and his followers, both male and female, also "breathed

⁶⁹ It is worth mentioning that Schmidt asserts that a minority of the Qing scholars rejected the debate over Tang and Song poetry. See Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 247.

⁷⁰ Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 312-13; Gu Yuanxiang, *Suiyuan shishuo de yanjiu*, 70-90.

⁷¹ Qi Zhiping, *Tang Song shi zhi zheng gaishu*, 116.

⁷² Shang Wei, "The Literati Era and Its Demise," 263. Zhu Zejie's comment on Yuan Mei can be seen as a Chinese version of Shang Wei's. See Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 242.

new life” into the Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry.

In *Qian Jia shitan dianjianglu* 乾嘉詩壇點將錄 (A Record Enumerating the Generals in the Poetic Circles of the Qianlong and Jiaqing Periods) by Shu Wei 舒位 (1765-1815), Yuan Mei ranks second only to Shen Deqian.⁷³ Other Qing poets, such as Yao Nai 姚鼐 (1731-1815), recorded Yuan Mei’s high reputation and empire-wide influence in their texts in different genres, including prose and miscellaneous notes.⁷⁴ Contemporary scholars consider Yuan one of the most important masters of classical Chinese poetry. In his chapter on fourteenth-century poetry, John Timothy Wixted names Yuan Mei as one of a few “giants” in post-Song poetry, alongside the Ming poet Gao Qi, the Jin (Jurchen) poet Yuan Haowen, and the Qing poet Wang Shizhen.⁷⁵ Chinese scholars usually place Yuan Mei alongside Shen Deqian. Wu Hongyi asserts that Yuan and Shen equalled each other in literary reputation and identifies Yuan as the most renowned and influential poet of the Qianlong reign,⁷⁶ a view continued by Wang Yingzhi and Zhu Zejie.⁷⁷ In his translation of Yuan Mei’s poetry, Jerome Seaton summarizes Yuan’s literary accomplishments and interactions in these words: “Throughout his life he was extraordinarily influential as a poet, literary critic, and poetry teacher, and was patron and friend of writers both Chinese and

⁷³ Shu Wei, *Chongke zuben Qian Jia shitan jianglu* 重刻足本乾嘉詩壇點將錄, 1a-1b, in *Xuke Siku quanshu*, 1705:168. Wang Yingzhi classifies Shu Wei as a representative of the late stage of the School of Natural Sensibility and Inspiration, although he did not associate with Yuan Mei. For Shu Wei’s literary life and achievements, see Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 330-47; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 300-309; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 532-34.

⁷⁴ Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 131-32, 349-50; Yuan Mei *pingzhuan* 袁枚評傳, 2:583; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 259-61; Liu Shinan, 332-34.

⁷⁵ Wixted, “Poetry of the Fourteenth Century,” 396.

⁷⁶ Wu Hongyi, “Shen Deqian Shuo shi zuiyu yanjiu,” 204, 229. Dai Wenhe declares that they steered High Qing poetry together. See Dai, *Tangshi Songshi zhi zheng yanjiu*, 241.

⁷⁷ Wang Yingzhi, “Yuan Mei ‘xingling shuo’ neihan xintan,” 195; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 268.

Manchu.”⁷⁸ These scholars’ recognition of Yuan’s great importance in and influence on the development of Qing poetry also reflects the literary reputations and achievements of his followers, including the members of the School of Natural Sensibility and Inspiration.

The members of Yuan Mei’s school represented a greater variety than those of other literary schools.⁷⁹ The main body of the school was composed of male poets congenial to him. The most famous poets among them were Zhao Yi 趙翼 (1727-1814) and Zhang Wentao 張問陶 (1764-1814).⁸⁰ More than twenty male poets among them were Yuan Mei’s disciples.⁸¹ An accomplished representative of them was Sun Yuanxiang 孫原湘 (1760-1829).⁸² Another group of poets consisted of Yuan Mei’s family members and relatives. In addition to the male ones, including his male cousins and nephews,⁸³ there were also his younger sisters Yuan Ji 袁機 (1720-1759) and Yuan Zhu 袁杼 (ca. 1727-ca.1776); his female cousins Yuan Tang 袁棠 (1734-1771) and Yuan Jie 袁傑 (fl. eighteenth century); his granddaughters Yuan Shou 袁綬 (1794-after 1867), Yuan Jia 袁嘉 (d. 1835), and Yuan Shu 袁淑 (fl. eighteenth century); and

⁷⁸ Seaton, introduction to *I Don’t Bow to Buddha: Selected Poems of Yuan Mei*, XI.

⁷⁹ For the membership of Yuan Mei’s disciples, see Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 27-41; *Yuan Mei pingzhuan*, 1:216-95; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 261-69.

⁸⁰ Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 207-28, 309-30; Wang Yingzhi, *Yuan Mei pingzhuan*, 1:217-31, 237-44; Wang Zhenyuan and Wu Guoping, *Qingdai wenxue pipingshi*, 504-15, 521-4; Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 2:912-19, 926-33; Zhu Zejie, *Qingshi shi*, 270-78, 286-91; Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 322-32; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 520-24, 527-31; Zhang Lihua, “Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi,” 384-97. For Zhao Yi, also see Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 270-71. For Zhang Wentao, also see Shang Wei, “The Literati Era and Its Demise,” 264-65.

⁸¹ Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 228; *Yuan Mei pingzhuan*, 1:231.

⁸² Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 294-308; Yan Dichang, *Qingshi shi*, 2:970-72; Wang Yingzhi, *Yuan Mei pingzhuan*, 1:231-37; Wang Xiaoshu, *Qingdai juan*, 536-38.

⁸³ Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 184-206; “Lun Yuanshi jiazhu nanxing shiren zhi gongguo: xingling pai yanjiu zhi yi” 論袁氏家族男性詩人之功過——性靈派研究之一, 29-36, 52.

other female poets.⁸⁴ Another group of women poets in Yuan Mei's school of poetry was his fifty-odd female disciples. Most of them were from Jiangsu or Zhejiang.⁸⁵ Among these women poets were several acclaimed names: Xi Peilan 席佩蘭 (1760-after 1829), Sun Yuanxiang's wife; Luo Qilan 駱綺蘭 (1755-1813) (courtesy name Peixiang 佩香);⁸⁶ Jin Yi 金逸 (1770-1794) (courtesy name Xianxian 纖纖); Qu Bingyun 屈秉筠 (1767-1810); Gui Maoyi 歸懋儀 (1762-1832);⁸⁷ and Bao Zhihui 鮑之蕙 (1757-1810),⁸⁸ who were all from the Jiangnan region.⁸⁹ Yuan Mei recorded the wide circle of his literary disciples:

⁸⁴ Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 166-83; Wang Yingzhi, "Xingling pai nü shiren 'Yuanjia san mei'" 性靈派女詩人“袁家三妹”, 75-80, 89; Liang Yizhen 梁乙真, *Qingdai funü wenxue shi* 清代婦女文學史, 104-10.

⁸⁵ Wang Yingzhi, *Yuan Mei pingzhuan*, 1:273-78; Wang Yingzhi, "Guanyu Suiyuan nü dizi de chengyuan shengcheng yu chuanguo" 關於隨園女弟子的成員、生成與創作, 18-19. Gu Yuanxiang provides a chart of the names and native places of Yuan Mei's fifty-three female disciples. See Gu Yuanxiang, *Suiyuan shishuo de yanjiu*, 30-34.

⁸⁶ For these poets, see Idema and Grant, *The Red Brush: Writing Women of Imperial China*, 593-612, 612-20. For Xi, also see Irving Yucheng Lo, "Xi Peilan," in *Women Writers of Traditional China: An Anthology of Poetry and Criticism*, 477-85; Zhong Huiling [Chung Hui-ling] 鍾慧玲, "Xi Peilan," *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women: The Qing Period, 1644-1911*, 23-41; David Hawkes, "Hsi P'ei-lan," 113-21; Zhong Huiling, *Qingdai nü shiren yanjiu* 清代女詩人研究, 428-59. For Luo, see Robyn Hamilton, "Unseen Hand: Contextualizing Luo Qilan and Her Anthologies," in *The Inner Quarters and Beyond: Women Writers from Ming through Qing*, 107-40; "The Pursuit of Fame: Luo Qilan (1755-1813?) and the Debates about Women and Talent in Eighteenth-century Jiangnan."

⁸⁷ For these poets, see Anthony C. Yu, "Jin Yi," "Qu Bingyun," and "Gui Maoyi," in *Women Writers of Traditional China*, 485-87, 490-95. For Jin Yi, also see Zhong Huiling, "Jin Yi," *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women*, 96-98; Zhong Huiling, *Qingdai nü shiren yanjiu*, 402-27. For Qu Bingyun, also see Liuxi Meng, *Poetry as Power: Yuan Mei's Female Disciple Qu Bingyun (1767-1810)*. For Gui Maoyi, also see Ellen Widmer, "Border Crossing and the Woman Writer: the Case of Gui Maoyi 歸懋儀 (1762-1835/6)."

⁸⁸ Cathy Silber, "The Sisters Bao Zhilan, Bao Zhihui, and Bao Zhifen," in *Women Writers of Traditional China*, 522-26.

⁸⁹ For Yuan Mei's female disciples, also see Wang Yingzhi, *Xingling pai yanjiu*, 238-93; Wang Yingzhi, "Suiyuan 'guizhong san da zhiji' lunlüe: xingling pai yanjiu zhi yi" 隨園“閨中三大知己”論略：性靈派研究之一, 101-12; Liang Yizhen, *Qingdai funü wenxue shi*, 64-103; Zhong Huiling, *Qingdai nü shiren yanjiu*, 68-76, 206-29.

Those who follow me to learn poetry, from Buddhist monks to women, you can count every type, and people think it is indiscriminate and excessive.⁹⁰

以詩受業隨園者，方外緇流，青衣紅粉，无所不備，人嫌太濫。

The negative comment in fact shows the surprising variety of Yuan's disciples and his pride in it.⁹¹

David Hawkes remarks that Xi Peilan and her literary associates, including her husband, relatives, and friends, were all engrossed in Yuan Mei's *xingling* theories.⁹² In her poem "Discussing Poetry with My Nephew's Wife, Xie Cuixia" 與侄婦謝翠霞論詩, Xi Peilan states her own *xingqing* poetic theory:

Natural feeling is the root and base,	性情其本根
Words and ideas belong to the branches.	辭意屬枝節
If the root and base are not thick,	本根如不厚
How can fragrant blossoms form?	芬葩詎能結
If the twigs and branches are too dense,	枝節如太繁
The principle of growth will not be firm. ⁹³	生理轉不實

As Grace Fong points out, "Xi Peilan uses the metaphor of the tree and the principle of natural growth to illustrate her critical viewpoint about the fundamental significance of 'natural feeling'

⁹⁰ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua buyi*, juan 9, 780.

⁹¹ For Yuan Mei's interactions with other female writers, see Liang Yizhen, *Qingdai funü wenxue shi*, 110-32.

⁹² Hawkes, "Hsi P'ei-lan," 120.

⁹³ Xi Peilan, "Yu Zhifu Xie Cuixia lun shi," *Changzhenge ji* 長真閣集 (1874 edition), juan 4, 7b-8a; cf. Grace Fong, *Herself An Author*, 126.

(*xingqing*) underlying the production of poetry to a younger female relative.”⁹⁴ Since excessive application of poetic skills (too dense twigs and branches) results in empty poetry (infirm growth), natural, spontaneous expression of the inner self of a poet, *xingqing*, leads to substantial, quality poetry (fragrant blossoms). Echoing Hawkes, Fong states that Yuan Mei’s female disciples “espoused the genial views of their mentor on poetry, privileging above all the qualities of inspired creativity, naturalness, and spontaneity embodied in the concept of *xingling*.”⁹⁵ This observation confirms that of Han Tingxiu 韓廷秀 (1744-1792), one of Yuan’s disciples, in this couplet:

Suiyuan’s disciples cover half of the empire, 隨園弟子半天下

Taking up their brushes, they all talk about nature and emotion.⁹⁶ 提筆人人講性情

As Zhang Lihua notes, the voices of those appealing for reconciliation of the opposition between Tang and Song poetry had existed but were weak before the Qianlong reign. During the first half of that reign, this force grew in the Wu region, the base of the Tang poetry advocacy headed by Shen Deqian. However, its strength remained inferior to that of Shen Deqian’s and Li E’s followers. According to her research, only four influential critical works against the artificial division between Tang and Song poetry were produced from the beginning of the Qing to the fortieth year of the Qianlong period (1775), and their authors were all natives of Jiangsu. From the fortieth year of the Qianlong period to the end of Jiaqing period (1820), twenty works opposing the division and advocating *xingling* emerged, and the authors were widely distributed,

⁹⁴ Fong, *Herself An Author*, 126.

⁹⁵ Fong, *Herself An Author*, 126.

⁹⁶ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua buyi*, juan 8, 760.

from Zhili in North China to Guangdong, the southern end of the Qing Empire. This number is more than twice that of the nine works during this period in which scholars admired Tang poetry and the Qing followers of Tang poetry, Wang Shizhen and Shen Deqian. It is worth mentioning that half of these twenty works were from the Jiangnan region, six from Jiangsu and four from Zhejiang, including Yuan Mei's *Suiyuan shihua*. Meanwhile, among the authors of the nine works promoting Tang poetry, two were from Zhejiang, and three were from Jiangsu.⁹⁷ The high proportion of Jiangnan scholars among these authors also proves the importance of the Jiangnan region in the debate.

Yuan Mei and his followers became a "Yuan Mei phenomenon,"⁹⁸ which lasted into the nineteenth century, or the reign of Jiaqing.⁹⁹ This phenomenon thus contributed to the debate over Tang and Song poetry by enriching its theories and diversifying and the membership of the debaters.

Conclusion

The debate over Tang and Song poetry reached its greatest intensity and complexity during the High Qing era. The debaters continued to apply the strategies used by the Song, Yuan, Ming, and early Qing poets and critics, writing their versions of the orthodox tradition of classical Chinese poetry and invoking the importance of *xingqing* and *xingling*. Extending to their times, these

⁹⁷ Zhang Lihua, "Qian Jia shiqi Tang Song shi zhi zheng liubian shi," 334-56, 361-63. The other authors of these works were from Shandong, Sichuan, Jiangxi, Zhili, Guangdong, Hubei, Hebei, Shanxi, and Anhui. In addition, there was also a Mongolian author.

⁹⁸ Shang Wei, "The Literati Era and Its Demise," 265. Also see Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupaivshi*, 333.

⁹⁹ Bryant, "Poetry of the Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries," 436.

versions of poetic tradition were longer and more comprehensive than those by their predecessors. The expression of *xingqing* was given unprecedented significance equal to that of the canonical statement of poetry's function, "Poetry expresses intention," by Shen Deqian and Yuan Mei. Their versions of the orthodox poetic tradition applying this criterion thus obtained the highest authority. Another criterion, the demonstration of *xingling* in poetry, was greatly elaborated and developed by Yuan Mei. *Xingling* was explained as a concept of equal importance and similar content to *xingqing* with a heightened emphasis on a poet's inspiration and originality. With their new interpretations of *xingqing* and *xingling*, the scholars led by Yuan Mei who intended to mediate the advocacies of Tang and Song poetry developed into the third critical group in the debate. These three critical groups formed the most complex pattern in the history of the debate and chose the most intense and direct means to argue with one another, through critical questioning and refutation, face to face or in letters.

The three critical groups in the debate, mainly composed of three schools of poetry, greatly overlapped with local Jiangnan literary cultures. The poetic traditions of Jiangsu and Zhejiang nurtured influential, accomplished poets who protected and continued them energetically and exerted great influence on other poets' choice of poetic models. The new participants further enriched the debate as well as the poetic traditions of various regions and the Qing empire. Therefore, the High Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry was not only a conflict among schools of poetry but also among local Jiangnan literary cultures under their shared esteem for the same poetic orthodoxy. Chapter 4 will demonstrate how the poetic tradition of Dantu County contributed to the debate. The important role of Jiangnan women poets, who along with their

male counterparts represented the greatest diversity of the debate in history, will be elucidated in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4 Return to Tang Poetry: Qing Poetry in Dantu County

This chapter reconstructs the history of poetry in Dantu County from the beginning of the Qing to the High Qing era by tracing Dantu poetic trends and explores the position and role of Dantu poetry in the debate over Tang and Song poetry during High Qing. The main sources I use for this regional approach consist of the biographies of Dantu poets from two editions of the Dantu gazetteer, *Jiaqing Dantu xianzhi* completed in 1803 and *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi* completed in 1879. In addition, I examine textual sources about Dantu poetry and poets outside the gazetteers, such as the prefaces Shen Deqian and Yuan Mei wrote for Dantu poets' individual collections and Yuan Mei's *Suiyuan shihua*.

The first section of this chapter demonstrates the importance of local gazetteers in establishing local literary histories on the basis of the increasing visibility of literary culture in local gazetteers. In the second section, I first trace the compilation process of the Dantu gazetteer and investigate the importance Dantu literati attached to the gazetteer and literary culture represented in it. Then, I highlight the greater significance of poetry in the Dantu gazetteer than in other gazetteers from the Jiangnan region produced during the Qing dynasty. Thus, I confirm the importance of the Dantu gazetteer in representing Dantu poetry. The third section, through close reading and analysis of the texts from the Dantu gazetteers and other sources, elaborates the development of Dantu poetry from the Shunzhi to the Jiaqing reign, which involves Dantu poets' relationships with their contemporaries, especially the influential poets Shen Deqian, Li E, and Yuan Mei. In this section, I scrutinize Dantu poets' literary preferences and styles, their literary interactions, and the evolution of the local poetic trends, especially from the Yongzheng

to the Jiaqing period. My research shows that Dantu poetry revived during the late seventeenth century by modeling itself after Song poetry. From the early eighteenth century, Tang poetry replaced Song poetry as the model for emulation in Dantu until the first quarter of the nineteenth century or even later. Shen Deqian and Yuan Mei exerted great influence on Dantu poets, who were claimed as adversaries to Li E and the Zhe School. The interactions and tensions among Dantu poets and these three poets, whose leadership in the debate over Tang and Song poetry is discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, turned the county into a center of the debate in the Jiangnan region.

Local Chinese Gazetteer: A History of Local Literature

Difangzhi 地方志, or the local gazetteer,¹ is seen as one of the most important primary sources in Chinese studies and the most common and important genre of local Chinese history.² Joseph Dennis defines *difangzhi* as “a cumulative record of a territorial unit published in book format, generally by a local government, and arranged by topics such as topography, institutions, population, taxes, biographies and literature.”³ For Peter Bol, *difangzhi* is the history of a place,

¹ *Difangzhi* 地方志 or *fangzhi* 方志 is translated by several terms, including “local gazetteer,” “local history,” “local chronicle,” and “regional description.” In this dissertation, I use the most common translation, local gazetteer, following Joseph Dennis and Endymion Wilkinson, although they believe that all the translations cannot fully cover what the term *difangzhi* designates.

² Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History*, 210; Chengzhi Wang, “Chinese Local Gazetteers: Evolution, Institutionalization and Digitalization,” 45.

³ Dennis, introduction to *Writing, Publishing, and Reading Local Gazetteers in Imperial China*, 1. For other scholars’ definitions of *difangzhi*, for example, see Timothy Brook, *Geographical Sources of Ming-Qing History*, 31; Harriet T. Zurndorfer, *China Bibliography: a Research Guide to Reference Works about China Past and Present*, 188; Zhang Yingpin 張英聘, “Difangzhi

“its own stories about itself, and not just an existence as part of something else [...]. It requires an ongoing commitment to sifting through past records, to creating new records, and to finding ways to ensure that they can be known to the future.”⁴ This statement identifies the important role of a local gazetteer for its place: to preserve the history of the place and present it to the world.

The importance of literati and literary culture in local Chinese gazetteers arose in the Song dynasty. Local gazetteers started to include biographies of local personages, bibliographies of local literary works and refined writings, and local literati’s literary writings, such as poems, essays, and inscriptions.⁵ Local literati’s desires and inclinations exerted influence on the production of local gazetteers. Some Song men of letters made local gazetteers a venue for their appreciation and exploration of poetry. For example, Yang Wanli expressed disappointment at a local gazetteer of Songjiang county (in present-day Shanghai) because of its neglect of late Tang poetry. Local gazetteers served as “a manifestation of local achievement,” “works of literature and historical scholarship,” and “a measure of cultural achievement for a place.”⁶

The production of local gazetteers reached a height during the Qing dynasty. The emperors, governments, and high officials all strongly supported this enterprise.⁷ Separate, sometimes

fazhan gaikuang yu mingcheng zhonglei” 地方志發展概況與名稱種類, 1.

⁴ Bol, “Local History and Family in Past and Present,” 308.

⁵ James M. Hargett, “Song Dynasty Local Gazetteers and Their Place in the History of *Difangzhi* Writing,” 407; Hilde De Weerd, “Regional Descriptions: Administrative and Scholarly Traditions,” in *Treasures of the Yenching*, 124, 127.

⁶ De Weerd, “Regional Descriptions,” 124, 127-28.

⁷ Lai Xinxia 來新夏, Zhang Yingpin, and Chang Jianhua 常建華 underscore the joint efforts by governments of different levels in normalizing local gazetteers during the Ming-Qing era. See Lai Xinxia, *Zhongguo difangzhi* 中國地方志, 37-72, 65-66, 81-84; Zhang Yingpin, “Difangzhi

unofficial practices of individuals or small groups from different places were integrated into a long-term, empire-wide, and normalized project, which generated a significant body of local gazetteers. Men of letters constituted the most important force behind this heavy, time-consuming undertaking commissioned and sponsored by imperial and local governments (sometimes also by local patrons). They were in charge of the contents of gazetteers. Their exploration and expansion of the function and range of contents of this genre developed the study and production of local gazetteers into “an independent field in China.”⁸ Historian Zhang Xuecheng 章學誠 (1738-1801), the founder of scholarly studies of local gazetteers in China,⁹ regarded a local gazetteer as an exhaustive historical work instead of a geographical account.¹⁰ In his time, prolific collections of literary texts in local gazetteers served as the symbols of their native places and attracted audiences beyond territorial boundaries.¹¹ Zhang equated the importance of local gazetteers with that of official histories in his preface to the gazetteer of

fazhan gaikuang yu mingcheng zhonglei,” 12-5; Chang Jianhua, “Qingdai yilai difangzhi bianzuan wenti shulun” 清代以來地方志編纂問題述論. Robert Hymes and Zhu Shijia 朱士嘉 note that the Qing courts repeatedly required local governments to compile gazetteers. See Hymes, “Writing Places: Local Chinese gazetteer,” 17-18; Zhu Shijia, “Qingdai difangzhi de shiliao jiazhi (shang)” 清代地方志的史料價值(上), 31-32.

⁸ De Weerd, “Regional Descriptions,” 139.

⁹ Lai Xinxia, *Zhongguo difangzhi*, 134-5; Lai, “Lüelun difangzhi de yanjiu zhuangkuang yu qushi” 略論地方志的研究狀況與趨勢, in *San xue ji* 三學集, 277; Lai, “Zhongguo fangzhixue lilun de fazhan yu xianzhuang” 中國方志學理論的發展與現狀, in *San xue ji*, 296; Zhu Shijia [Chu Shih-Chia], “Qingdai difangzhi de shiliao jiazhi (xia)” 清代地方志的史料價值(下), 29; Chang Jianhua, “Qingdai yilai difangzhi bianzuan wenti shulun.”

¹⁰ Zhang not only participated in the compilations of local gazetteers in several districts but also composed many essays on the importance, structure, generic features, and methodologies used in compiling local gazetteers. For Zhang Xuecheng’s contribution to the study of local gazetteers, see David Nivison, *The Life and Thought of Chang Hsüeh-ch’eng (1738-1801)*, 208-12; Zhu Shijia, “Chang Hsueh-ch’eng and His Contributions to Local Historiography.”

¹¹ De Weerd, “Regional Descriptions,” 142.

Daming county (in present-day Hebei province): “A family has its genealogy, a prefecture or county has its gazetteer, a state has its history: their importance is the same” 夫家有譜，州縣有志，國有史，其義一也。¹² At the latest in the early sixteenth century, this kind of declaration already became “stock phrases” in many prefaces to local gazetteers.¹³ While a local gazetteer qualified as an official history of a certain region, its records of literature provided a history of literature of that region.

Endymion Wilkinson categorizes the contents of local Chinese gazetteers into twelve categories, some of which are also applied in dynastic histories. Two of these categories include contents related to local literary production. One category, *yiwenzhi* 藝文志 or *yiwen* 藝文 (“literature” or “bibliographies and choice excerpts”), contains bibliographies of local literati’s works or selections from their writings. Another category is biographies, which are generally arranged in different sections according to “occupational” types. The subjects of the biographies in some sections, such as *minghuan* 名宦 (upright, outstanding officials), *renwu* 人物 (notable people), and *shilao* 釋老 (Buddhist and Daoist monks), include a considerable number of local writers.¹⁴

My research on the local gazetteers included in *Zhongguo difangzhi jicheng* 中國地方志

¹² Zhang Xuecheng, “Wei Zhang Jifu sima zhuan Daming xianzhi xu” 爲張吉甫司馬撰大名縣志序, *Zhang xuecheng yishu* 章學誠遺書, *juan* 14, 129.

¹³ Bol’s study confirms the universality of Zhang Xuecheng’s view. One example is a preface to the 1520 edition of the gazetteer of Wuyi county (in present-day Zhejiang province). See Bol, “The Rise of Local History: History, Geography, and Culture in Southern Song and Yuan Wuzhou,” 37.

¹⁴ Wilkinson, *Chinese History*, 210-11. In both the 1998 and 2000 editions of his *Chinese History*, *yiwen (zhi)* is translated as “bibliographies and choice excerpts.” See page 155 of both editions.

集成 (The Series of Local Chinese Gazetteers), a large series of thousands of local Chinese gazetteers that were produced before 1949, supplements Wilkinson's categorization with more details. It shows that the category *yiwenzhi* or *yiwen* in a local gazetteer in late imperial China contains a lengthy bibliography often consisting of four sections, *jing* 經 (Classics), *shi* 史 (History), *zi* 子 (Philosophy), and *ji* 集 (belles lettres),¹⁵ and/or a selection of literary writings of different genres. When a local gazetteer comprises both a bibliography and selected writings, the bibliography is sometimes entitled *jingji* 經籍 or *jingjizhi* 經籍志 (Classics), *shuji* 書籍 (Books), or *shumu* 書目 (List of Books), while the title *yiwen(zhi)* is assigned to the section of selected works.¹⁶ The titles *jingji(zhi)* and *yiwen(zhi)* follow those in official dynastic histories. The *Han shu* 漢書 (Dynastic History of the Former Han) compiled by Ban Gu 班固 (32-92) is the first official history in which the category of bibliographies is entitled *yiwenzhi*; in the *Sui shu* 隋書 (Dynastic History of the Sui) by Wei Zheng 魏徵 (580-643), this category is for the first time entitled *jingjizhi* and divided into four subcategories, *jing*, *shi*, *zi*, and *ji*. In a local gazetteer, a bibliography enumerates the titles of collections by local literati, both male and female. There are also selected writings by local writers, including women, and those from other places on various subjects relevant to the locale, especially its natural scenery and historic sites.

Under the section of biographies of local gazetteers, educated men, especially those who

¹⁵ The translations of these four categories are from Kent Guy, introduction to *The Emperor's Four Treasuries: Scholars and the State in the Late Qianlong Era*, 1. For other translations of the four categories, for examples, see "Pre-1958 Chinese Collection," "Chinese Classics," and "Siku Zhulu 四庫著錄."

¹⁶ There could also be a section for inscriptions on steles, metalware, and stoneware, "List of [Inscriptions on] Steles" (*beimu* 碑目) or "[Inscriptions on] Metal and Stone" (*jinshi* 金石).

were renowned for their achievements in literature rather than official careers, are subjects of the *wenyuan* 文苑 (Literary Garden) or *wenxue* 文學 (Literature) category.¹⁷ In the *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (Dynastic History of the Latter Han), *wenyuan* was for the first time used as a title of the category that serves as a “garden” or “space” for collecting “biographies devoted to subjects known for their literary or refined writing” and their works.¹⁸ The *Nan Qi shu* 南齊書 (The History of the Southern Qi) compiled by Xiao Zixian 蕭子顯 (ca. 489-537) started to use *wenxue* as an alternative title of this biographical category. In local gazetteers, the subjects of biographies of this category were representative poets, essayists, song lyricists, and literary critics of their native places, of whom only a small number were able to gain empire-wide fame and be recorded in a dynastic history.

The category *lienü* 列女 (Exemplary Women) in both official dynastic histories and local gazetteers follows the model set by the canonical collection *Lienü zhuan* 列女傳 (Biographies of Exemplary Women) compiled by Liu Xiang 劉向 (77-6 BCE), which was used as a standard textbook for women’s moral education. In most cases, this category is reserved for various types of exemplary women. *Lienü* is the category adopted in official dynastic histories for women except for empresses and imperial consorts. For example, Xie Daoyun 謝道韞 (fl. 376), a famous female poet of the Eastern Jin (317-420), and several other educated women are arranged among more than twenty “exemplary women” famous for their chastity, filial piety, loyalty to the

¹⁷ The subjects of some biographies under the category “Buddhist and Daoist Monks” (*shilao* 釋老, *fangwai* 方外) are also writers and artists.

¹⁸ Grace Fong, “Radicalizing Poetics: Poetic Practice in *Women’s World*, 1904-1907,” in *Women and the Periodical Press in China’s Long Twentieth Century*, 114.

empire, or other virtues in *Jin shu* 晉書 (Dynastic History of the Jin). In local gazetteers in late imperial China, the era of flourishing women's literary culture, biographical entries of women poets, painters, and calligraphers were often classified in particular subcategories, which were entitled *guixiu* 閨秀 (Genteel Women), *cai yuan* 才媛 (Talented Ladies), or *caishu* 才淑 (Talented and Virtuous [Ladies]) under the category *lienü*, in addition to the majority who appear in subcategories of female virtue.¹⁹

These categories in a local gazetteer present the literature of a region from three perspectives. First, the literary collections in the bibliography and the selected literary writings by local authors represent a general picture of literary production of the region. Second, the biographies of local writers include details of their literary careers, ideas, and styles, which embody the diversity of the literature of their native place. Third, the criteria for selecting and evaluating literary works and writers are determined by the literary mainstream of the region.

If “a gazetteer creates a definition of place out of its categories,”²⁰ then the categories and perspectives discussed above in a gazetteer define the literary culture of a particular region. An overwhelming majority of local writers, especially women writers, were absent from dynastic histories, large anthologies, and influential remarks on poetry for different reasons. Many of their writings were even lost. Local gazetteers were one of the most reliable and accessible records of these writers' literary practices and achievements. In view of the importance the Qing court and

¹⁹ The subsection “Talented and Virtuous [Ladies]” in some gazetteers include biographies of two types of women: a) women who excelled in literature, painting, or calligraphy, and b) those who possessed Confucian womanly virtues but did not have prominent behaviour in preserving chastity or serving parents (in-law) and were not known for literary or artistic production.

²⁰ Bol, “The Rise of Local History,” 52.

local governments attributed to local gazetteers, a Qing gazetteer could be regarded as an official history that contains local literary culture. The titles and structures of the sections about literature and writers in imitation of those in dynastic histories enhance the authority of the gazetteer in the presentation and reconstruction of a local literary history. While local gazetteers “have been major sources for Chinese historians for decades,”²¹ I argue that their importance for the study of Chinese literature should be further recognized. For example, if local literati “adapt[ed] the medium to their various needs and interests,”²² how did they express their literary views and present their fellow countrymen and countrywomen as writers through this “medium,” or their gazetteers, especially through the *wenyuan*, *yiwenzhi*, and *cai yuan* sections? Taking two editions of local gazetteers of Dantu County as an example, the rest of this chapter aims to answer this question.

The Dantu Gazetteer and Dantu Poetry

In the course of the Qing dynasty, the gazetteer of Dantu County, whose other names include Jingkou and Runzhou, was revised and enlarged three times. The first edition of the Dantu gazetteer was compiled in 1683, the twenty-second year of the reign of Kangxi.²³ In 1766, the thirty-first year of the Qianlong period, Dantu scholars petitioned for a revision of the gazetteer

²¹ Chen Shipai [Shih-Pei Chen], “Material Network Analysis: An Exemplary Project on Chinese Local Gazetteers.”

²² De Weerdt, “Regional Descriptions,” 124.

²³ Bao Tianzhong 鮑天鍾, “Kangxi zhi xu” 康熙志序, 1a-1b, in Xu 序, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)* 光緒丹徒縣志 (一), in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji* 江蘇府縣志輯, 29:5; Wan Chengji 萬承紀, “Jiaqing zhi houxu” 嘉慶志後序, 1a-1b, in Xu, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:9.

and recommended Jiang Zonghai 蔣宗海 (1720-1796), a native of Dantu, as the chief compiler. When Jiang died before he was able to complete the project, Dantu scholar-officials, including Mao Yuanming 茅元銘 (*jinshi* 1772) and Wang Wenzhi 王文治 (1730-1802) (style name Menglou 夢樓), took over his work in 1795. This edition, which included the new period from 1684 to 1795,²⁴ was finished in 1803, the eighth year of the Jiaqing era.²⁵ Other Dantu scholars, such as Bao Wenkui 鮑文達 (1765-1828), contributed to complete this edition after Wang Wenzhi died.²⁶ In 1873, the twelfth year of the Tongzhi reign, at the request of the provincial government, another revision and expansion of the Dantu gazetteer was launched.²⁷ Completed in 1879,²⁸ the fifth year of the Guangxu period, this edition is the last edition produced in the Qing. Thus, Dantu literati's sustained involvement in the production of their own local history ran through the Qing dynasty.

The prefaces to the three editions of the Dantu gazetteers record the authors' understanding of the genre. In his preface written in 1803, Mao Yuanming, like many scholars in late imperial China, makes a claim to the effect that the importance of local gazetteers equals that of official histories. This claim is repeated verbatim in the preface to the Guangxu edition in 1879 by Le

²⁴ Wan Chengji, "Jiaqing zhi houxu," 1a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:9.

²⁵ Mao Yuanming, "Jiaqing zhi xu" 嘉慶志序, 1a-2a, in Xu, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:8; Wan Chengji, "Jiaqing zhi houxu," 1a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:9. Also see Wang Wenzhi's and Zhang Mingqian's biographies in "Wenyuan yi" 文苑一, in *Renwu zhi* 人物志, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 38b, 39b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 9:659.

²⁶ "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 46b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:663.

²⁷ Zhao Youchen 趙佑宸, "Chongxiu Dantu xianzhi xu" 重修丹徒縣志序, 1b-2a, in Xu, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:4; Shen Dunlan 沈敦蘭, "Chongxiu Dantu xianzhi xu" 重修丹徒縣志序, 2a-2b, in Xu, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:3.

²⁸ Shen Dunlan, "Chongxiu Dantu xianzhi xu," 2b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:3

Fangqi 勒方錡 (1816-1880), the Provincial Governor and Provincial Administration Commissioner of Jiangsu: “A prefecture or county has its local gazetteers, just as an empire has its historical records” 郡邑之有志, 猶國之有史也.²⁹ By enumerating varied coverage of a local gazetteer, Mao declares that it must be a complete, accurate record of every aspect of a prefecture or county, “No event should be unrecorded, and no record should be inaccurate” 當事無弗備, 備無弗嚴.³⁰ He attributes this necessity to the functions of the genre as preparation for the court’s investigation, officials’ reference, and future research.³¹ These points are also repeated summarily in Le Fangqi’s preface.³²

In his preface to the Jiaqing edition written in 1805, Tiebao 鐵保 (1752-1824), the Governor-General for Jiangsu, Jiangxi, and Anhui, emphasizes the difficulty of compiling and publishing a local gazetteer. Echoing Mao’s preface, he argues for the comprehensiveness of a local gazetteer, as it should provide information and reference in different fields.³³ At the end of this preface, Tiebao declares the importance of human culture (*renwen* 人文) for a region:

The prominence of a prefecture or a district consists in its human culture; the flourishing of human culture depends on moral teaching.³⁴

夫郡邑之著, 在於人文. 人文之盛, 由於教化.

²⁹ Mao Yuanming, “Jiaqing zhi xu,” 1a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:8; Le Fangqi, “Dantu xianzhi xu” 丹徒縣志序, 2a, in *Xu*, in *Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:1.

³⁰ Mao Yuanming, “Jiaqing zhi xu,” 1a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:8.

³¹ Mao Yuanming, “Jiaqing zhi xu,” 1a, 2a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:8.

³² Le Fangqi, “Dantu xianzhi xu,” 2a-2b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:1.

³³ Tiebao, “Jiaqing zhi xu” 嘉慶志序, 1b, in *Xu*, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:7.

³⁴ Tiebao, “Jiaqing zhi xu,” 1b-2a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:7.

Tiebao believes that human culture, an important component of which is literary culture, bears the responsibility to spread a place's fame, reputation, and influence and is based on moral teaching. His expectation of completing a reference work on moral teaching for both Dantu people and outsiders expressed after this passage, therefore, contains his desire to contribute to the flourishing and great renown of Dantu literature. Tiebao's view may not represent that of all the compilers and authors of the Jiaqing edition. However, the large, well-organized *yiwenzhi* section and the detailed records of poetic trends in the biographies of local literati reflect his view.

A substantial *yiwenzhi* section is found in both the Jiaqing and Guangxu editions of the Dantu gazetteer. Both *yiwenzhi* sections begin with one *juan* of *shumu*, or "List of Books," which is followed by ten *juan* of selected literary writings, including five *juan* of poems, by authors from Dantu and other places. The five *juan* of selected poems constitute more than one tenth of the forty-seven *juan* of the Jiaqing edition and one twelfth of the sixty *juan* of the Guangxu edition. The five *juan* in the Jiaqing edition are devoted respectively to the Six Dynasties and Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing periods. The five *juan* in the Guangxu edition consist of one from the Six Dynasties to the Tang dynasty, one for the Song and Jurchen Jin dynasties, one for the Yuan and Ming dynasties, and two for the Qing dynasty, in which dozens of women's poems can be found.³⁵

³⁵ The poems included in these *juan* do not correspond precisely to the periods indicated at the beginning of each *juan*. For example, the first *juan* of both editions also has poems from the Southern Tang dynasty (937-975).

From the Jiaqing to the Guangxu edition, it can be seen that poetry was an ongoing preoccupation of Dantu literati in the Qing. My comparison of these two editions with fifty-nine local gazetteers produced during the Qing dynasty in the Jiangnan region reveals the particular attention Dantu literati paid to poetry. These fifty-nine gazetteers consist of twenty-five gazetteers of twenty-one Jiangsu counties, twenty-one gazetteers of eighteen Zhejiang counties, seven gazetteers of five Jiangsu prefectures, and six gazetteers of six Zhejiang prefectures. These counties and prefectures include Suzhou, Wuxi, Changzhou, Nanjing, Hangzhou, Jiaxing, and Shaoxing. Like Dantu, they produced thousands of scholars, poets, prose writers, song lyricists, dramatists, and literary critics. Among these sixty-one gazetteers, only the two Dantu gazetteers arrange selected poems into as many as five *juan*, devote each *juan* to a certain period chronologically, and specify the time spans under the title of each *juan*, although some of the other gazetteers contain more extensive *yiwen(zhi)* sections.³⁶ The Jiaqing edition of the Dantu gazetteer is one of only two gazetteers in which Qing poems occupy a whole *juan*,³⁷ and the Guangxu edition of the Dantu gazetteer is the only one containing two *juan* of Qing poetry. The arrangement of selected works in the *yiwenzhi* section demonstrates that the Dantu literati chose poetry as the most efficient literary medium to represent certain aspects of the county's history

³⁶ Most of the *yiwen(zhi)* sections in the other gazetteers devote a half, one, or two *juan* to selected poems. There are also several exceptions among them. For example, the Qianlong edition of the gazetteer of Wujiang county (in present-day Jiangsu province) contains four *juan* of poetry. However, there is no clear explanation of the structure of these *juan*. Additionally, the four *juan* of poems in the Qianlong edition of the gazetteer of Zhenjiang prefecture (in present-day Jiangsu province) are arranged according to poetic forms.

³⁷ The other is the Guangxu edition of the gazetteer of Jingui county (in present-day Jiangsu province). It contains one *juan* of poems from the Shang (ca. 1600-ca. 1045 BCE) to the Ming dynasty and one of Qing poems.

and they presented poetry by Dantu writers as representing the county's most important literary attainment.

It is noteworthy that the *yiwenzhi* section in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi* includes two series of quatrains commenting on poems by Dantu poets, Zhang Chonglan's 張崇蘭 (1797-1856) "Quatrains on Jingkou poets" 論京口詩人絕句³⁸ and Li Fengchen's 李逢辰 (fl. eighteenth century) "On the Collections by Jingkou Poets" 讀京口詩人諸集.³⁹ Zhang's twelve quatrains evaluate fifteen Qing poets' attainments, and Li's sixteen quatrains comment on fifteen individual collections and an anthology of the Qing dynasty. Eight poets are praised in both poetry series. Six of them—Leng Shimei 冷士媚 (1626-1711), Zhang Xingliang 章性良 (1628-1710), Yu Jing 余京 (1664-1739) (style name Jianggan 江干), Bao Gao 鮑皋 (1708-1766) (courtesy name Bujiang 步江, style name Haimen 海門), Zhang Zeng 張曾 (1713-1774) (style name Shifan shanren 石帆山人), and Li Yu 李御 (d. 1790)—have their biographies in the *wenyuan* section of both *Jiaqing Dantu xianzhi* and *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi*, and their poems are found in the *yiwenzhi* sections of both editions.⁴⁰ These poets, who are given prominence in both gazetteers, should be considered the most esteemed representatives of the Dantu poets. The inclusion of these two poem series in the gazetteer suggests that Dantu literati used their gazetteer to engage in poetic criticism and establish their poetic tradition.

³⁸ Zhang Chonglan, "Lun Jingkou shiren jueju" 論京口詩人絕句, in "Shi si guochao" 詩四國朝, in *Yiwenzhi* 藝文志, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi* (er) 光緒丹徒縣志(二), *juan* 52, 49b-51a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 30:258-9.

³⁹ Li Fengchen, "Du Jingkou shiren zhu ji" 讀京口詩人諸集, in "Shi si guochao," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi* (er), *juan* 52, 57a-58b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 30:262.

⁴⁰ The other two poets are He Tie 何鐵 (fl. seventeenth century) and Guan Yu 關漁 (fl. eighteenth century) (courtesy name Xuejiang 雪江).

Dantu Poetry in the Qing Dynasty: From the Song Style to the Tang Style

I) The Biographies in the *Wenyuan* Section of the Jiaqing Edition

The Dantu literati's presentation of their poetry is also found in the biographies of Dantu poets, most of which are included in the *wenyuan* section.⁴¹ The *wenyuan* section of the Jiaqing edition of the Dantu gazetteer includes eight biographies of Qing literati, who were all poets and flourished between the Shunzhi and Jiaqing periods. These biographies, especially from the third to the sixth one, record the evolution of Dantu poetry from the Kangxi reign to the Qianlong reign.

Zhang Xingliang's biography, which is after those of Leng Shimei and Xia Shenshu 夏慎樞 (b. 1664, *jinsi* 1712) (courtesy name Yongxiu 用修), includes a passage from a letter Zhang wrote to Yu Jing, the subject of the fourth biography. In this passage, Zhang looks back at the history of Dantu poetry during the early Qing:

After Wei Qiushan and Wu Longmen, the learning of poetry in our hometown had few successors. Twenty or thirty years ago, if anyone wrote poetry, people gathered together to ridicule him. In recent years, some scholars who were commoners, one after another, have encouraged [poetic writing]. The elites of our group, such as He Huangshi and Xia Yongxiu (Xia Shenshu), rose up, and customs changed because of them.⁴²

⁴¹ Some poets' biographies are included in the *rulin* 儒林 ("Confucian scholars") and *fangwai* sections.

⁴² "Wenyuan" 文苑, in *Renwu zhi*, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 19a; "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 22b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:651.

吾鄉自韋秋山鄔龍門而後，詩學頗少傳人。二三十年之前，有捉筆爲詩者，輒從而譏訕之。近時諸君以布衣之士先後鼓吹其間，而吾黨之英如何皇士夏用修輩翕然振起，風俗爲之一變。

According to this passage, Dantu poetic production declined in the decades following the deaths of two poets, including the mid-Ming poet Wei Chun 韋椿 (fl. 1488-1505) (style name Qiushan 秋山).⁴³ Twenty or thirty years before this letter was written, poetic composition was even regarded as ridiculous in Dantu. Thereafter, a number of poets, to whom Zhang Xingliang referred as “our group” (*wudang* 吾黨), revitalized Dantu poetry. In view of Zhang Xingliang’s and Yu Jing’s dates, this letter must have been written during the reign of Kangxi, definitely before 1710 and probably after around 1680, when Yu Jing was able to discuss poetry with older poets as a teenager; ridiculing poetic production must have happened during the period between approximately 1650 and 1690. Xia Shenshu’s birth year helps us to infer that the revival of Dantu poetry began at the earliest in the 1680s or 1690s, when Xia was able to exert an influence on his town as a young poet. Zhang Xingliang identifies the revivalists, including himself, and his young correspondent, Yu Jing, into a distinct body. This classification implies the intensity of the conflict between the Dantu poets. The question here is: wherein did the divergences among Dantu scholars lie in addition to the opposite attitudes towards the relevance and significance of poetic production?

⁴³ For Wei Chun, see Yang Yiqing 楊一清, “Wei Qiushan shi xu” 韋秋山詩序, in “Zawen zhong” 雜文中, in *Yiwenzhi*, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 43, 10a-11a; “Wei Qiushan shixu,” in “Zawen er” 雜文二, in *Yiwenzhi*, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (er)*, *juan* 55, 9b-10a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 30:323-24.

A bifurcation can be found in Zhang's letter to another scholar, Wang Ping 王莘 (1661-1720), in which Zhang comments on recent poetic tendencies:

For the learning of poetry after the reigns of Zheng[de] and Jia[jing], pentasyllabic poems imitated the style of the *Wenxuan*, and recent-style poems were similar to those of the three Tang periods. [Like a person in] an oversized gown with loose sleeves, [these poems were] similar to [those of old times] in appearance but unlike [them] in spirit. [Since they were just] mediocre imitations of their predecessors, how could they rejuvenate [the style of] the Major Odes? In recent decades, demons and monsters have all appeared. Borrowing from the likes of Wen [Tingyun] and Li [Shangyin] and quoting the books of anecdotes from the Song and Yuan periods, they only hope that if readers cannot understand even one single character in their texts, they can conceal their own superficiality. In fact, the meanings of their poems are shallow. The poets who attempt to correct their errors still follow the practices of their predecessors in the reigns of Zheng[de] and Jia[jing] and repeat the mistakes which really cause their failure.⁴⁴

詩學自正嘉以後，五言則規撫選體，近體則仿佛三唐。寬袍闊襖，貌似神非。碌碌因人，安能振興大雅？沿及近今，蛇神牛鬼，無不畢現。借溫李之派，引用宋元稗史，只圖見者一字不解，以自文其陋，其實意味淺薄。而矯其偏

⁴⁴ “Wenyuan,” in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 19a-19b; “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 22b-23a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:651.

者，仍踵正嘉前輩之習，蹈其真實銷亡之病。

In this passage, Zhang Xingliang expresses a completely negative attitude towards the poetic trends from the mid-Ming (the reigns of Zhengde and Jiajing) to the early Qing. The targets of his criticism, who are not clearly named, are imitators of Tang poetry (especially the likes of the late Tang poets Wen Tingyun 溫庭筠 (ca. 801-866) and Li Shangyin, although some of them invoked Song-Yuan texts in their writing. Zhang's criticism clearly shows his anxiety about the continuation of the classical poetic tradition, or the style of the Major Odes. His anxiety is caused by the Ming-Qing poets' concentration on poetic language, or "appearance" (*mao* 貌), and their ignorance of the "spirit" (*shen* 神) of previous literary examples, which should refer to the past authors' originality and unique inner selves expressed in their works, for example, their nature, emotion, and inspiration. This anxiety implies that he considers a poet's expression of *xingqing* and demonstration of his *xingling* the essence of the classical poetic tradition. In Zhang's biography, a sharp criticism of his poetry follows his letter quoted above:

However, the poems by [Zhang] Xingliang, [He] Jie, and other poets are all extant.

It is quite difficult [to say that] none of their poems are the so-called "demons and monsters." During that time, only Xia Shenshu had unrestrained talent, but he did not control it and [thus] was unable to become a master. Only Yu Jing made extraordinarily painstaking efforts and differed from other poets by alone exploring the goals of ancient poets. When Shen Deqian, the Chief Minister [of the Court of Sacrifices], was a Government Student, [...] he alone greatly appreciated Yu Jing.

However, [Yu] Jing was criticized at that time. Even the Chief Minister himself could not avoid [criticism]. [Zhang] Xingliang regarded Tang [poetry] as a remote ancestor and Song [poetry] as a direct progenitor in his poetry writing; he was unable to explore the orthodoxy [of poetry].⁴⁵

然性良及絜等詩具在，所謂蛇神牛鬼，頗難盡免。其時唯夏慎樞天才開朗而不自收拾，未得成家；惟余京苦心孤詣，不與眾同，獨探古人宗旨。沈德潛宗伯爲諸生時 [...] 獨劇賞之。然京在當時輒被楚咻，卽宗伯亦不能免也。性良詩專主桃唐祖宋，未能深究正宗。

Similar to *mi Song tiao Tang* used by Shen Deqian to criticize the poetic trend of the first half of the eighteenth century, Zhang Xingliang's preference for Song poetic models is summarized into *tiao Tang zu Song* 桃唐祖宋, "regarded Tang [poetry] as a remote ancestor and Song [poetry] as a direct progenitor," in his biography.⁴⁶ His choice of poetic models is regarded as the cause of his failure to "explore the orthodoxy" (*shenjiu zhengzong* 深究正宗) of poetry in his writing. In this passage, the criticism of Zhang Xingliang (and He Jie 何絜 (fl. 1683), one of the compilers of the Kangxi edition⁴⁷) is accompanied by praise of two other poets, Xia Shenshu and Yu Jing.

⁴⁵ "Wenyuan," *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 19b; "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 23a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:651.

⁴⁶ Chinese scholars, such as Jiang Yin, Li Shenghua, and Tang Yunyun 唐芸芸, in their studies show that *tiao Tang zu Song* means a poet prefers Song poetry to Tang poetry. For example, See Jiang Yin, "Wang Yuyang yu Qingchu Songshi feng zhi xingt," 88; Jiang Yin, "Huang Zongxi yu Zhepai shixue de shixue qingxiang" 黃宗羲與浙派詩學的史學傾向, 224; Li Shenghua, "Lun Xuancheng pai," 42; Tang Yunyun, "Qingdai 'Tang Song shi zhi zheng' yanjiu zongshu" 清代"唐宋詩之爭"研究綜述, 138.

⁴⁷ He Jie was famous for his poetry, prose, and song lyrics and frequently associated with famous contemporary men of letters. For He Jie's biography, see "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 24a-24b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:652.

Between the latter two, Yu Jing appears to gain a higher evaluation because he “alone explored the goals of ancient poets” (*du tan guren zongzhi* 獨探古人宗旨). His exploration coincided with Zhang Xingliang’s desire to “rejuvenate [the style of] the Major Odes” (*zhenxing Daya* 振興大雅) but avoided Zhang’s failure. The divergent evaluations of Yu and Zhang derive from their different choices of poetic models and illustrate a poetic view in this biography: Song poetry does not belong to the orthodox tradition of classical poetry. Shen Deqian’s great appreciation (*ju shang* 劇賞) of Yu further implies that “the goals of ancient poets,” or “orthodoxy,” pursued by Yu includes Tang poetry. The author(s) of this gazetteer approve(s) Yu’s and Shen’s pursuit by showing sympathy for their difficult situation.

Yu Jing’s leadership in Dantu, which was comparable to that of Zhang Xingliang, is further claimed at the end of Zhang’s biography:

Generally speaking, poetry in our native Run[zhou] mainly followed [Zhang] Xingliang before [the end of] the Kangxi reign; from the Yongzheng reign, it was resurrected by Yu [Jing] and Bao [Gao].⁴⁸

大抵吾潤之詩，康熙前多宗性良，雍正後重開於余鮑。

This passage divides Dantu poetry from the mid-seventeenth (the beginning of the Qing dynasty) to the early nineteenth century (the first half of the Jiaqing period, during which the Jiaqing edition of the Dantu gazetteer was produced) into two periods. Zhang Xingliang’s emulation of Song poetry dominated Dantu poetry during the Kangxi period. The criticism that Yu Jing and

⁴⁸ “Wenyuan,” in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 20b; “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 24a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:652.

Shen Deqian suffered in Dantu in the late 1710s, the end of the Kangxi period,⁴⁹ corroborates this trend by revealing the prevalent contempt for Tang poetry. From the Yongzheng period, the early 1720s, another poetic trend supplanted Zhang's as the mainstream. To determine this new poetic trend, it is necessary to further identify the poetic views and practices of the new leading poets, Yu Jing and Bao Gao, mentioned at the end of Zhang's biography. Bao's full name is given in an annotation:

Poets like Zhang Xingliang and He Jie were famous and important figures during that time; however, their poetic collections were far inferior to those by poets like Yu Jing and Bao Gao. Now we still list them in the biographies under the "Literary Garden," [...] so that [readers] can see the literary trends of our native Run[zhou] during the Kangxi reign.⁵⁰

章性良何絜輩名重當時，然所著詩集遜余京鮑皋輩不啻倍蓰。今仍列文苑傳中，[...] 可見吾潤康熙中詩文風氣。

Two positions that persist from the biography to this annotation are the mismatch between Zhang Xingliang's and He Jie's high reputation and their relatively low poetic quality as well as the high poetic quality of Yu Jing and Bao Gao. Another noteworthy claim is the intention behind recording the history of Dantu poetry at the end of this annotation. This claim explains why Zhang Xingliang's biography devotes a great deal of space to Yu Jing's greater achievements

⁴⁹ Shen Deqian was a Government Student (*zhusheng* 諸生) from 1694 to 1739 and met Yu Jing in 1718. See Shen Deqian, "Nianpu," 6b, 13b, in *Shen Guiyu shiwen quanji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 234:4, 7.

⁵⁰ "Wenyuan," in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 20b.

than those of Zhang and to the periodization of Dantu poetry, and it calls attention not only to individual poets but also to their connections and the poetic evolution of the whole county.

The regional poetic transformation and networks of Dantu are further disclosed by the three biographies after Zhang Xingliang's biography, those of Yu Jing, Bao Gao, and Zhang Zeng. In Yu Jing's biography, a passage from Yu's epitaph written by Shen Deqian examines Yu's literary career and influence:

Runzhou originally had many poets, and the trend of that time esteemed Song style.

Jianggan (Yu Jing) did not specialize in one style. When he and gentlemen from his town distributed titles [among themselves] for versification, he imitated Song poets.

When I visited Runzhou and befriended him, he began to imitate Tang poets.

However, he was neither pedantic and pretentious when he imitated Song [poets] nor was he vacuous and superficial when he imitated Tang [poets]. He nurtured his natural sensibility and inspiration [in his poetry, which] has his temperament in it.

The older he became, the more mature his poetic realm was, and the more pure and profound his learning was. Many scholars followed him and learned from him.

Poets who were from different regions and came to Run[zhou] all visited his hut.

High officials there often valued a visit from Yu, who was a commoner.⁵¹

潤州固多詩人，時風會尚宋格。江干不專一體，遇故里諸君分賦倣宋人；予客潤州，與定交，輒倣唐人。然不餽釘爲宋浮廓爲唐，陶冶性靈，有君形者存也。

⁵¹ "Wenyuan," in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 21a-21b; "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 24b-25a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:652.

年益高，境益老，學益醇厚。從遊者滿座，四方詩人過潤者必經其廬。達官當路，每以余布衣一至爲重。

As an advocate of Tang poetry, Shen Deqian pays particular attention to the evolution of Yu Jing's poetic style within the context of Dantu poetry during the early Qing period. Dantu poets' imitation of Song poetry recorded in this epitaph echoes the prevalent contempt for Tang poetry at the time, revealed by the attacks on Shen and Yu and Zhang Xingliang's leadership found in Zhang's biography. Shen Deqian highlights Yu Jing's turning from Song poetry to Tang poetry under his own influence and praises Yu's learning from both Tang and Song poetry by applying the important criterion emphasized most strongly by Yuan Mei, the demonstration of *xingling*, or natural sensibility and inspiration. When comparing Shen's characterization of Yu's poetry with the evaluation of Yu's poetry in Zhang Xingliang's biography, it is reasonable to argue that Yu's demonstration of *xingling* is considered an embodiment of his exploration of "the goals of ancient poets" in this edition of the Dantu gazetteer, and that the demonstration of *xingling* served as a chief criterion in the Dantu poets' pursuit of poetic orthodoxy. The higher evaluation given to the later stages of Yu's writing career, in which the imitation of Tang poetry played a major role, uncovers Dantu literati's preference for Tang poetry when the biography was written. Yu Jing's influence in his old age in a wide range of places, which is greater than that in Dantu County as stated in Zhang Xingliang's biography, implies a widespread veneration of Tang poetry over Song poetry by the early eighteenth century.

The biography of Bao Gao, the other leading poet of the Yongzheng reign, follows immediately after that of Yu Jing. The beginning of this biography records the recognition and

support given to Bao by Yin Huiyi 尹會一 (1691-1748), the Salt Controller in Yangzhou. Yin himself elaborates their interactions in the preface he wrote for Bao's *Haimen shichao* 海門詩鈔 (Haimen's Poems). A passage from this preface quoted in Bao's biography summarizes the merits of Bao's poetry and explains Yin's appreciation of it:

[Bao Gao's poetry] continues the legacy of "[being] gentle and earnest" and differs totally from the ornate, dissolute customs.⁵²

得乎溫柔敦厚之遺，迥異浮華放浪之習。

By including this passage in Bao Gao's biography, Dantu literati echoed Yin and designated Bao as a representative of their shared pursuit of poetic orthodoxy characterized by *wenrou dunhou*.

Yin's reverence for the *Shijing* is also found in the beginning of this preface, which is not cited in Bao Gao's biography:

The way of poetry is to cultivate nature and emotion, not only to embellish essays and ornament lines.⁵³

詩之爲道，所以陶冶性情，非苟爲摘章繪句也。

Poetry's function as expressing and nurturing nature and emotion, as Yin claims here, was conventionally understood by generations of scholars, as early as Liu Xie, as being initiated and exemplified by the *Shijing*. Applying this model in his comment on Bao Gao's poetry, Yin shared with Bao the desire to continue the classical poetic tradition, although Yin was chiefly interested

⁵² "Wenyuan," in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 22a; "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 25b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:652; Yin Huiyi, "Haimen chuji xu" 海門初集序, in "Fulu" 附錄, 16a, in *Haimen shichao* 海門詩鈔, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 310:121.

⁵³ Yin Huiyi, "Haimen chuji xu," in "Fulu," 16a, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 310:121.

in Song Neo-Confucianism and lacked an in-depth understanding of poetry, as indicated in Bao's biography.⁵⁴

Bao's biography further recounts his literary environment, poetic style, and influence on Dantu poets:

At that time, Li E from Hangzhou, [whose courtesy name was] Fanxie, raised his banner of poetry in Yangzhou. Scholars who pursued fame all revered him. They often regarded pedantry as erudition and mistook finickiness for innovation. Their poetry had form but not [a distinctive] voice, had [flowery] language but not vitality, and had refinement but not emotion. Bao Gao's poetry originated in [the poetry of] the Six Dynasties and derived from [the styles of] the *Li Sao* and *Wenxuan*, as well as being a blend of the styles of the High Tang masters. At that time, most people were not able to understand his poetry. [...] Among the poets in the county who learned from Bao's poetry, Chen Shen, [whose style name was] Hecong, succeeded in learning his boldness and carefreeness; and Liu Mengxi, [whose style name was] Huipu, succeeded in learning his ornateness and floweriness. Additionally, Fa Chongzheng, [whose style name was] Xiping, [...] imitated Bao's metres and tonal patterns in most of his poems.⁵⁵

顧其時，杭州厲鶚樊榭方樹詩幟於揚州，好名之士翕然宗尚，往往以鰓釘爲

⁵⁴ “Wenyuan,” in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 22a; “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 25b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:652.

⁵⁵ “Wenyuan,” in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 22a-22b; “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 25b-26a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:652-53.

博，以纖巧爲新，有色而無聲，有詞而無氣，有文而無情。皋詩出入六朝，胎乳騷選，而折衷於盛唐諸大家。時人多弗能解。[...] 里中學其詩者，陳深壑淙得其豪宕，劉夢儔蕙圃得其冶麗。又法重正西坪 [...] 爲詩多倣鮑家格律。

This passage accuses Li E and his followers for the ways in which they wrote Song-style poetry. The Li group's defects, their concentration on language and scholarship and neglect of "[a distinctive] voice" (*sheng* 聲), "vitality" (*qi* 氣), and "emotion" (*qing* 情), are similar to characteristics of the Ming poets whose poems are "similar to [those of old times] in appearance but unlike [them] in spirit" (*mao si shen fei* 貌似神非) in Zhang Xingliang's criticism. Dantu literati continue to criticize the lack of the expression of the inner self, or *xingqing*, and of the demonstration of sensibility and inspiration, or *xingling*, in poetry. Bao Gao, in their view, ought to serve as an exemplar in these aspects. The description of Bao Gao's poetry shows the esteem for pre-Song literary works, especially pre-mid-Tang ones, as models in Dantu County. The juxtaposition of Bao Gao and Li E (and also the description of Yin Huiyi's admiration of Bao) in this biography discloses Dantu scholars' confidence and pride in Bao's accomplishments and suggests a victory of Tang literary culture over its Song counterpart, although Bao's influence was mainly in the county and inferior to Li's in geographical range even according to this biography.

The poetic trend in Dantu during the reign of Kangxi, Yu Jing's and Bao Gao's poetic pursuits, and the opposition between Dantu adherents of Tang or Song poetry are summarized in the next biography, of which the subject is Zhang Zeng:

Zhang Zeng [...] was as famous as Bujiang (Bao Gao). Although Runzhou had many poets in the past, they admired Song poetic style. [Their poems were] either stiff or coarse. Only Yu Jianggan (Yu Jing) restored the tone of the “Odes,” but he suffered greatly from criticism. In his late years, he saw the two masters’ poems and rejoiced, saying: “These are true Tang tones and can expand our camp.”

Bujiang’s poetry originated from [the poetry of] the Six Dynasties; full of unrestrained talent, it fell between [the styles of] Taibai (Li Bai) and Changgu (Li He). Zeng’s poetry was similar to the poetry of Chu [Guangxi] and Wei [Yingwu] and was shaped by the individual styles of Jia [Dao], Meng [Jiao], Pi [Rixiu], and Lu [Guimeng]. They both established themselves as poetic masters; the poets whose poems are similar to [those of] Tang poets in appearance cannot be compared to them. [...] Shen [Deqian] especially appreciated Zeng’s poems and wrote a preface [to his collection]. [...] The poetry enthusiasts in the Han Banners stationed in Jingkou learned from him. [...] Among them, the poems of Guan Xuejiang, Jia Wenshan, and Yin Zhixi were quite good. [...] The poet Huang Long loved his poetry, built the Yuebo House of Poetry, and invited him to live in it.⁵⁶

張曾 [...] 與步江齊名。初潤州雖多詩人，然崇尚宋體，非苦生硬，即涉俚俗。余江干雅音獨振，頗病楚咻，暮年見二子之詩，大喜曰：“是真唐音，足以張吾軍矣。”蓋步江詩原本六朝，而才氣凌轢，在太白昌谷之間；曾詩仿佛儲韋，

⁵⁶ “Wenyuan,” in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 23a-23b; “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 26b-27a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:653.

而雜以賈孟皮陸之別韻. 皆能自立家, 非貌為唐人者比也. [...] 沈特賞曾詩, 為製序. [...] 京口駐防漢軍有喜詩者輒從之遊. [...] 若關雪江賈文山殷芷溪詩頗佳. [...] 有詩人黃澐者愛其詩, 搆月波詩屋延之居.

Compared to the biographies of Zhang Xingliang and Yu Jing, this passage criticizes the Dantu poets who wrote in the Song styles more explicitly. The accusations against them once again corroborate Dantu literati's general denigration of Song poetry and growing esteem for Tang poetry, which is also confirmed by their pride in Shen's appreciation of Zhang Zeng's poems shown in this biography. In the quotation of Yu Jing's praise for Bao Gao and Zhang Zeng, Yu's drafting of Bao and Zhang into "our camp" (*wu jun* 吾軍) in his late years (the end of Yongzheng reign or the beginning of the Qianlong reign) resembles but is more militant than Zhang Xingliang's categorization of "our group" earlier. At the same time, it differs from Zhang's categorization by using a new criterion, "real Tang tones" (*zhen Tang yin* 真唐音). When Yu Jing, Bao Gao, and Zhang Zeng became the backbone of Dantu poetry, the opposition between the advocates of Tang poetry and those of Song poetry became the key contradiction among Dantu poets. Based on this criterion, this biography distinguishes Bao Gao and Zhang Zeng, the "masters" (*jia* 家) who turned Tang poets' styles into their own, from the poets whose poems were "similar to [those of] Tang poets in appearance" (*mao wei Tangren* 貌為唐人). This differentiation corresponds to Zhang Xingliang's careful distinction between poems similar to Tang poetry in appearance or in spirit. Their divisions between Dantu poets derive from the concern about *xingqing* and *xingling* in the poetic production shared by Dantu scholars, in addition to their preference for Tang poetry. In other words, Tang poetry was considered the

model of poets' *xingqing* and *xingling* in Dantu County. Bao Gao's and Zhang Zeng's growing influence in the county demonstrates their ascendance over their opponents, the Song-style poets. The Dantu literati's acceptance of High Tang and late Tang poetry as examples of the "real Tang tones" is partially revealed by Bao Gao's and Zhang Zeng's poetic models: the High Tang poets Li Bai, Chu Guangxi 儲光羲 (*jinshi* 726), and Wei Yingwu; and the late Tang poets Li He 李賀 (790-816), Jia Dao, Meng Jiao, Pi Rixiu 皮日休 (ca. 834-ca. 883), and Lu Guimeng 陸龜蒙 (d. 881).⁵⁷

The revival of Dantu poetry driven by Yu Jing, Bao Gao, and Zhang Zeng is further depicted in the first half of Li Yu's biography, which comes after Zhang Zeng's biography:

In Run[zhou], from Jianggan (Yu Jing) to Bujiang (Bao Gao) and Shifan (Zhang Zeng), there were many [scholars] famous for being good at poetry one after another. [...] Only Li Yu's poetry possessed the [poetic] merits of these masters. The masters all thought [themselves] inferior to him. However, although Li Yu's [poetry] encompassed all exquisiteness, [he took] colourfulness, floweriness, profundity, and nobleness as the ultimate goal, because this is his nature and emotions.⁵⁸

潤自江干暨步江石帆，先後以能詩稱，一時擅吟詠者頗多。[...] 御獨兼諸子之長，諸子皆以為不及，然御雖奄有眾妙，終以鮮華雋上為歸，其性情然也。

⁵⁷ For Chu Guangxi's poetry, see Owen, *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry*, 63-70.

⁵⁸ "Wenyuan," in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 24a-24b; "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 28a-28b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:654.

Li Yu's biography lists his literary friends and the sites of their gatherings, including Guo Jiaju 郭家駒 (1718-1765) and Huang Long as well as their studios.⁵⁹ In view of Li's and Guo's dates as well as the contemporaneity of Huang Long and Zhang Zeng, this flourishing of poetry emerged probably during the Qianlong period, especially its first half (mid-1730s-mid-1760s). In praising the style and high quality of Li's poetry, the Dantu scholars still give priority to a poet's expression of nature and emotion, rather than the choice of any particular poetic style or model, in their evaluation.

It is possible to probe Guo Jiaju's, Huang Long's, and Li Yu's poetic models and preferences according to their literary associates. Guo Jiaju and Huang Long appear to be two of the most enthusiastic poets in the revival. They not only participated in the poetic gatherings but also offered their studios as locales for them. Huang Long, who admired Zhang Zeng's poetic talent, probably appreciated the attainments of Tang poets more than those of Song poets. Guo was probably also congenial to Shen Deqian and Zhang Zeng, since Shen prefaced Guo's poetry collection, as Shen did to Zhang Zeng's, and also wrote Guo's biography.⁶⁰ The friendly and harmonious relationships between them and other Dantu poets depicted in this biography suggest the possibility of some similarities in their poetic views.

Li Yu's poetic inclination and style may also be illustrated by those of other contemporary scholars whose recognition of his poetry is recorded in the second half of his biography.

⁵⁹ "Wenyuan," in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 24a-24b; "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 28a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:654.

⁶⁰ Ke Yuchun 柯愈春, *Qingren shiwenji zongmu tiyao* 清人詩文集總目提要, 1:661-62.

Wang [Wenzhi] took Li's poems out and showed them to his colleagues as soon as he arrived [in Beijing]. When the famous masters in the Hanlin Academy at that time, like Attendant Censor Jiang Hening, the Senior Compilers Bi Yuan, Zhu Chongguang, Tong Fengsan, and Song Xian, as well as the Secretaries Di Jikun and Dong Chao, saw Li's poems, they praised him unreservedly and made friends with him.⁶¹

甫至，王亟出其詩示諸同館。時館閣諸名家若侍御蔣和寧，修撰畢沅諸重光童鳳三宋銑，中書狄繼坤董潮見其詩，極口歎服，相與訂交。

Contemporary scholars Liu Yi's 劉奕 and Wang Ping's 王平 investigations of Wang Wenzhi's poetry show that Wang Wenzhi, who recommended Li's poetry eagerly to his colleagues, mainly appreciated Tang poetry even though he referred to Song and Yuan poets.⁶² Liu Yi also notes that Wang Wenzhi also learned from Wang Shizhen, an early Qing devotee of Tang poetry.⁶³ Wang Wenzhi's literary preferences must have contributed to the ruling esteem for Tang poetry in the Jiaqing edition of the *Dantu* gazetteer as a leading compiler during its completion. Among the Hanlin academicians who praised Li's poetry highly, Bi Yuan 畢沅 (1730-1797) was the best-known poet, whose reputation was comparable to that of Yuan Mei.⁶⁴ In his *Qian Jia shitan*

⁶¹ "Wenyuan," in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 25a; "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 28b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:654.

⁶² Wang Ping, *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi: Wang Wenzhi yanjiu* 探花風雅夢樓詩——王文治研究, 182-83; Liu Yi, "Wang Wenzhi shige lunlüe" 王文治詩歌論略, 220.

⁶³ Liu Yi, "Wang Wenzhi shige lunlüe," 217-18.

⁶⁴ Hou Dong 侯冬, "Bi Yuan mufu yu Qianlong houqi shitan" 畢沅幕府與乾隆後期詩壇, 217-18. But Schmidt regards him as a "skilled if not great" poet. See Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 159.

dianjianglu, Shu Wei ranks Bi Yuan third after Shen Deqian, Bi's tutor,⁶⁵ and Yuan Mei.⁶⁶ Bi Yuan was also an emulator of Tang poetry and a literary associate of Wang Wenzhi.⁶⁷ His poetry was praised as being similar to Du Fu's poetry in spirit (*shen si* 神似) instead of in appearance (*mao si* 貌似) and as expressing the "genuineness of nature and emotion" (*xingqing zhi zhen* 性情之真).⁶⁸ He also studied the poetry of Han Yu, Li Shangyin, Du Mu 杜牧 (803-53), and Su Shi,⁶⁹ while he denigrated some contemporaries' misguided application of Song poets' intricate, obscure language as a distortion of erudition.⁷⁰ In addition, he agreed with Yuan Mei's literary theories.⁷¹ Wang's and Bi's literary ideas and practices give us more clues to the Tang style and demonstration of *xingqing* and *xingling* in Li Yu's poetry.

The revival of Dantu poetry is also sketched in Cheng Mengxiang's 程夢湘 (fl. 1765) biography, the last biography in the *wenyuan* section of the Jiaqing edition:

[Cheng] often associated with erudite literati, including Bao Haimen (Bao Gao)

⁶⁵ According to Xu Shichang, Bi Yuan "associated with Guiyu (Shen Deqian) [as his disciple] when he was a young scholar" 少從歸愚游。See *Wanqingyi shihui*, 4:3687.

⁶⁶ Shu Wei, *Chongke zuben Qian Jia shitan dianjianglu*, 1a-1b, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, 1705:168.

⁶⁷ For their literary association, See Wang Ping, *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 34-41. For Bi Yuan's emulation of Tang poetry, see Hou Dong, "Bi Yuan mufu yu Qianlong houqi shitan," 218; Yang Lingling 楊玲玲, "Bi Yuan shige yishu tese tanwei" 畢沅詩歌藝術特色探微, 22.

⁶⁸ Zhang Fengsun 張鳳孫, "Lingyan shanren shiji xu" 靈巖山人詩集序, 1b-2a, in *Lingyan shanren shiji* 靈巖山人詩集, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 369:333-34.

⁶⁹ Shi Shanchang 史善長, *Yanshan Bi gong nianpu* 弇山畢公年譜, 3a, in *Beijing tushuguan cang zhenben nianpu congkan* 北京圖書館藏珍本年譜叢刊, 106:127.

⁷⁰ Bi Yuan, "Jinque pansong ji xu" 金闕攀松集序, 1b, in *Jinque pansong ji* 金闕攀松集, in *Yan Dongyou shiji* 嚴東有詩集, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1450:652. Also see Hou Dong, "Bi Yuan mufu yu Qianlong houqi shitan," 218.

⁷¹ Schmidt, *Harmony Garden*, 159; Hou Dong, "Bi Yuan mufu yu Qianlong houqi shitan," 218-19. They both notice that Bi subsidized the publication of *Suiyuan shihua*.

and Zhang Shifan (Zhang Zeng). He also interacted like brothers with other scholars of the same generation, including Wang Menglou (Wang Wenzhi) and Bao Yatang (Bao Zhizhong), and exchanged poems with them without missing one single day. His poems followed [the poems which had the characteristics of] nobility, antiquity, clarity, and plainness. They derived from [the styles of] Meng [Haoran] and Wei [Yingwu] and also Pi [Rixiu] and Lu [Guimeng]. After he completed his study, he went to Jinling to pay a visit to the Hanlin Bachelor Yuan Jianzhai (Yuan Mei). The Hanlin Bachelor [had] astonishing talent and extensive scholarship, [...] [He] especially liked Mengxiang's poems and thought that [Mengxiang's] lines would definitely [make Mengxiang] a master not inferior to ancient poets.⁷²

常親近鮑海門張石帆諸夙學，又與王夢樓鮑雅堂諸子爲昆弟交，相與唱和無虛日。其詩以高古澄淡爲宗，出入孟韋，兼涉皮陸。所業旣成，至金陵謁袁簡齋太史。太史奇才博學，[...] 尤喜夢湘之詩，以爲語必成家，不愧古之作者。

The record of Cheng Mengxiang's literary circle enriches the picture of the flourishing of Dantu poetry given in the *wenyuan* section. Cheng connected the poets of two generations: the older generation, Bao Gao and Zhang Zeng, and the younger generation, Wang Wenzhi and Bao Zhizhong 鮑之鍾 (1740-1802) (courtesy name Lunshan 論山, style name Yatang 雅堂), Bao Gao's son. His admiration of High Tang and late Tang poets is an example of the poetic

⁷² "Wenyuan," in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 24, 25b-26a; "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 29b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:654.

inclinations of the younger generation in Dantu. Yuan Mei's comparison of Cheng's poetic achievements with those of ancient poets suggests his recognition of Cheng's exemplarity in expressing *xingqing* and demonstrating *xingling*, in view of Yuan's claims of *xingqing* and *xingling* as the essence of ancient poetry.

Two overt themes run through the *wenyuan* section in the Jiaqing edition of the Dantu gazetteer: the desire and efforts to continue the classical poetic orthodoxy and the consequent selection of a model between Tang and Song poetry. The criterion of poetic evaluation, which judges whether a poet expresses his nature and emotion and demonstrates his sensibility and inspiration, serves as an equally central, if covert, theme. Under these themes, the Jiaqing edition presents a history of Dantu poetry from the beginning of the Qing dynasty to the Qianlong period. This history narrates how Dantu poetry turned to taking Tang poetry as their model, the correct path in their views, and away from imitation of Song poetry, which had earlier revitalized Dantu poetic production.

Briefly, the revival of Dantu poetry began with a dominant imitation of Song poetry represented by Zhang Xingliang and Yu Jing during the late 1680s or 1690s. This mainstream lasted for several decades and then gave way to the advocacy of Tang poetry pioneered by Yu Jing, Bao Gao, and Zhang Zeng in the early 1720s. From the 1720s, the advocacy of Tang poetry ruled Dantu poetry until at the earliest the end of Qianlong period. The transformation between the two poetic trends in Dantu County followed the high tide of the imitation of Song poetry in the 1670s and the re-emergence of Tang poetry advocates in the 1680s. This process is defined by the authors of the Dantu gazetteer as the Dantu poets' return to the correct path of literature,

the rejuvenation of the poetic orthodoxy, and the following of ancient poets' goals. The enduring admiration of Tang poetry in Dantu echoed the empire-wide advocacy of Tang poetry which ran through the Qianlong period. Dantu poetry kept pace with the evolution of the empire's poetry and constituted an important element of the debate over Tang and Song poetry.

The most influential High Qing poets bridged Dantu County and the empire. Among these poets, Shen Deqian exerted the greatest influence on the county. He established a close relationship with Dantu poets and frequently associated with them. As the biographies of Zhang Xingliang, Yu Jing, and Zhang Zeng show, Shen changed Yu Jing's poetic inclination and encouraged Zhang Zeng by prefacing Zhang's individual collection. It is reasonable to say that Shen facilitated the beginning and continuation of the Dantu advocacy of Tang poetry. The Jiaqing edition resonates with Shen's advocacy of Tang poetry and follows his criticism of the imitation of Song poetry represented by Li E. An embodiment of the latter is the application of the term *douding* 餽釘 or *dingdou* 釘餽 (pedantry) in Shen's criticism of the Song-style poets' display of erudition.⁷³ Yuan Mei's authority is also recognized in this edition. Like Shen Deqian, he was a supporter of Dantu poetry. The emphasis on *xingqing* and *xingling*, which characterized his poetics, also significantly informs poetic trends described in the Jiaqing edition. His higher evaluation of Tang poetry over Song poetry is probably the other reason behind his popularity.

II) Texts from Other Sources

Many details in the history of Dantu poetry in the Jiaqing edition of the Dantu gazetteer are

⁷³ Shen Deqian, *Qingshi biecai ji*, 2:969.

confirmed by various texts by the leaders of High Qing poetry and by those about the relationships between these leaders and the Dantu poets. At the same time, this history sometimes slightly diverges from texts of other sources. These small divergences result from the selection, expurgation, or revision of many different texts and supplement our perception of Dantu poetry shaped by the biographies in the Dantu gazetteer, which present only the aspects of Dantu poetry that the authors and compilers of the gazetteer wanted to show the world.

Among the texts from various sources, the preface Shen Deqian wrote for Zhang Zeng's collection shows that Shen Deqian interacted with the Dantu poets more frequently than as reflected in the Dantu gazetteer:

I found three poets in Jingkou. In the year of *wuxu* of the Kangxi reign (1718), [I] befriended Master Yu Jianggan (Yu Jing) in an ancient temple on Jiao Mountain. Jianggan's poetry possessed [the merits of] both Tang and Song [poetry] [...]. In the year of *guihai* (1743) of the Qianlong reign, Master Bao Bujiang (Bao Gao) came to the capital and sent me his poems. [I] read them. [He] was cautious about poetic forms and metres and attached importance to them and did not write any line hastily. His poems were close to the tone of the "Odes." Two years later, in the year of *yichou* (1745), [I] read the poems of Master Zhang Shifan (Zhang Zeng) [...] and thus made friends with him.⁷⁴

余于京口得詩人三。康熙戊戌歲交余子江干于焦山古寺，江干詩兼善唐宋

⁷⁴ Shen Deqian, "Shifan shiji xu" 石帆詩集序, in *Shen Deqian shiwenji* 沈德潛詩文集, 4:2010.

[...]. 乾隆癸亥，鮑子步江來京師，投余以詩，讀之，矜高格律，句不妄下，
近於雅音。又二年乙丑，讀張子石帆詩[...], 因與定交。

According to this preface, Shen befriended the three chief poets, Yu Jing, Bao Gao, and Zhang Zeng, successively and discussed poetry with them. The Dantu poets gained recognition and encouragement from him.⁷⁵

Shen Deqian's appreciation is also recorded by Dai Xieyuan 戴燮元 (fl. 1859-1882), whose maternal grandfather was the son of Bao Zhilan 鮑之蘭 (1751-1812), Bao Gao's first daughter. Dai mentions Shen's appreciation in his preface to *Jingjiang Baoshi san nüshi shichao heke* 京江鮑氏三女史詩鈔合刻 (The Joint Publication of the Three Bao Women Scholars from Jingjiang) by Bao Zhilan and her younger sisters, Bao Zhihui and Bao Zhifen 鮑之芬 (1761-1808):

The Summoned Scholar Bao Haimen (Bao Gao) of our hometown gained equal fame with Yu Jianggan (Yu Jing) and Zhang Shifan (Zhang Zeng). Shen Wenque (Shen Deqian) called them the Three Poets of Jingkou.⁷⁶

吾鄉鮑海門徵君與余江干張石帆齊名，沈文慤嘗稱為京口三詩人。

The title of the three Tang-style poets, the Three Poets of Jingkou (*Jingkou san shiren* 京口三詩人), approves their representativeness of Dantu poetry. Shen's association with the three poets and his neglect of the Dantu poets who modeled their poetry on Song poetry reflect his exclusive

⁷⁵ For Shen Deqian's interactions with Yu Jing, also see Xu Shichang, *Wanqingyi shihui*, 5:4080. Wang Ping also examines Shen's associations with these three poets, see Wang, *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 119-22.

⁷⁶ Dai Xieyuan, "Xu" 序, 1a, in Bao Zhilan, Bao Zhihui, and Bao Zhifen, *Jingjiang Baoshi san nüshi shichao heke*, 1882 edition.

attention to the emulation of Tang poetry in his observations about Dantu poetry. Such evidence confirms Shen's influence on the trend towards Tang poetry in Dantu. Although given by Shen Deqian and shared by the three important Dantu poets, this title is not found in the Dantu gazetteer or Shen's writing. Dai Xieyuan probably learned it from his family, who perhaps heard it from Bao Gao. The Bao family's pride in Bao Gao's accomplishments and admiration of Shen Deqian persisted into the late nineteenth century.

As Shen Deqian's followers, the Dantu poets formed an antithesis to the imitation of Song poetry represented by Li E and the Zhe School. This antithesis is recorded in *Wanqingyi shihui* 晚晴簃詩匯 (An Anthology from the Twilight Studio), the enormous anthology of Qing poetry completed in 1929 under the supervision of Xu Shichang 徐世昌 (1855-1939):

Haimen (Bao Gao) was famous for his poetry in the region between the Yangzi River and the Huai River. Fanxie (Li E) sojourned in Yangzhou and discussed poetry by using the Song poetic methods, but Haimen always took High Tang grandmasters as his ideal. [...] The natives of his county who learned poetry, Chen Shen, [whose style name was] Hezong, Liu Danying, [whose style name was] Huipu, and Fa Chongzheng, [whose style name was] Xiping, all took Haimen as their model and formed their own school.⁷⁷

海門稱詩江淮間，時樊榭客揚州，論詩用宋法，而海門一以盛唐諸大家為職志。[...] 里人學詩者，陳深壑宗，劉宣英蕙圃，法重正西坪，皆宗海門，自

⁷⁷ Xu Shichang, *Wanqingyi shihui*, 4:3006.

成派別。

More radical than Bao Gao's biography, this passage equates Bao's influence with that of Li E, the leader of the Zhe School and of many poets in Yangzhou and Tianjin, by labeling Bao a leader of a poetic school. The late Qing scholar Chen Rong 陳融 (1876-1955) (style name Yongyuan 顥園) in his *Yongyuan shihua* 顥園詩話 (Yongyuan's Remarks on Poetry) even names this school the Bao School (*Bao pai* 鮑派),⁷⁸ a counterpart of the Li School. Bao Shangchuan 鮑上傳 (fl. 1907), Bao Gao's great-grandson, in his postscript written in 1907 for Bao Gao's individual collection describes Bao Gao as a leader of Dantu poets, whom he refers to as the Jingjiang School of Poetry (*Jingjiang shipai* 京江詩派). While the poetry of other places is absent from this postscript, Bao Gao is identified as a grand master (*jushou* 鉅手) with an empire-wide reputation who brought Dantu poetry to the way of the "Odes," or Tang poetry, the orthodox tradition.⁷⁹

The most radical portrayal of the relationship between Bao Gao and Li E is found in Bao's biography included in his poetry collection. The annotation under its title claims that this biography is the one included in the Dantu gazetteer and authored by Wang Wenzhi. However, there are some discrepancies between them:

At that time, Li E, a native of Hangzhou [whose courtesy name was] Fanxie,
raised his banner of poetry in Yangzhou. Scholars who pursued fame all admired
him. They often regarded pedantry as erudition and mistook finickiness for

⁷⁸ Qian Zhonglian, *Qingshi shiji* 清詩紀事, 8:4884.

⁷⁹ Bao Shangchuan, "Ba" 跋, 19a-19b, in "Fulu," in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 310:123.

innovation. The strength [of their language] was formidable, but the vitality [of their language] was frail. The vocabulary [of their poetry] was rich, but the emotion [in their poetry] was vapid. [Bao] Gao's poetry derived from [the styles of] the *Li Sao* and *Wenxuan* and originated in [the poetry of] the Six Dynasties, as well as being a blend of the styles of the High Tang masters. Li was deeply jealous of Bao. [Bao] was quite ostracized by him. However, [Li] was not able to damage Bao's poetic reputation after all.⁸⁰

顧其時杭人厲鶚樊榭方樹詩幟於維揚，好名之士翕然宗尚，大抵以餽釘爲博，纖巧爲新，力勑氣孱，詞富情索。皋詩獨出入騷選，胎息六朝，而折衷於盛唐諸大家。厲深忌之，頗爲所排，然卒不能損其詩名也。

As found in the biography in the gazetteer, on the one hand, this passage expresses the same dissatisfaction with the lack of nature and emotion in Li's poetry; on the other hand, it retains the same praise of Bao's learning from previous literary models. There are only negligible textual discrepancies between them. The noteworthy part in this passage is the last sentence, which is absent from the Dantu gazetteer. It pays attention to the county's competition with other places and depicts Bao Gao as a poet whose higher achievements caused Li E's jealousy. It is difficult to know if this depiction is an exaggeration of Bao's influence and why it is not found in the Dantu gazetteer. The records of this competition could be a later addition or have been removed by Wang Wenzhi from the gazetteer in order to avoid offending people from other places.

⁸⁰ Wang Wenzhi, "Bao Haimen xiansheng shi zhuan" 鮑海門先生詩傳, in "Fulu," 11b, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 310:119.

Therefore, this version probably reflects the intensity of the divergence between Dantu and Zhejiang poets of Bao's time more faithfully than the Dantu gazetteer and Bao Shangchuan's and Xu Shichang's records. In any case, it is certain that Dantu scholars attempted to establish themselves through their competitive relationships with Li E, the Zhe School, and the advocacy of Song poetry.

In addition to Shen Deqian, Yuan Mei also frequently communicated with the Dantu poets, especially the Bao family. As a literary friend of Bao Gao, he quotes Bao Gao's (and also Zhang Zeng's) poems in his *Suiyuan shihua*.⁸¹ In his preface dedicated to *Qingyuge heke* 清娛閣合刻 (The Joint Publication of the Clear Joy Studio) by Bao Zhihui, Bao Gao's second daughter, and her husband, Zhang Xuan 張鉉 (b. 1756) (style name Gezhai 軻齋), Yuan compares the friendship between Bao Gao and himself as "the association between Han [Yu] and Meng [Jiao]" (*Han Meng liaojiao* 韓孟聯交).⁸² He also records the interactions between him and Cheng Mengxiang in *Suiyuan shihua*. He depicts Cheng's cautiousness in considering whether a character can be used in poetry. Then he complains about people's ignorance of a standard which distinguishes between Tang and Song poetry: whether a poet practices a cautious choice of words:

People cannot distinguish between Tang and Song [poetry] from this perspective,
and they distinguish Tang and Song [poetry] in vain from the perspective of

⁸¹ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 2, 50; *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 14, 458; *Suiyuan shihua buyi*, *juan* 5, 669.

⁸² Yuan Mei, "Qingyuge heke shi xu" 清娛閣合刻詩序, 2a, in Bao Zhihui, *Qingyuge yingao* 清娛閣吟藁, 1811 edition.

explicitness and implicitness. They do not know that among the Three Hundred Poems, there are of course many implicit poems, but there are also not a few explicit poems. That is why the poets of fake Tang styles fall into mediocrity.⁸³

人不能在此處分唐宋，而徒在渾含刻露處分唐宋；則不知三百篇中，渾含固多，刻露者亦復不少。此作偽唐詩者之所以陷入平庸也。

Cheng's cautiousness differentiates him from the poets who are ignorant of this standard and write mediocre (*pingyong* 平庸) poems in "fake" (*wei* 偽) Tang styles. Yuan Mei classifies Cheng as an inheritor of this unique feature of Tang poetry, although he designates both implicit and explicit poems as the successors of the *Shijing* and does not think implicitness is inferior to explicitness in poetry writing.

However, another passage about Cheng Mengxiang in *Suiyuan shihua* records Cheng's admiration of Li E:

He most admired Master Fanxie (Li E), a native of my hometown. Imitating [Fanxie] from his heart and tracing [Fanxie] by hand, [he] almost became Li's match.⁸⁴

渠最心折於吾鄉樊榭先生，心摹手追，几可抗手。

Cheng Mengxiang's enthusiasm for both Tang and Song poetic styles agrees with Yuan Mei's opposition to artificial periodization of classical poetry. However, Cheng's imitation of Li E is erased from the Dantu gazetteer, and he is described as a pure admirer of Tang poets. The

⁸³ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 7, 220.

⁸⁴ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 13, 432.

strategies applied in the portraits of Chen Mengxiang and Bao Gao illustrate the Dantu scholars' self-identification as successors of Tang poetry and opponents of Song-style writers.

Compared with the texts from different sources about the relationships between the Dantu poets and the leaders of High Qing poetry, the Jiaqing edition of the Dantu gazetteer concentrates on the poets' emulation of Tang poetry from the Yongzheng period and excludes their interest in Song poetry, although the number of the unrecorded cases in addition to Cheng Mengxiang remains unknown. By doing so, the Jiaqing edition portrays the Dantu poets as determined, qualified successors of the poetic orthodoxy, of which the foremost exemplar included Tang poetry, although it does not record Bao Gao's and Zhang Zeng's interactions with Shen Deqian. The texts from various sources further confirm that Dantu was an important sphere of Shen Deqian's influence. The antagonism between the Dantu advocates of Tang poetry, especially Bao Gao, as an important force of Shen Deqian's critical group and the Zhe School represented by Li E was probably more intense than described in the Dantu gazetteer.

These textual resources also record a higher frequency of associations between Yuan Mei and Dantu poets. Yuan and the Dantu poets, such as Bao Gao, had mutual regards for each other. The importance attached to *xingqing* and *xingling*, especially the application of the term *xingling*, in the Jiaqing edition echoed Yuan's poetic promotion. Yuan's influence coexisted with Shen's in Dantu County. The county, like the Jiangnan region in which it was situated, thus provided a stage for the three groups of poet-critics in the debate over Tang and Song poetry in the High Qing period.

III) The Guangxu Edition of the Dantu Gazetteer

The *wenyuan* section of the Guangxu edition of the Dantu gazetteer is considerably expanded on the basis of the Jiaqing edition. Dozens of new biographies of the literati who flourished from the Shunzhi to the Jiaqing period are included in this edition. The theme of the *wenyuan* section of the Jiaqing edition, the advocacy and emulation of Tang poetry, is further enhanced by the new biographies.

In this edition, the oldest poet who chose Tang poetry as his model is Zhou Shi 周詩 (fl. 1659). As a poet of the same generation as Zhang Xingliang, Zhou modeled his poetry on the late Tang poets Wen Tingyun and Li Shangyin. He was considered superior to “contemporary pedantic collectors [of literary erudition]” 時下掇拾鯁釘者 in the beginning of the Qing dynasty.⁸⁵ Yu Jing’s “camp” is of greater strength than depicted in the Jiaqing edition. According to Guan Zhaogui’s 管兆桂 (b. 1704) biography, he and poets including Bao Gao and Zheng Zeng “formed the Poetry Society of Washing Flowers to worship Shaoling (Du Fu)” 結浣花社以祀少陵,⁸⁶ whose studio was named “the Washing-Flowers Cottage” (*Huanhua caotang* 浣花草堂).

The biographies of the poets flourishing from the second half of the Qianlong to at least the Jiaqing reign in this edition further piece together the history of the county’s pursuit of Tang poetic merits. The subjects of these new biographies usually emerged in groups. One group was composed of four friends:

⁸⁵ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 21a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:650.

⁸⁶ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 27b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:653.

Poet's Name	Poet's Characteristics and Influences	Literary Relationships
Cheng Zhaoxiong 程兆熊 (1717-1764) ⁸⁷	He admired Zhang Zeng. His “poems followed the rules of Tang [poetry] and expressed his nature and emotions” 詩宗唐律，抒寫性情。	He befriended Wang Liancheng, Bao Zhizhong, and Fa Jiasun.
Wang Liancheng 王連城 (fl. mid-eighteenth century) ⁸⁸	He admired Zhang Zeng.	
Fa Jiasun 法嘉荪 (fl. 1768-1770) ⁸⁹	His “poems followed the three Tang periods” 詩法三唐。	The son of Fa Chongzheng 法重正 (fl. eighteenth century), who admired Bao Gao. He learned poetry together with Cheng Mengxiang. ⁹⁰
Bao Zhizhong ⁹¹	He “was praised along with his father” 並其父稱之。 ⁹²	Bao Gao's son.

Fa Jiasun dedicated a preface to Cheng Zhaoxiong's poetry collection. Attached to the end of Cheng's biography, it is a rare case in local gazetteers in which a full-text quotation conveys a scholar's poetic values systematically in the *wenyuan* section.⁹³ Like many participants in the debate over Tang and Song poetry from the Song to the Qing dynasty, Fa Jiasun traces the

⁸⁷ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 30b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:655. Cheng Zhaoxiong was a native of Anhui but lived in Dantu. See Ke Yuchun, *Qingren shiwenji zongmu tiyao*, 1: 657.

⁸⁸ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 30a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:655. For Wang Liancheng's biography, see “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 35b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:657.

⁸⁹ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 35b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:657.

⁹⁰ “Wenyuan,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, juan 24, 26a; “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 30a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:657-8.

⁹¹ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 35b-38a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:657.

⁹² “Wenyuan,” 22b, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, juan 24; “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 26a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:653.

⁹³ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 31a-31b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:655.

history of classical poetry in this preface and employs two general principles in his version. First, the function of poetry is to express a poet's nature and emotion (and to uphold Confucian morality). Second, the *Shijing* is the origin of classical poetry and provides the highest model of poetry's function. Fa Jiasun evaluates poetry from the Han dynasty to his own time according to these two principles. He designates Tang poetry, especially High Tang poetry, as the only example that possesses all the merits of its predecessors, including "emotion and inspiration" (*qingxing* 情興), a near synonym of *xingqing* and *xingling*. Song poetry (as well as the poetry of the Five Dynasties) is contrasted to Tang poetry because it lacked important poetic merits, such as "naturalness" (*ziran* 自然) and "inspiration" (*yixing* 意興), which correspond closely to *xingqing* and *xingling*. Ming poets' imitation of Tang poetry is considered unnatural, and Qing poetry is critiqued for its inferiority to Song poets' imitation of Tang poetry. Through his version of the history of classical poetry, Fa Jiasun establishes Tang poetry as the last model and himself as a devotee of Tang poetry.

Fa Jiasun further invites Cheng Zhaoxiong to study poetry together:

[If we go] from the mid and late [Tang poetry] back to the early and High [Tang poetry], from the Tang [poetry] back to the Han and Wei [poetry], and from the Han and Wei [poetry] back to the Three Hundred Poems, those things that make one's nature and emotion gentle and the doctrine of social order and ritual clear rely on [our study of poetry] so as not to perish.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 31b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:655.

由中晚而初盛，由唐而漢魏，由漢魏而三百篇，所以淑性情著名義者，亦賴是以不泯。

The interactions between Cheng Zhaoxiong and Fa Jiasun in Fa's expectation convey their pursuit of the poetic orthodoxy (and Confucian morality).

Their poetic colleague Bao Zhizhong was a literary successor of his father, Bao Gao. Although neither Bao Gao's nor Bao Zhizhong's biography indicates Bao Zhizhong's poetic preference and style, Yuan Mei in *Suiyuan shihua* quotes Bao Zhizhong's poems and maintains that his "poetry continued his father's style" 詩有父風.⁹⁵ Cheng Zhaoxiong, Wang Liancheng, Bao Zhizhong, and Fa Jiasun constitute a group of young poets who followed Bao Gao and Zhang Zeng. At the same time, Bao Zhizhong, like Bao Gao, befriended Yuan Mei,⁹⁶ who devoted one poem to Bao Gao's and Bao Zhizhong's poetry in his series of quatrains in imitation of Yuan Haowen's poetic criticism.⁹⁷ The long friendship between Yuan and the Bao family provides an example of how Yuan's influence endured in Dantu.

The most influential poet of the younger generation in Dantu is probably Wang Wenzhi, who had learned poetry from Shen Deqian.⁹⁸ His biography in the Guangxu edition states the

⁹⁵ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 9, 277.

⁹⁶ In his preface to the joint publication by Bao Zhihui and Zhang Xuan, Yuan Mei states that he "made a friend with [Chen] Ji and [his son Chen] Qun [like Kong Rong]" 紀羣做友. See Yuan Mei, "Qingyuge heke shixu," 2a, in Bao Zhihui, *Qingyuge yingao*, 1811 edition. For the interactions between him and Bao Zhizhong, also see Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 5, in *Yuan Mei quanji*, vol. 3, 135. For Kong Rong's 孔融 (153-208) relationship with Chen Ji (129-199) 陳紀 and his son, Chen Qun 陳羣 (d. 237), see Chen Shou 陳壽, *San guo zhi* 三國志, 3:633.

⁹⁷ Yuan Mei, "Fang Yuan Yishan 'Lun shi'," no. 28, in *Xiaocang shanfang shiji*, *juan* 27, in *Yuan Mei quanji*, 1:596.

⁹⁸ Jiang Yin, "Shen Deqian menxia de shixue jianjie lüeshu" 沈德潛門下的詩學見解略述, 378.

high quality of his poetry:

The sophistication of his poetry reached the level of Tang poets and became their equal.⁹⁹

生平吟詠之工，入唐人之室，與分席而處。

This statement is taken from the text celebrating Wang's birthday in 1799 written by Yao Nai 姚鼐 (1731-1815), a famous prose writer and poet who claims that Du Fu's poetry represents the zenith of poetic production in history.¹⁰⁰ Yuan Mei points out that Wang's poetic production "started from [imitating] Jin and Tang [poetry]" 從晉唐入手。¹⁰¹ In his preface to a collection of song lyrics by Xu Baoshan 許寶善 (*jinshi* 1760), Wang Wenzhi evaluates previous poets from the Han to the Song dynasty according to whether they continued in the orthodox tradition of the *Shijing*:

From the Han to the Tang dynasty, only great masters were able to inherit the intentions of the poets of the "Airs." Very few poets from the Song dynasty on inherited the intentions of the poets of the "Airs."¹⁰²

自漢至唐，作詩而得風人之意者，非大家不能；宋以後諸詩家，得風人之意者絕少。

This passage clearly suggests the poetic orthodoxy deriving from the *Shijing* declined from the

⁹⁹ "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, *juan* 33, 38a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:659.

¹⁰⁰ Yao Nai, "Wang Yuqing qishi shou xu" 王禹卿七十壽序, in *Xibaoxuan wenji* 惜抱軒文集, *juan* 8, 13b, *Qingren shiwenji huibian*, 377:382.

¹⁰¹ Yuan Mei, "Da Zhu Zhitang taishi" 答祝芷塘太史, in *Xiaocang shanfang chidu* 小倉山房尺牘, *juan* 10, in *Yuan Mei quanji*, 5:202.

¹⁰² Wang Wenzhi, "Ziyixuan cigao xu" 自怡軒詞稿序, in Wang Ping, "Wang Wenzhi yiwén huibian" 王文治佚文彙編, in *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 247.

Song dynasty. After this passage, Wang Wenzhi identifies Song lyricists, instead of Song poets, as the succeeding generation who inherited the merits of the *Shijing*, thus disqualifying most Song poets. He further asserts that Xu Baoshan is a new successor:

There is nothing that he does not learn from ancient poets, but he is able to express his own nature and emotion. This is what I call someone who obtains the intention of the poets of the *Shijing* [...].¹⁰³

於古人無所不學，而能自抒其性情。吾所謂得風人之意者[...].

This praise coincides with Yuan Mei's idea of a poet's broad learning and expression of *xingqing*. Wang's poetic values partially explain the esteem for Tang poetry as the mainstream advocacy in the Jiaqing edition of the Dantu gazetteer, which was completed under his direction. They also support my inference of the poetic values of Wang's associates, including Li Yu, whose biography records Wang's appreciation of his poetry.

Wang Wenzhi and Yuan Mei were intimate friends and kindred spirits.¹⁰⁴ In his preface dedicated to the collection by Luo Qilan, one of his female disciples, Yuan recommends Wang as another mentor for Luo because of the similarities between his and Wang's poetic views:

The poetic trends nowadays often have literary qualities but lack colour; they have sound but no tones. They are especially not empathetic to the intention of ancient poetry. Only the poetic theories of Master Menglou (Wang Wenzhi) of Jingjiang

¹⁰³ Wang Wenzhi, "Ziyixuan cigao xu," 248.

¹⁰⁴ Yuan Mei in his *Suiyuan shihua* frequently praises and quotes Wang Wenzhi. See Wang Ping, *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 52-77.

are in accord with mine.¹⁰⁵

今之詩流，往往文而不采，有聲而無音，殊非惻隱古詩之意。惟京江夢樓先生論詩與余意符。

Yuan Mei's criticism of the poetry of his contemporaries exemplifies his emphasis on natural sensibility and spontaneous inspiration in poetry. It also implies that Wang and Yuan himself were exceptional successors to the classical poetic tradition. The congeniality between them explains to a certain degree Yuan's popularity in Dantu and its gazetteer.

According to Wang Ping's study of Wang Wenzhi's literary circles, Wang Wenzhi interacted actively with Dantu poets, including the poets whose biographies are included in the Jiaqing edition: Cheng Mengxiang, Li Yu, and six of Li Yu's seven poetic friends listed in Li's biography.¹⁰⁶ Wang was also a friend of the Bao family.¹⁰⁷ As the Guangxu edition shows, Wang was surrounded by younger devotees of Tang poetry, including poets from two groups related by blood as shown in the tables below:

Group one:

Poet's Name	Poet's Characteristics and Influences	Literary Relationships
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¹⁰⁵ Yuan Mei, "Yuan xu" 袁序, 1b-2a, in *Tingqiuxuan shiji* 聽秋軒詩集, Jiaqing edition.

¹⁰⁶ Wang Ping, *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 124-28.

¹⁰⁷ For Wang Wenzhi's associations with Bao Zhihui, Zhang Xuan, Bao Zhizhong, and Bao Zhifen, see Wang Ping, *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 68-70, 129-31, 142. Bao Zhizhong's poetry collection includes nearly twenty poems which record the interactions and close relationships between him and Wang. For example, see "Wanzhitang zuo yue tong Wang Menglou" 萬芝堂坐月同王夢樓, in *Lunshan shixuan* 論山詩選, 1832 edition, *juan* 1, 3a; "Huai Wang Menglou" 懷王夢樓, in *Lunshan shixuan*, *juan* 2, 7b-8a; "Huai Menglou" 懷夢樓, in *Lunshan shixuan*, *juan* 12, 27b.

Yang Zhu 楊鑄 (1778-1847) ¹⁰⁸	He “obtained the truth of Taibai’s (Li Bai) poetry” 於太白詩獨得真諦.	He was appreciated by Wang Wenzhi as well as Zhang Wentao and Song Dazun 宋大樽 (1746-1804), who both admired Li Bai.
Yang Shixin 楊試昕 (fl. 1803) ¹⁰⁹	His poetry was “not inferior to mid and late [Tang] poetry” 不落中晚之後.	Yang Zhu’s older brother.
He Jin 何金 (fl. nineteenth century) ¹¹⁰	He developed a poetic style “similar to that of Tao [Qian] and Wei [Yingwu] in spirit” 神似陶韋.	The Yang brothers’ nephew. He was appreciated by Wang Wenzhi.

Group two:

Poet’s Name	Poet’s Characteristics and Influences	Literary Relationships
Dai Chun 戴純 (juren 1747) ¹¹¹	He was “famous for his poetry” (<i>yi shi ming yishi</i> 以詩名一時) and praised by Bao Gao as the most outstanding poet of the county.	He was appreciated by literati from different places. Jiang Shiquan wrote a preface for his poetry collection, and Yuan Mei wrote a postscript for it.
Dai Tianxi 戴天錫 (fl. eighteenth century) ¹¹²	His poetic style “had the charms of [Meng] Xiangyang (Meng Haoran) and [Liu] Liuzhou (Long Zongyuan)” 有襄陽柳州風韻.	Dai Chun’s nephew. He learned poetry from Wang Wenzhi.
Dai Ze 戴澤 (1791-1812) ¹¹³	He imitated Wei-Jin poetry and Du Fu.	Dai Chun’s grandson and Dai Tianxi’s nephew.

These poets formed a loose group of adherents of Tang poetry.

The Poetry Society of Seven Masters (*Qi zi shishe* 七子詩社) was another group in which

¹⁰⁸ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 43a-44b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:661-62.

¹⁰⁹ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 43a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:661.

¹¹⁰ “Wenyuan er” 文苑二, in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 34, 3b-4a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:667.

¹¹¹ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 42a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:661.

¹¹² “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 34, 48b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:664.

¹¹³ “Wenyuan er,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 34, 7b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:669.

the poets wrote in Tang poetic styles. Its members whose biographies are included in the

Guangxu edition of the Dantu gazetteer include:

Poet's Name	Poet's Characteristics and Influences	Literary Relationships
Wang Yu 王豫 (1768-1826) ¹¹⁴	“His poetry followed Qinglian (Li Bai) and Xiangyang (Meng Haoran)” 詩以青蓮襄陽爲宗. He was also a follower of Shen Deqian's poetry. ¹¹⁵	A friend of Tang Peiying and Yang Shixin. ¹¹⁶
Tang Peiying 唐培英 (fl. eighteenth century) ¹¹⁷	His poems were compared to those in the <i>Wenxuan</i> 文選 (Selections of Refined Literature) and Tang poetry, especially those by Wang Wei, Meng Haoran, and mid-Tang poets.	
Zhang Xueren 張學仁 (<i>juren</i> 1807) ¹¹⁸	He learned from Tang poetry and paid particular attention to the compilation and annotation of Du Fu's poetry.	
Qian Zhiding 錢之鼎 (1773-1824, <i>juren</i> 1810) ¹¹⁹	He was “good at learning from Li Bai” 善學太白.	
Bao Wenkui ¹²⁰	His poetry synthesized Tang and Song poetry. ¹²¹	A friend of Wang Wenzhi; ¹²² the grandson of Bao Ao 鮑

¹¹⁴ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 47b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:663.

¹¹⁵ Wang Ping, *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 138.

¹¹⁶ For Wang Yu's relationship with Yang Shixin and Tang Peiying, see Ke Yuchun, *Qingren shiwenji zongmu tiyao*, 2:984, 1055.

¹¹⁷ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 47b-48a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:663-64.

¹¹⁸ Zhang's biography in the Dantu gazetteer is composed of a passage from the genealogy of his family and his biography from another local gazetteer, *Jiaodong zhi* 焦東志 (The Gazetteer of Jiaodong). The passage from his genealogy claims that he learned from High Tang poetry, while the biography from another local gazetteer says he learned from mid and late Tang poetry. They both mention Zhang's compilation and annotation of Du Fu's poetry. See “Wenyuan yi,” in *Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 46b, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:663. Also see Wang Ping, *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 139.

¹¹⁹ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 47a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:663. Also see Wang Ping, in *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 138.

¹²⁰ “Wenyuan yi,” in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 45a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:662-63.

¹²¹ Wang Ping, *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 137.

		翱, Bao Gao's younger brother; a friend and student of Fa Shishan 法式善 (1753-1813) (style name Shifan 時帆), who followed the Qing poet Wang Shizhen's poetic theory and learned from Wang Wei, Meng Haoran, Wei Yingwu, and Liu Zongyuan. ¹²³
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Bao Wenkui's broad synthesis of Tang and Song poetry echoes Yuan Mei's literary ideals, while continuing Bao Gao's esteem for Tang poetry:

[His] poetry derived from Tang and Song [poetry] and could not be labeled by [the characteristics of] any single master. The Chancellor [at the Directorate of Education] Fa Shifan (Fa Shishan) said that he learned from Haimen (Bao Gao) and Lunshan (Bao Zhizhong) but went beyond them.¹²⁴

詩出入唐宋，不名一家。法時帆祭酒謂其承海門論山遺教而有非海門論山所能牢籠者焉。

Although Fa Shishan and Bao Zhizhong did not agree with Yuan Mei's equation of *xingling* with *xingqing*,¹²⁵ the fact that Bao Wenkui demonstrated engagement with both Tang and Song

¹²² Wang Ping, *Tanhua fengya Menglou shi*, 138.

¹²³ Zou Peng 鄒鵬, "'Xingling pai' puxi de lilun quexian ji jiu zongpai lilun de wuqu" "性靈派" 譜系的理論缺陷及就宗派立論的誤區, 32; Gao Jingjie 高靜潔 and Zhao Yongyuan 趙永源, "Qingdai Zhenjiang Baoshi jiazhu wenxue chengjiu tanlue: yi 'Jingjiang qian qi zi' zhi yi Bao Wenkui wei li" 清代鎮江鮑氏家族文學成就探略——以“京江前七子”之一鮑文達為例, 4. For Fa Shishan's literary views, also see Xu Shichang, *Wanqingyi shihui*, 5:4285.

¹²⁴ "Wenyuan yi," in *Guangxu Dantu xianzhi (yi)*, juan 33, 46a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:663.

¹²⁵ Fa Shishan, *Wumen shihua* 梧門詩話, juan 7, 88; Zou Peng, "'Xingling pai' puxi de lilun quexian ji jiu zongpai lilun de wuqu," 32; Gao Jingjie and Zhao Yongyuan, "Qingdai Zhenjiang Baoshi jiazhu wenxue chengjiu tanlue: yi 'Jingjiang qian qi zi' zhi yi Bao Wenkui wei li," 4.

poetics suggests Yuan Mei's continued influence into the Jiaqing reign, and that Yuan's poetic theories were perceived as compatible by advocates of Tang poetry.

The Guangxu edition echoes the Jiaqing edition in terms of its emphasis on Tang poetry and shows how Dantu poets' enthusiasm for Tang poetry continued in the Qianlong and Jiaqing periods. According to this edition, while Shen Deqian's and Yuan Mei's influence continued in Dantu, Wang Wenzhi, the new leader of Dantu poets from the second half of the Qianlong period to the early Jiaqing period, interacted with a larger number of scholars empire wide while still maintaining his base in Dantu. Many of his literary engagements took place at the same time as his compilation of the Jiaqing edition. Therefore, the focus on Tang poetry in the *wenyuan* section in the Jiaqing edition not only resulted from early Dantu poets' writing practices but also the poetic views of the compilers represented by Wang Wenzhi. Wang's own literary life, along with those of other poets of the younger generation, further contributed to the dominance of the Tang "camp" in the Guangxu edition. The two editions of the Dantu gazetteer thus established Dantu County as an important base of the Qing advocacy of Tang poetry. While the three groups of poet-critics in the debate over Tang and Song poetry all developed vigorously and competed with one another in the empire during the High Qing era, the advocacy of Tang poetry predominated in Dantu throughout this period.

Conclusion

As I have shown, although what they chose to emphasize differed, local gazetteers re/presented various aspects of their administrative districts to both natives and outsiders, from lower officials

and common people to emperors and high elite, and expanded knowledge of the localities. The authors and compilers of local gazetteers, who would be conscious of their responsibilities for providing overall, precise, detailed, and pertinent records, represented diverse aspects, especially the positive features, of their localities, which they considered deserving of attention and recognition from the court and empire. From the Song dynasty, editors, compilers, and scholar-literati devoted great attention and space to intellectual culture, with which they were familiar and in which they had participated, when they showed people what they thought special about the region. During the Qing dynasty, Dantu literati particularly enriched the contents of biographies in the *wenyuan* section to fulfill this mission. In these biographies, they documented and archived their fellow townsmen's literary ideas and practices, which embodied strong views about Tang and Song poetry and the division between the poetic styles of the two dynasties. They also brought out the regional associations and conflicts in their discourses and made visible the region-based controversies over Tang and Song poetry between Jiangsu and Zhejiang. Their efforts made their gazetteer a unique instance among local Chinese gazetteers that, from a local perspective, recounts the High Qing history of the debate over Tang and Song poetry. The Dantu gazetteer put Dantu County on the map as a center of the advocacy of Tang poetry in Jiangnan and the Qing Empire. Among the sixty-one local gazetteers I examine, the Dantu gazetteer is the only one that re/present a local literary culture from the perspective of the evolution of local poetic trends, especially those related to the debate over Tang and Song poetry. However, this single case still suggests the possibility of how local Chinese gazetteers constitute a new field for the research of Qing poetry and poetics, including the debate over Tang and Song poetry.

Chapter 5 Writing with Authority: Jiangnan Women in Poetic Traditions

This chapter focuses on women poets from elite families in High Qing Jiangnan and investigates their position in the debate over Tang and Song poetry and in the construction of the poetic traditions of their families, their native places, and more broadly in the Qing Empire. The first section delineates the theory, evaluation, and criticism of women's poetry during the Qing dynasty and identifies the criteria and views these critics shared with the scholars in the debate over Tang and Song poetry. Then I analyze women's importance in the poetic traditions of their families, their native places, and the empire as well as their prominence in inheriting Tang or Song poetic characteristics. The second section focuses on Bao Zhilan, Bao Zhihui, and Bao Zhifen, the three sisters mentioned in Chapter 3 and 4. The third and fourth sections discuss fourteen other women poets' roles in the poetic traditions as well as their literary views and poetry writing. The texts analyzed here are mainly composed of paratexts dedicated to a joint publication by the three Bao sisters and to individual collections of Bao Zhihui and thirteen other women poets. Other texts consist of two poems of literary criticism presented to Luo Qilan, one of these sixteen writers; a passage from Shen Deqian's "Editorial Principles" in his *Guochao shi biecai ji*; and a passage from Yuan Mei's *Suiyuan shihua* on Jin Yi, another famous female poet. All these seventeen women poets were from elite families in Jiangnan, the center of women's literary production in late imperial China.¹ Most of the authors of these texts, both male and female who discussed these seventeen women's poems and poetic views, were natives of or lived

¹ Many scholars have pointed out the importance of the Jiangnan region as a center of women's literary culture in Ming-Qing China. For example, see Idema, introduction to *Two Centuries of Manchu Women Poets: An Anthology*, 6.

in this region. I argue that these texts construct a tradition of women's writing and affirm women's legitimacy to continue and represent the poetic traditions of their natal and marital families, their hometowns, and the Qing Empire as peers of male poets. By positioning women in the orthodox tradition of classical poetry, High Qing poet-critics, both male and female, argued that these women poets expressed their *xingqing* and inherited the qualities of previous poetic models, especially Tang poetry. Women poets were thus included in the debate over Tang and Song poetry as both advocates of Tang poetry and conciliators of Tang and Song poetic values. These women's writings and the comments on them further demonstrate the importance of the Jiangnan region as a center of the debate.

Women's Poetry and Poetics during the Qing Dynasty

Haihong Yang in her study, *Women's Poetry and Poetics in Late Imperial China: A Dialogic Engagement*, investigates "women-authored poetics," or poetic criticism and evaluation composed by women. Yang's focus leaves possibilities for exploring "men-authored poetics" about women's poetry in late imperial China, especially the Qing dynasty. Women's literary production reached an unprecedented height during the Qing dynasty, as shown by four thousand women writers included in Hu Wenkai's 胡文楷 (1901-1988) *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao* 歷代婦女著作考 (Catalog of Women's Writings through the Ages). Their literary careers developed in an especially favourable, encouraging environment.² As observed by scholars in North America, such as Kang-I Sun Chang, Qing society's support of women's writing, especially "male literati's

² Wilt Idema, introduction to *Two Centuries of Manchu Women Poets*, 16.

overwhelming support,” was “one of the most distinctive phenomena” of literati culture in late imperial China.³ This view is elaborated by many scholars in mainland China and Taiwan, including Zhong Huiling [Chung Hui-ling] 鍾慧玲, Wang Xiaoyan 王曉燕, Duan Jihong 段繼紅, Du Fangqin 杜芳琴, and Jiang Yin.⁴ While male literati educated, praised, patronized, and interacted with women writers who were their kin, family friends, disciples, or strangers, they also engaged in the theorization, evaluation, and criticism of women’s poetry, that is to say, “men-authored” poetics. It is necessary to include both male and female authors for an overall view of “women’s poetics”—theories, criticism and evaluation of women’s poetry—in the Qing dynasty.

Yang points out that there were three types of “women-authored poetics” in the Ming and Qing period.⁵ The first type in her examination is women’s anthologization of their poetry. It is noteworthy that an anthologist’s (either male or female) criteria of selection and evaluation are not only embodied in the poems included in the anthology but are often stated in the paratext(s), especially preface(s) and editorial principles. For example, in her study on *Guochao guixiu zhengshi ji* 國朝閨秀正始集 (An Anthology of Correct Beginnings of Genteel Women’s Poetry of Our Dynasty) compiled by Yun Zhu 惲珠 (1771-1833), Xiaorong Li demonstrates that this

³ Kang-I Sun Chang, “Gender and Canonicity: Ming-Qing Women Poets in the Eyes of the Male Literati,” in *Hsiang Lectures on Chinese Poetry*, 1:2.

⁴ See Zhong Huiling, *Qingdai nü shiren yanjiu*, 5-172; Wang Xiaoyan, *Qingdai nüxing shixue sixiang yanjiu* 清代女性詩學思想研究, 5-44; Duan Jihong, *Qingdai guige wenxue yanjiu* 清代閨閣文學研究 47-64; Du Fangqin, “Xu er” 序二, in *Qingdai guixiu ji congkan*, 1:1-4; Jiang Yin, “Qingdai guige shiji cuibian xu” 清代閨閣詩集萃編序, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian* 清代閨閣詩集萃編, 1:1-4.

⁵ Yang Haihong, *Women’s Poetry and Poetics in Late Imperial China*, 8-9.

anthology “established a normative women’s poetics” by its “Editing Principles” (*liyan* 例言), “Editors’ Words” (*bianyan* 弁言), prefaces, and poems. She also points out that Shen Deqian set an example for Yun Zhu by establishing a poetics of the orthodox poetic tradition for both men’s and women’s poetry in his anthologies, which included not only paratexts by him but also a preface by the Qianlong Emperor.⁶

The production of remarks on poetry, or *shihua*, the second type of “women-authored poetics” in Yang’s study, also involved both female and male authors. Wang Yingzhi in his preface to *Qingdai guixiu shihua congkan* states that the remarks on women’s poetry include works by both female and male authors. He also points out that the remarks on women’s poetry by female authors constituted half of all the remarks on women’s poetry recorded, and the number of extant remarks on women’s poetry by male authors is larger than that of remarks by female authors.⁷ Among the fourteen works included in this series, six are entitled *shihua*:

Author’s Name	Author’s Sex	Title of Remarks on Poetry
Shen Shanbao’s 沈善寶 (1808-1862)	Female	<i>Mingyuan shihua</i> 名媛詩話 (Remarks on Poetry by Notable Women)
Lei Jin 雷瑨 (1871-1941) and Lei Jian 雷璣 (b. after 1871)	Male	<i>Guixiu shihua</i> 閨秀詩話 (Remarks on Genteel Women’s Poetry)
Lei Jin	Male	<i>Qinglou shihua</i> 青樓詩話 (Remarks on Courtesans’ Poetry)
Yuan Mei	Male	<i>Suiyuan shihua</i>
Tiaoxisheng 茗溪生 (fl. early twentieth century) ⁸	Male	<i>Guixiu shihua</i> 閨秀詩話

⁶ Li, “Gender and Textual Politics during the Qing dynasty: The Case of the *Zhengshi ji*,” 77, 83-5, 89.

⁷ Wang Yingzhi, “Zongxu” 總序, in *Qingdai guixiu shihua congkan*, 1:2-3.

⁸ Song Qingxiu 宋清秀 observes three similarities between Tiaoxisheng and Xu Zhenya 徐枕亞 (1889-1937), a novelist of the late Qing and the early Republic of China; however, she does

Jin Yan 金燕 (fl. early twentieth century)	Male	<i>Xianglian shihua</i> 香奩詩話 (Remarks on Poetry from Fragrant Cosmetic Cases)
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The series also include *Wumen shihua* 梧門詩話 (Wumen's Remarks on Poetry) by Fa Shishan in the appendix.

Women's poems about poetry (*lun shi shi* 論詩詩), the last type in Yang's study, also find their counterparts in male literati's writings. Many endorsements (*tici* 題辭, 題詞) dedicated to women's individual collections are written in the form of poetry. In these poems, both male and female authors comment on the poetic qualities and styles of the collections, praise women poets' talents, and argue for women's importance in the history of classical literature. The digital archive and database *Ming Qing Women's Writings* includes more than six hundred endorsements, more than two thirds by men and nearly one third by women. An unusual example is the collection *Tingqiuxuan zengyan* 聽秋軒贈言 (Poems of Tribute to the Listening to Autumn Studio) compiled by Luo Qilan, which contains hundreds of poems and song lyrics presented to her. In addition to those matching her rhymes, inscribed on her paintings, and celebrating her birthday, dozens of poems comment on Luo Qilan's poetry and literary talent. Most of these poems are by male literati.

There are other types of critical writings on women's poetics not covered by Yang's categorization. Paratexts dedicated to women's individual collections, such as prefaces, postscripts (*ba* 跋), postfaces (*houxu* 後序), and endorsements in the form of prose, also convey the authors' (both male and female) views of women's poetry. In *Women Writers of Traditional*

not assert that they are the same person. See Song, "Guixiu shihua yu Guixiu shipin guanxi ji zuozhe kaoshu" 《閨秀詩話》與《閨秀詩評》關係及作者考述, 145.

China: An Anthology of Poetry and Criticism, forty-four prefaces in the section “Criticism” are written for women’s individual collections, anthologies of women’s literary works, didactic literature for women, and women’s poems in Qian Qianyi’s *Liechao shiji*, a large anthology of Ming poetry. Among these prefaces are eighteen by women and nineteen by men from the late imperial period, which include thirteen by women and eight by men from the Qing dynasty.⁹ Some Qing anthologies were similar in function to *shihua*, such as Chen Weisong’s 陳維崧 (1625-1682) *Furen ji* 婦人集 (An Anthology of Women). Although about one third of its entries are irrelevant to women’s writing, Wang Yingzhi includes it in *Qingdai guixiu shihua congkan* because it initiated the format of the remarks on women’s poetry (*shihua* on women’s poetry): Many entries are composed of a brief biography of a woman and selections of (lines of) her poems and song lyrics, sometimes accompanied by comments on her literary works. Remarks on women’s poetry in the Qing dynasty basically followed this format.¹⁰ Wang Duanshu’s anthology *Mingyuan shiwei* 名媛詩緯 (*Poetry of Notable Women*) includes her comments on each poet. Song Qingxiu 宋清秀 considers *Mingyuan shiwei* representative of the highest achievements in the genre of remarks on women’s poetry,¹¹ although this work is not a *shihua*. These works of varied lengths and generic features are all texts of women’s poetics.

When women’s flourishing poetic practices are examined within the framework of this

⁹ This section also includes a famous essay by Zhang Xuecheng, “Women’s Learning” (*Fu xue* 婦學),” and an epitaph Yuan Mei wrote for Jin Yi, one of his favourite female disciples.

¹⁰ Wang Yingzhi, “Zongxu,” 5. Also see “Qianyan” 前言 to *Furen ji*, in *Qingdai guixiu shihua congkan*, 1:4.

¹¹ Song Qingxiu, “Xiu: Qingdai guixiu shixue de hexin gainian” 秀——清代閨秀詩學的核心概念, 44.

dissertation, it becomes necessary to ask: did women participate in the debate over Tang and Song poetry, especially during the High Qing era, which witnessed both the unprecedented intensity and complexity of the debate and the high output of women's poetry and poetic criticism? If as Yang claims, "[t]he emergence of women writers as a discernable group in the late imperial period gradually yet unquestionably changed the landscape of *shi* poetry,"¹² did it also change or enrich the "landscape" of the debate over Tang and Song poetry? Did women's poetry and poetics contribute to this debate? Did women consciously learn from previous poetic models? Jiang Yin notes that during the Qing, critics claimed that Qing women's poetry is superior to Tang women's poetry and at the same time declared that Qing male poets are inferior to Tang male poets.¹³ Did these critics further investigate how Qing women learned from previous literature and whether they were involved in the debate? What were Qing women's views of Tang and Song poetry and of their own legitimacy and position in the classical poetic tradition?

The recent scholarship on women's writing has already uncovered some connections between the debate over Tang and Song poetry and late imperial literati's anthologization and criticism of women's poetry. Tina Lu calls attention to the preface to Zhong Xing's *Mingyuan shi gui* 名媛詩歸 (Sources of Notable Women's Poetry), which was completed around 1625. This

¹² Yang Haihong, introduction to *Women's Poetry and Poetics in Late Imperial China*, xi.

¹³ Jiang Yin, "Qingdai guige shiji cuibian xu," 3-4. According to Jiang Yin, an example of Qing literati's recognition of women poets' achievements is Liu Lǔxun 劉履恂 (1738-1796) *Qiucha zaji* 秋槎雜記 (Miscellaneous Notes on Autumn Boat). Liu designates women's poetry in *Guochao shi biecai ji* compiled by Shen Deqian as the representative of the orthodoxy of women's poetry, which far surpasses Tang poetry.

preface expresses regret for male poets' deviation from the orthodox poetic tradition by claiming the superiority of women's poetry inasmuch as the latter embodies naturalness, purity, originality, and "some of the self-expressive essence of poetry."¹⁴ In other words, in Zhong Xing's view, women's poetry supersedes men's poetry as the representative of poetic orthodoxy, which is characterized by poets' expression of *xingqing* and demonstration of *xingling*. Zhong Xing and Tan Yuanchun, the leaders of the Jingling School during the late Ming, followed the Yuan brothers' emphasis on *xingqing* and *xingling* in poetry and opposed the Seven Masters' mimicry of Tang poetry. By compiling an anthology of poetry from remote antiquity to the Sui dynasty, *Gushi gui* 古詩歸 (A Return to Ancient Poetry), and an anthology of Tang poetry, *Tangshi gui* 唐詩歸 (A Return to Tang Poetry), they promoted certain pre-Song poetic models. The similarity between the titles of these two anthologies and *Mingyuan shigui* appears to suggest that women's poetic achievements were comparable to those of the pre-Song male models. Zhong Xing's appreciation of women's poetry legitimizes women's position in the orthodox poetic tradition by designating them as heirs more qualified than men.

Grace Fong clearly unveils the relationships between the anthologization of Ming women's poetry and trends in male literati's literary production and evaluation. As she points out, a cluster of anthologies of women's poetry appeared, echoing the revival of classical poetry, in the second half of the sixteenth century; another cluster in the first third of the seventeenth century, including Zhong Xing's *Mingyuan shigui*, coincided with the appeal to express the inner

¹⁴ Tina Lu, "The Literary Culture of the Late Ming (1573-1644)," 88.

self and to demonstrate inspiration and sensibility as a reaction against the archaist trend.¹⁵

These two trends led, in succession, the late Ming debate over Tang and Song poetry. The first trend was represented by the Latter Seven Masters. The second trend was pioneered first by the three Yuan brothers and then the Jingling School led by Zhong Xiang and Tan Yuanchun, who reconciled the poetic views of the Latter Seven Masters and the Yuan brothers. Fong's conclusion sheds light on how women's poetry was involved in male literati's participation in the debate over Tang and Song poetry.

Similarly, Xiaorong Li in her study of *Guochao guixiu zhengshi ji* argues that Yun Zhu's compilation of this anthology echoed the trends in Qing literary anthologization. From the Ming-Qing transition to the High Qing era, poets represented by Chen Zilong, Qian Qianyi, and Shen Deqian emphasized the classical poetic orthodoxy, whose basic principle was "gentle and earnest." Shen Deqian paid particular attention to women's writing by requiring its moral correctness, as he required moral correctness of men's poetry, by exclusively anthologizing poems by "worthy women" and rejecting those by courtesans. He announces his intention to establish a paradigm for women's poetry in the "Editing Principles" in his *Guochao shi biecai ji*. In imitation of Shen Deqian, Yun Zhu entitled her anthology of women's poetry *Guochao guixiu zhengshi ji* in order to "elevate the status of women's writing." She envisioned this anthology as "an embodiment of orthodox poetics and representative of Qing women's poetic achievement" and "a female counterpart to authoritative literary achievements such as those represented by

¹⁵ Fong, "Gender and the Failure of Canonization: Anthologizing Women's Poetry in the Late Ming," 131, 140-41.

Shen Deqian's *Guochao shi biecai ji*" through "establish[ing] an 'orthodoxy' of women's poetry in light of moral and aesthetic principles derived from the *Shijing* (Book of Odes) and other Confucian classics."¹⁶ Chen Zilong, Qian Qianyi, and Shen Deqian, as I show in Chapters 1 and 2, were participants in the debate over Tang and Song poetry. Li's observation suggests the similarities in poetic views between Yun Zhu and them.

While the debaters on Tang and Song poetry traced the origin of poetry to the *Shijing*, the anthologists of women's writings declared the *Shijing* the origin of women's poetry. As Kang-I Sun Chang demonstrates, from the Han dynasty, scholars throughout the ages employed this strategy to promote and canonize men's writing.¹⁷ Ming-Qing male compilers of women's writings further invoked their "sharing interpretive strategies" to "bring women's works into the mainstream of the interpretive community."¹⁸ Xiaorong Li's study shows how Yun Zhu "assimilat[ed] women's writing into the dominant literary tradition"¹⁹ and thus exemplified women's use of this strategy. A sign of this assimilation is Yun Zhu's use of the term "correct beginnings" (*zhengshi* 正始) from the *Shijing* as the title of her anthology. The legitimization of women's writing by associating it with the *Shijing*, according to Sufeng Xu, can be traced to the Northern Song dynasty.²⁰ Briefly, in both the debate over Tang and Song poetry and women's poetics in the Qing period, critics shared some criteria, including the exemplarity of the *Shijing*

¹⁶ Li, "Gender and Textual Politics during the Qing dynasty," 76, 80-86, 89-90.

¹⁷ Chang, "Ming and Qing Anthologies of Women's Poetry and Their Selection Strategies," 147, 150; "Ming-Qing Women Poets and the Notions of 'Talent' and 'Morality'," in *Culture and State in Chinese History: Conventions, Conflicts, and Accommodations*, 238.

¹⁸ Chang, "Gender and Canonicity," 2.

¹⁹ Li, "Gender and Textual Politics during the Qing dynasty," 105.

²⁰ Xu, "The Rhetoric of Legitimation: Prefaces to Women's Poetry Collections from the Song to the Ming."

and the importance of *xingqing* and *xingling*.

These studies do not concentrate on whether literary women participated in the debate over Tang and Song poetry and, if they did, how women expressed their views. This is probably because most women poets (both Han Chinese and Manchu women) did not pay attention to the debate, as Wilt Idema notes in his study on Manchu women poets in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He argues that women's poetics during this period emphasized "the direct expression of spontaneous emotion" and "avoid[ed] the learned display of allusions" and the struggle to "find the right word and the perfect line."²¹ Idema uses the poem by Duomin Huiru 多敏惠如 (fl. nineteenth century), or Xitala Duomin 喜塔臘多敏, a Manchu woman, "Discussing Poetry with My Female Disciple Sufang" 與素芳女弟子論詩, as an example. The first couplet of this poem reads: "What is the need to talk of Tang or Song?/ A poem gives expression to one's nature" 何必論唐宋, 詩原寫性靈.²² This couplet negates the necessity of discriminating between Tang and Song poetic styles and of imitating ancient poems; instead, most stress is laid on the expression of *xingling*.

However, these women's choices can be considered a reaction to the debate. Their rejection of using historical allusions actually is an opposition to the emulation of Song poetry represented by Li E and the Zhe School. The importance they attached to nature, emotion, and spontaneity in poetry conforms to the poetic values of Yuan Mei's School of Natural Sensibility

²¹ Idema, introduction to *Two Centuries of Manchu Women Poets*, 29.

²² Xitala Duomin, "Yu Sufang nü dizi lun shi" 與素芳女弟子論詩, *Yiqiange yishi* 逸菴閣遺詩, 1839 edition, 19b. The translation is from Idema, introduction to *Two Centuries of Manchu Women Poets*, 29.

and Inspiration, the third group in the debate in addition to the advocates of Tang or Song poetry. Duomin Huiru's views expressed in the above poem are very similar to those of Yuan Mei (Chapter 3) and Chen Gongyin (Chapter 1). Furthermore, Idema notes that a few Manchu women stated their esteem for Han prose and High Tang poetry, although only occasionally and conventionally.²³ It is reasonable to believe that, when Manchu women voiced their opinions in relation to the debate over Tang and Song poetry, their Han Chinese counterparts, who greatly outnumbered them, engaged more frequently and strikingly in this debate and the efforts to promote women's importance in the literary traditions of their families, native places, and the empire, especially during the High Qing era. Chapter 3 has already provided a preliminary examination of Han women poets' participation in these practices exemplified by Yuan Mei's female disciples, especially Xi Peilan, as members of the School of Natural Sensibility and Inspiration in Jiangnan. The significance of women's poetry in the debate and orthodox poetic tradition during the Qing dynasty requires further exploration and discussion.

The Three Bao Sisters and Their Poetry

As I showed in Chapter 4, Dantu was a centre of pro-Tang poetry in the Jiangnan region, and Bao Gao was the most influential advocate of Tang poetry in Dantu during the mid-eighteenth century. His son, Bao Zhizhong, and his older brother's grandson, Bao Wenkui, were also famous poets. The Bao family constitutes a rare case of producing three generations of poets whose biographies comprised a family literary tradition in the section *wenyuan* of their local

²³ Idema, introduction to *Two Centuries of Manchu Women Poets*, 251n75.

gazetteer. Another half of this family tradition is found in the subcategory of *cai yi* 才藝 (Talents and Skills), which records women poets, painters, and calligraphers, under the category of *lienü*. The biography of Chen Ruizhu 陳蕊珠 (1714-1778), Bao Gao's wife, is included first in the Jiaqing edition and repeated in the Guangxu edition with a few negligible textual variants. In her biography, Chen Ruizhu is not only a virtuous wife, older sister, and mother, but also a reader of her father's books, a proofreader and editor of her husband Bao Gao's poetry collection, and a teacher of her sons.²⁴ She embodies a role which both carried on the literary tradition of her natal family and transmitted the tradition of her marital family. At the end of her biography, the three daughters, Bao Zhilan, Bao Zhihui, and Bao Zhifen, are mentioned because of their poetic talents. For the same reason, the three sisters are also mentioned in Bao Gao's biographies in both the Jiaqing and Guangxu editions and in their older brother Bao Zhizhong's biography in the Guangxu edition. They also have their joint biography in the Guangxu edition. Their repeated appearance in the Dantu gazetteer illustrates how Dantu literati treated the poets from the Bao family as a group and the three sisters as representatives of the Bao family's poetic achievements even after they married.

The male Bao family members expressed their pride in the Bao sisters' literary talents and achievements. Bao Zhizhong and Bao Wenkui each wrote a preface for *Qiyunge shichao* 起雲閣詩鈔 (Poems from the Arising Clouds Loft), the individual collection of the eldest of the three sisters, Bao Zhilan. In his preface, Bao Zhizhong calls for the joint publication of the three

²⁴ "Lienü," in *Dantu xianzhi*, 1803 edition, *juan* 30, 49a-49b; "Caiyi," in *Dantu xianzhi* (yi), *juan* 33, 25a, in *Jiangsu fuxian zhi ji*, 29:742.

sisters' and their mother's poems.²⁵ Bao Wenkui in his preface writes:

[She] received instruction from the Summoned Scholar Haimen (Bao Gao) when she was young. After she grew up, she discussed [poetry] with my uncle Lunshan (Bao Zhizhong) and my two aunts to learn from one another. Her poems are clear, peaceful, implicit, and beautiful and cannot be labeled by [the characteristics of] any single master. These poems really express her nature and emotion and do not rely on imitation. Critics praise her. They think our family has many talents in the inner chambers, and the lineage originating from the "Airs" and "Odes" does not decline here.²⁶

幼承海門徵君之訓，長與吾論山叔父仲季兩姑相切劘。其爲詩清和婉麗，不名一家，實能抒寫性情而無憑附樞擬之習。談藝者稱之，以爲吾宗閨閣多才，而風雅一脈，於焉弗墜也。

This preface includes many concerns about poetry discussed in this chapter: the transmission of family learning between male and female members of different generations; a poet's broad learning from various poetic masters and their expression of *xingqing*; a woman poet's continuation of her family learning and the orthodox poetic tradition; and male literati's legitimization of a woman poet's status in the tradition.

Qingyuge yingao 清娛閣吟藁 (Poetic Drafts from the Clear Joy Loft), the collection of

²⁵ Bao Zhizhong, "Qiyunge shichao xu" 起雲閣詩鈔序, 1b, in *Qiyunge shichao*, in *Jingjiang Baoshi san nüshi shichao heke*, 1882 edition.

²⁶ Bao Wenkui, "Qiyunge shichao xu," 1a, in *Qiyunge shichao*, in *Jingjiang Baoshi san nüshi shichao heke*, 1882 edition.

Bao Gao's second daughter, Bao Zhihui, was first printed in 1811. It includes a great number of paratexts: five prefaces, one postface, fifty-one critical postscripts (*pingba* 評跋) by seventeen authors, seventeen endorsement poems by eight authors, and one preface to the joint publication of poetry by Bao Zhihui and her husband Zhang Xuan, *Qingyuge heke*. These paratexts are far more than the two prefaces and one postscript in Bao Zhilan's *Qiyunge shichao*. Among the twenty-seven authors of these paratexts, twenty-three are scholar-officials or local male literati from Jiangsu or Zhejiang, among whom are Yuan Mei; Li Xigong 李錫恭 (fl. 1811); Wu Xiqi 吳錫麒 (1746-1818); Zhang Ruoyun 張若筠, whose younger brother was Bao Zhihui's father-in-law; and Bao Zhizhong, the older brother of the three sisters. Others from elsewhere include Fa Shishan, an old friend of both the Bao family and Bao Zhihui's marital family, and Bao Guixing 鮑桂星 (1764-1826), a scholar-official from Anhui. The three female authors are Bao Zhihui's sisters, Bao Zhilan and Bao Zhifen, as well as Mao Guifen 茅桂芬, another female poet from Dantu. Yuan Mei's preface to the *Qingyuge heke* was written in 1792. Bao Zhizhong's preface to the *Qingyuge yingao* was composed in 1801, and the other four prefaces and the postface in 1811. Zhang Ruoyun's critical postscript was written in 1780, Bao Wenkui's in 1792, and Wang Songgao's 王嵩高 (1735-1800) in 1795. The other paratexts are not dated. The four prefaces and the postscript were obviously written for the publication of this collection in 1811, and Yuan Mei's preface was probably written in the year of the publishing of the couple's joint publication. The wide temporal range of these dates suggests Bao Zhihui's lasting reputation and the continuous interactions between her family and the Jiangnan writers, both female and male. Connected by *Qingyuge yingao*, these authors epitomize the High Qing elite, and their writings

constitute a significant part of elite discourse on women's talent and writing.

Similar to Bao Wenkui's comments on Bao Zhilan's poetry, Bao Zhizhong and Mao Guifen in their critical postscripts extol Bao Zhihui's poetry for its embodiment of her *xingqing* and the spirit of the *Shijing*:

[Her poems] flow out of her nature and emotions [...] and deeply obtain the legacy of "gentleness and earnestness" of the poets in the *Shijing*.²⁷ (Bao Zhizhong)

從性情中流露 [...] 深得詩人溫柔敦厚之遺。

It is wonderful that the fine points in this collection come from her nature and emotion. She has a profound grasp of the principle and charm of the Three Hundred Poems. Those who belong to fashionable trends and popular schools and who laugh at the wind and whistle to the moon are unable to see the secrets of her poetry.²⁸ (Mao Guifen)

集中佳處妙在從性情中來，深得三百篇旨趣，迥非時流俗派嘲風嘯月者所得窺其堂奧。

In her comments, Mao Guifen, as a woman poet, has mastered the critical approaches and criteria of poetic evaluation applied by many previous and contemporary male literati. She relies on these approaches and criteria, rather than developing a women-centered discourse, and is assured about women's legitimacy in using and being evaluated by these criteria. Her attack on

²⁷ Bao Zhizhong, "Pingba" 評跋, in "Zhujia pingba" 諸家評跋, 6a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

²⁸ Mao Guifen, "Pingba," in "Zhujia pingba," 6a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

contemporary poets in the second half of her passage further shows her confidence in her authority as a critic, in Bao Zhihui's and her superiority to many male poets, and in their qualifications for interpreting and continuing the orthodox poetic tradition.

Li Xigong in his preface conforms to the views expressed by Bao Zhizhong and Mao Guifen by acknowledging the poetic qualities of the *Shijing* in Bao Zhihui's poems:

The talents of the Jiangnan region gather within one family. [They] really qualify as the descendants of the Adjutant of Army (Bao Zhao). I have not obtained ancient poets' basic methods of poetic metres, but I love orthodox voices very much. When I read this collection, I feel that the reserved, leisurely, modest, and quiet style and the principle of gentleness and earnestness in the Three Hundred Poems are not far from today.²⁹

江左風雅，萃於一門，洵不愧參軍之後也。予於詩律未得窺古人門徑，而頗愛正聲。讀是篇乃覺三百篇中幽閒貞靜之風，溫柔敦厚之旨，去今未遠也。

Li Xigong puts Bao Zhihui's poetry in the category of "orthodox voices" (*zhengsheng* 正聲) originating from the *Shijing* poems. This placement is a rare example in which a woman is seen as an exemplar of the orthodox poetic tradition. At the same time, Li sees Bao Zhihui as a representative of the Bao family's literary achievements, which began with the famous poet Bao Zhao 鮑照 (405-466) of the Liu Song dynasty.³⁰ Zhang Ruoyun holds a similar view in his critical postscript:

²⁹ Li Xigong, "Xu" 序, 1b-2a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

³⁰ For Bao Zhao's poetry, see Kang-I Sun Chang, *Six Dynasties Poetry*, 79-111.

[Her poetry] embodies the teaching of Master Haimen (Bao Gao) and the “Palace Penman” Yatang (Bao Zhizhong). In recent years, [I] have copied and compiled the *Anthology Collected by a New Learner of [Poetry by] Jingkou Poets*; the only thing to be regretted is that genteel women’s writings are not commonly seen. After reading through this collection, [I] finally know that the outstanding talent of the inner chambers is so close [to me] in my family. Even the earlier poet of willow catkins of the Xie family cannot monopolize all the praises.³¹

不愧海門先生雅堂中翰家法。年來抄撰京口詩人蒙拾集，獨名媛篇什惜不多見。循覽是帙，乃知閨中之秀近在吾家。謝庭柳絮，正不得專美於前。

As a member of Bao Zhihui’s marital family, Zhang Ruoyun recognizes her as an important poet of both her natal and marital families. Furthermore, he hopes to elevate women’s production to a higher level in Dantu poetry but regrets the rarity and unavailability of Dantu women’s writings. Bao Zhihui is thus promoted as a poet who deserves a place in the regional poetic tradition.

As found in many texts encouraging and praising women’s writing in late imperial China, Xie Daoyun, a poet who surpassed her male cousins in literary talent by producing a better metaphor for snow, is seen as an early model of talented women in Zhang Ruoyun’s critical postscript. The paratexts in Bao Zhihui’s collection frequently compare her with Xie and other talented women from early periods:

The catkin poet’s reputation is high and not inferior to previous works. [...] [She

³¹ Zhang Ruoyun, “Pingba,” in “Zhujia pingba,” 9b-10a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

resembles] Bao Zhao's younger sister.³² (Wu Xuan's 吳烜 (1759-1821) preface)

柳絮名高，無慚曩製。[...] 鮑照女弟。

How could her poem on tea be inferior to Xie Daoyun's talent of improvising on a willow catkin?³³ (Zhao Zhuotong's 趙擢彤 endorsement poem)

賦茗何慚詠絮才？

[Her] learning has its source in the Adjutant of Army Bao.³⁴ (Zhao Zhuotong's endorsement poem)

淵源學本鮑參軍。

The Bao family has a good poetic style,/ not inferior to the transmission of the letter from Dalei river bank.³⁵ (Qian Zhiding's endorsement poem)

鮑家詩格好，不讓大雷傳。

The letter from the Dalei riverbank has not yet been sent; the poem of catkin-like snow already hastens it. Her talent is like that of Lady Zuo [Fen]; like Liu [Xiaochou]'s younger sister, her talent is praised.³⁶ (Wu Xiqi's preface)

大雷之書未寄，絮雪之詠先催。才乃左姝，慧誇劉妹。

In addition to Xie Daoyun, these texts compare Bao Zhihui to three talented women in history who had male literati as their brothers: Bao Linghui, to whom Bao Zhao wrote “A Letter to My Younger Sister about Ascending the Bank of Great Thunder Lake” 登大雷岸與妹書 during his

³² Wu Xuan, “Xu” 序, 1b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

³³ Zhao Zhuotong, “Tici” 題辭, in “Zhujia tici” 諸家題辭, 2a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

³⁴ Zhao Zhuotong, “Tici,” in “Zhujia tici,” 2a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

³⁵ Qian Zhiding, “Tici,” in “Zhujia tici,” 3a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

³⁶ Wu Xiqi, “Qingyuge yingao xu” 清娛閣吟藁序, 1a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

journey for his official posting in Jiangzhou; Zuo Fen 左芬 (ca. 255-300), a writer of poetry and rhapsody and the younger sister of Zuo Si 左思 (ca. 250-ca. 305), a grand master of the Western Jin dynasty; and Liu Lingxian 劉令嫻 (fl. 525), a woman poet and the youngest and most talented one among the three younger sisters of Liu Xiaochuo 劉孝綽 (481-539), a famous scholar of the Liang dynasty.³⁷ This comparison confirms Bao Zhihui's status as a new model in women's literary tradition and a new example who continued her family's literary learning together with her brother or male cousins. Wu Xiqi imagines the literary interactions between Bao Zhihui and Bao Zhizhong by combining two allusions, Xie Daoyun using willow catkins as a metaphor for snowflakes and Bao Zhao writing a letter to Bao Linghui. Bao Zhihui's capability to complete a text more quickly than her older brother reveals her superiority in literary talent, like Xie Daoyun's superiority over her male cousins.

Furthermore, the paratexts in *Qingyuge yingao* also compare Bao Zhihui to other exemplary literary women. These exemplars include authors of didactic literature for women, Ban Zhao 班昭 (49-ca. 120), a female scholar and historian of the Eastern Han dynasty (25-220) who wrote "Precepts for My Daughters" 女誡 and completed the *Han shu*, the project of Ban Biao 班彪 (3-54), her father, and Ban Gu, her late brother;³⁸ and Song Ruoxian 宋若憲 (d. 835), one of the five sisters who all won recognition for their literary learning from the Emperor Dezong of the Tang dynasty.³⁹ Another group of models comprises talented writers, Cai Yan 蔡

³⁷ For the life stories and literary productions of these women writers, see Idema and Grant, *The Red Brush*, 43-8, 50-2, 136-53.

³⁸ Li Zhen 李珍, "Tici," in "Zhujia tici," 2b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

³⁹ Yuan Mei, "Qingyuge heke shixu," 1a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

琰 (ca.162-259), a woman poet and musician during the Eastern Han dynasty;⁴⁰ Su Hui 蘇蕙, a poet of the Former Qin dynasty (350-394) who embroidered a piece of brocade with a long palindrome in order to express her affection for her husband;⁴¹ and Xu Shu, who was famous for her literary cultivation, which was comparable to that of her husband.⁴² Xue Tao 薛濤 (758-831), a Tang courtesan who had literary interactions with many male poets, is also found in this list of talented women.⁴³ The authors seem to evaluate women's writings on the basis of their literary accomplishments and do not categorize women writers on the basis of their social status, moral virtues, or other special characteristics. In the history of women's literary production, Bao Zhihui is listed as the newest model comparable to them in literary talent.

When defining her as a new literary model, Bao Guixing locates Bao Zhihui within a broader context and more complex literary and family relationships:

[Her poems are] gentle and earnest. They originate from the Three Hundred Poems and contain the best [of the poems] of the Six Dynasties and the three Tang periods. [She] not only surpasses ordinary genteel women but also the writers who call themselves experts of poetic metres. From past to present, there have been many women who are able to write poetry. However, the Adjutant of Army of our family transmitted [his learning] only to his younger sister. Among the three

⁴⁰ Yuan Mei, "Qingyuge heke shixu," 2a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁴¹ Li Zhen, "Tici," in "Zhujia tici," 2b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁴² Bao Zhizhong, "Xu" 序, 1b, in *Qingyuge yingao*; Bao Guixing, "Houxu" 後序, 1a, in *Qingyuge yingao*; Yuan Mei, "Pingba," in "Zhujia pingba," in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁴³ Yuan Mei, "Qingyuge heke shixu," 2a, in *Qingyuge yingao*. For the life stories and literary productions of these women writers, see Idema and Grant, *The Red Brush*, 17-42, 54-9, 112-36, 182-9.

younger sisters of the Liu family, Xu Fei's wife [wrote] the clearest and most outstanding [poems]. However, as Xu Fei died early, their poetic exchanges within the inner chamber are rarely heard about. Madam Bao has Masters Haimen (Bao Gao) and Yatang (Bao Zhizhong) as her father and older brother, Master Gezhai (Zhang Xuan) as her husband, and Zhang Cheng and his brothers as her children. [...] [Among the cases of] talents within a family in Jiangnan, [hers] is peerless. Moreover, there is no doubt that her poetry will be transmitted to posterity.⁴⁴

溫柔敦厚，導源於三百篇，而奄有六代三唐之勝。豈獨尋常閨秀所不逮，抑操觚握槩號聲律專家者所遜謝不如也。夫古今女子能詩者衆矣。然吾家參軍僅傳女弟；劉家三妹惟徐悱妻最清拔，然悱先卒，閨中倡和罕聞焉。若夫人者，以海門雅堂兩先生爲之父若兄，以舸齋先生爲之偶，以澂兄弟爲之嗣 [...] 江左門才夔乎稱獨步矣。又況其詩之必傳於世不疑乎。

Bao Guixing states that Bao Zhihui's poems inherit the qualities of previous poetic models. He also acknowledges Bao Zhihui as a rare model in the tradition of women's poetry because of the diversity of Bao Zhihui's family members as her literary companions and thus confirms her importance in the poetic traditions of the Bao and Zhang families as well as the Jiangnan region. When these traditions merge in Bao Zhihui's case, women are accommodated into the orthodox tradition of poetry as men's counterparts and models for later generations, both male and female.

The Bao family members in their paratexts also highlight the qualities of Tang poetry in Bao Zhihui's collection:

⁴⁴ Bao Guixing, "Houxu," 1b-2a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

This draft is profound, elegant, agreeable, and moderate and has deep feeling and a carefree mood. It possesses the lingering tone from the Six Dynasties and the three Tang periods and will definitely be transmitted to posterity.⁴⁵ (Bao Zhizhong's preface)

此豪淵雅冲和，深情逸致，具有六代三唐之遺韻，其必傳於後也。

[Her poems] combine the best qualities of the Six Dynasties and the three Tang periods. It is difficult for contemporary masters to do so. This is because her nature and emotion surpass other poets in certain aspects.⁴⁶ (Bao Zhilan's postscript)

兼擅六代三唐之勝，爲近今名家所難，蓋其性情有過人者矣。

[Her poems] derive from the three Tang periods and are based on her nature and emotion.⁴⁷ (Bao Wenkui's postscript)

寢食三唐而本乎性情。

It is natural that the Bao siblings and Bao Wenkui, as descendants of Bao Gao devoted particular attention to Tang poetry in their poetic production and evaluation. Bao Zhilan and Bao Wenkui, like Bao Zhizhong and Mao Guifen, invoke *xingqing* as another important criterion of in their evaluation of Bao Zhihui's poetry. When their comments are read together, it is clear that these Dantu poets regard the *Shijing* and Tang poetry as the models for the expression of *xingqing* and designate Bao Zhihui's poetry as both a successor and a new model in the orthodox poetic tradition.

⁴⁵ Bao Zhizhong, "Xu" 2a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁴⁶ Bao Zhilan, "Pingba," in "Zhujia pingba," 7b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁴⁷ Bao Wenkui, "Pingba," in "Zhujia pingba," 8b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

The statements about the similarities between Bao Zhihui's poems and those of previous poets, especially Tang masters, constitute an important theme of the paratexts in Bao Zhihui's collection:

[Her poems] can match those by Shen [Quanqi] and Song [Zhiwen] and compete with those by Wei [Yingwu] and Tao [Qian].⁴⁸ (Wu Xuan's preface)

駢衡沈宋，並軼韋陶。

In addition to its richness of thought and changes of motion, her ancient-style heptasyllabic poetry is moreover proper, strong, and vigorous, possessing Du [Fu]'s and Han [Yu]'s strength.⁴⁹ (Bao Zhizhong's critical postscript)

七言古詩沉鬱頓挫中更兼妥帖排募，具有杜韓之長。

For her pentasyllabic regulated poem on passing by our old house, its first half is like a painting, and its second half is [like] a successful work by a poet of the Dali reign.⁵⁰ (Bao Zhifen's critical postscript)

經舊宅五律，前半如畫，後半大厯人得意之作。

[She] sent me a pentasyllabic regulated poem. [...] A mediocre writer says everything at the beginning of a poem and cannot be so leisurely and gentle.

This kind of poem is by no means inferior to early Tang poetry.⁵¹ (Bao Zhifen's critical postscript)

⁴⁸ Wu Xuan, "Xu," 1b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁴⁹ Bao Zhizhong, "Pingba," in "Zhujia pingba," 6a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁵⁰ Bao Zhifen, "Pingba," in "Zhujia pingba," 8a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁵¹ Bao Zhifen, "Pingba," in "Zhujia pingba," 8a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

寄芬五律一首 [...] 俗工開口便盡，則無此紆徐。此等詩斷不在初唐以下。

She attains purity in all forms; her ancient-style heptasyllabic poetry especially accords with the Tang tones.⁵² (Fa Shishan's preface)

各體俱臻醇粹，七古尤合唐音。

[Her] ancient-style pentasyllabic and heptasyllabic poems are avowedly from an old hand; the tone and rhythm of her recent-style poetry are clear and forceful.

She is the Grand Mentor Bai (Bai Juyi) in the inner chambers.⁵³ (Yuan Mei's critical postscript)

五七古公然老手，今體音節清蒼，閨中之白太傅也。

The vigorous style of her ancient-style poems resembles that of Master Po (Su Shi); but the deep, refined, wondrous, and sharp style resembles that of Cen Jiazhou (Cen Shen).⁵⁴ (Guo Qi's 郭琦 (1769-1826) critical postscript)

古體中雄健之筆，直似坡公；森秀奇峭，又似岑嘉州。

As for the poem responding to Master Lunshan (Bao Zhizhong) on his supervision of the examination in eastern Yue, its elegance and nobility resemble in the utmost [the poetry by] Liu Mengde (Liu Yuxi).⁵⁵ (Guo Qi's critical postscript)

和論山先生主試粵東一篇，典貴極似劉夢得。

⁵² Fa Shishan, "Xu" 序, 1b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁵³ Yuan Mei, "Pingba," in "Zhujia pingba," 1a, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁵⁴ Guo Qi, "Pingba," in "Zhujia pingba," 5a-5b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁵⁵ Guo Qi, "Pingba," in "Zhujia pingba," 5b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

In addition to its full splendor, the poem “The Dragon Well” also has flowing rhythm. It belongs to the school of Gao [Shi], Cen [Shen], Wang [Changling], and Li [Bai].⁵⁶ (Guo Qi’s critical postscript)

龍井篇整麗之中兼饒跌宕，是高岑王李一派。

The way the poem “Water-Pleasure Cave” begins is incomparably outstanding and wonderful; it is Dongpo’s (Su Shi) greatest effort to imitate Taibai’s (Li Bai) style.⁵⁷ (Guo Qi’s critical postscript)

水樂洞起法極為超妙，是東坡極意模仿太白文字。

The male poets with whom Bao Zhihui is compared in these texts are the most famous, acknowledged masters: Tao Qian 陶潛 (ca. 372-427); Shen Quanqi 沈佺期 (656?-714); Song Zhiwen 宋之問 (656?-712); Wang Changling 王昌齡 (698-757);⁵⁸ Li Bai; Gao Shi 高適 (707-765); Du Fu; Cen Shen 岑參 (715-770); Han Yu; Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫 (772-842) (courtesy name Mengde 夢得); Bai Juyi; and Su Shi. Except for Wu Xuan’s and Fa Shishan’s comments, all the others are specific about which qualities Bao Zhihui’s poetry has inherited from these poetic models. Such specific comments call attention to Bao Zhihui’s mastery of previous poets’ styles and writing skills. Her models are mainly Tang poets. All these point to Bao Zhihui’s and these commentators’ preference for Tang poetic models. The presence of so many advocates of Tang poetry in a collection by a Dantu woman poet further validates the county’s importance as a

⁵⁶ Guo Qi, “Pingba,” in “Zhujia pingba,” 5b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁵⁷ Guo Qi, “Pingba,” in “Zhujia pingba,” 5b, in *Qingyuge yingao*.

⁵⁸ For Tao Qian’s poetry, see Kang-I Sun Chang, *Six Dynasties Poetry*, 3-46. For Wang Changling’s poetry, see Owen, *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry*, 91-103.

center of advocacy for Tang poetry.

At the same time, Song poetry and poetic style also receive recognition in this collection. Su Shi, for example, is cited in two comments. The poetic styles of Du Fu and Han Yu, who are acknowledged as pioneers of the Song poetic style, are also included. In short, Bao Zhihui's poetry exemplifies the influence of her mentor, Yuan Mei, who rejected the artificial discrimination between Tang and Song poetry and laid stress on *xingqing* and *xingling*, as I have shown in Chapter 3.

The authors of the paratexts in Bao Zhilan's and Bao Zhihui's collections praise and endorse their poetry, identifying them as representative poets in the Bao family's literary tradition and the orthodox tradition of classical poetry. Furthermore, Bao Zhihui, in the paratexts in her collection, is labeled an exemplar of the literary tradition of her native place, an emulator of Tang poetry, a conciliator of Tang and Song poetic virtues, and a model for both male and female poets of later generations. As these paratexts show, men's and women's poetics share certain aspects of rhetoric, perspectives, and methodologies. Along with their male contemporaries, the female authors of these paratexts, including Bao Zhihui's two sisters, Bao Zhilan and Bao Zhifen, declare women's legitimacy and authority in the orthodox poetic tradition. Bao Zhifen displays her comprehensive understanding of Tang poetry and demonstrates Bao Zhihui's equal familiarity with Tang poetic characteristics.⁵⁹ These texts

⁵⁹ According to Yao Yuanzhi's 姚元之 (1773-1852) preface written in 1840 to Bao Zhifen's collection, *Sanxiuzhai shichao* 三秀齋詩鈔 (Poems from the Thrice-Blossoming Herb Studio), the poetic styles of her husband Xu Bin 徐彬 (*juren* 1777) are similar to those of mid-Tang poetry. Bao Zhifen, as his companionate wife (and also the daughter of Bao Gao), possibly

contain poetic views similar to those in the Dantu gazetteer; their specific comments provide examples of the poetic qualities emphasized in Dantu poetry, which are not included in the gazetteer. The diversity of the authors of these texts further expands our knowledge of the extent to which High Qing literati, both male and female, legitimized women in the orthodox tradition of classical poetry. Bao Zhilan's and Bao Zhihui's collections, like many male poets' collections, serve as a venue for the debate over Tang and Song poetry and make women's practices and voices relevant in this debate through the discussions of their poetry.

Women in Literary Traditions

In Bao Zhihui's collection, many previous masters are mentioned to extol her literary achievements and thus her position in the tradition of classical poetry. The comparison of women poets in late imperial China with prior models can be found in many accounts written to support women's literary production. According to my investigation of the *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian* 清代閨閣詩集萃編 (An Anthology of Qing Women's Poetry Collections), which contains eighty Qing women's individual collections, it is very common that High Qing literati in their prefaces enumerate women writers and their writings as well as literary works about outstanding women or attributed to women, for example, some poems in the *Shijing*. Most of these prefaces are written in the style of parallel prose. These collections include:

preferred Tang poetic styles over Song styles. See Yao Yuanzhi, "Sanxiuzhai shichao xu" 三秀齋詩鈔序, 1a, in *Sanxiuzhai shichao*, in *Jingjiang Baoshi san nüshi shichao heke*. Yao Yuanzhi supervised the civil service examination which Xu Yunsheng 徐韻生 (*jinshi* 1834), Bao Zhifen and Xu Bin's grandson, passed. Xu Yunsheng was thus considered his student and asked him to write prefaces for Bao Zhifen's and Xu Bin's collections.

Collection	Author	Native Place of Author
<i>Huanqing shicao</i> 浣青詩草 (Drafts of Huanqing's Poems)	Qian Mengdian 錢孟鈿 (1739-1806) (style name Huanqing 浣青)	Wujin (present-day Yanghu in Jiangsu province)
<i>Xiuyu yingao</i> 繡餘吟稿 (Drafts for Chanting after Embroidering)	Yuan Tang	Qiantang (present-day Hangzhou in Zhejiang province)
<i>Tingqiuxuan ji</i> 聽秋軒集 (A Collection from the Autumn Listening Studio)	Luo Qilan	Jurong (present-day Zhenjiang in Jiangsu province)
<i>Xiangyunguan shi</i> 湘筠館詩 (Poems from the Xiang Bamboo Studio)	Sun Yunfeng 孫云鳳 (1764-1814)	Renhe (present-day Hangzhou)
<i>Luoyuexuan ji</i> 蘿月軒集 (A Collection from the Wisteria and Moon Studio)	Shi Yun 史筠 (fl. first half of the nineteenth century)	Shimen (present-day Jiaxing in Zhejiang province)
<i>Yiyanzhai ji</i> 貽硯齋集 (The Collection from the Inkstone Gift Studio)	Sun Sunyi 孫蓀意 (b. 1783)	Renhe
<i>Xiaouboguan wenchao</i> 小鷗波 館文鈔 (Writings from the Small Gull-and-Wave Studio)	Guan Yun 管筠 (1789-1840)	Qiantang
<i>Hongxuelou shixuan chiji</i> 鴻雪 樓詩選初集 (The First Collection of Selected Poems from Hongxue Tower)	Shen Shanbao	Qiantang

These prefaces construct a women's literary tradition and included the authors of these collections as the newest generation in this tradition.

One of the most substantial versions of this tradition is found in the preface written in 1776 for Qian Mengdian's collection *Huanqing shicao*.⁶⁰ The author of this preface, Qian Mengdian's maternal grandfather Jin Zujing 金祖靜 (b.1696) (courtesy name Dingtao 定濤), lists women writers and literary works from the Zhou (ca.1027-256 BCE) to the Yuan dynasty, exemplifying

⁶⁰ Dingtaolaoren 定濤老人, "Xu" 序, in *Huanqing ji* 浣青集, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 3:1563.

the trend of tracing the tradition of women's literature to the *Shijing* demonstrated in abovementioned Xiaorong Li's and Sufeng Xu's studies. The works enumerated as composed by or about women include:

Title	Historical Period	Contents
“Ospreys” 關雎	Before the six century BCE	The first poem in the <i>Shijing</i> .
“Song: I Watered My Horse at the Long Wall Caves” 飲馬長城窟行	The Han Dynasty	The anonymous Han <i>yuefu</i> ballad which depicts a wife's lovesickness for her husband.
“An Ancient Poem Written for Jiao Zhongqing's Wife” 古詩為焦仲卿妻作	The Eastern Han Dynasty	A long <i>yuefu</i> poem which tells about the love tragedy of Liu Lanzhi 劉蘭芝 and her husband Jiao Zhongqing 焦仲卿.
The fifth poem of the “Nineteen Ancient Poems” 古詩十九首	The Han Dynasty	A pentasyllabic poem describing a woman's sorrow.
“The Mulberry by the Road” 陌上桑	The Han Dynasty	A <i>yuefu</i> ballad which depicts a girl's beauty, eloquence, and faithfulness to her husband.
The inscription on the monument of Cao E 曹娥, a filial daughter of the Eastern Han dynasty, by Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133-192), the famous scholar and calligrapher of the Eastern Han dynasty and the father of Cai Yan.	The Eastern Han Dynasty	Praise of high literary quality.

The exemplary women writers enumerated in this preface include:

Name	Historical Period
Xie Daoyun	The Eastern Jin dynasty
Zuo Fen	The Western Jin dynasty
Bao Linghui	The Liu Song Dynasty

Liu Lingxian	The Liang Dynasty
Su Hui	The Former Qin dynasty
Wei Shuo 衛鑠 (272-349), a calligrapher	The Eastern Jin dynasty
A seven-year-old poet, who wrote a poem at the request of Empress Wu, or Wu Zetian 武則天 (624-705), a poet and the only female who ruled imperial China as an emperor.	The Tang dynasty
Li Qingzhao 李清照 (1084-ca.1151), the most influential female writer of song lyrics.	The Song dynasty
Guan Daosheng 管道昇 (1262-1319), a poet, calligrapher and painter.	The Yuan dynasty

The diverse women poets in other prefaces also include:

Name	Historical Period	Author of Preface	Collection
A woman who refused to flirt with Zigong 子貢 (520-446 BCE), one of Confucius' disciples, through her eloquence.	The Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BCE)	Yuan Mei	<i>Xiuyu yingao</i>
Su Boyu's 蘇伯玉 wife, who wrote him a long poem in a tray.	The Eastern Han dynasty	Yuan Mei	<i>Xiuyu yingao</i>
Lady Xuanwen 宣文 (283-after 362), who learned the Confucian classic <i>Zhou li</i> 周禮 (The Rites of Zhou) from her father and was invited to instruct 120 students on the <i>Zhou li</i> by Fu Jian 苻堅 (338-385), the ruler of the Former Qin dynasty.	The Eastern Jin dynasty	Yuan Mei	<i>Xiuyu yingao</i>
Lady Chen 陳, who wrote a poem, "Hymn on the Pepper Blossom" 椒花頌, to celebrate the Chinese new year.	The Jin Dynasty (265-420)	Yuan Mei	<i>Xiuyu yingao</i>
Xu Hui 徐惠 (627-656), a poet and consort of the Emperor Taizong. ⁶¹	The Tang dynasty	Yuan Mei	<i>Xiuyu yingao</i>

⁶¹ Yuan Mei, "Xiuyuyingao xu" 繡餘吟稿序, in *Yuan Tang ji* 袁棠集, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 3:1519.

Fu Sheng's 伏勝 daughter who explained her father's instructions on the <i>Shangshu</i> to his student Chao Cuo 晁錯 (200-154 BCE).	Mid-third century-mid-second century BCE	Cao Sidong 曹斯棟(fl. eighteenth century)	<i>Yiyanzhai ji</i>
Shangguan Wan'er 上官婉兒 (664-710), a Tang female politician who drafted edicts and other imperial orders for Emperor Zhongzong (656-710) and a poet who was appointed by Empress Wu to evaluate contemporary male court poets.	The Tang dynasty	Cao Sidong	<i>Yiyanzhai ji</i>
Consort Ban Jieyu, who compared herself to a discarded autumn fan in a poem written after she lost the emperor's favour.	The Western Han dynasty	Xu Zongyan 許宗彥 (1768-1819)	<i>Xiangyunguan ji</i>
A girl whose couplet on a candle surprised her father, scholar Zhang Yunsu 張芸叟 (fl. eleventh century). ⁶²	The Northern Song dynasty	Xu Zongyan	<i>Xiangyunguan ji</i>

Some of these prefaces juxtapose women writers with accomplished male poets from different periods. The male writers mentioned in Jin Zujing's preface include:

Name	Historical Period
Liu Xiaochuo, Liu Lingxian's brother	The Liang dynasty
Zuo Si, Zuo Fen's brother	The Western Jin dynasty
Xie An 謝安 (320-385), Xie Daoyun's uncle	The Eastern Jin dynasty

⁶² Xu Zongyan, "Xiangyunguan shi xu" 湘筠館詩序, in *Xiangyunguan ji* 湘筠館集, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 5:2539. For these women writers, see Idema and Grant, *The Red Brush*, 18-9, 52-3, 61-72, 77-82, 144-6, 750n4. For Shangguan Wan'er's poetry, also see Jie Wu, "Vitality and Cohesiveness in the Poetry of Shangguan Wan'er (664-710)," *Tang Studies* 34.1 (2016): 40-72.

Yu Xin 庾信 (513-581) ⁶³	The Liang dynasty and Northern Zhou dynasty (557-581)
Xu Ling 徐陵 (507-583)	The Liang and Chen dynasties
Wen Tingyun	The Tang dynasty
Li Shangyin ⁶⁴	The Tang dynasty

Other male models to whom these women poets are compared include:

Name	Historical Period	Author of Preface	Collection
Song Yu 宋玉 (fl. third century BCE)	The Warring States Period	Yuan Mei	<i>Xiuyu yingao</i>
Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-361), a famous writer and calligrapher; Xie Daoyun's father-in-law	The Eastern Jin dynasty	Yuan Mei	<i>Xiuyu yingao</i>
Li Ling	The Western Han dynasty	Yuan Mei	<i>Xiuyu yingao</i>
Cai Yong ⁶⁵	The Eastern Han dynasty	Yuan Mei	<i>Xiuyu yingao</i>
Scholar and musician Ruan Xian 阮咸 (fl. third century), one of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove (<i>Zhulin qi xian</i> 竹林七賢)	The Western Jin Dynasty	Qian Weiqiao 錢維喬 (1739-1806) (style name Zhuchu 竹初)	<i>Huanqing ji</i>
Scholar and writer Cui Yin 崔駰 (d. 92)	The Han dynasty	Qian Weiqiao	<i>Huanqing ji</i>
Li Bai	The Tang dynasty	Qian Weiqiao	<i>Huanqing ji</i>
Wang Changling	The Tang dynasty	Qian Weiqiao	<i>Huanqing ji</i>
Li He ⁶⁶	The Tang dynasty	Qian Weiqiao	<i>Huanqing ji</i>

⁶³ For Yu Xin's poetry, see Kang-I Sun Chang, *Six Dynasties Poetry*, 146-84.

⁶⁴ Dingtaolaoren, "Xu," in *Huanqing ji*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 3:1563.

⁶⁵ Yuan Mei, "Xiuyuyingao xu," in *Yuan Tang ji*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 3:1519; Qian Weiqiao, "Xu," in *Huanqing ji*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 3:1566.

⁶⁶ Qian Weiqiao, "Xu" 序, in *Huanqing ji*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 3:1566.

Cao Zhi ⁶⁷	The Eastern Han dynasty and the Three Kingdoms (220-265)	Ding Pei 丁佩 (fl. first half of the nineteenth century)	<i>Hongxuelou shixuan chuj</i>
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These prefaces list the writers and writings in non-chronological order. This order differs from the chronology of the presentation of male literary models in the texts written to construct an orthodox poetic tradition, as I have shown in previous chapters. The authors appear to write paratexts for women's collections to display their erudition and literary elegance, rather than to review systematically women's literary history. At the same time, it still can be said that these authors, including the female author Ding Pei, strove to record the development of women's learning and writing within the tradition of Chinese poetry dominated by male poets. The authors of these collections, like the Bao sisters, are thus recognized for their accomplishments in both their family learning and in the poetic tradition of imperial China.

Cao Xibao 曹錫寶 (1719-1792), a scholar-official from a literary family in Shanghai who nurtured his cousins, the women poets Cao Xigui 曹錫珪 (1708-1788) and Cao Xishu 曹錫淑 (1709-1743), brought the family traditions of women's poetry into both regional and empire-wide poetic traditions. His arguments are found in the preface written for *Xiuyu xiaocao* 繡餘小草 (Drafts after Embroidering) by the well-known woman poet Gui Maoyi, a native of

⁶⁷ Ding Pei, "Xu" 序, in *Hongxuelou shixuan chiji* 鴻雪樓詩選初集, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 8:4376. Similar prefaces in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian* are also Zeng Yu's 曾燠 (1760-1831) preface to Luo Qilan's collection, Zhou Yubin's 周郁濱 (1789-1834) preface to Shi Yun's collection (written in 1835), and Gong Yuchen's 龔玉晨 (1770-1838) preface to Guan Yun's collection (written in 1823). See Zeng Yu, "Xu" 序, in *Tingqiuxuan ji* 聽秋軒集, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 3:1757; Zhou Yubin, "Xu wu" 序五, in *Luoyuexuan ji* 蘿月軒集, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 6:3180, Gong Yuchen, "Gong Yuchen xu" 龔玉晨序, in *Xiaouboguan wenchao*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 6:3482.

Changshu (in present-day Jiangsu province)⁶⁸:

Many gentlewomen of my hometown express themselves in poetry. Among those I have seen are two of my female cousins, [...] There is also the Presented Scholar Xu Shaoyu's first wife, née Zhao. [...] There are countless others, who become famous for one couplet or two or are extolled for one poem or two. [...] As for those who enjoy praise successively from mother to daughter within the inner quarters, no example is better than the Li family from Longxi. [...] I had thought that the pure and beautiful vitality of mountains and rivers is equally endowed in women and men. However, women's nature is quiet. Since they are quiet, it is easy for them to understand. Their mind is focused. Since they are single-minded, they concentrate on what they do. They are quiet and single-minded and have endowment and capability. Furthermore, they have famous teachers and fathers to instruct and enlighten them. Therefore, they are able to devote themselves to the "Airs" and "Odes" in order to explore the origin and development as well as the orthodoxy and mutations [of literature] from ancient to modern.⁶⁹

吾邑閨秀之以詩鳴者多矣。所見者，余兩從女兄 [...]。又有徐紹愚進士原聘趙氏 [...]。其他之或以一兩聯顯，或以一二詩傳頌者，指不勝屈。[...] 而欲母與女之繼繼承承擅美閨閣者，則莫若隴西李氏。[...] 吾嘗以為山川清淑之氣，鍾

⁶⁸ Gui Maoyi lived in Shanghai later in her life.

⁶⁹ Cao Xibao, "Xiuyu xiaocao xu" 繡餘小草序, in *Xiuyu xiaocao* 繡餘小草, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 4:2196.

于女子與鍾於男子不異。然女子之性靜，靜則易於領會；女子之心專，專則一於所業，而他事不得以相間。既靜且專，而又有其資，有其力，又有名父師爲訓迪，俾得肆力於風雅，以深究夫古今源流正變之故。

Cao Xibao not only flaunts women's poetic accomplishments in his hometown but also praises the talented women in the Li family from Longxi (in present-day Gansu province). By doing so, he shifts the emphasis to women's literary tradition, rather than simply focusing on the literary fame of his hometown. Cao Xibao calls attention to two qualities of women writers: "quiet" (*jing* 靜) and "single-minded" (*zhuan* 專), which are near synonyms of "pure" (*qing* 清). According to Kang-I Sun Chang, many male scholars in the Ming and Qing periods defined *qing*, or purity, as a precondition of high poetic quality especially embodied in women's poetry. Chang also notes that Zhao Shiyong 趙時用, a late-Ming male scholar, in his preface to an anthology of women's poetry, implies that women's writings should be included in literary canons.⁷⁰ Cao's preface is an example of the argument for women's excellent capability in studying and developing the orthodox poetic tradition. This preface also points to the support and encouragement from male kin, teachers, and scholars. Women's position in the orthodox poetic tradition is legitimized, and their instruction by men is recognized, accepted, and encouraged. To Cao Xibao, women's literary tradition is closely related to male literati culture and constitutes a component of the orthodox tradition of classical poetry.

Similarly, in Zhang Xiying's 張縉英 (1792-after 1863) individual collection, *Danjuxuan shi chugao* 澹鞠軒詩初稿 (The First Draft of Poetry from Pure Chrysanthemum Studio), the

⁷⁰ Kang-I Sun Chang, "Gender and Canonicity," 5, 7.

postscript by Xue Ziheng 薛子衡 (fl. nineteenth century) records the history of women's writing in Yanghu (in present-day Jiangsu province), both his and Zhang's hometown:

My hometown has always had many famous ladies who are good at poetry. In the past, I compiled the gazetteer of my hometown and recorded the literary works. Since [the beginning of] our dynasty, I found thirty-four gentlewomen who are able to write poetry and more than twenty women whose poems are worthy of reciting. Recently, the *Collection from the Long Separation Loft* by Madam Wang (Wang Caiwei), the wife of the [Grand Master for] Splendid Happiness Sun (Sun Xingyan), and the *Drafts of Huanqing's Poems* by Respectful Lady Qian (Qian Mengdian), the wife of the [General] Surveillance [Circuit] Cui (Cui Longjian) are especially outstanding. Sun Xingyan is famous for his poetry in the present day, and the *Collection from the Long Separation Loft* is nearly comparable to the *Records of Fangmao shanren's Poems* [by Sun]. This is the only case seen in the inner chambers. Madam Qian studied poetry from Master Qian Wenmin (Qian Weicheng) and the District Magistrate Zhuchu (Qian Weiqiao). Cui [Longjian] also enjoyed poetic fame. Therefore, the Respectful Lady's profound learning was transmitted to her by her father, and the pleasure of her poetic exchanges involved her husband. This was especially a celebrated story at the time. However, no one has heard that she had younger brothers or sisters skilled in poetry. Now, the poetic methods and study of song

lyric in this collection are all derived from Master Hanfeng (Zhang Qi) and Master Gaowen (Zhang Huiyan). This is the same as the Respectful Lady Qian's learning from her father and uncle. After [she (Zhang Xiying)] married [the Secretary of] the Ministry of Justice, Wu Weiqing (Wu Zan), who is famous for his poetry and rhapsody in the capital, [their relationship] is also the same as [that between] Madam Wang and Sun Xingyan as well as that between Madam Qian and Cui Longjian. Zhongyuan (Zhang Yuesun) also received his father's instructions on poetry. As Madam Zhang's younger brother, he exchanged poems with her, and they matched each other's rhymes. Furthermore, there are Mrs. Zhang 章 (Zhang Guanying), Mrs. Sun (Zhang Lunying), and Mrs. Wang (Zhang Wanying). Their mother Commandery Grand Mistress Tang (Tang Yaoqing) had a collection *Poems Recited at Random in a Shabby Room*, and Mrs. Zhang (Zhang Guanying) had a collection, *Weiqing's Posthumous Drafts*. Both had already been published. Their emotions were different, but their principles were the same. Their melodies differed but were equally skillful. Madam Wang and Respectful Madam Qian did not have [such accomplished family members]. As for the flourishing of genteel women in recent ages, Xiaoluan and her sisters of the Ye family from Wujiang of the Ming dynasty should be ranked first. They and their mother Shen Wanjuan (Shen Yixiu) were all good at poetry and song lyrics. However, their collections, in the *Drafts from*

the Hall of Midday Dreams and *Perfume that Restores Life*, which have been circulated, are filled with melancholic and hurried sounds and lack the peaceful correctness of the *Shijing*. They cannot be compared to this collection.⁷¹

吾鄉素多名媛而工詩。往余纂邑志，錄藝文，自國朝以來，閨秀之能詩者得三十四人，其詩可誦者得二十餘人。而近時則孫光祿室王夫人《長離閣集》崔觀察室錢恭人《浣青詩草》爲尤著。光祿以詩名當代，而《長離閣集》幾與《芳茂山人詩錄》抗行，爲閨閣僅見。錢夫人詩學授之錢文敏公及竹初大令，崔觀察亦素有詩名，故恭人淵源之學，授於庭闈；賡酬之歡，聯以夫壻，尤爲一時嘉話。然皆未聞更有弟妹能詩者也，今是編詩法詞學皆導源於翰風先生及皋文先生，與錢恭人之學文敏大令同。及歸刑部吳君偉卿，固以詞賦名京師者，則與王夫人之於光祿，錢夫人之於觀察又同。而仲遠之詩復紹庭訓，爲夫人弟，更唱疊和。又有章夫人孫夫人王夫人，母湯太夫人有《蓬室偶吟》，章夫人有《緯青遺稿》，皆已梓行，均情殊旨合，異曲同工，則皆王夫人錢恭人所不能得者。夫近代閨媛之盛，推前明吳江葉氏小鸞姊妹，與其母沈宛君竝工詩詞，然所傳《午夢堂稿》及《反生香》等詞，多哀感噍殺之音，少正始和平之什，方之是編，又未可同日而語也。

Published in 1840, Zhang Xiying's collection can be considered a summation of her poetic attainments in the High Qing; the paratexts in it also embody their authors' literary views during this period. Xue Ziheng's postscript thematizes his pride in Yanghu women's literary

⁷¹ Xue Ziheng, "Danjuxuan chugao tibia" 澹鞠軒初稿題跋, in "Tibia" 題跋, in *Danjuxuan shi chugao* 澹鞠軒詩初稿, 1840 edition, 1a-1b; "Danjuxuan chugao tibia," in *Danjuxuan shi chugao*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 6:3734.

accomplishments. As a gazetteer editor, he records Yanghu women's poetry of the Qing dynasty in the *yiwen* section. On the basis of his knowledge of Yanghu women's poetry, he especially appreciates two outstanding women poets flourishing during the second half of the eighteenth century. One is Wang Caiwei 王采薇 (1753-1776), who enjoyed a companionate marriage with Sun Xingyan 孫星衍 (1753-1818). The other one is Qian Mengdian, who was the daughter of Qian Weicheng 錢維城 (1720-1772), whose posthumous title was Wenmin 文敏; the niece of Qian Weiqiao, a poet and dramatist; and the wife of Cui Longjian 崔龍見 (1741-1817). In Xue Ziheng's depiction, Qian Mengdian is not only an exemplary companionate wife of a scholar, like Wang Caiwei, but also the successor of the literary tradition of her natal family. In other words, a woman who took her family learning into her marriage still represented her natal family. Compared to her husband, she played a more important role in the continuation and integration of the two families' literary traditions.

Xue Ziheng, however, attaches greater importance to Zhang Xiying because of the more complex literary relationships of the Zhang family, comparable to the Bao family in Dantu. Like Qian Mengdian, Zhang Xiying was the student of both her father Zhang Qi 張琦 (1764-1833) (courtesy name Hanfeng 翰風) and her uncle Zhang Huiyan 張惠言 (1761-1802) (courtesy name Gaowen 皋文) and the wife of Wu Zan 吳贊 (*jinshi* 1826). She was also in a family whose members were all poets, including her mother Tang Yaoqing 湯瑤卿 (1763-1831), her brother Zhang Yuesun 張曜孫 (1807-1863) (courtesy name Zhongyuan 仲遠), and her three sisters: Zhang Guanying 張(糸冊)英 (1795-1824), Zhang Zhengping's 章政平 wife; Zhang Lunying 張綸英 (1798-after 1868), Sun Jie's 孫劼 wife; and Zhang Wanying 張紈英

(1800-1881), Wang Xi's 王曦 wife.⁷² Xue Ziheng takes pride in the Zhang family's larger group of writers from different generations and both genders than those of Wang Caiwei's and Qian Mengdian's families. By calling attention to the rarity of Zhang Xiying's case, he celebrates the flourishing of Yanghu literary families and especially women writers' activities in them.

Xue Ziheng further emphasizes the superiority of Yanghu women's poetry by contrasting Zhang Xiying's poetic quality to that of several women poets from the Ye family in Wujiang during the late Ming dynasty: Ye Xiaoluan 葉小鸞 (1616-1632), her sisters, and her mother Shen Yixiu 沈宜修 (1590-1635) (courtesy name Wanjun 宛君).⁷³ On the one hand, Xue admits their reputation but classifies the majority of these women's poems as "hurried sounds" (*jiaosha zhi yin* 噉殺之音), the type criticized in the *Book of Rites*.⁷⁴ On the other hand, he clearly implies that Zhang's collection continues the orthodox tradition of classical poetry by containing works like those of the correct beginning (*zhengshi* 正始) and of peacefulness (*heping* 和平), a near synonym of *wenrou dunhou*, the well-accepted features of the *Shijing*.

Liu Xiaohua 劉曉華 (fl. 1840), a native of Wujin, in his preface to Zhang Xiying's collection, which was written in 1840, also designates the women poets from the Zhang family as equals of their male family members and as representatives of the Zhang family's literary achievements. Furthermore, he identifies the poems by the Zhang writers, both male and female,

⁷² Their literary relationships and practices are elaborated in Susan Mann's *The Talented Women of the Zhang Family*.

⁷³ For their literary lives, for example, see Idema and Grant, *The Red Brush*, 383-414; Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers*, 143-218; Anne McLaren, "Lamenting the Dead: Women's Performance of Grief in Late Imperial China," in *The Inner Quarters and Beyond*, 49-77.

⁷⁴ See Hao Yixing 郝懿行, *Liji jian* 禮記箋, *juan* 19, 10b, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 104:590.

as a threshold to “the teaching of gentleness and earnestness” (*wenrou dunhou zhi jiao* 溫柔敦厚之教), or the essence of the *Shijing*. While sharing identical views of these women poets’ roles with Xue Ziheng, Liu reminds us that the Zhang poets’ achievements are *not* the “private treasure” (*simei* 私美) of their family and hometown. He thus implies that both men and women poets have their place in the poetic tradition of imperial China.⁷⁵

In Chen Xie’s 陳燮 (*juren* 1798) preface to *Xiaoweimo shigao* 小維摩詩藁 (Drafts of Little Vimalakirti’s Poems) by Jiang Zhu 江珠 (1764-1804), a native of Ganquan (present-day Yangzhou) who sojourned in Wu county (in present-day Jiangsu), we see another type of “history” of women’s poetry from the perspective of anthologizing women’s poetry:

[Compiling] poetic anthologies of women scholars was initiated by Yan Jun and Yin Chun. The *Anthology of Talents* from the Tang dynasty included one *juan* of [poems by] genteel women. From the Song and Yuan dynasties, the anthologists never omitted this category. The *Remarks on Poetry from the Dwelling of Quiet Intent* [by Zhu Yizun] recorded it in detail. The *Anthology of Burning Tallow Candles* compiled by Wang [Shilu] from Ji’nan [who held a post in] the Bureau of Evaluations was an excellent version. The Chief Minister [of the Court of Sacrifices] Shen Guiyu (Shen Deqian) collected the poems by women of the reigning dynasty, and his selection was also of high quality. He included only the poems which possess the correctness of emotion and nature and conformed to the

⁷⁵ Liu Xiaohua, “Danjuxuan shigao xu” 澹鞠軒詩稿序, in *Danjuxuan shi chugao*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 6:3731.

principles of the “Airs” and “Odes.”⁷⁶

女史詩集始於顏竣殷淳。唐人才調集輯閨秀一卷。宋元以降，選家類不見遺。

靜志居詩話詳哉言之，而以濟南王考功然脂集為善本。沈歸愚宗伯輯國朝詩採擇亦精，凡以得情性之正，合風雅之旨而已。

The anthologies mentioned in this preface, which extends from the Liu Song dynasty to the High Qing era, consist of two categories: those that contain only women’s poems, such as Yin Chun’s 殷淳 (403-434) *Furen ji* 婦人集 (An Anthology of Women), Yan Jun’s 顏竣 (after 414-459) *Furen shiji* 婦人詩集 (An Anthology of Women’s Poetry), and Wang Shilu’s 王士禛 (1626-1673) *Ranzhi ji* 然脂集 (The Anthology of Burning Tallow Candles), none of which are extant;⁷⁷ and those of both men’s and women’s poems, including Wei Hu’s 韋縠 (fl. tenth century) *Caidiao ji* 才調集 (The Anthology of Talents) compiled during the Latter Shu dynasty (934-965) and Shen Deqian’s *Guochao shi biecai ji*. Chen Xie notes that, at the latest during the mid-tenth century, women started to have a place in efforts to canonize poetry and poetic tradition rather than being separated from men’s poetry and the poetic mainstream. He particularly summarizes Shen Deqian’s selective criteria in his *Guochao shi biecai ji*: a poet’s proper expression of *qingxing*, or *xingqing*, and following the poetic principles established by the *Shijing*. These criteria of poetic values were shared by many scholars who participated in the

⁷⁶ Chen Xie, “Xu” 序, in *Jiang Zhu ji* 江珠集, *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 5:2690.

⁷⁷ See David R. Knechtges, “Yin Chun 殷淳 (403-434), *zi* Cuiyuan 粹遠,” in *Ancient and Early Medieval Chinese Literature: A Reference Guide*, 3:1901-2; Knechtges, “Yan Yanzhi 顏延之 (384-456), *zi* Yannian 延年,” in *Ancient and Early Medieval Chinese Literature*, 3:1781; Peng Shurong 彭曙蓉, “Yin Chun *Furen ji* *ji* *Furen shiji* kaolun—jian yu Xu Yunhe ‘Nanchao *furen ji* kaolun’ yiwen shangque” 殷淳《婦人集》及《婦人詩集》考論——兼與許雲和《南朝婦人集考論》一文商榷。

debate over Tang and Song poetry.

Shen Deqian's *Guochao shi biecai ji* devotes one of the thirty-two *juan* to the poems of 66 women poets among the nearly one thousand poets in the anthology.⁷⁸ Shen explains the criterion of his selection of women's poetry in the "Editorial Principles":

All [of the authors] included in [this] anthology [...] are able to preserve the dignity of the doctrine of names and ethical rules; the loftiness of their styles is secondary. [If we record them] in order to dignify the status of poetry and to correct the norms of the inner chambers, who could say it is not proper?⁷⁹

選本所錄 [...] 均可維名教倫常之大，而風格之高，又其餘事也。以尊詩品，以端壺範，誰曰不宜？

Many scholars have noted Shen Deqian's attention to women's poetry, quoted his comments on individual women poets, and explored his influence on women scholars' understanding and legitimization of their own literary production.⁸⁰ What remains unexamined is the importance of women's poetry in Shen's framework of poetic evaluation. In this passage, Shen juxtaposes two

⁷⁸ In other words, more than 6% of the poets in *Guochao shi biecai ji* are women poets. This proportion is slightly higher than that in Qian Qianyi's *Liechao shiji* 列朝詩集 (The Poetry Anthology of the Successive Reigns), which includes more than 120 women poets among around 2,000 poets. For the number of the poets included in *Liechao shiji*, see "Chuban shuoming" 出版說明, in *Liechao shiji xiaozhuan*, 1:1.

⁷⁹ Shen Deqian, "Fanli," 4a, in *Qingshi biecai ji*, 3.

⁸⁰ For example, Shen Deqian's praises of Chai Jingyi's 柴靜儀 (fl. mid-seventeenth century) have been quoted in several studies. See her biography written by Dorothy Ko, in *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women*, 14-5; Paula Varsano, "Chai Jingyi and her Daughter-in-Law Zhu Rouze," in *Women Writers of Traditional China*, 386-91; Daria Berg, *Women and the Literary World in Early Modern China, 1580-1700*, 237. Zhong Huiling outlines Shen's encouragement of women's poetry writing. See Chung, *Qingdai nü shiren yanjiu*, 66-68. Xiaorong Li argues that Shen Deqian pioneered Qing literati's exclusion of courtesans from their anthologies. See Li, "Gender and Textual Politics during the Qing dynasty," 88-89.

goals for his inclusion of women's poetry, to "correct the norms of the inner chambers" (*duan kunfan* 端壺範) and "dignify the status of poetry" (*zun shipin* 尊詩品), which is nearly synonymous with enhancing "poetic doctrine," one of the principles of his poetic theory discussed in Chapter 2. This juxtaposition confirms that women's high-quality poems were equally important in cultivating Confucian womanly virtues and in continuing the orthodox poetic tradition. When Shen Deqian included women's poetry in the anthology, he at the same time employed it as a model in his version of the classical poetic tradition, which was produced in order to exalt Tang poetry and exclude the Song poetic style. In view of Shen's admission of his partiality for Tang poetry in the "Editorial Principles," he considers women poets in this anthology the successors of Tang poetry.

When we read together the Bao sisters' collections with the above texts, we can see that male scholars evaluated poetry by men and women with the same criteria. They historicized and canonized women's poetry by writing their own versions of women's poetic histories. Although these versions are shorter and less substantial than those of men, they shared with the latter attempts to name the models and acclaim their poetic qualities inherited from the *Shijing* as the origin and ultimate exemplar. Both the authors of the paratexts in women's individual collections and Shen Deqian, a leading poet and important anthologist during this period, realized the necessity to preserve women's literary achievements because they believed women's poetry to be a component of family, regional, and empire-wide poetic traditions.

Women and Tang or Song Poetry

When women's status in the orthodox tradition of classical poetry was legitimized, the examination of how they were influenced by previous literature and developed the poetic tradition became inevitable. As shown above, during the High Qing era, women poets were frequently discussed together with and compared to classical literary models, including Tang and Song poets. The claims of women inheriting poetic qualities of previous models became common practices. Some of these claims are general and vague. In his preface to *Danxian shici ji* 澹仙詩詞集 (The Collection of Poetry and Song Lyrics by Danxian) by Xiong Lian 熊璉 (1766-1820) (style name Danxian 澹僊), a native of Rugao (in present-day Jiangsu province), Cao Longshu 曹龍樹 (fl. late eighteenth century) states that Xiong's poems "have Tang tones" (*you Tangren yin* 有唐人音).⁸¹ Without specifying whether Xiong Lian intentionally emulated previous poets and who her models were, Cao Longshu simply underlines the embodiment of Tang poetic qualities in Xiong's poetry.

Similarly, in *Yiyanzhai ji* by Sun Sunyi, Hong Liangji 洪亮吉 (1746-1809), a native of Yanghu, points out the relationship between Sun's poetry and a wider range of poetic models in his preface written in 1807:

[Her poetry] is actually close to the spirit of many poets of the Six Dynasties and three Tang periods. It is more than what women poets are able to achieve.⁸²

⁸¹ Cao Longshu, "Xu" 序, in *Danxian shici ji* 澹仙詩詞集, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 6:3562.

⁸² Hong Liangji, "Xu" 序, in *Yiyanzhai ji*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 6:3335.

于六朝三唐諸詩人實皆有神會處，非僅閨閣中之能事也。

Hong Liangji's praise of Sun Sunyi's comprehension of previous poets' accomplishments reveals his regret at most women poets' lack of understanding of them and his expectation of women's broad learning.

In their prefaces to Jiang Zhu's *Xiaoweimo shigao*, Chen Xie and Jiang Pan 江潘 (1761-1831), Jiang Zhu's older brother, also claim Jiang's uniqueness and excellence among women poets by reference to Tang poets:

The boldness and vigour in [her] ancient-style heptasyllabic poems inherit the methods of the Tang poets. They are especially rare among women poets.⁸³ (Chen Xie)

七言古詩之縱橫捭闔，得唐人遺法，則尤林下所少也。

Her ancient-style pentasyllabic poems are strong in diction and pure in meaning; they can compete with [the poems from] the Zhengshi reign (240-249). Her leisurely songs and clear melodies originate from the Jian'an period. [Her] ancient-style heptasyllabic poems and recent-style poems take their vigour from Li [Bai] and Du [Fu] and articulate arguments [learned] from Han [Yu] and Su [Shi]. [...] How could [her poems] be like those of the women in recent times merely imitating the tones of Tang and writing allegorical poems, good only at soft words? As her learning has its source, she naturally has few compositions that trace feelings. She models her poems

⁸³ Chen Xie, "Xu," in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 5:2690.

on the “Airs” and “Odes”; therefore, there should not be any writings that would harm virtue.⁸⁴ (Jiang Pan)

五古則辭決義貞，爭驅於正始；緩歌清曲，發響於建安。七古近體則裁風骨於李杜，騁論說於韓蘇。[...] 豈如近日女郎之作，但撫唐音，托興之詩，祇工柔語者乎？蓋學有淵源，自少緣情之作；言宗風雅，應無累德之篇也。

Both prefaces eulogize Jiang Zhu as a prominent exception among women poets because her poetry derives from previous poetry, including Tang poetry. *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian* marks Jiang Zhu as an emulator of Tang poets on the basis of Jiang Pan’s preface.⁸⁵ These two prefaces differ from each other in their evaluations of contemporary women poets. Chen Xie, like Hong Liangji, asserts that most of the women’s poems lack Tang poetic qualities, while Jiang Pan is dissatisfied with contemporary women poets’ imitation of Tang poetry. However, Jiang Pan’s criticism results from women’s narrow interest in the “tones of Tang” (*Tangyin* 唐音), being inferior to Jiang Zhu’s poetry which “has its source” (*you yuanyuan* 有淵源) in the Han, Tang and Song masters and “is modeled on the ‘Airs’ and ‘Odes’” (*zong fengya* 宗風雅). While Chen and Jiang both attach importance to women’s learning from previous poetic models, Jiang maintains an even higher expectation of the breadth of their knowledge about poetry.

In comparison to Cao Longshu and Hong Liangji, Chen Xie and Jiang Pan are more specific about the origins of Jiang Zhu’s poetic qualities. Like them, many High Qing scholars discussed precisely how women learned from previous poets and chose poetic models. An

⁸⁴ Jiang Pan, “Xu” 序, in *Jiang Zhu ji*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 5:2688.

⁸⁵ “Zhengli shuoming” 整理說明, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 5:2683.

example is the preface by Guan Shiming 管世銘 (1738-1798), another native of Wujin, in Qian Mengdian's collection:

[Qian Mengdian] read and learned from all the poets from the three Tang and two Song periods to recent times. [Her poems] [...] all abide by the correctness of nature and emotion.⁸⁶

自三唐兩宋以及近代作者無不出入沾溉，[...] 而一軌於性情之正。

As an advocate of Tang poetry whose poetic models included Han-Wei poetry, the Tang poets Du Fu and Han Yu, and the Song poet Su Shi,⁸⁷ Guan Shiming notes the variety of Meng's poetic styles and declares that she broadly learned from the poets from the Tang to the Ming-Qing period. He further emphasizes the importance of *xingqing* in poetry writing by pointing out that her "correct" nature and emotion disciplines her poetic production. In this preface, he shares two frequently used criteria with many literati who participated in the debate over Tang and Song poetry: *xingqing* as the source of poetry and the proper choice of poetic models, by which he evaluates Qian Mengdian as he would evaluate a male poet.

Another claim about Qian Mengdian's various poetic models and styles is found in the first half of the endorsement verse by Dong Dazhang 董達章 (1753-1813), who was also from Wujin:

⁸⁶ Guan Shiming, "Xu" 序, in *Huanqing ji*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 3:1568.

⁸⁷ Wang Zuizhong 汪最中, "Guan Shiming yu Yunshantang ji" 管世銘與《韞山堂詩集》, 72. For Guan's literary views, also see Wang Zuizhong, "Lun Duxue shanfang Tangshi chao zai Tangshi xue shi shang de lilun gongxian" 論《讀雪山房唐詩鈔》在唐詩學史上的理論貢獻, 109-12; He Shihai 何詩海, "Zongji fanli yu wenxue piping: yi Duxue shanfang Tangshi chao fanli wei zhongxin" 總集凡例與文學批評——以《讀雪山房唐詩鈔》凡例為中心, 35-44.

Her pentasyllabic poems continue those by Tao Qian and Xie	五言繼陶謝
Lingyun,	
Her <i>yuefu</i> ballads follow those by Qinglian (Li Bai).	樂府追青蓮
Her works in every subgenre all naturally formed,	百體皆渾成
Most of their secrets derive from the Tang talents. ⁸⁸	三昧多唐賢

According to Dong Dazhang, the Tang poets, represented by Li Bai, constitute the majority of Qian's poetic models. Compared to Guan's and Dong's accounts, Yuan Mei's *Suiyuan shihua* more clearly specifies Qian's conscious choice of Tang poetic models:

Her style name is Huanqing, [because she] wants to combine [the poetic qualities of] Huanhua (Du Fu) and Qinglian (Li Bai).⁸⁹

其號浣青者，欲兼浣花青蓮而一之也。

Qian's style name is composed of the first character of the name of Du Fu's studio, *Huanhua caotang*, and the first character of Li Bai's style name. Yuan Mei explains Qian's ambition and poetic preference embodied by this name. On the basis of Dong and Yuan, contemporary Chinese scholar Hu Xiaoming 胡曉明 identifies Qian Mengdian as an imitator of Tang poetry.⁹⁰

Yuan Mei wrote an epitaph for Jin Yi, a poet from Changzhou (in present-day Jiangsu province). This epitaph shows that she, like Qian Mengdian, admired and consciously learned from previous poetic models:

⁸⁸ Dong Dazhang, "Tici" 題詞, in *Tingqiuxuan ji*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 3:1571.

⁸⁹ Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua*, *juan* 5, 151.

⁹⁰ Hu Xiaoming, "Zhengli shuoming" 整理說明, in *Jiangnan nüxing biejie chubian* 江南女性別集初編, 1:218.

Xianxian (Jin Yi) studied [poems by] all Tang and Song masters when she discussed poetry and was especially addicted to my poetry.⁹¹

纖纖論詩，於唐宋諸名家靡不宣究，尤酷嗜余詩。

Jin was one of Yuan Mei's favourite female disciples.⁹² As the leading poet-critic who called for mixing Tang and Song poetic styles, Yuan Mei describes her as an enthusiastic disciple of his poetry and a practitioner of his poetic theories.

In *Qiushuixuan ji* 秋水軒集 (The Collection from the Autumn Water Studio) by Zhuang Panzhu 莊盤珠 (1772-1796) (courtesy name Lianpei 蓮佩), a native of Yanghu, two paratexts show her strong aspiration to carry on the orthodox poetic tradition and the important role male scholars played in her literary life. Wu Dexuan 吳德旋 (1767-1840), a native of Yixing (in present-day Jiangsu province), writes in the "Short Biography of Zhuang Lianpei" 莊蓮佩小傳:

[She] studied the poems of the Han dynasty, Wei dynasty, Six Dynasties, and Tang dynasty with her older brother Fenpei (Zhuang Yingzeng). She read the poems and loved them. Therefore, she wrote poems by imitating them; then [her poems became] well-written.⁹³

嘗從其兄芬珮受漢魏六朝唐人詩，讀而好之，因效爲之，輒工。

Pre-Song poetry was what Zhuang Panzhu's brother Zhuang Yingzeng 莊穎曾 (fl. 1788) (courtesy name Fenpei 芬珮) preferred and chose as model. The process of Zhuang Panzhu's

⁹¹ Yuan Mei, "Muzhiming" 墓誌銘, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 6:2965.

⁹² Yuan Mei, *Suiyuan shihua buyi*, juan 10, 808.

⁹³ Wu Dexuan, "Zhuang Lianpei xiaozhuan" 莊蓮佩小傳, in *Qiushuixuan ji*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 6:3697.

studying poetry with him provides an example of how literary learning and views were transmitted within a certain generation of a family and how a woman became interested in poetry and chose her poetic models. In Wu Dexuan's representation, the Zhuang siblings' poetic productions are especially featured by their shared preference, which is not frequently seen in other women's cases.

Zhuang Panzhu's conscious and cautious choice of her poetic models is also recorded in *Shouyizhai kechuang biji* 守一齋客窗筆記 (Miscellaneous Notes under the Window of the Preserving-the-One Studio during My Journey) by Jin Pengchang 金捧闔 (1760-1810), whose older sister's husband was Zhuang Panzhu's grandfather:

Our Chang[zhou] produces many talented women, and Zhuang Lianpei (Zhuang Panzhu) is the most outstanding. [...] She often told her father: "I want to hear orthodox works of the 'Airs' and do not want to hear mutated works of the 'Airs'."

Youjun taught her the poems by the Han and Tang masters.⁹⁴

吾常才媛頗有，而以莊蓮佩爲最。[...] 每謂父曰：“願聞正風，不願聞變風。”友鈞授以漢唐諸家詩。

According to this text, Zhuang Panzhu's expectation for poetic models not only resulted from her personal interest but also her desire to emulate poetic orthodoxy. Her father's choice of representatives of poetic orthodoxy, Han and Tang poetry, shows that her desire and preference for pre-Song poetry were characteristics of their family's learning shared by male and female

⁹⁴ Jin Pengchang, "Shouyizhai kechuang biji" 守一齋客窗筆記, in *Qishuixuan ji*, in *Qingdai guige shiji cuibian*, 6:3698.

members. Both Zhuang Panzhu's father and brother accepted her as a new poet in the poetic tradition of their family and helped her to be a new successor of the poetic orthodoxy. In Zhuang Panzhu's learning career, male scholars had a greater importance than in the cases of many of the other women examined above.

In the anthology of poems and song lyrics presented to Luo Qilan, which she compiled and entitled *Tingqiuxuan zengyan*, Shouxian 瘦仙 (fl. eighteenth century) and Zhu Delin 祝德麟 (1742-1798) recognize Luo Qilan's role as an heir of the orthodox poetic tradition in different ways:

A Poem Presented to Madam Peixiang after Reading the
Collection from the Autumn Listening Studio

讀聽秋軒集即呈佩
香夫人

The famous scholars in Jiangnan all admire her wholeheartedly,

江南名士總傾心

And want to see Madam's chant of "White Snow."

願見夫人白雪吟

Unlike the collections of ordinary genteel women,

不比尋常閨秀集

In their clear and flowery forms and tones are Tang sounds.⁹⁵
(Shouxian)

清華格調有唐音

The Female Scholar from Juqu, Luo Peixiang, Married Gong but Was Widowed. She Is Sojourning in Runzhou. Good at Writing Poetry, She Is a Disciple of Two Masters, Jianzhai (Yuan Mei) and Menglou (Wang Wenzhi). In the Past, the Female Scholar Introduced Jianzhai to Me and Asked Me to Inscribe the Painting *Teaching My Daughter by an Autumn Lamp*. Menglou Further Presented Me the Block-Printed Edition of Her *Poetry from the Autumn Listening Studio*. I Read It on a Boat. The Poems in It Are Pure, Subtle, and Placid. Their

句曲女史駱佩香
嫁於龔而寡，寓
居潤州。工吟
詠，為簡齋夢樓
兩公女弟子。往
歲女史曾介簡齋
索余題秋燈課女
圖，茲夢樓復以
其所著聽秋軒詩

⁹⁵ Shouxian 瘦仙, "Du Tingqiuxuan ji ji cheng Peixiang furen" 讀聽秋軒集即呈佩香夫人, in *Tingqiuxuan zengyan*, 1796 edition, *juan* 3, 13b.

Qualities Are Extremely Similar to Wang Wei's and Meng Haoran's Quatrains and Are Also Quite Close to Wang Zhongchu's (Wang Jian) Works. She Should Be the Best among Contemporary Genteel Women. Therefore, I Inscribed Three Quatrains to Record My Appreciation

刻本見貽。舟中
讀之，清微澹
遠，佳處直逼王
孟絕句，亦頗近
王仲初，當爲近
日閨秀之冠。爰
題三絕以誌歎賞

It is not necessary to draw boundaries strictly between poems when discussing poetry,

論詩不必苦分疆

The flavour of poetry has to be investigated carefully.

氣味終須細審詳

It is a shame that most scholar-officials take Song poetry as a direct progenitor,

慙媿士夫多祖宋

But look, this lady in the inner chambers does not regard Tang poetry as a remote ancestor.⁹⁶ (Zhu Delin)

卻看閨閣未祧唐

Shouxian's eulogy on Luo Qilan's poetry is a cliché. The claim of Luo's superiority to contemporary women poets and the comparison of her poetry to the "Tang sounds" (*Tang yin* 唐音) and the "White Snow" (*Baixue* 白雪), a piece of refined, elegant music from the Warring States period, are Shouxian's probably sincere yet unoriginal, formulaic, and superficial compliments. In contrast, Zhu Delin's comments are specific, similar to Bao Zhizhong's, Bao Zhifen's, Yuan Mei's, and Guo Qi's comments on Bao Zhihui's poetry as well as Chen Xie's and Jiang Pan's comments on Jiang Zhu's poetry. The long title of Zhu's quatrain describes Luo Qilan's poetry as pure, subtle, and placid (*qingwei danyuan* 清微澹遠). Furthermore, Zhu compares Luo's poetry to that of Wang Wei, Meng Haoran, and Wang Jian 王建 (766-830) (courtesy name Zhongchu 仲初), the Tang representatives of this poetic style. In the first couplet,

⁹⁶ Zhu Delin, "Juqu nüshi Luo Peixiang jia yu Gong er gua yuju Runzhou gong yinyong wei Jianzhai Menglou liang gong nü dizi wangsui nüshi ceng jie Jianzhai suo yu ti Qiudeng ke nü tu zi Menglou fu yi qi suo zhu Tingqiuxuan shi keben jian yi zhou zhong du zhi qingwei danyuan jiachu zhi bi Wang Meng jueju yi po jin Wang Zhongchu dang wei jinri guixiu zhi guan yuan ti san jue yi zhi tanshang," no.1, in *Tingqiuxuan zengyan*, 1796 edition, *juan* 3, 24b.

Zhu Delin opposes male poets' artificial division between styles of poetry and their insufficient attention to the flavour (*qiwei* 氣味) of poetry, which can be considered the reflection of a poet's *xingqing*. The first line of the second couplet criticizes the mainstream imitation of Song poetry, or *tiao Tang zu Song*, among male poets, but the second line can be understood in two ways: Luo Qilan learned from poetry of different periods or she persisted in emulation of Tang poetry. According to his comments on Luo's poetry in the long title, it can be argued that Zhu Delin praises her adherence to Tang poetic models. Zhu Delin here gives contemporary male and female poets equal status in Qing poetry by evaluating them within the same literary context, the debate over Tang and Song poetry, and declares the superiority of Luo's poetic views over those of her male contemporaries. Even in view of his partiality, Zhu's comments seem to be genuine praise, instead of vague, general flattery.

High Qing male literati made general and specific evaluations of women's poetry. They compared women's poetry with earlier poetic models. Their precise evaluations demonstrate their great attention to women's poetic production as a collective phenomenon, rather than separate individual cases, and their comprehension of women's individual poetic styles, qualities, and defects. According to their comments on High Qing women's literary practices, the preference for Tang poetry became a trend in women's writing, although most of these women's literary views were unknown and the qualities of their poems varied. Some of these women shared a sense of responsibility to carry on the orthodox tradition of classical poetry and possessed self-confidence in their qualification. They put their intention into practice by choosing and learning from certain poetic models, who were mainly pre-Song poets. While Song

poets were not excluded from the list of the models of these women poets, it can still be said that the mainstream of High Qing women's poetry in Jiangnan consisted of advocates of Tang poetry. Male scholars accepted women's new role as their talented and insightful peers.

Conclusion

Lasting throughout imperial China after the emergence of Song poetry, the debate over Tang and Song poetry reached an unprecedented intensity and complexity during the High Qing era. This period also witnessed the flourishing of women's literary culture. Literary women thus had a chance to participate in this male-dominated debate, especially in the Jiangnan region, the center of both occurrences. On the one hand, these women did not discuss the superiorities and inferiorities of Tang and Song poetry as frequently as men did, and male literati did not include women's poetry in the debate as often as they criticized men's poetry. This observation partially confirms Wilt Idema's view of women's lack of interest in this debate. On the other hand, women did not ignore the debate and were not excluded from it. Some cases of Jiangnan women's literary production show that they were actually involved in the debate and with the debaters. These male and female literati learned from the same exemplary works and employed the same theories, criteria, rhetoric, and vocabulary in their poetic production and evaluation. Contemporary scholars note the contents and emotions exclusive to women's poetry and the higher evaluation given to women poets in late imperial China. The perceived differences between women's and men's poetry, however, can be understood as the result of personal preferences and contextual experiences instead of divergences between the writing styles and

aims of the two genders. After all, women and men, as poets and writers, thought and created under the influence of the same literary models and within the same literary tradition in late imperial China. Therefore, they developed similar expectations for men's and women's literary production. Their shared intentions, preferences, skills, and strategies in reading and writing remind us of the possibility of women's greater importance in the debate over Tang and Song poetry.

Conclusion

This dissertation examines the history of the debate over Tang and Song poetry from the perspective of the poet-critics' efforts to preserve and continue the tradition of poetic orthodoxy. By situating High Qing poet-critics in this millennium-long literary context, I not only trace the course of the debate but also demonstrate its complexity and intensity as well as the strategies the poet-critics used in it. The major concern of Chinese literati in this debate was to select appropriate model(s) on the basis of their comprehensive analyses, evaluations, and discriminations of diverse poetic styles and achievements of various poets. Their discussions of poetry involved topics ranging from poetic content, forms, (sub)genres, and trends; literary ideals and practices of poets as individuals, as members of schools of poetry, and as representatives of their native places; to the criticism of imitation and innovation in poetic practice. The literati's agreements and disagreements were embodied in their associations and conflicts, formations and dissolutions of poetry societies, exchanges of poetry, anthologization, paratext writing, and epistolary communications. These arguments were expressed and recorded in various literary modes: poems, letters, remarks on poetry, paratexts to individual collections and large anthologies, biographies, and miscellaneous notes. The debate over Tang and Song poetry was ubiquitous in Qing poetry and poetics.

A major way to preserve and extend the orthodox poetic tradition applied by many poet-critics was to write a history of it. In texts of diverse genres on the topics in the debate over Tang and Song poetry discussed above, they proposed their versions of the history of classical Chinese poetry. These versions began with the *Shijing* and *Chuci* as the origins and canons of

classical Chinese poetry and enumerated Han, Wei, and Tang poetry, especially certain poets and poems, as the most respectable exemplars of this tradition. Furthermore, they included particular post-Tang poets as followers and even equals of earlier models. By the High Qing, these versions were complicated by an unprecedented number of poets and complex visions of the poetic craft. Qing poet-critics not only studied and discussed Tang and Song poetry but also commented on the literary achievements and shortcomings of the poets who learned from them, especially those of the Ming dynasty. Qing literati's evaluations of these post-Song poets diverged even more radically than their views of Tang and Song poetry. For example, as I discuss in Chapters 1, 2, and 3, Chen Zilong claimed that Ming poetry's contribution to the restoration of poetic orthodoxy was greater than that of Tang poetry. In his view, Ming poets stopped the decline of poetry caused by Song-Yuan poets, one which was more cataclysmic than that caused by Qi-Liang poets. Shen Deqian, on the contrary, considered Qi-Liang poetry the predecessor that rivaled the attainments of Tang poetry. He also pointed out the disparity in the quality of Ming poetry, including the poems by the Former and Latter Seven Masters. In his view, the Ming Seven Masters' poems included both works that are comparable to previous literary masterpieces and also mediocre imitations. Huang Zongxi argued that only Song poets succeeded in learning from Tang poetry and called Li Mengyang's and He Jingming's imitative works "fake Tang poetry." Similarly, Yuan Mei asserted that Song-Yuan poets were the most successful students of Tang poetry while the Seven Masters were the most unsuccessful. He pointed out uneven qualities in poems in the *Shijing* and in Han, Wei, and Tang poems, instead of labeling them all as the exemplars of unquestionable excellence. More retrospective than other poet-critics

examined in this dissertation, Yuan Mei traced the origin of classical Chinese poetry to the time of Emperor Shun, much earlier than the *Shijing*. Qing literati's debate over Tang and Song poetry is thus also a collective effort to reaffirm the orthodox origin of classical Chinese poetry and ensure the continuation of poetry's excellence and cultural significance.

Although in this dissertation I classify Qing poet-critics into three groups as is the practice among Chinese scholars such as Wang Yingzhi, most Qing poet-critics, whether authors of poetic histories or a subject discussed in one, are not exclusive advocates of Tang or Song poetry. Many Qing poets regarded their predecessors and contemporaries with an unprejudiced eye and based their judgments on these poets' expression of *xingqing* (nature and emotion) and display of *xingling* (natural sensibility and inspiration), the criteria employed by the earliest exemplars of literary criticism. Their open-minded, critical analyses of poetry resulted in their changing interests in and preferences for different poetic models and styles, especially as we see in Chapter 1. The poets who mainly emulated Tang poetry maintained a belief in its unquestionably high achievements, especially during the High Tang period. At the same time, they acknowledged the excellence of certain Song masters, especially Su Shi. As a result, some of them chose to follow particular Song models in different stages of their writing careers. Early Qing poets, including Shi Runzhang, Song Wan, Wang Shizhen, and Zhu Yizun, discussed in Chapter 1, were all open to poetic predecessors of different periods. Shen Deqian, while admitting that he preferred Tang poetry, announced that he "never denigrated Song poetry" and paid more attention to Song and Jin (Jurchen) poetry at the end of his anthologizing career, as I show in Chapter 2. The Song-style advocates, except for a small number of radicals like Shi Qian,

mentioned in Chapter 3, shared with poet-critics of the other two groups a high regard for Tang poetry while persisting in promoting the Song poetic style. Huang Zongxi (Chapter 1) and Li E (Chapter 2), as influential advocates of Song poetry, both displayed characteristics of Tang poetry in their writing. Thus, the dominant admiration of High Tang poetry that one finds in the Yuan and Ming dynasties did not reappear during the Qing dynasty; rather, an increasing esteem for Song poetry characterized the Qing dynasty.¹ Such a period of complex views, shifting positions, and manifold writing practices witnessed the rise of a new third group, who unprecedentedly rivaled the other two and attempted to reconcile their opposing views while also sharing some literary ideas.

Schools of poetry played an important role in the debate over Tang and Song poetry during this period. In post-Tang imperial China, many schools of poetry formed on the basis of their members' similar choices of literary styles modeled after certain Tang or Song masters. The three main groups of poet-critics in the High Qing debate over Tang and Song poetry were represented by three large schools of poetry respectively around their renowned leaders, Shen Deqian, Li E, and Yuan Mei, and the debate involved various small schools. The controversies occurred among not only individuals but also schools of poetry. The Qing history of the debate over Tang and Song poetry is also a history of the schools of poetry.

Certain regions established their importance in the debate by producing local poets and providing them with venues of literary activities to form literary schools. Most schools of poetry in the debate, including the three led by Shen Deqian, Li E, or Yuan Mei, were mainly regional.

¹ Liu Shinan, *Qingshi liupai shi*, 211.

The large number of the regional schools of poetry, especially those named after their members' native places, shows the wide geographical range of participants in this empire-wide debate.

These regions' importance was also found in Qing literati's establishment of local poetic reputation and traditions. Qing literati wrote poetic histories of various regions, including those of their native places. In these local literary histories, they designated certain local poets, often their townsmen, as the successors of the orthodox poetic tradition beginning from the *Shijing* and thus peers of the most famous, influential masters known and admired by the whole empire. A particularly enthusiastic example is Shen Deqian, who implicitly graded poets in the literary histories he wrote for their native places but gave the highest appraisal to his townsmen congenial to him (Chapter 2). An exception is Yuan Mei. He expressed his regret at lacking knowledge of Zhejiang literati because he did not live in Zhejiang long, his concerns about the problems in Zhejiang poetry, and his pride in Zhejiang women writers (Chapter 3). The approaches and criteria used in these histories, which these literati frequently applied when they wrote their versions of the orthodox poetic tradition, and these literati's enthusiasm, impartiality, and anxiety, all show that they treated the poetic tradition of the empire and local poetic traditions with equal seriousness and attached equal importance to them. These poet-critics' views of Tang and Song poetry conveyed in the literary histories they wrote for different regions constituted part of their criteria by which they praised certain poets, especially those of their native places, and criticized other ones. These literary histories thus provided a venue for the debate over Tang and Song poetry by reflecting the competition between different advocacies and regions.

A striking example of Qing literati's enthusiasm for their local literary tradition, discussed in Chapter 4, is Dantu scholars' collective efforts to document their local poetic history and trends. The biographies of some major Dantu poets in the Dantu gazetteer paid great attention to the evolution of the poetic trends in Dantu County, the developments of the literary styles of Dantu poets, the interactions among them, and their competition with Zhejiang poets, in addition to archiving their writing careers and achievements as local Chinese gazetteers usually did. Although Dantu poets generally were not called a school of poetry by their contemporaries, themselves, or modern scholars, they were described as a group who collectively pursued the correct path of poetry by changing their local trend of imitating Song poetry to modeling their poetry on Tang poets. Instead of only recording Dantu poets as separate individuals, their biographies draw a full picture of the poetry and poetic network of the county from the Ming-Qing transition to the Jiaqing reign.

Another new area of knowledge I bring to the investigation of the debate over Tang and Song poetry is the literary production of women writers in the Qing. Maureen Robertson points out that "women's literary culture was [...] capable of giving rise to the concept of a tradition of women writing" during late imperial China.² Women negotiated with "the gendered literary traditions they wr[o]te within."³ She and other literary scholars, such as Kang-I Sun Chang and Ellen Widmer, have investigated women's poetry and writing of other genres "as negotiation and intervention in the dominant literary tradition."⁴ Robertson and Widmer both label women's

² Robertson, "Voicing the Feminine," 64.

³ Robertson, "Voicing the Feminine," 64, 65n4.

⁴ Fong, introduction to *The Inner Quarters and Beyond*, 3.

literature in late imperial China as “minor literature,” in contrast to men’s “major literature.”⁵ In brief, scholars have reestablished a gendered literary tradition that was constructed by women writers’ efforts to inherit and innovate the legacy of the time-honoured literary tradition dominated by men. However, they have not paid sufficient attention to the interrelation and integration between these two traditions. As Chapter 5 shows, during the High Qing era, Jiangnan literati, both male and female, attempted to construct a tradition of women’s writing by producing different versions of women’s literary history in paratexts contributed to collections and anthologies of women’s poetry. In some of these versions, the authors included male masters as women poets’ forerunners and models. In other paratexts, male and female writers also listed Jiangnan women poets in the poetic traditions of their families and native places, as peers of their male family members and townsmen. The approaches and criteria employed in the debate of Tang and Song poetry were also used in these literati’s accounts of literary traditions of elite families, regions, and the Qing Empire. Jiangnan women poets were thus seen as inheritors of a poetic tradition that originated from the *Shijing*, which emphasized expression of *xingqing* and demonstration of *xingling*. In short, women poets were acknowledged as members of the traditions in local regions across the empire. Like their male counterparts, some women poets expressed their desire to continue the poetic orthodoxy represented by Tang poetry and were

⁵ See Robertson, “Literary Authorship by Late Imperial Governing-Class Chinese Women and the Emergence of a ‘Minor Literature’,” in *The Inner Quarters and Beyond*, 375-86; Widmer, “*The Inner Quarters and Beyond: Women Writers from Ming through Qing* and Its Deliberations on a ‘Minor Literature’,” in *The Inner Quarters and Beyond*, 387-90. The concept of “minor literature” was developed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari who interpreted writers including Franz Kafka as marginalized, subordinate minorities and their use of a major language as a way to write and construct their own consciousness and concerns within it. See Deleuze and Guattari, “What Is a Minor Literature?” in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*.

considered followers of Tang poets. In High Qing Jiangnan, women's poetic tradition constituted part of the orthodox tradition of classical Chinese poetry, intertwining with familial and regional traditions. The texts on women's poetry provided a new stage for the debate over Tang and Song poetry, and through a discussion of women's poetry made women's practices and voices relevant to this male-dominated debate.

As Guo Shaoyu remarked, the Qing dynasty was a prosperous period of literary production and a culmination of literary criticism in imperial China.⁶ It was also the period during which schools of poetry, local gazetteers, and women's literary culture thrived. The debate over Tang and Song poetry, as part of Qing literary criticism and poetics, was carried beyond conventional genres and areas of literary criticism to be inscribed in new textual media such as local gazetteers and individual collections and anthologies of women's poetry. Such discursive terrain embodied the enthusiasm, erudition, and productivity of a vast number of poets, both male and female, and their families and native places, especially in the Jiangnan region.

As I have shown, the participants in the debate over Tang and Song dynasty often flourished as members of different types of literati groups: elite families, schools of poetry, regions across the empire, and the large critical groups advocating poetry of certain dynasties. Generally, these groups often formed without regulations, for example, requirements for physical gatherings. Instead, the circulation of different genres of texts spread literary ideas and ideals, connected literary friends of kindred spirit, and furthered their mutual understanding and appreciation. At the same time, the spread of literary views led to the disagreements and

⁶ Guo Shaoyu, "Xulun" 緒論, in *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi*, 5-6.

controversies among different literary groups. That is to say, Qing literati frequently identified models, companions, and opponents through texts, and their models and companions were often from afar among contemporary strangers and predecessors of previous generations, even previous dynasties, rather than among colleagues and acquaintances. For example, Shen Deqian, on the one hand, disputed with Li E when they worked together as joint compilers of a local gazetteer; on the other hand, he learned from and admired the early Qing poet Wang Shizhen, while Wang highly praised Shen's poems but never met Shen (Chapter 2). Many men of letters developed such a sense of camaraderie.

In sum, the debate on Tang and Song poetry, especially in High Qing iterations, reconfirmed a classical poetic orthodoxy with exemplary poets and poems, with whom they resonated and were culturally connected. This tradition formed an “imagined poetic community” – to modify Benedict Anderson's famous term, in the cultural landscape of imperial China. These poet-critics embodied Chinese literati's feelings of belonging and a sense of pride, agency, and responsibility to assess and transmit the inherited poetic legacy. This poetic community transcended the limitations of region, time, and gender and reached unparalleled variety and temporal and spatial scales, especially during the High Qing era, and enabled the debate and tradition to continue and flourish through the history of classical Chinese poetry even to the present.

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