Hsiang Lectures on Chinese Poetry

Centre for East Asian Research
McGill University

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Volume 5

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Endowed by

Professor Paul Stanislaus Hsiang (1915-2000)

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Editor's Note

The first lecture following those published in Volume 4 of the *Hsiang Lectures on Chinese Poetry* (2008) was given by Red Pine (Bill Porter), renowned translator of classical Chinese poetry, on March 16, 2007. His lively talk was co-sponsored by the Centre Zen Enpuku-ji as part of its biennial Zen Poetry Festival. To the delight of the audience, Red Pine recited some of his translations of poems by recluses and monks from the Tang to the late Ming, accompanied by slides he took of hermits and their abodes on Zhongnan Mountain south of present-day Xian during a research trip studying contemporary eremitism in China.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the three lectures in the present volume, which were delivered by Professor Wilt Idema on October 17, 2007, Professor Martin Kern on March 28, 2008, and Professor Ronald Egan on October 26, 2008. All three demonstrate exciting new trends in the diverse scholarship in the field of classical Chinese poetry. In "Poetry, Gender, and Ethnicity: Manchu and Mongol Women Poets in Beijing (1775-1875)," Prof. Idema introduces us to the classical verse written by women poets of Manchu or Mongolian origin living in the capital from the late eighteenth to the late nineteenth century, who received education at home in the Han Chinese literary tradition. Little attention has been paid by Western scholars to writing women of different ethnicities in imperial China. Prof. Idema's superb translations of their poetry allow us to see vividly the daily experiences, thoughts, and feelings of these women. By careful analysis and contextualization of the recently excavated manuscripts on the *Shijing* (Classic of Poetry) written on bamboo and silk, such as the *Kongzi shilun* (Confucius Discusses *Poetry*), in his lecture "Lost in Tradition: The *Classic of Poetry* We Did Not Know" Prof. Kern sheds fascinating new light on pre-imperial uses of the "Airs of the State" section of the *Shijing*. He breaks the "spell" of the Han and post-Han author-centered, Confucian didactic hermeneutics of the *Shijing* to show us how pre-imperial and some early imperial writers were reading the sensual language and content of these songs quite differently, and enjoying them. In Prof. Egan's lecture, "Why Didn't Zhao Mingcheng Send Letters to His Wife, Li Qingzhao, When He Was Away?", thoughtful, meticulous scholarship is brought to support the critique of the predominant trend in recent Chinese scholarship to read Li Qingzhao's song lyrics empirically and biographically. Instead, Prof. Egan argues that we should train our critical lens on the generic framework in

which Li Qingzhao was writing, which foregrounds her talents as a song lyricist.

Montreal, September 2010

Errata:
In Volume 4, the last character in Professor Tian Xiaofei's Chinese name was given incorrectly. Her name in Chinese is 田曉菲.

Poetry, Gender, and Ethnicity: Manchu and Mongol Women Poets in Beijing (1775-1875)

Wilt L. Idema
Harvard University

Two prominent tendencies in Western sinological scholarship of the last two decades have been the rediscovery of the Manchus as a distinct ethnic group throughout the Qing dynasty, and the rediscovery of the rich tradition of women's literature, especially poetry, of the Ming and Qing dynasties. In Manchu studies one finds little information on Manchu women, apparently for lack of usable source materials. In studies of women's literature, a few Manchu authors, such as Wanyan Yun Zhu 完顏惲珠 (1771-1833) and Gu Taiqing 顧太清 (1799-1877), are discussed at length, but primarily as individuals, and with little stress on their identity as Manchu writers. This paper hopes to make a small contribution to both fields, by looking at the works of lesser-known Manchu (and Mongol) women poets who were mainly based in Beijing and wrote their poems roughly in the century of 1775 to 1875.

In my earlier work I have rarely ventured into the nineteenth century, and I lack every qualification to call myself a Manchu scholar. For my information on Manchu intellectual, institutional, cultural and social history I rely on the publications of such scholars as Pamela Crossley, Evelyn Rawski, and Mark Elliott. The most comprehensive work on Manchu social history to date during the Qing dynasty is Mark Elliott's *The Manchu Way* of 2001. This fine monograph contains a short chapter on Manchu women, deploring the fact that we know little about them beyond the peculiarities of their hairstyle and dress, and the fact that they did not bind their feet (but imitated the gait of Chinese women with special shoes), while suggesting that they may have had more freedom of movement (in some respects) than Han-Chinese women.[1] Some scholars have added to this meager knowledge in recent years. Xun Liu for instance has written on the interest of Manchu women in internal alchemy teachings and their relations with monks of the White Cloud Observatory (Baiyunguan 白雲觀), the major Quanzhen 全真

monastic establishment in Beijing, in the second half of the nineteenth century.[2]

I do confess to dabbling from time to time in Chinese women's literature of the imperial period. This is a burgeoning field. Scholars who incorporate the second half of the Qing dynasty in their studies cannot avoid the towering figures of Wanyan Yun Zhu and Gu Taiqing. Wanyan Yun Zhu was of Han-Chinese descent, but married into a prominent Manchu family. She is best known for her *Correct Beginnings: Women's Poetry of Our August Dynasty* (*Guochao guixiu zhengshi ji* 國朝閨秀正始集), first printed in 1831, a comprehensive anthology of Qing dynasty *shi* 詩 poetry by women. The anthology includes hundreds of authors, each represented with a handful of poems, and each author is provided with a short biography. The anthology is not only characterized by its comprehensiveness, but also by its insistence on moral standards, as it aims to exemplify the impact of the virtuous rule of the Qing emperors.[3] Wanyan Yun Zhu was greatly supported in her efforts by her son Wanyan Linqing 麟慶 (1791-1846), a high Manchu official,[4] and her granddaughters, who continued her compilation project following her death. Her compilation project involved considerable correspondence with contacts all over China and made her the center of an extensive empire-wide female network.

If Wanyan Yun Zhu's background is clear, that of Gu Taiqing continues to be a matter of speculation and controversy.[5] It is clear, however, that she grew up away from Beijing, in the Jiangnan area, and her many female friends in her later life continued to be from that part in China, even when she had settled in Beijing as a concubine of the Manchu prince Yihui 奕繪 (1799-1838).[6] Following the death of his main wife, she played that part, but upon the death of her husband, she and her children were unceremoniously kicked out of the house. Romantic rumor linked her departure from the family palace to an affair she allegedly conducted with the famous southern and Han-Chinese poet and statecraft thinker Gong Zizhen 龔自珍 (1792-1841).[7] Gu Taiqing's situation would improve later in life when one of her sons became her husband's heir. Gu Taiqing left a considerable body of *shi* 詩 poetry,[8] but her fame derives from her many *ci* 詞 lyrics, and ever since her lifetime she has enjoyed a reputation as one of the finest, if not the finest female lyricist of the Qing.[9] In recent years her authorship of a twenty-chapter sequel to *Dream of the Red Chamber*, entitled *Dream of the Red Chamber Shadow* (*Honglou meng ying* 紅樓夢影), has also been established.[10] Even more recently, she has been identified as the author of two short plays, which she most likely wrote in the years following her husband's death.[11]

Different as Wanyan Yun Zhu and Gu Taiqing may have been in their life and work, they are quite different from the Beijing Manchu women poets

I will discuss below, both in the nature of their preserved oeuvre and in their literary networks. Each of these Beijing women poets left a much more modest oeuvre, which almost completely consists of *shi* poetry. They would appear to have had a much more restricted social network, one that was almost exclusively limited to direct family and at most a few other banner-women. The latter should not come as a surprise as bannermen and Han-Chinese usually lived segregated lives. While I cannot claim to have made an exhaustive survey of Manchu women poets and their works,[12] I would venture the suggestion that these characteristics may have been much more typical, and that to the extent that one would want to discuss both Wanyan Yun Zhu and Gu Taiqing as Manchu poets, one would have to be aware how atypical they well may be as such.[13]

Authors and Collections

The earliest known Manchu woman poet to leave behind a collection of poetry was a younger sister of the famous early Qing poet Nalan Singde 納蘭性德 (1655-1685). She left a collection of 120 *shi* poems, almost all quatrains, entitled *Drafts of Poems Done after Embroidery* (*Xiuyu shigao* 繡餘詩稿).[14] Those modern critics who mention her poetry usually illustrate the nature of her poetry by quoting the following quatrain:

The Eagle	鷹
Fierce winds that chill you to the bone: release the autumn eagle!	勁風凜凜縱秋鷹
Pupils of gold and claws of jade, it roams the skies at will.	玉爪金眸正橫行
When grass starts wilting on the plain its eyes are once as sharp—	原草初凋眼更疾
Where it descends in one fell swoop it terrifies all birds.[15]	飛來一擊鳥皆驚

The poem is praised for giving expression to the vigorous and fierce nature of the Manchus.[16] Within her collection, however, this poem is somewhat of an exception. Much more typical are the descriptions of the cold and bleak winter landscapes of Northern China, such as the following:

Freezing Sparrows	凍雀
Madly they dash across the empty courtyard,	空庭飛太急
Unable to find peace on swaying branches.	枝動未能安
Weak as they are, they fear the blustering wind;	力小衝風怯

Afraid of snow and frost they twitter softly.	聲低畏雪寒
Without a mate they follow painted beams,	伴難尋畫棟
For love of warmth they hug the balustrade.	暖愛傍雕欄
Just wait until the springtime sun returns	好待春光轉
And you can test your wings amidst the flowers![17]	花間試羽翰

The family in which Nalan Xingde and his sister grew up was highly exceptional in the mid-seventeenth century Manchu Beijing for its mastery of the Chinese cultural tradition. *Drafts of Poems Done after Embroidery* was published with a preface by Yongshou 永壽, a nephew of the author, whose widow Sibo 思柏 also would publish a small collection of poems in 1738 as *Drafts of Poems Preserved Together* (*Hecun shichao* 合存詩鈔).[18]

For more Manchu women writers leaving not just a few poems but a collection of poetry, however, we have to wait for the second part of the eighteenth century and beyond. The earliest woman poet I want to introduce in somewhat greater detail is Lady Tongjia 佟佳 (1737-1810?), who spent all her life in Beijing.[19] Following the death in 1770 of her much lamented husband Rusong 如松, a Manchu court official of the imperial family, whose second wife she was, she saw to the education of her son Chunying 淳穎. Her son not only had an official career, but also was raised in 1778 to the eminent rank of Prince Rui 睿, when the Qianlong emperor reversed the judgment on Dorgon (1612-1650).[20] Chunying would become one of the major statesmen at the court of the Jiaqing emperor, and one of her grandsons would be a powerful official at the court of the Daoguang emperor. Lady Tongjia left not just one collection, but published a number of them. Her *Preserved Drafts of Crow-like Attachment* (*Wusi cuncao* 烏私存草; preface dated 1776) collected her poems lamenting her late parents.[21] Her *Tearful Drafts from besides the Coffin* (*Suiwei leicao* 繐帷淚草) brought together 170 quatrains lamenting her late husband.[22] She published a first choice of her general poems as *Collective Selection from the Asking about Poetry Loft* (*Wenshilou hexuan* 問詩樓合選) in 1792, and included in this anthology also a handful of poems of each of her household teachers, who all were from Jiangnan.[23] Eventually her general poems were collected in *Elegant Exercises at the Empty Window* (*Xuchuang yake* 虛窗雅課), a two-volume collection carrying a preface dated to 1805.[24] As the matriarch of a newly established princely family she also composed *Family Instructions from the Hall for Treasuring Goodness* (*Baoshantang jiaxun* 寶善堂家訓), which was printed in 1800, and contained an extensive chapter on the instruction of girls.[25]

My next two poets belong to a later generation and a less exalted stratum of Manchu society. Wanyan Jinchi 完顏金墀 (ca. 1770-ca. 1840) claimed descend from the Wanyan family that had been the imperial family during the

Jin dynasty (1115-1238).[26] She was married to a member of the Imperial Guard, and would appear to have led an uneventful life in Beijing. Both a son and a grandson rose to the rank of prefect. Her youngest daughter married a Mongol prince in Kulun (or Kuren; Urga, now Ulan Bator), who, following the death of his father, was called to the capital and appointed as a member of the Imperial Guard, whereupon she returned with her husband to Beijing. We have Wanyan Jinchi's poems, entitled *Poetry Collection of the Pavilion of Green Rue* (*Lüyunxian shiji* 綠芸軒詩集), because they were printed in 1873 by her Mongol granddaughter Naxunlanbao 那遜蘭保 (1824-1873), who also provided a preface.[27]

The Person of the Way who Takes Refuge in the Truth (Guizhen daoren 歸真道人; ca. 1770-ca. 1855) was born in a family of Chinese bannermen. She married a low-ranking Manchu official, who died five years into their marriage, after which she made a living as a teacher. [28] She too would appear to have led an otherwise uneventful life in Beijing, where she enjoyed the friendship and patronage of Manchu ladies, such as Bingyue 冰月, the Lady of the Cold Study (Lengzhai furen 冷齋夫人).[29] Guizhen daoren's collection, *Poems of the Hall of Ice and Snow* (*Bingxue tang shi* 冰雪堂詩) probably was printed at some time during the final decades of her life. It comes with an 1834 postface by a prince of the second rank, and a preface by her disciple Yuhua 毓華 of 1840. In a poem on the occasion of Guizhen daoren's eightieth birthday Naxunlanbao too claims her as her teacher. I include Guizhen daoren in this selection because of her marriage to a Manchu husband, and her constant contacts with Manchu women writers.

Our fourth woman poet, Baibao Youlan 百保友蘭 (ca. 1800-1861), also hailed from Beijing, but she spent most of her adult life away from the capital. As a young widow she accompanied her father-in-law Guiliang 桂良 (1785-1862), who in his middle years occupied a long string of high provincial posts throughout China.[30] Starting from the mid-1840s, however, she lived on her own in Beijing with her son, in modest circumstances. As of 1856 she accompanied her son to his official postings in the provinces, and she died in 1861 in Hangzhou, when that city was overrun by the troops of the Taiping Tianguo 太平天國 movement. Her poems had been published by her family in 1857, as *Collected Poems of Cold Red Studio* (*Lenghongxian shiji* 冷紅軒詩集),[31] and a selection from that collection, using the same title, was put out by Naxunlanbao in 1873.[32] Naxunlanbao also contributed a preface to this edition. Naxunlanbao's edition was later reissued in 1882 by Baibao Youlan's only surviving younger brother.[33]

The youngest woman poet in this selection is Naxunlanbao herself, whose *Preserved Poems of the Hall of Fragrant Rue* (*Yunxiangguan yishi* 芸香館遺詩) was printed in 1874 by her son Shengyu 盛昱 (1850-1900).[34] Naxunlanbao was of Mongolian extraction actually—her father's family

claimed to descend from Chinghis Khan but had intermarried with Manchu families for generations—and she had spent her infant years in Kulun, present-day Ulan Bator. But she had arrived in Beijing at the tender age of four, and there she was raised by her Manchu grandmother. She would spend all of her life in Beijing, where her husband, a member of the imperial family, pursued a career at court.[35] Naxunlanbao was personally acquainted with all other female poets in this section, with the exception of Lady Tongjia, who may well have died before her birth, but she was related to the latter as one of her father's sisters married one of Lady Tongjia's great-grandsons.[36]

The above selection of Manchu women poets reflects to a certain degree the availability of texts at Harvard University a number of years ago, when I first became interested in Manchu women poets. The Harvard-Yenching Library has important holdings of literary collections by women, which now are easily available in the McGill-Harvard-Yenching Ming-Qing Women's Writings Digitization Project,[37] and some of the collections listed above may be found in that database. The staff of the Harvard-Yenching Library has been very helpful in acquiring other collections of Manchu women poets from National Library of China these last few years, and now holds the collections of fourteen such writers. Despite the originally rather arbitrary nature of the selection of authors to be discussed, the selected authors very well represent the variety within the category of Beijing Manchu women poets.

Modern scholarship on these Manchu women writers is practically non-existent, apart from short paragraphs in a few survey articles.[38] The only exception here is Naxunlanbao, because of her Mongolian connection.[39] She has repeatedly been hailed as "the Mongolian Li Qingzhao," which is at least somewhat ironic as she never wrote lyrics. Naxunlanbao is also the only writer in my sample who had her work reprinted in the twentieth century, and not once, but twice—in a lithographic edition in 1928,[40] and in a modern typeset and annotated edition in 1991.[41]

Poetry

The collections of these five women consist primarily of *shi* poems. In the collection of Guizhen daoren a very small number of *ci* lyrics is inter-spersed with the *shi* poems, and in the case of Baibao Youlan's collection, the collection proper is followed by a handful of *ci* lyrics. All five women write in a very simple and straightforward style, avoiding allusions and other displays of erudite scholarship. As a rule the poetry collections of these women are chronologically arranged, and one is therefore tempted to read these collections as diaries/autobiographies. As such they reveal all kinds of information about their daily life and their feelings. The prefaces to these collections also are rich in biographical and autobiographical materials.

However, it should immediately be stressed that all of these collections are extremely restrictive in their selection of poetic topics, and one certainly will not find a full and rounded-out view of their daily life. As can only be expected, one finds a large quantity of rather conventional observations of the seasons, based on the shifting appearance of their gardens. The major yearly festivals will be described, as well as the occasional trips to temples, including those in the Western Hills.

However, beyond that, each of these collections has its own characteristics, reflecting the personality of the individual authors. In the collections of Lady Tongjia one is struck by the large number of poems lamenting the death of relatives. Her late husband is lamented in a set of 170 quatrains, selected from an even larger number. As an example of this type of poetry I will quote one quatrain lamenting her husband and one regulated poem lamenting her father. In a quatrain written in memory of her husband, she laments her inability to promptly follow him in death:

"They share a grave who shared a blanket" is the ancient maxim,	同穴同衾古有箴
And all my life I never wanted to betray my lessons.	平生肯負讀書心
But even though I want to die, I lack a proper method,	那知欲死無良策
And cannot match the spontaneity of simple folks.[42]	輸與庸愚鹵莽忱

The following eight-line poem was written in memory of her father:

Eight Poems Lamenting My Father, No. 2	哭父詩八首之二
Your unlimited sincere grace was as capacious as the ocean,	罔極深恩似海涵
Teaching me all kinds of books, you loved me more than a son.	廣教書史愛逾男
I've been unable to fully please you while you were still alive,	承歡未及生前盡
Weeping blood I vainly must carry this with me after your death.	泣血徒當歿後含
Your portrait can be delineated with the aid of powder and ink,	貌得形容憑粉墨
We'll sacrifice to you in your shrine as if you banter and smile.	祭如言笑在芝龕
Summoning your soul from the road of darkness,	招魂冥路悲無限

my sorrow is boundless,
So I collapse for grief and revive again—twice, thrice each day.[43] 痛絕還甦日再三

Lady Tongjia also has left us an exceptionally long autobiographical poem, recounting the vicissitudes in her life—her youth, her marriage, her widowhood, and the reinstatement of her son as the heir of Dorgon.[44] It is only later in life that Lady Tongjia occasionally strikes a lighter note. At the very end of her collection we even find a little satire in which official society is compared to a monkey show:

Monkey Show 猢猻戲

Their crafty nature left ravine and mountain, 狡性辭山谷
And, barely tamed, enters the marketplace. 初調入市游
They learned from man his arrogant behavior, 向人學踞傲
With feigned expression they play cute and meek 假面作嬌柔
Your coins and fruits: grasped by unbridled greed, 錢果姿貪取
In no way shamed by dress of cap and gown.[45] 衣冠不自羞
Because they proudly show their cunning tricks, 祗緣誇巧技
The watching public fills the city streets.[46] 相看滿街頭

Guizhen daoren like Lady Tongjia was widowed at an early age, and soon thereafter lost both her children and her parents, but the number of laments in her collection is limited, and while Lady Tongjia is filled with unmitigated gloom in such works, Guizhen daoren displays a somewhat lighter tone. An example is the following poem:

Lamenting My Dog 悼犬

You, Brown-ears, had retired from night-guard duty, 黃耳辭司夜
And only rarely did we hear you bark. 狺聲聽已稀
I cannot keep myself from cold and hunger; 飢寒吾不免
Frozen and starved you are the first to go. 凍餒汝先歸
I have no means to have you nicely buried, 弊盡慚無理
But you will not refuse to take a letter. 家書附莫違
When you will meet your master down below, 冥中如遇主
Please tell him that the tears still soak my gown.[47] 爲報淚霑衣

The long sets in Guizhen daoren's collection, such as her thirty quatrains on "Angling in Autumn on the Long River" 依韻題長河秋釣[48] and her thirty regulated poems entitled "On Chrysanthemums" 咏菊三十首[49] seems to be designed to dazzle by their virtuosity as each poem in these two sets uses a different rhyme, but such virtuosity is not done justice by translations that ignore rhyme. Her collection also includes a large number of occasional poems written for her female patrons (and to a far lesser extent her male patrons). I will quote one of the least sycophantic of these poems, one addressed to her female patron, the Master of Quiet Joy (Jingyi zhuren 靜怡主人),[50] on receiving a copy of her printed works:

Returning from a Visit to the Lady My Mother-in-law I Learned that the Master of Quiet Joy Had Sent Me a Copy of Her Newly Printed Poetry Collection and also Had Gifted Me with a Potted Plum; by Lamplight I Improvised the Following Lines	省太夫人回聞靜怡以新刊詩稿見遺兼惠盆梅燈下口占
Because I visited my husband's mother,	爲省高堂去
I learned returning that I had some mail:	歸聞驛使來
The printed version of your White-Snow verse,	已刊白雪句
Together with a plum that blooms in winter.	兼寄歲寒梅
I love the flowers for their frozen splendor,	賞花憐冷艷
Admire the lofty talent in your writings.	展卷羨仙才
To my great fortune I am joined tonight	小軒今夜月
Here in my little study by the moon.[51]	何幸共徘徊

Such social poems are basically absent in the collections of Lady Tongjia and Wanyan Jinchi.

Wanyan Jinchi wrote neither large sets nor long poems. Most her work consists of single quatrains and regulated poems. Autumn is by far the most common topic in her work, and the very first poem in her collection combines the topics of poetry and fall:

Idly Chanting on an Autumn Day	秋日閑吟
A little courtyard with its chilly mosses—	小院苔痕冷
The double gate stays locked at daytime too.	重門晝亦關
While incense burns, I copy ancient models;	焚香臨古帖
As I pour wine, I think of autumn hills.	把酒憶秋山
No draught disturbs the brazier's rising smoke;	風靜爐烟穩
The shadows idle of the empty garden's trees.	庭空樹影閑

I watch the falling leaves outside the window, 隔窗看落葉
Blown hither and blown thither by the breeze.[52] 吹去復吹還

Actually her most ambitious work is a set of four regulated poems written on the occasion of the departure of her youngest daughter for Kulun.[53] Rather than quoting that set, I will present a poem she must have written some time later, entitled "Releasing Butterflies" 放蝶:

This raising butterflies resembles raising daughters: 養蝶如養女
Once you have raised them, you can't keep them any longer. 養成難久留
A person's heart may still be filled with love, 人心終戀戀
But butterflies already long for distant parts. 蝶意自悠悠
You want to set them free, but cannot give them up; 欲放難割愛
If you don't set them free, they may not find a partner. 不放慮無儔
So I'll allow you now to find your way— 任爾自來去
I'll hang the pearly curtain on its hook. 珠簾且上鉤
When first they fly, they still stay close to home, 初飛猶傍欄
When next they fly, they cross the garden wall. 再飛過墻頭
I'm not concerned about the butterflies' thin dress, 不慮蝶衣薄
I am concerned about the winds and rains of fall. 只慮風雨秋
If you succeed in finding a fit partner, 良匹如可得
Please come together, entering my room. 同來入我樓
The dreams tonight here in my flower cell 花房今夜夢
Will be more somber than green window-gauze.[54] 應比綠窗幽

Once her eldest son had grown up, Wanyan Jinchi loved to write matching poems to his compositions (there are no poems addressed to her husband or exchanged with him, which might suggest that he either did not write poetry or had died by that time).

Like the three preceding women, Naxunlanbao spent all her life in Beijing. She, however, was spared the fate of early widowhood. In her collection too we find many poems on the changing seasons, but many of these have a certain lightness of tone that is lacking in the poems discussed above. A single example, one from a set of three poems on "A Spring Day" 春日三首之一, in which one might even detect a light self-irony, may suffice:

Suddenly warmer, the weather tells the rain to stop its cold,	乍暖天教雨住涼
Without a worry, I now notice that the days grow longer.	閑來只覺晝偏長
Bees, loving the heavy dew, are loath to return to the hive,	蜂憐露重遲歸戶
Swallows, using the slight breeze, skim low across the wall.	燕趁風微低度墻
Whenever I paint a picture, I splatter my gown with ink,	作畫每教衣染墨
When I pluck a flower, at least my sleeves stay fragrant.	折花贏得袖余香
All spring long, carefully considered, I've nothing to do:	一春細較混無事
Let me busy myself by finding a theme and writing verse.[55]	且作尋題覓句忙

Naxunlanbao's occasional poems include poems addressed to a devoted female servant and her elder sister-in-law, in which she declares herself to be a Manchu, but her collection also includes a long poem of farewell to her brother when he is posted to Kulun, in which she reflects on their Mongol heritage. Another remarkable feature of her collection is two long poems on poetry collections by women.

The only woman in this selection who spent many years away from Beijing was Baibao Youlan. As she accompanied her father-in-law Guiliang on his travels through China, she described in her poems the many scenes she observed while traveling. The following poem, for instance, was written during a journey from Fujian to Yunnan:

The Scenery on Xiyang Ridge	西陽嶺即景
At break of dawn we start on our long march:	清曉事長徵
I carefully observe the mountain shapes.	山容子細評
The clouds rise up from underneath our feet,	雲從足下起
While we as humans travel through a painting.	人在畫中行
A rocky ledge connects to native bridges,	石磴連番渡
While mist and fog are spreading everywhere.	烟嵐到處橫
On both my sides the pines and firs rise tall,[56]	松杉夾輿長
As vines and creepers hang from steepest cliffs.	蘿薜掛崖生
The curving brook just turns at every bend,	澗曲隨灣轉
The strangest peaks rise right before your eyes.	峰奇劈面迎
The tricky pathway robs you of your courage,	險途多膽怯

The utmost pinnacles increase your fright.	絕頂益心驚
I lift my head and see the heavens distant,	昂首九霄迥
I gaze around and find these vistas pure.	凝眸四望清
How marvelous the beauty of these mountains—	佳哉斯嶺秀
When it is raining, and when skies are clear.[57]	宜雨更宜晴

Gender

In order to write, one first has to read. In the prefaces to some of her works, Lady Tongjia has described in some detail the female teachers from the Jiangnan region who had been hired for her education. In the family instructions she would compose late in life, when she had become the matriarch of a princely household, she devoted one chapter to the instruction of girls. Criticizing the easy way in which many families treated the segregation of the sexes, she stresses the need and the moral nature of a girl's literary education. Noting that many women preferred to read ballads and novels as soon as they had enjoyed a smattering of education, she argues that such works should not be their only reading materials. Most surprisingly perhaps, her strongest reason for insisting on a strict upbringing of girls is the chance that a girl might end up being married off to a very strict family—if the bride had not been properly prepared for such a fate, she might grow despondent or even fall ill in such a properly restrictive environment. Such a fear may perhaps be related to the "directed marriage" (*zhi hun* 指婚) system by which the Eight Banners exercised a strict control over the marriages of Bannermen daughters, which gave upper class Manchu families less control over the selection of their daughters' husbands than common Chinese families.[58]

> But the people of these times are not like this! Because a girl is not a boy, they refuse to teach her, and she does not have a clue what it means to be filial towards her father and mother, to be sincere towards her siblings, to respect her seniors, and to maintain harmony between relatives. They have never heard about such things as reciprocity, the exchange of gifts, and ritual rules. They only indulge their belly and love their jewelry, and all they care for is their make-up. [The parents] take excessive tolerance for love, to the extent that there is no norm to leaving and entering, and men and women are not separated. [The girls] treat elder and younger uncles, and elder and younger brothers the same way as their own parents, and do not avoid suspicion. In all these matters they are not cautious at all. They equally meet with distant relatives and closest friends, and they call this "open-minded"! When it comes to watching a play or listening to songs such as the recent hexagonal-drum tunes, they are allowed to listen and look with their faces publicly visible. That

> is really against all decency! When it comes to boisterous crowds, they visit temples to burn incense and have fun—that is even more ridiculous! Don't they know that such behavior is unseemly for men, so even more for girls from the inner chambers? If upon marriage their husbands' families are families that do not insist on ritual, this is all fine, but if their husbands' families insist on ritual, they either fall ill or are filled with resentment. Moreover, if at home they do not know to show filial piety towards their father and mother, then how can they after their marriage know the way of serving their parents-in-law and respecting their husband? Lack of filial piety, lack of respect, and lack of common sense all originate from this. They have not the slightest idea that the husband and master have to be served and that ritual and righteousness have to be maintained.[59]

As the above paragraph once again makes clear, an education never meant a purely literary education. By study one perfected one's behavior and one's speech, and became a model to other women. Many of the women poets established as much as a reputation for their virtue as for their poetry.[60] There can be little doubt that Lady Tongjia herself fully internalized the conventional (Chinese) conceptions of female morality of her time in their most oppressive form: when her husband fell ill, she committed *gegu* 割股 (slicing off a piece of her flesh in order to feed it to the diseased person in a broth) for his sake, but to no avail. This did not stop her from bitterly complaining as a widow about the heavy burden she had to bear in order to ensure the survival of the family:

Stirred by Emotion	有感
The occasion which most of all ruins the spirit	最是銷魂處
Is the heart as the bell rings out the fifth watch.	鐘敲午夜心
When the cock crows and the cold moon sinks,	雞鳴寒月落
The blanket is too thin to keep the late cold out.	衾薄晚涼侵
I've come to known the taste of chewing wax,	嚼蜡知滋味
When eating *tu*, I fear the "bitter chanting."[61]	茹荼畏苦吟
The many responsibilities of Rules and Norms	綱常多少事
All come down on a single woman's shoulders.[62]	巾幗一肩任

Baibao Youlan too committed the act of *gegu*, in her case for the sake of her father-in-law, this time with more success. Guiliang would survive to marry one of his daughters off to Yixin 奕訢 (1833-1898), the favorite younger brother of the Xianfeng Emperor (r. 1851-1861), and known to history as the Prince Gong 恭.[63] Thanks to Baibao Youlan's act of

self-sacrifice, Guiliang would still be around more than ten years later to negotiate the Treaty of Tianjin in 1860. It would appear that the first publication of Baibao Youlan's poetry in a very fine edition, and with prefaces by some of the leading luminaries of the day, had been planned as early as 1845 in order to celebrate her conspicuous display of virtue. Baibao Youlan's collection also contains a long poem in celebration of another act of *gegu*.[64] The widows in our sample also often express their regret at having failed in their duty towards their late husband by not following him into death.

Ethnicity

In the poems of these five female authors one only rarely finds expressions of ethnic self-awareness. It is difficult to discern any explicit Bannermen sensibility in the poetry of Wanyan Jinchi, Guizhen daoren, or Baibao Youlan, and this in the latter case despite the fact that she would eventually commit suicide when the Manchu city of Hangzhou was overrun by the Taiping Tianguo rebels in 1861. This is perhaps not surprising as feminine poetry hardly provided a model for the discussion of such issues. Moreover, most of these women were born and grew up in a period of relative political stability. However, we can find signs of ethnic self-awareness in the poems of Lady Tongjia, who lived during the decades when the Qianlong emperor emphasized the vitality and antiquity of the Manchu race, and we witness an outspoken ethnic-self-awareness in the poems and prefaces of Naxunlanbao, whose own ethnic background was complicated by her Mongolian heritage and who lost one of her closest friends during the Taiping Tianguo rebellion.

In her long autobiographical poem Lady Tongjia cannot but refer to the titles of her husband and son when they are appointed as a prince of the second rank and as a prince of the first rank, which marks these titles as specific Manchu titles. She twice in other poems proudly mentions her son's expertise in "riding and shooting/shooting on horseback" (*qishe* 騎射),[65] an expertise that was defined by the Qianlong Emperor as a quintessential characteristic of a true Manchu. She had good reason to do so, as her husband had earned his promotion in rank when the Qianlong Emperor had selected him from among his brothers as the best of a poorly performing bunch.[66] We probably may discern a concern for the survival of the dynasty in her criticism of the lack of proper etiquette in contemporary (Manchu) families, especially when it comes to the segregation of men and women.

The clearest expression of ethnic sensibility is to be found in the work of Naxunlanbao. But it is a conflicted ethnic sensibility. We have already mentioned her long poem addressed to her brother, on the occasion of his posting to Kulun, and I will now quote it in full:

My Second Elder Brother Yingjun Was Appointed to Kulun, which Is Our Old Hometown. On the Day I Saw Him Off, I Dashed Off this Poem	瀛俊二兄奉使庫倫故吾家也送行之日率成此詩
At the age of four I arrived here in the Capital,	四歲來京師
Thirty years I've been away from our hometown.	三載辭故鄉
What is the location of our hometown?	故鄉在何所
North of the passes, lost in the clouds.	塞北雲茫茫
We are descendants of Chinghis Khan,	成吉有遺譜
And Kulun has always been our fief.	庫倫余故疆
A hundred thousand who draw the bow—	彎弧十萬眾
We, "proud sons of Heaven," are strong!	天驕自古強
At night we're used to sleeping in felt tents,	夕宿便氈幕
For breakfast we'll happily have frozen milk.	朝餐甘湩漿
Fortunately, we are living in a Unified World,	幸逢大一統
Without borders between Middle and Outside.	中外無邊防
Carrying your sword, you served in the Guard,	帶刀入宿衛
And were ennobled with an inherited rank.	列爵襲冠裳
Too bad I am only inner quarter material,	自笑閨閣質
From early on I donned the current fashion.	早易時世妝
I've never dreamed of riding a saddled horse,	無夢到鞍馬
All my ambition is focused on high literature.	有意工文章
By the window I busy myself with cosmetics,	綠窗事粉黛
And at night I devote myself to my books.	紅燈勤縹緗
Floriate and Barbarian are different in style:[67]	華夷隔風氣
My old hometown is now a foreign region!	故國爲殊方
When you speak to me in that weird language,	問以啁哳語
I have to confess I completely forgot all of it!	遜謝稱全忘
Now you have received this appointment,	我兄承使命
And you will return home, covered in glory.	將歸晝錦堂
But we look upon the place as a strange land,	乃作異域視
And the whole family is filled with fear.	舉家心彷徨
But I have something I want to say to you,	我獨有一言
As I offer you this parting drink now you leave.	臨行奉離觴
The Son of Heaven rules the four Barbarians,	天子守四夷
So they may protect us against the Wastelands.[68]	原爲捍要荒
Recently, I hear, they are very docile and meek,	近聞頗柔懦
And their honest customs are better than normal.	醇俗醕其常
To my regret, I am not a man, so my desire	所愧非男兒
To go back there will never be fulfilled.	歸願無有償
I hope that you, brother, will make an extra effort	冀兄加振厲

To restore our inheritance to its former glory. 舊業須重光
Let's not cry sentimental tears like lovers 勿爲兒女泣
And vainly indulge in sadness and grief.[69] 相對徒悲傷

In this poem she proudly recalls her family's descent from Chinghis Khan, sketches the warlike nature of her forefathers, claims Kulun as a family fief, and urges her brother to continue the family tradition. No wonder this poem has often been quoted in modern articles emerging from Inner Mongolia. However, in the same poem Naxunlanbao confesses that she doesn't know the Mongolian language, follows contemporary (Beijing) fashion, and is addicted to Chinese literature. At the same time she praises the unification of "Floriate and Barbarian" by the current dynasty. One cannot escape the feeling that she was only too happy that she as a woman did not have to accompany her brother to this place where she may have been born, but which the whole family now considered a "foreign land."

As the wife of a member of the Manchu imperial family, who served at the imperial court, and the mother of Manchu sons, Naxunlanbao in other places unambiguously identifies herself with the Manchu cause. When her maid servant is chosen to accompany her elder sister-in-law to Shengjing 盛京 (modern Shenyang and the pre-conquest capital of the Manchus), she refers to that city as "our old homeland," and urges her to tell her everything about the local sights upon her return.[70] But her identification with the Banners, and more specifically with the Manchus, is perhaps most clearly displayed in the prefaces she wrote. In the preface she provided for the collection of Baibao Youlan, she not only mentions Baibao Youlan's act of *gegu*, but also describes her heroic suicide in great detail:

> In the year *bingchen* of the Xianfeng reign period (1856) [Baibao Youlan's son] Zhuangjie 莊介, then a Director in one of the Boards, was appointed as prefect of Jinhua. At that time the Cantonese rebels had already widely spread to the south and the north of the Yangzi.[71] Many urged her to stay in the Capital, but the Lady was of the opinion that as she taught her son to be loyal she should not try to avoid danger herself, and she resolutely went to his posting. In the winter of the year *xinyou* (1861), when Hangzhou was besieged for a second time,[72] Zhuangjie, then the Jin-Qu-Yan Circuit Intendant, was the acting governor, and was living with the Lady in the provincial capital. Each day the Lady urged Zhuangjie to lead his trained braves, and repeatedly he repulsed the bandits. But when the city was about to fall, the Lady offered Zhuangjie a cup of wine and ordered him to give battle in the streets and kill the bandits, and on no account to return or look back. She then herself kowtowed

> towards the north, and clutching the seal of the Provincial Administration Commissioner of the Provincial Administration Commission for Zhejiang she drowned herself in the pond in the garden behind the official mansion. Alas, the Lady may be said to have in this way achieved the full measure of human qualities! I had always known that the Lady would be capable of this![73]

She proceeds to sum up all the virtues of her late friend, stressing that by her virtues and accomplishments she has brought glory to the Banners:

> If one adds up all the bitter chastity of the Lady, she was renowned for her filial piety in her hometown for forty years, and in her final years she sacrificed herself for her country. Such loyalty and righteousness has been rare in recent times. As to her other accomplishments, whether it was the study of the *Classic* or the understanding of the *Histories*, the composition of poems or the writing of lyrics, the making of paintings or playing the zither; the game of go or needlework, there was nothing of which she was not capable and there was nothing in which she did not excel. This must mean that such a person has been given life by Heaven in order that she above all others should bring glory to us women in the Banners![74]

A comparable desire to construct a tradition of bannerwomen virtue and talent that is at least equal to, if not superior to Han-Chinese women, may be detected in Naxunlanbao's preface to the collection of her grandmother Wanyan Jinchi.[75] That preface actually begins by admitting the lack of poets among the women of the banners, and the negative attitude amongst many banner families against the practice of poetry by women, but it then proceeds by sketching the lively poetry parties at the house of her grandmother, who plastered her own house with her own poems, especially in autumn. Naxunlanbao next deplores the fact that her grandmother did not seek the instruction of Tiebao 鐵保 (1752-1824), who, according to her, was a patron of women poets in the north, equal to Yuan Mei 袁枚 (1716-1798) in the south.[76]

Tiebao was a high metropolitan official, who had a considerable reputation as a poet.[77] His wife Yingchuan 瀅川 (1754-ca. 1814), too, was an accomplished poet (as well as painter and calligrapher), and left a collection of poetry.[78] Tiebao also contributed a preface to the first poetry collection of Bingyue, yet another Manchu woman poet, one of the female patrons of Guizhen daoren. While Tiebao would appear to have had a friendly disposition towards educated women,[79] there is no evidence, however, of him

actively pursuing the role of a patron and teacher of women poets in the manner of Yuan Mei, so one wonders to what extent Naxunlanbao is here retrospectively inventing a tradition. Naxunlanbao's description of the role of Tiebao becomes even more conspicuous when contrasted to her dismissive remarks on Cai Wan 蔡琬 and Gao Jingfang 高景芳, two famous seventeenth-century Han-Chinese bannerwomen and poets.[80] While these two women are mentioned, a continuous tradition from them to the present is denied.

Naxunlanbao finally confesses in the preface to her grandmother's collection that it has always been her ambition to compile an "Anthology of Poetry by Manchu Women" (Manzhou guige shichao 滿洲閨閣詩鈔), and that she already had collected a considerable body of source materials.[81] In this preface we can observe a clear shift from the comprehensive definition of bannermen, by way of the Manchu patron and teacher Tiebao, to a far more restrictive project, the "Anthology of Poetry by Manchu Women." There can be little doubt that Naxunlanbao considered herself part of the latter category.

Naxulanbao died very soon after publishing her grandmother's poetry at the age of fifty, and the "Anthology of Poetry by Manchu Women" never appeared in print. Still, it may be instructive to spend a few more words on this unrealized project of this Mongol poet. A comparison of her project with Wanyan Yun Zhu's *Correct Beginnings* may be especially instructive. Like Naxunlanbao, Yun Zhu was not a Manchu by birth. Yun Zhu came from a well-known Han Chinese lineage, and married into a prominent Manchu family. She clearly identified herself with the project of Manchu rule, but in her case it was identification with the project of universal moral rulership, which equally included all ethnic groups throughout the empire. As a consequence, her anthology includes works from women poets, irrespective of their ethnic classification: Manchu and Mongol women poets are interspersed with Han-Chinese women poets, and the collection also features poems by fisher women from the South coast, and women from Hami and Korea. Naxunlanbao's project is far more restrictive as it wanted to limit itself to Manchu women. It may have been designed as simple corrective to *Correct Beginnings* in giving greater prominence to Manchu women poets, but probably its ambition was larger: to prove that Manchu women poets were, if not as numerous, at least as productive and as talented as Han-Chinese women poets. Perhaps the ambition went even further than that: she may have wanted to prove that Manchu women poets were better poets than Han-Chinese women. One cannot help but see Wanyan Yun Zhu's *Correct Beginnings* as a reflection of the Manchu self-confidence of the late Qianlong and Jiaqing decades, which allowed them to be all-inclusive, and Naxulanbao's project as a product of the middle of the nineteenth century,

when Manchu self-confidence had been severely shaken, and many Manchu felt a need to reassert Manchu leadership.

Conclusion

Wanyan Yun Zhu and Gu Taiqing are not the only Manchu women poets of the middle period of the Qing dynasty. Many Manchu women practiced poetry, but they mostly interacted with other Manchu women writers, and limited themselves to the genre of *shi*. Those who left collections of poetry as a rule belonged to the princely and bureaucratic elite of Manchu society; their fathers, husbands, and sons served the emperor at court and in the provinces. The circumstances of their lives were subject to great fluctuations, depending upon matters such as adoption, widowhood, imperial grace, and successful sons, but none ever seems to have been reduced to extreme circumstances—in this world, the worst fate that could befall a woman was a lack of servants, forcing her to do all the heavy household chores in person.

Their poetry, though restricted in scope, was highly competent, and reflected their individual experiences and personalities. Within their own world, their work was highly appreciated, and their collections often were printed with endorsements of the highest political and cultural authorities of their day. As educated women these Manchu writers embodied the values of culture and morality they had learned from their Chinese readings, not only in their writings, but also in their daily life, to the extent that some of them committed *gegu*. While one might want to interpret this as a sign of sinification, we also find expressions of ethnic self-awareness, both in their poetry and prose. The most outspoken expression of Manchu self-awareness we find is the writings of Naxunlanbao (Mongolian by birth but Manchu by marriage), who envisioned the compilation of an "Anthology of Poetry by Manchu Women."

Endnotes

1. Mark C. Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 246-55. For Chinese scholarship on Manchu women and their lifestyle, see Ding Yizhuang 定宜庄, *Manzu di funü shenghuo yu hunyin zhidu yanjiu* 满族的妇女生活与婚姻制度研究 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999), and Zhou Hong 周虹, *Manzu funü shenghuo yu minsu wenhua yanjiu* 满族妇女生活与民俗文化研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2005). At least two

Manchu women poets (Yingchuan 瑩川 and Mengyue 夢月) were avid equestrians.

2. Xun Liu, "Visualizing Perfection: Daoist Paintings of Our Lady, Court Patronage, and Elite Female Piety in the Late Qing," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 64.1 (2004): 57-115.
3. Susan Mann, "Wanyan Yunzhu and 'Correct Beginnings'," in *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 94-117. Also pp. 214-18, and *passim*. Also see Ellen Widmer, *The Beauty and the Book: Women and Fiction in Nineteenth-Century China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), pp. 127-33; and the entry on Yun Zhu in Clara Wing-chung Ho, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women, The Qing Period, 1644-1911* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), pp. 281-85. For a detailed study of Wanyan Yunzhu's program in compiling her anthology, see Xiaorong Li, "Gender and Textual Politics during the Qing Dynasty: The Case of the *Zhengshi ji*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 69.1 (2009): 75-107.
4. Wanyan Linqing has his own entry in Arthur W. Hummel, ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1911)* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1943-44) (hereafter ECCP), pp. 506-07.
5. Hummel, ECCP, pp. 386-87. Also see the entry in Ho, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 52-55. The dominant current understanding is that Gu Taiqing was a granddaughter of Ochang 鄂昌 (d. 1755), a nephew of the high Manchu official Ortai 鄂爾泰 (1680-1745), who was posthumously stripped of all his titles in 1755. On that occasion Ochang was allowed to commit suicide (Hummel, ECCP, pp. 601-603). This would make her a Manchu of the Silin gioro clan. Gu Taiqing's father survived as a private secretary, and Gu Taiqing grew up mainly in the Jiangnan region. When Yihui married her as a concubine she was registered as a daughter of a soldier surnamed Gu, because Yihui, as a member of the imperial family, was not allowed to marry a member of a "criminal family." See Lu Xingji 卢兴基, *Gu Taiqing ci xinshi jiping* 顾太清词新释辑评 (Beijing Zhongguo shudian, 2005), "Qianyan" 前言, p. 2. Also see Chen Shuiyun 陳水雲, "Gu Chun yanjiu de shiji huigu" 顧春研究的世紀回顧, *Manzu yanjiu* 2 (2005): 104-111. This article provides a survey of the printing history of Gu Chun's poetry, of the various accounts of her life, of the changing evaluation of her lyrics, and of the study of her novel *Hongloumeng ying* 紅樓夢影.

6. See "Gu Taiqing Yihui shehui jiaowang zhuyao renwu biao" 顧太清奕繪社會交往主要人物表, in *Gu Taiqing Yihui shi ci heji*, ed. Zhang Zhang 張璋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1998), pp. 788-89.
7. For a highly romanticized account of that alleged affair, see Henry McAleavy, *A Dream of Tartary: The Origins and Misfortunes of Henry P'u Yi* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1963), pp. 13-28.
8. A small number of her poems are already included by Wanyan Yun Zhu in her *Zhengshi ji*, 20.1a-2a.
9. For recent editions of her works, see Zhang Zhang, *Gu Taiqing Yihui shi ci heji*; and Lu Xingji, *Gu Taiqing ci xinshi jiping*. For recent evaluations of her work, see Deng Hongmei 邓红梅, *Nüxing ci shi* 女性词史 (Jinan: Shandong jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000), pp. 452-88; Huang Yanli 黄嫣梨, *Qingdai si da nüciren* 清代四大女词人 (Shanghai: Hanyu dacidian chubanshe, 2002), pp. 22-66. For selections of her works in English translation see Kang-I Sun Chang and Haun Saussy, eds., *Women Writers of Traditional China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 589-600; and Wilt Idema and Beata Grant, *The Red Brush: Writing Women of Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), pp. 630-52.
10. On Gu Taiqing as a novelist, see Ellen Widmer, *The Beauty and the Book*, pp. 181-216. For a modern edition of *Honglou meng ying*, see Yuncha waishi 云槎外史, *Honglou meng ying* (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1988).
11. Huang Shizhong 黄仕忠, "Gu Taiqing de xiqu chuangzuo yu qi zaonian jingli" 顧太清的戲曲創作與其早年經歷, *Wenxue yichan* 6 (2006): 88-160. The two plays are entitled *Taoyuan ji* 桃園記 and *Meihuayin* 梅花引. In this article Huang also argues that Gu Taiqing was a young widow when she married Yihui, and that she was expelled from the family home by Yihui's mother upon the latter's death because she was considered to bring bad luck.
12. For an (incomplete) catalogue of known collections by Manchu women writers, see Hu Wenkai 胡文楷, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao* 歷代婦女著作考, rev. ed. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985), pp. 813-19. The recently revised edition of this work by Zhang Hongsheng 張宏生 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008) does not add any new information on Manchu and Mongol women poets. Also see Zhu Zhuxian 祝注先, "Qingdai Manzu Mengguzu de funü shige" 清代滿族蒙古族的婦女詩歌, *Zhongnan minzu xueyuan xuebao* 4 (1997): 82-86.
13 At least one general anthology of women's poetry, Du Xun 杜珣, *Zhongguo lidai funü wenxue zuopin jingxuan* 中国历代妇女文学作品

精选 (Beijing: Zhongguo heping chubanshe, 2000), makes a clear distinction between Gu Taiqing and other Manchu women poets by giving Gu Taiqing her alphabetical position among Qing dynasty authors, but grouping other Manchu (and Mongol) poets together on pp. 762-67, at the very end of the section on Qing dynasty authors.

14. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 816; Zhu Zhuxian "Qingdai Manzu, Mengguzu de funü shige," 82.
15. Nalan shi 納蘭氏, *Xiuyu shigao*, 28a-b.
16. Hong Ying 紅鶯, "Manzu nüshiren Nalan shi" 滿族女詩人納蘭氏, *Manzu yanjiu* 2 (1995): 24.
17. *Xiuyu shigao*, 32b.
18. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 816. Sibo's collection also includes poems by the female tutor of her daughters.
19. Zhu Zhuxian, "Qingdai Manzu Mengguzu de funü shige," 83.
20. Dorgon (Hummel, ECCP, pp. 215-19), an uncle of the Shunzhi emperor, had been the all-powerful regent in the years immediately following 1644. As he had no son, he had adopted Dorbo, a son of his younger brother Dodo. Upon Dorgon's death, his titles were rescinded, and Dorbo was returned to his own natal family. As a descendant of Dorbo, Rusong was both a descendant of Dorgon and Dodo. For the revision of the judgment on Dorgon, see Evelyn S. Rawski, *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 79-81; p. 105; p. 219; Zhou Yuanlian 周远廉 and Zhao Shiyu 赵世瑜, *Huangfu shezhengwang Duo'ergun* 皇父摄政王多尔袞 (Changchun: Jilin wenxue chubanshe, 1993), pp. 464-75. On Chunying's social contacts outside officialdom, see Hu Xiaowei 胡小伟, "Ruiqinwang Chunying tihongshi yu *Hongloumeng* chaoben de zaoqi liuchuan" 睿亲王淳颖题红诗与红楼梦鈔本的早期流传, *Hongloumeng xuekan* 4 (1996): 307-25.
21. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 815. I have used a copy provided by National Library of China to the Harvard-Yenching Library.
22. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 815. I have used a copy provided by National Library of China to the Harvard-Yenching Library.
23. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, pp. 817-18. I have used a copy provided by National Library of China to the Harvard-Yenching Library.
24. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 814. The Harvard-Yenching Library holds a copy of this work, which is included in the McGill-Harvard-Yenching Database (See n. 34).

25. I have used a copy provided by National Library of China to the Harvard-Yenching Library.
26. Zhu Zhuxian, "Qingdai Manzu Mengguzu de funü shige," 83.
27. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 815. I have used a copy provided by National Library of China to the Harvard-Yenching Library. Naxunlanbao's preface is basically our only source on the life of Wanyan Jinchi, apart from her own poems.
28. I have used a copy provided by National Library of China to Harvard-Yenching Library. Guizhen daoren was surnamed Chen, and her father was the "famous Confucian scholar" Chen Yanfang 陳延芳. When her husband died in 1800, he was only a secretary in the Grand Secretariat (rank 7a), but his elder brother was a Vice Brigade Commander (rank 4a) at his death in 1799. If both brothers had lived to grow older, they probably would have reached higher ranks.
29. On Bingyue, see Yun Zhu惲珠, ed., *Guochao guixiu zhengshi xuji* 國朝閨秀正始集續集 (1836), 6.1a-3b, which includes some of her poems. Like Guizhen daoren, Bingyue had been widowed at a relatively young age. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 814. A first collection of her poetry prefaced by Tiebao 鐵保 (1752-1824) was printed as early as 1798; a second, larger selection was printed later. Both these collections are available at the Chinese National Library. See Ke Yuchun 柯愈春, *Qingren shiwenji zongmu tiyao* 清人詩文集綜目提要 (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe, 2001), p. 1019. The second collections contain some poems addressed to lady Tongjia, and some others addressed to Guizhen daoren. The Harvard-Yenching Library holds copies of both collections provided by National Library of China.
30. On Guiliang, see Hummel, ECCP, pp. 428-30. Guiliang's brother Binliang 斌良 (1784-1847) was considered one of the finest Manchu poets of the age. There are more Manchu women poets who traveled extensively, accompanying their father, their father-in-law, or their husband, for example Mengyue, but none would appear to have traveled as widely as Baibao Youlan. Cf. Grace Fong, "Authoring Journeys: Women on the Road," in *Herself an Author: Gender, Agency and Writing in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), pp. 85-120.
31. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 813
32. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 813-14. A copy of this edition is available at the Harvard-Yenching Library, and is included in the McGill-Harvard-Yenching Database (See n. 37).

33. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 814. A copy of this edition is available at the Harvard-Yenching Library, and is included in the McGill-Harvard-Yenching Database (See n. 34).
34. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 815; Zhu Zhuxian, "Qingdai Manzu Mengguzu de funü shige," 85-86. A copy of this edition is available at the Harvard-Yenching Library, and is included in the McGill-Harvard-Yenching Database (See n. 24). On Shengyu, see Hummel, ECCP, pp. 648-49. He would later serve in the Hanlin Academy and at the Imperial Academy, and establish himself as a major historian, specializing in Manchu and Mongol studies.
35. Ho, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 158-60.
36. Naxunlanbao's contacts were not exclusively limited to other Manchu women. Her collection contains a poem in which she thanks Zhang Xiying 張綺英 (1792-after 1863) for an inscription on a portrait. Zhang Xiying was widely regarded as one of the finest female poets of her generation. She hailed from Changzhou, but she joined her husband in Beijing for the years 1829-1844 and 1847-1853. See Susan Mann, *The Talented Women of the Zhang Family* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), pp. 62-129.
37. Grace S. Fong, ed., *Ming Qing Women's Writings* (http://digital. library. mcgill.ca/mingqing/).
38. Yu Yuehua 于月华 has devoted a short article to the nineteenth-century Manchu woman poet Duomin 多敏, entitled "Nüshiren Duomin yu *Yiqiange yishi*" 女诗人多敏与逸倩阁遗诗, *Manzu yanjiu* 2 (1994): 51-55. Duomin's collection is available in the National Library of China.
39. Some of these articles provide primarily evaluations of her poetry, others focus on the family background of Naxunlanbao and the date of her birth. In the first category one may classify articles such as Li Ping 李萍, "Naxunlanbao zhuiqiu nüxing jiefang, ziyou he fandui fengjian lijiao de sisiang" 那遜蘭保追求女性解放自由和反對封建礼教的思想, *Qianyan* 2 (1999): 52-54; Aruna 阿如那, "Mengguzu 'Yi'an jushi' Naxunlanbao: jiating, minzu, xingbie dui qi shige chuangzuo de yingxiang" 蒙古族易安居士那遜蘭保家庭民族性別對其詩歌的影響, *Hulunbei'er xueyuan xuebao* 14.3 (June 2006): 41-43; Aruna, "Shiji *Yunxiangguan yishi* suo fanyingchulai de minzu jingshen" 詩集芸香館遺詩所反映出來的民族精神, *Neimenggu minzu daxue xuebao* 15.1 (2009): 4-5; Aruna, "Shiji *Yunxiangguan yishi* ticai fenxi" 詩集芸香館遺詩題材分析, *Changsha daxue xuebao* 23.1 (2009): 73-74. In the second category fall works such as Du Jiaji 杜家驥, "Qingdai

Mengguzu nüshiren Naxunlanbao jiqi xiangguan wenti kaozheng" 清代蒙古族女詩人那遜蘭保及其相關問題考證, *Minzu yanjiu* 3 (2006): 86-93; and Ding Yizhuang, "Wu meng dao saibei, you yi gong wenzhang: Qingdai Menggu nüshiren Naxunlanbao de shenshi yu xiezuo" 無夢到塞北有意工文章 清代蒙古女詩人那遜蘭寶昀身世與寫作 (paper presented at the conference "Chinese Women through a Modern Lens," Cambridge, MA, June 2006). Du and Ding establish beyond a doubt that Naxunlanbao cannot have been born in 1801, which is given as her date of birth in many publications, but that she was born in 1824, and came to Beijing in 1827, when her father Duo'erji Wangchuke 多爾及旺楚克 was appointed as a member of the Imperial Guard. For an extensive study of the intermarriage between Manchu and Mongol elites, see Du Jiaji, *Qingchao Man-Meng lianyin yanjiu* 清朝满蒙联姻研究 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2003).

40. This edition is listed in Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 815.
41. Sun Yuzhen 孫玉溱, ed., *Naxunlanbao shiji sanzhong* 那遜蘭保詩集三種 (Huhehot: Neimenggu daxue chubanshe, 1991). The collection provides the poetry collections of three different Mongolian writers. The poems are annotated, and the editor includes a substantial introduction to the works of each poet.
42. Lady Tongjia, *Suiwei leicao*, 2a.
43. Lady Tongjia, *Wusi cuncao*, 1b-2a.
44. Lady Tongjia, *Xuchuang yake*, 1.18b-23b. Cf. Fong, "A Life in Poetry: The Auto/biography of Gan Lirou (1743-1819)," in *Herself an Author*, pp. 9-53, esp. pp. 39-41, for its discussion of a comparable long autobiographical poem by a contemporary Chinese woman poet.
45. "Cap and gown" are the dress of the officials—the monkeys apparently were dressed as officials.
46. Lady Tongjia, *Xuchuang yake*, 2:21a-b.
47. Guizhen daoren, *Bingxue tang shi*, 22b. Guizhen daoren also wrote a poem on a sick pet chicken/rooster (*Bingxue tang ji*, 19a).
48. Guizhen daoren, *Bingxue tang shi*, 3a-6b.
49. Guizhen daoren, *Bingxue tang shi*, 56a-63a.
50. So far I have been unable to identify Jingyi zhuren. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 263 lists a *Jingyi zhai shi* 靜怡齋詩 by Shi Jide 史濟德, who is identified as the elder sister of Shi Jizhuang 史濟莊 (ca. 1900), and so must have lived almost a century later. More probably, the Master of Quiet Joy may be identified as an elder sister of the Manchu woman poet Zhuyou 竹友.
51. Guizhen daoren, *Bingxue tang shi*, 33b.

52. Wanyan Jinchi, *Lüyunxian shiji*, 1a.
53. Wanyan Jinchi, *Lüyunxian shiji*, 12a-13a.
54. Wanyan Jinchi, *Lüyunxian shiji*, 17b-18a.
55. Naxunlanbao, *Yunxiangguan yishi*, 1.6a.
56. A more literal translation would read, "On both sides of my carriage the pines and firs rise tall."
57. Baibao Youlan, *Lenghongxian shiji*, 2.1a-b.
58. For a description of this system, see Elliott, *The Manchu Way*, pp. 253-55. The Manchu women poet Mengyue refers to her marriage "by imperial decree" in one of her poems. In other poems she informs us that she was raised as a boy until she was a teenager. The reference to her marriage "by imperial decree" is found in her poem "Decorated by Imperial Decree for My Chastity I Write the Following" 蒙皇恩旌表貞節感而成咏. The poem is included in Siyanzhuren 四焉主人, *Siyanzhuren Zhuwu shichao* 四焉主人竹屋詩鈔 (Jiaqing wu chen nian, 1808), 19b-20a. The same poem is also included in Yun Zhu, *Guochao guixiu zhengshi xuji*, 5:15a. For her poems on being raised as a boy see her series of ten quatrains entitled "Emotions on Remembering the Past" 憶舊事感成, esp. no. 3, 4, and 5, in Siyanzhuren, *Siyanzhuren Zhuwu shichao*, 1b-3b. *Siyanzhuren Zhuwu shichao* has been preserved in manuscript in the National Library in Beijing; Harvard-Yenching Library holds a xerox copy.
59. Lady Tongjia, *Baoshantang jiaxun*, 26b-27b.
60. Mark C. Elliott, in "Manchu Widows and Ethnicity in Qing China," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41.1 (1999): 33-71, notes the spectacular rise in officially registered "chaste widows" among Manchu women from the early years of the Qianlong period on, and contrasts this state support for the "sinicization" of Manchu women to the consistent attempts of the Qianlong emperor to strengthen the ethnic distinctiveness of Manchu men. He concludes, "This suggests that the Qianlong boom in widow chastity was more than just an effort to acquire Confucian legitimacy, and more, even, than just a leap in the pace of acculturation. Promoting widow chastity affirmed the control of Manchu males over the nuptiality and fertility of Manchu women, giving them further control over the reproduction of banner people and Qing power" (p. 71).
61. *Tu* (Sonchus oleraceus) is a vegetable with a very bitter taste.
62. Lady Tongjia, *Xuchuang yake*, 1.4b-5a.
63. Hummel, ECCP, pp. 380-84.
64. Baibao Youlan, *Lenghongxian shiji*, 2.9b-11a.

65. Lady Tongjia, *Xuchuang yake*, 1.15a-b; 1.15b. *Qishe* refers especially to shooting the bow from horseback.
66. Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, p. 78.
67. "Floriate" (*hua*) designates the area and culture of China proper.
68. The Wastelands refer to the areas beyond the land of the Barbarians, outside the transformative influence of the virtue of the Son of Heaven.
69. Naxunlanbao, *Yunxiangguan yishi*, 2.1a-b.
70. Naxunlanbao, *Yunxiangguan yishi*, 7b-8a.
71. As the Taiping Tianguo rebellion had originated in southernmost China, the rebels were often characterized as "Cantonese rebels," even though by this time the overwhelming majority of the rebel troops must have been raised locally in the Jiangnan area.
72. A part of the city of Hangzhou had been briefly occupied by the rebels in 1860.
73. Baibao Youlan, *Lenghongzhai shiji*, "Preface," 1b-2a.
74. Baibao Youlan, *Lenghongzhai shiji*, "Preface," 2a-b.
75. Wanyan Jinchi, *Lüyunxian shiji*, "Preface," 1a-2a.
76. Hummel, ECCP, pp. 955-57. On Yuan Mei as a patron of women poets, see i.a. Zhong Huiling 鍾慧玲, *Qingdai nüshiren yanjiu* 清代女詩人研究 (Taipei: Liren, 2000), pp. 68-76. Tiebao is not mentioned in her detailed chapter on "teachers" (pp. 238-57).
77. Hummel, ECCP, pp. 717-18. Also see Li Jinxi 李金希, "Qingdai Manzu shiren Tiebao" 清代滿族詩人鐵保, *Minzu wenxue yanjiu* 3 (1998): 41-48.
78. Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, 818. Yingchuan's collection, *Ruting shicao* 如亭詩草 was printed in 1828; it is available in the National Library.
79. His collected works contains one poem addressed to his wife on her sixtieth birthday in which he mentions she studied poetry with him when they had just been married. Among his prose pieces one finds "Sun Shuming furen huazan bing xu" 孫淑明夫人畫贊併序, which provides a short biography of Chen Shuming 陳淑明, the wife of the Instructor Sun Shijin 孫式金, whom Tiebao had met in Jilin. Chen Shuming had studied *baguwen* in her youth, and often acted as her husband's ghost-writer. In Tiebao's collection one can find one lyric he wrote in response to a lyric of Chen (Sun) Shuming.
80. Cai Wan (1695-1755) is the author of a collection of poetry entitled *Yunzhen xian xiaocao* 蘊真軒小草, which was printed in a very fine edition in 1779. She was the daughter of Cai Yurong 蔡毓榮 (1633-1699). Cai Yurong's father had surrendered to the Manchus in

1642, and the family later belonged to the Chinese Plain White Banner. Cai Yurong held a series of high provincial and metropolitan posts. Cai Wan married Gao Qizhuo 高其倬 (1676-1738), who from 1723 on served either as governor or governor-general in Southern China. See Hummel, ECCP, pp. 734-36; and Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, pp. 731-32.

Gao Jingfang's family belonged to the Chinese Plain Red Banner. Her father Gao Qi 高琦 reached the rank of governor-general of Zhejiang and Fujian; her husband was a certain Zhang Zongyuan 張宗元. Her collected works, both *fu* and *shi*, were printed in 1719 as *Hongxuexian shiwenji* 紅雪軒詩文集. See Hu Wenkai, *Lidai funü zhuzuo kao*, p. 499.

81. To judge from the title, the direct model (and object of competition) for Naxunlanbao's project probably was the *Anthology of Poetry by Women of the Present Dynasty* (*Guochao guige shi chao* 國朝閨閣詩鈔) of 1844, compiled by Cai Dianqi 蔡殿齊. This is a collection of extensive selections from one hundred poetry collections by women; a later sequel of 1874 added 20 more. Kang-i Sun-Chang, "Ming and Qing Anthologies of Women's Poetry and Their Selection Strategies," in *Writing Women of Imperial China*, ed. Ellen Widmer and Kang-I Sun-Chang (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 165-66.

Lost in Tradition: The *Classic of Poetry* We Did Not Know

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Prelude

Like no other poetic text in world literature, the Shijing 詩經, *or* Classic of Poetry, *has a continuous history of some twenty-five centuries of reciting, singing, reading, teaching, memorizing, printing, quoting, and interpreting. True to Goethe's definition of a classic, it is a text forever inexhaustible in its meaning. At the end of the Chinese empire, however, the text could barely carry the weight of its own commentarial tradition. When this weight was finally removed in the wake of May Fourth, little seemed left: a body of archaic, bombastic court hymns next to simple, formulaic songs that purportedly express—in however monotonous a fashion—the sentiments of commoners some time before Confucius. One may find these songs charming and innocent, folk songs in Herder's sense of song as the simple—and simple-minded—original language when civilization was still a child. But today, few lovers of poetry will read them for pleasure or inspiration. The classic has become the living dead of Chinese poetry, occupying its mandatory place at the beginning of our anthologies where it blocks, rather than opens, the pathway to those later texts for which alone it is worth learning Chinese. Connoisseurs who today recite the lyrics from the Tang and the Song do not recite the* Poetry, *or at least not for the same reasons.*

We know our text as the Mao Poetry 毛詩, *that is, as the text accompanied by its first transmitted commentary, probably from the second century BCE. This Mao text and commentary never went away: solidified and transmitted by Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) in the second century AD, it was enshrined in the seventh-century* Correct Meaning of the Five Classics *(Wujing zhengyi 五經正義), compiled on imperial command; in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, its interpretations were partly rejected by scholars like Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072), Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1036-1162), and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200); after another five hundred years, it began to be subjected to historical and linguistic scrutiny by Qing philologists; and finally, since the May Fourth Movement in the early twentieth century, the Mao explanations were tossed aside. For the longest time, the*

terse words of the Poetry *had disappeared into and behind an ever-proliferating commentarial tradition. Arguably, this tradition ended not in China but in Europe, namely, with Bernhard Karlgren's (1889-1978) copious glosses, published between 1942 and 1946, that were then translated and published in Chinese in 1960.*[1] *Yet when Karlgren, utterly disinterested in poetic style and diction, was done with his rigorously philological review of traditional Chinese scholarship, he had eviscerated the ancient songs of their poetic flow, leaving behind a carcass of awkward English translations that few would recognize as songs. To Karlgren, the* Poetry *was primarily a source text in the philological study of Chinese antiquity even though he professed some interest in the anthology itself.*[2]

At the same time, twentieth-century Chinese scholars writing in the wake of the May Fourth movement laid their own claims to the text. Intent to free the pre-imperial songs from their imperial hermeneutic traditions, they appropriated the Poetry *for twentieth-century political needs where the court hymns served as an expression of ancient "feudalism" and the "Airs of the States" (guofeng 國風) as the authentic voices of the common folk living (and suffering) under said "feudalism." This early and mid-twentieth century Chinese search for the true nature of Chinese antiquity—a search no longer burdened by tradition—was paralleled by the work of Western sociologists, foremost among them Marcel Granet (1884-1940), the author of* Fêtes et chansons anciennes de la Chine *(1919),*[3] *to whom the songs confirmed newly developed European ideas about primitive societies. As throughout the two millennia of the Chinese empire, the* Poetry *was there, but it was barely itself. Formerly overwhelmed by the commentarial tradition, it now served particular political and academic functions.*

Yet just after the anthology had finally expired as a Confucian Classic, it once again proved itself the most resilient of texts Chinese, unexpectedly rising from its tomb—or its many tombs: not the dark chambers of philology and sociology but the brilliant ones of the ancient Chinese aristocratic elite. With the discovery of Mawangdui 馬王堆 tomb no. 3 near Changsha (Hunan) in 1973, the excavation of Shuanggudui 雙古堆 tomb no 1. in Fuyang (Anhui) in 1977, the finds of Guodian 郭店 tomb no. 1 in Jingmen (Hubei) in 1994, the purchase of the Shanghai Museum bamboo slips on the Hong Kong antique market in the same year, and—finally so far—the cache of bamboo slips acquired in 2008 by Qinghua University, no other text of ancient China has surfaced as frequently, and in as many different forms, from newly discovered Warring States and early imperial manuscripts as the Poetry*: quoted in the Guodian and Shanghai Museum "Black Robes" (Ziyi 緇衣) bamboo texts, in the "Five Modes of Conduct" (Wuxing 五行) manuscripts from Guodian (bamboo) and Mawangdui (silk), and in the Qinghua bamboo slips;* [4] *discussed in the Shanghai Museum*

"Confucius' Discussion of the Poetry*" (Kongzi shilun* 孔子詩論*) bamboo manuscript and in the Mawangdui "Five Modes of Conduct" silk manuscript; and finally, in the badly damaged and incomplete Shuanggudui bamboo manuscript that contains the* Poetry*, or significant parts of it, as the anthology close to how we know it from the tradition. With the Guodian, Shanghai Museum, and Qinghua University bamboo slips tentatively dated around 300 BCE and the Mawangdui and Shuanggudui tombs closed in 168 BCE and 165 BCE, respectively, we now have a constantly increasing record of the* Poetry *in southern Chinese tombs spanning a period of about 150 years in addition to the* Mao Poetry *from presumably the second century BCE and to the fragments of the so-called Three Schools (*sanjia 三家*)* Poetry *interpretations from around the same time.*

As a result of these finds—some of them coming from archaeologically controlled excavations, others looted from unknown sites and then sold to prestigious institutions that nevertheless vouch for their authenticity—we live, with the Poetry*, in a time like no other time. Gradually, a* Poetry *before the* Mao Poetry *is emerging, and with it a "new"—if in fact earliest known—approach to the ancient songs. For scholars, today is a defining moment in the history of the text, a moment on par with the Mao determination of the text, the Song challenge, the Qing inquiry, and the May Fourth departure. Yet our moment goes beyond these: we are not confined to the Mao recension as our ultimate source; we can, for the first time since the versions of the Three Schools were lost in early medieval times, have access to fragments, however incomplete, of a strikingly different early hermeneutic tradition of the* Poetry*, and with it a different* text *of the songs. Because of the fragmentary nature of our evidence, we have more questions than answers, but our questions are getting better with every excavation (or, with lesser trust, purchase of looted grave goods). Those willing to make space for these questions "know" much less about the Poetry than our forebears. Those still under the sway of the traditional readings, including the May Fourth reading, have yet to grasp the magnitude of the challenges posed by the ancient manuscripts. The present deliberations illustrate some of the perspectives and paradoxes opened by the newly found manuscripts.*[5]

* * *

Hermeneutically, the most difficult and also most interesting songs in the *Poetry* are the 160 "Airs." Unlike the court hymns, they do not advance unambiguous messages, nor does any of them contain a sustained historical narrative. None of them offers a hint regarding its authorship, and only one—"Yellow Bird" (Huang niao 黃鳥 [Mao 131])—refers to specific

situational circumstances.[6] Moreover, their archaic language, filled with repetitive formulae that on their surface describe simple images in nature or human interactions, rarely develops a continuous line of thought or narrative. The resulting fundamental uncertainty about many of the "Airs" enabled and indeed demanded sophisticated hermeneutical procedures to "uncover," or construct, the presumed meaning of each song that was hidden below its textual surface. Yet what might appear as a weakness turned out to be the actual strength of the "Airs": since the time of Confucius regarded as classical and supremely authoritative expressions of the human condition,[7] their semantic vagueness allowed a potentially infinite range of interpretations and situational applications while never reducing the songs to any single meaning or use. In this, the "Airs" were always above and beyond their actual, individual explications, invocations, and performances, constituting a general mode of expression that could be directed to any specific event in the full range of human experience. A song could be related to a particular situation, but it was not tied to it and hence could not be impeached for it. From this perspective, it is no longer surprising that all of the "Airs" remained anonymous. In order to exert their force as universally applicable, any trace of their original authorship or moment of composition was erased. No original author had ever owned the songs, and hence no song could be discredited by finding fault with its author. In reverse, following Foucault's insight that true authorship implies accountability and potential punishment for the text, no author could be blamed for a song.[8]

While the semantic openness and general applicability of the "Airs" is on full display in pre-imperial sources such as the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 that mention numerous instances of their individual recitation, it was only with the Western Han readings—and most forcefully with the Mao reading—that individual songs were understood as political commentary and placed in specific historical circumstances that provided them with an original compositional context, historical date, and more or less specific authorship. This reading is related to the famous dictum "poetry expresses what is on the mind" (*shi yan zhi* 詩言志)— first found in the *Shangshu* 尚書 and then fully developed in the "Great Preface" (Daxu 大序) to the *Mao Poetry*—that has remained the single most influential statement on the production and purpose of Chinese poetry ever since.[9] In the Mao reading, the "Airs" were moral witnesses of their own time and could be organized in terms both chronological and ideological. Thus, the Mao prefaces that accompany each song individually take the first twenty-five songs of the anthology—that is, the pieces in the "Zhou nan" 周南 and "Shao nan" 召南 sections—as coming from the glorious days of the early Western Zhou and praising the virtue of the members of the royal house. By contrast, for

example, all but the first of the twenty-one "Airs of Zheng" (Zheng feng 鄭風) criticize the various lords of Zheng. Overlooked in this, and now coming to light in the newly discovered manuscripts, is the fact that this author- and production-centered view of poetry ran diametrically against the pre-imperial views and uses of the "Airs." The two manuscripts that include explicit interpretations of individual songs—the "Kongzi shilun" and the Mawangdui "Wu xing"— never assign such historical or political meanings to them.

The fragmentary "Kongzi shilun" on twenty-nine mostly broken bamboo slips containing slightly over one thousand characters offers the most extensive comments on the *Poetry* from pre-imperial times. Far from trying to determine, and hence limit, the meaning of specific expressions, it assigns broad semantic categories to the songs. Through this instruction in the *Poetry*,[10] the songs could easily be remembered under their respective characterizations and then be called upon in a wide range of diplomatic and other situations that we know, for example, from the *Zuo zhuan*.[11]

Consider the following section that, in the original arrangement by the Shanghai Museum editors,[12] is found on slips 10, 14, 12, 13, 15, 11, and 16. In the revised order first offered by Li Xueqin 李學勤 and subsequently slightly modified by Huang Huaixin 黃懷信,[13] this passage constitutes the first part of the existing (however fragmentary) manuscript. In my following translation, I divide the passage into three paragraphs:[14]

> (§ 1) The transformation of "Guanju," the timeliness of "Jiumu," the wisdom of "Hanguang," the marriage of "Quechao," the protection of "Gantang," the longing of "Lüyi," the emotion in "Yanyan"—what of these?
> (§ 2) It is said: "As they are set in motion,[15] [these songs] all surpass what they put forth initially." "Guanju" uses [the expression of] sexual allure to illustrate ritual propriety [. . .] the pairing [?], its fourth stanza is illustration. It uses the pleasures [one derives] from the zithers as a comparison to lustful desire. It uses the delight [one derives] from the bells and drums as {a comparison to}[16] the liking of [. . .] As it returns to ritual propriety, is this not indeed transformation? In "Jiumu," good fortune is with the gentleman. Is this not {indeed timeliness? "Hanguang" teaches not to pursue what cannot} be achieved, not to tackle what cannot be accomplished. Is this not indeed knowing the constant way? In "Quechao," [the young woman] departs with a hundred carriages. Is this not indeed still leaving [her family behind]? That in "Gantang" {one longs} for the man and cherishes his tree is because [the Duke of Shao's] protection [of the people] was

magnanimous. The cherishing of the Gantang tree is {because} of the Duke of Shao [. . .] emotion, is love.
(§ 3) The transformation of "Guanju" is about [the man's] longing being excessive. The timeliness of "Jiumu" is about [the man's] good fortune. The wisdom of "Hanguang" is about knowing what cannot be obtained. The marriage of "Quechao" is about [the woman's] departure being [. . .] {The protection of "Gantang" is about the longing for} the Duke of Shao. The sorrow of "Lüyi" is about longing for the ancients. The emotion of "Yanyan" is about [the man's sentimental] uniqueness.
(§ 1) 《關雎》之改，《樛木》之時，《漢廣》之智，《鵲巢》之歸，《甘棠》之報，《綠衣》之思，《燕燕》之情，曷？
(§ 2) 曰：動而皆賢于其初者也。《關雎》以色喻于禮【。。。】兩矣。其四章則喻矣。以琴瑟之悅擬好色之願，以鐘鼓之樂{擬}【。。。】好。反納于禮，不亦能改乎？《樛木》福斯在君子，不{亦有時乎？《漢廣》不求不}可得，不攻不可能，不亦知恆乎？《鵲巢》出以百兩，不亦有離乎？《甘棠》{思}及其人，敬愛其樹，其保厚矣。《甘棠》之愛以召公{之固也。}【。。。】情，愛也。
(§ 3)《關雎》之改，則其思益矣。《樛木》之時，則以其祿也。《漢廣》之智，則知不可得也。《鵲巢》之歸，則離者【。。。】{《甘棠》之保，思}召公也。《綠衣》之憂，思古人也。《燕燕》之情，以其獨也。[17]

While the lacunae in §§ 2 and 3 leave us with some uncertainty, the overall formulaic and repetitive nature of the passage suggests a tightly coherent text and supports Li Xueqin's re-arrangement of the order of the slips. Most likely, the third lacuna in § 2 that follows the discussion of "Gantang" and ends before "emotion, is love" (情, 愛也) contained discussions of both "Lüyi" and "Yanyan," with the remark on "emotion" ending the comment on the latter.

Nothing in this passage advances the kind of historical and political interpretation we know from the *Mao Poetry*. Instead, the text works like a catechism, characterizing each song with a single word and then rhetorically asking what it is about. The introductory "it is said" (or perhaps "[master xy] has said") is a gesture of authority that points back to a preexisting understanding and leads to the core formulation of a hermeneutical principle that is then valid for all the individual songs discussed in the following: "As they are set in motion, [these songs] all surpass what they put forth initially" (*dong er jie xian yu qi chu zhe ye* 動而皆賢于其初者也). In other words, the songs mean more than they say.

The most prominent piece mentioned in this passage is "Guanju" 關雎 ("Fishhawks"), the very first song in the *Poetry* analogy. Yet the way the "Kongzi shilun" speaks of the song does not go well with the Mao statement that "Guanju is about the virtue of the queen" (*Guanju houfei zhi de ye* 關雎後妃之德也); instead, it resonates with the reading of the song in the Mawangdui "Wu xing" silk manuscript as well as with *Analects* (*Lunyu* 論語) 3.20 and statements on the "Airs" in the *Xunzi* 荀子 and by Liu An 劉安 (r. 179-122 BCE), King of Huainan 淮南:

> The Master said: "'Guanju' [expresses] pleasure but does not lead to licentiousness, [expresses] sorrow but does not cause harm."
> 子曰：關雎樂而不淫，哀而不傷。 (*Analects* 3.20, "Bayi" 八役)

> As for the "Airs of the States" expressing fondness of sexual allure, a tradition says: "They satisfy the desires but do not lead to the transgression of the correct stopping point."
> 國風之好色也，傳曰：盈其欲不愆其止。(*Xunzi*, "Dalue" 大略)[18]

> The "Airs of the States" express fondness of sexual allure but do not lead to licentiousness.
> 國風好色而不淫 。(Liu An, "Lisao zhuan" 離騷傳)[19]

> If [his desire] is as deep as this, would he copulate next to his father and mother? Even if threatened with death, he would not do it. Would he copulate next to his older and younger brothers? He would not do it either. Would he copulate next to the countrymen? He would not do it either. {Being fearful} of father and older brother, and only then being fearful of others, is ritual propriety. Using [the expression] of sexual allure to illustrate ritual propriety is to advance [in moral conduct].
> 如此其甚也，交諸父母之側，爲諸？則有死弗爲之矣。 交諸兄弟之側，亦弗爲也。交{諸}邦人之側，亦弗爲也。{畏}父兄，其殺畏人，禮也。由色諭於禮，進耳。 (Mawangdui "Wu xing")[20]

It is impossible to date the statement attributed to Confucius in the *Analects*; it may or may not be the earliest of the series cited here.[21] Like the one in the *Xunzi*, it appears completely isolated and without context; in neither case is it part of an overall discussion of the *Poetry* but rather appears as an accepted piece of traditional lore. In the third-century BCE *Xunzi*, this impression is given by two facts: first, the grammatical structure

of *guofeng zhi haose ye* 國風之好色也 turns the aperçu "The 'Airs of the States' express fondness of sexual allure" (*guofeng haose* 國風好色) into the topical phrase "As for the 'Airs of the States' expressing fondness of sexual allure," that is, a statement of received wisdom. Second, this topic is then elaborated upon by reference to "a tradition" (*zhuan* 傳), that is, another pre-existing authority that has already followed the initial comment on the "Airs." At least rhetorically, the *Xunzi* does not advance a new interpretation of the songs but affirmatively cites what is already established. The same must then also be true for Liu An who in 139 BCE—roughly a century after the *Xunzi*—returned to the phrase "The 'Airs of the States' express fondness for sexual allure" and extended it to "but do not lead to licentiousness," presumably borrowing from the statement attributed to Confucius "'Guanju' expresses pleasure but does not lead to licentiousness."[22]

What may distinguish both the statement in the *Analects* and that by Liu An from the one in the *Xunzi* is their emphasis on the effect of "Guanju" and the "Airs," respectively. *Bu yin* 不淫 (not licentious) is not a quality of the songs themselves but a quality of their effect on the audience: while the songs express pleasure and desire, they do not stir licentious behavior. So what do they do? The answer is now found in the "Kongzi shilun" and Mawangdui "Wu xing" manuscripts: they "use [the expression] of sexual allure to illustrate ritual propriety" and in his bring about "transformation" ("Kongzi shilun") or the "advance [in moral conduct]" ("Wu xing").

Leaving the possible date of the *Analects* passage aside—if anything, its *le* ("pleasure") appears like a milder and more general rephrasing of the raw and explicit *haose* ("fondness of sexual allure")—the available evidence places the "Kongzi shilun" chronologically first among all these pronouncements. Yet even there, the dictum is not necessarily presented as an original thought but rather as the first and most prominent example of the preexisting idea "As they are set in motion, [these songs] all surpass what they put forth initially." This idea, furthermore, is introduced with "it is said"—a formula that, like "a tradition says" in *Xunzi*, gestures at existing authority. Likewise, the long discussion of "Guanju" in the Mawangdui "Wu xing" manuscript does not stand on its own but is offered as an example for the rhetorical principal of "illustration" or "analogy" (*yu* 諭) in the context of a discourse on self-cultivation. Invoked to prove a particular point, the statements in both "Kongzi shilun" and Mawangdui "Wu xing" presuppose that their reading of "Guanju" is already accepted; they themselves are not in need of proof.

All this suggests an understanding of the "Airs," and of "Guanju" as their principal example, that was widespread from at least the late fourth

through the late second centuries BCE but was subsequently lost in tradition. We cannot determine whether or not this understanding was the earliest in the history of the *Poetry*, but it is the earliest we now know. Like the reciters in the *Zuo zhuan* who in their poetic exchanges could confidently presume an existing agreement on how to interpret the songs from the *Poetry*, the statements cited above present both the songs and their interpretation as tradition. In this tradition, the discourses of history, authorship, and poetic production as political commentary—the hallmarks of the Mao reading—are conspicuously absent. Instead, the principal concern with the *Poetry* lies in the applicability of traditional verse to situational circumstances, a point that is emphasized in *Analects* 13.5 ("Zilu" 子路) where Confucius insists that knowing the songs by heart is insufficient unless one knows how to employ them on diplomatic occasion. Answering to the challenge posed in *Analects* 13.5, what the "Kongzi shilun" offers is not instruction in the past origins of the songs but guidance for their use in the present.[23] The Mao concern with authorial origin and intent is irrelevant.

The proper application of a given song rested on the ability to identify its core meaning, that is, the meaning, or semantic category, for which the song could be invoked. An example of distilling such categories from the individual songs may be found in another section of the "Kongzi shilun" that comprises slips 17, 25, 26, 28, 29, and possibly 23 of the original arrangement by the Shanghai Museum editors:

> "Dongfang weiming" contains incisive phrases. Of the words in "Qiang zhong," one cannot not be afraid of. In "Yang zhi shui," the love of the wife is strong. In "Caige," the love of the wife is [. . .] "{Junzi} yangyang" is about a petty man. "You tu" is about not meeting one's time. The final stanza of "Datian" shows knowing how to speak and to conduct oneself according to ritual. "Xiaoming" is about not [. . .] loyal. "Bozhou" in the "Airs of Bei" is about depression. "Gufeng" is about grief. "Liao'e" is about having a filial mind. In "Xi you changchu," one has obtained [a family] but regrets it. [. . .][24] speaks of detesting without pity. "Qiang you ci" is about guarded secrets that cannot be told. "Qingying" is about knowing [. . .] "Juan'er" is about not knowing [how to judge] people. "Shezhen" is about the cutting off. "Zhu'er" is about a serviceman. "Jiaozhen" is about a wife. "Heshui" is about knowing [. . .][25]
>
> 《東方未明》有利詞。《將仲》之言，不可不畏也。《揚之水》其愛婦烈。《采葛》之愛婦【。。。】《{君子}陽陽》小人。《有兔》不逢時。《大田》之卒章知言而禮。《小明》不【。。。】忠。《邶柏舟》悶。《鼓風》悲。《蓼莪》有孝

志。《隰有萇楚》得而悔之也。【。。。】言惡而不憫。《墻有茨》慎密而不知言。《青蠅》知【。。。】《卷而》不知人。《涉溱》其絕。《著而》士。《角枕》婦。《河水》知。[26]

A passage like this might be the answer to the confusingly wide range of situations to which the "Airs" are applied in early historiography. It may also explain why there is no case where a song from the "Airs" is quoted in full, leading to the pejorative characterization that the ancient reciters "cut off stanzas to (arbitrarily) generate meaning" (*duanzhang quyi* 斷章取義). Thus, according to the "Kongzi shilun," a text like "Juan'er" would fit *any* situation that involved the judging of people; and in order to do so, it did not need to be quoted in full. As it happens, the second out of the song's altogether eight couplets is cited in the *Zuo zhuan*:

Ah, our cherished men,	嗟我懷人
placed in the ranks of Zhou.	寘彼周行

The Mao preface to the song states that "'Juan'er' expresses the intent of the royal wife" (*Juan'er houfei zhi zhi ye* 卷耳后妃之志也); from here, the preface elaborates on her desire to assist her husband in seeking out worthy men for office. Toward this overall interpretation of the song, Mao glosses the term *zhou hang* as "the ranks of Zhou." This matches how the couplet appears in the *Zuo zhuan* where it is cited in the context of placing the right people into office;[27] and the same understanding is then found in two other quotations of the same couplet in the *Xunzi* 荀子 and the *Huainanzi* 淮南子.[28]

Zhu Xi, while also attributing the song to the royal wife (possibly King Wen's wife Taisi), believes that the text expresses the woman's longing for her husband traveling afar.[29] Some modern scholars have generalized this interpretation by taking it as the expression of some woman (not the queen) thinking of her traveling husband;[30] others see the song as expressing the emotions of the traveler himself, longing for his wife back home,[31] or they understand the song as dialogical, attributing the different stanzas to both husband and wife, respectively.[32] Either way, these readings concern not just the song as a whole but lead to a completely different understanding of the couplet under discussion.[33] Remarkably, recent studies of the "Kongzi shilun" have sided with the interpretation of the song as an expression of love and longing. Ma Yinqin 馬銀琴, who otherwise seems eager to identify similarities between the Mao prefaces and the characterizations of the songs in the "Kongzi shilun," lists "Juan'er" as an example where the two stand in mutual opposition.[34] Huang Huaixin goes so far as to call the Mao preface "close to nonsense" (*jinhu hushuo badao* 近乎胡說八道),

suggesting that the song represents a dialogical argument between a husband and his wife and that "not knowing people" refers to a misunderstanding between them.[35]

While most often, it remains doubtful that the Mao preface matches an earlier understanding of the respective song, the case of "Juan'er" seems different. Apart from the introductory sentence regarding the royal wife,[36] Mao's concern with the recognition of worthy men for office is perfectly in line with how the text was understood by the authors of the *Zuo zhuan*, the *Xunzi*, and the *Huainanzi*. Thus, the rejection of the Mao reading by the modern scholars cited above (and to some extent also by Zhu Xi) extends to all three early sources while their own interpretations are based on much later, purportedly more "natural" approaches to the poem's "original meaning" (*benyi* 本義)—an intellectual position that I find dubious at best.

It is uncertain how "not knowing men" (or "not knowing a man") relates to the ancient reading that we have transmitted in no less than four sources; likewise, we do not know how the individual lines of "Juan'er" would have been interpreted by the "Kongzi shilun" author. It seems clear, however, that the "Kongzi shilun" cannot have been a text that was to be read on its own. Considering its extremely elliptic pronouncements and its element of catechistic instruction, it must have been embedded in a context of oral teaching and learning. In such a context, the shorthand formula "not knowing men" may just have been interchangeable with "knowing men"—that is, in reference to situations where "knowing men" was the goal, while "not knowing men" was the initial point of departure. If this was the perspective advanced in the "Kongzi shilun," then "Juan'er" could be drawn upon in any context that required recognition of worthies. While this might be a stretch—after all, the text could also represent a different teaching tradition—it aligns the "Kongzi shilun" with all other early comments on "Juan'er," including those of the *Xunzi* and of the *Huainanzi* (compiled under Liu An's name), the two early sources with which the "Kongzi shilun" also agrees on "Guanju." Such a scenario seems decidedly more plausible than the projection of a Song dynasty or later interpretation of "Juan'er" into a manuscript from 300 BCE—a projection, moreover, that is based exclusively on a Song dynasty or later reading of the song's literal surface.

I consider the Song and modern reading of "Juan'er," and with it the wholesale rejection of the Mao prefaces and other early readings altogether, a fallacy born out of ignorance and arrogance. It is simplistic to believe that we have direct access to the "original meaning" of any of the "Airs" when our earliest sources—that is, before Mao—indicate that the true meaning of a song rested in its proper application and hence was generated in ever new ways through the flexible adaptation to various contexts. The readings of

"Guanju" in the "Kongzi shilun" and Mawangdui "Wu xing"—with phrases such as "using [the expression] of sexual allure to illustrate ritual propriety" or "As they are set in motion, [these songs] all surpass what they put forth initially"—explicitly state that the understanding of a song does not rest in the literal surface of its words but depends on hermeneutic procedures that involve the audience as much as the reciter. To claim that somehow, we understand the songs better than the ancients who were actively engaged with them is a folly. One does not need to, as some scholars currently do,[37] attribute the "Kongzi shilun" to Confucius' disciple Zixia 子夏 in order to note that the modern belief in the literal surface of the "Airs" runs counter to not only the Mao prefaces but also to *any* early reading of the *Poetry*, including the one of the "Kongzi shilun" that claims to follow Confucius' own views of the songs. To stay with "Guanju" as our best-documented example: no early reader or reciter took it as the simple song of courtship and marriage that modern interpreters believe it to be.

Beyond the different approaches—the earliest sources concerned with application, the later ones since Mao with authorship and original intent—looms a fundamental methodological problem. A comparison of the *Poetry* quotations in early manuscripts with both the Mao texts and the fragments of the Three Schools versions reveals a high percentage of character variants both among the same passages in different manuscripts and in comparison to their counterparts in received texts; yet more than ninety per cent of these variants are homophonous or near-homophonous with one another.[38] This strongly suggests that the *Poetry* was a text without a single definite written version; instead, it was a text memorized by the cultural elite that got written down in different and mutually independent forms whenever a particular occasion—be it a teaching context or the need for grave goods—called for it.

Taken together, the flexibility of the early writing system, the large number of homophone words, and the archaic and poetic language of the *Poetry* allowed for numerous choices of meaning. This situation was further exacerbated with the "Airs" that even in their received versions, in contrast to the sacrificial odes and court hymns, have remained notoriously open to various interpretations. Lacking historical context and narrative structure while being filled with archaic expressions, including repetitions of reduplicative (and to a lesser extent also rhyming and alliterative) binomes that are descriptive only in the vaguest of senses, the very words of the texts, written with a range of character choices, had to be determined. A reader who did not already know the song would not be able to make sense of it—or he or she would be able to come up with numerous parallel interpretations because of far too many variables in any of them. This is the situation both the "Kongzi shilun" and the Mao commentary respond to,

albeit with radically different approaches: here by briefly capturing the essence of a song evoked for its potential application, there with detailed glosses intended to arrest the meaning of the individual graphs and to develop a specific interpretative perspective on the whole song. It is not clear whether the Mao prefaces to the individual songs were the result of these interpretations, whether the glosses made the songs conform with an already existing hermeneutic tradition as it is now represented in the prefaces, or whether both developed alongside one another.[39] Yet while the "Kongzi shilun" took the overall meaning of an individual song for granted without determining the meaning of specific words, the Mao glosses did precisely this: create a text of a *certain* meaning. Strictly speaking, there was no early version of the *Poetry* outside or independent of its different hermeneutic traditions. It was only in these traditions that the songs, wide open to diverging and even mutually exclusive interpretations, were constituted in their meaning.

To illustrate the situation, it is useful to return to "Guanju" as our best-documented example. In Waley's translation, the first stanza reads as follows:

"Fair, fair," cry the ospreys	關關雎鳩
On the island in the river.	在河之洲
Lovely is this noble lady,	窈窕淑女
Fit bride for our lord.[40]	君子好逑

Likewise, Legge translates:

Kwan-kwan go the ospreys,
On the islet in the river.
The modest, retiring, virtuous, young lady:—
For our prince a good mate she.[41]

Just about everything in this reading is constructed by commentary and interpretation. Waley's translation of the reduplicative binome *guanguan* 關關 as "fair, fair" is not supported by any early source. Legge, as most other readers, takes the binome as onomatopoeic of the bird's cry. In Mao's gloss, *guanguan* is a "harmonious sound" (*hesheng* 和聲), which other Han texts expand to "the melodious sound being harmonious" (*yinsheng he ye* 音聲和也). Further early sources gloss the single word *guan* as "entering" (*ru* 入), "connecting" (*tong* 通), or "conjoining" (*jiao* 交), with the reduplicative form *guanguan* then representing the sounds of two birds singing their mutual enjoyment 鳥聲之兩相和悅也.[42] The English choice of "ospreys" for *jujiu* 雎鳩 is an educated guess. Ospreys, or sea hawks, are large birds

of prey that can be found around the world. Feeding mostly on fish, the birds usually mate for life.[43] The early commentators, in a flurry of pseudo-zoological glosses, describe the birds as monogamous and faithful to each other even after the death of the partner (*si bu zai pi'er* 死不再匹二); furthermore, the birds are said to virtuously "dwell separately" (*you bie* 有別)—in an anthropomorphically moral separation of the sexes!—while calling each other.

There is nothing predating the Han readings of "Guanju" to support any of these glosses on the two binomes *guanguan* and *jujiu* in the first line of the song. What sustains all of them, however, is the idea that the birds are an analogy to the pure and virtuous union of a human couple, or, in the received commentaries, of a lord and his wife. Already in Han times, these became historicized as King Wen 文, the hallowed founder of the Zhou, and his queen. The second line of the couplet is rather straightforward, merely completing the nature image of the birds dwelling in their natural habitat. (The simplicity of the line has not stopped traditional commentators from elaborating at some length on the imagined trees on the island that provide an environment of virtuous seclusion and separation). The same pattern of an obscure first and relatively clear second line is repeated in the second couplet of the stanza. The first line (and third overall in the stanza) again consists of two binomes: *yaotiao* 窈窕 and *shunü* 淑女. A number of Han texts—including the Mao commentary—follow the *Erya* 爾雅 glossary of possibly the third century BCE[44] that glosses *shu* 淑 as *shan* 善 ("good," "virtuous"), firmly establishing *shunü* as "virtuous lady." The problem, however, is the word *yaotiao*, glossed by Mao as *youxian* 幽閒, "pure and secluded"—which is the obvious source of Legge's "modest, retiring." More than any other, this gloss defines the character of the lady and the relationship with her partner.

When the Mawangdui "Wu xing" manuscript cites "Guanju," *yaotiao* (*ʔiəwʔ-gliawʔ) is written *jiaoshao* 茭芍 (*kəraw-tiawk).[45] Yet while the near-homophonous characters in *yaotiao* and *jiaoshao* are writing the same word, the meaning of "pure and secluded" cannot be extended to the sexual reading of "Guanju" in both "Wu xing" and "Kongzi shilun." Furthermore, "pure and secluded," a meaning not documented before the Mao commentary, conflicts with the use of *yaotiao* in other early texts. For example, the song "Mountain Spirit" (Shangui 山鬼) of the "Nine Songs" (Jiu ge 九歌) section in the *Recitations of Chu* (*Chuci* 楚辭) begins as follows:

There seems to be someone in the winding mountain,	若有人兮山之阿
[She is] covered in fig-leaves, girdled with lichen yarn.	被薜荔兮帶女羅

Now a teasing gaze, next a well-formed smile— 既含睇兮又宜笑
"You, lady, refined in your allure, desire me."[46] 子慕予兮善窈窕

While the traditional commentators strenuously explain *yaotiao* by way of reference to the Mao gloss on "Guanju," the erotic context of the preceding line—which matches the language of desire in other pieces of the "Nine Songs"—leaves little doubt that the word must mean something else here. Another example is found within the *Poetry* itself, namely in "The Moon Comes Out" (Yue chu 月出; Mao 143) from the "Airs of Chen" (Chen feng 陳風). The song consists of three brief stanzas:

The moon comes forth, how bright, 月出皎兮
The beautiful girl, how adorable! 佼人僚兮
At leisure she is in her sensual allure— 舒窈糾兮
My toiled heart, how anxious. 勞心悄兮

The moon comes forth, how brilliant, 月出皓兮
The beautiful girl, how lovely! 佼人懰兮
At leisure she is in her beguiling charm— 舒懮受兮
My toiled heart, how troubled. 勞心慅兮

The moon comes forth, how radiant, 月出照兮
The beautiful girl, how vibrant! 佼人燎兮
At leisure she is in her enchanting appeal— 舒夭紹兮
My toiled heart, how haunted. 勞心慘兮

It is worth providing the phonetic reconstruction of the entire poem:[47]

Stanza 1				
1	月 ŋjuat	出 khljuat	皎 kiaw?	兮 gi
2	佼 kəraw?	人 njin	僚 riaw(?)	兮 gi
3	舒 hlja	窈 ?iəw?	糾 kjaw?	兮 gi
4	勞 raw	心 sjəm	悄 ?sjaw?	兮 gi

Stanza 2				
1	月 ŋjuat	出 khljuat	皓 kəwʔ	兮 gi
2	佼 kərawʔ	人 njin	懰 Crəwʔ	兮 gi
3	舒 hlja	優 ʔjəwʔ	受 djəwʔ	兮 gi
4	勞 raw	心 sjəm	慅 ʔsəwʔ	兮 gi

Stanza 3				
1	月 ŋjuat	出 khljuat	照 tjaw	兮 gi
2	佼 kərawʔ	人 njin	燎 riawh	兮 gi
3	舒 hlja	夭 ʔjaw	紹 djawʔ	兮 gi
4	勞 raw	心 sjəm	慘 ʔsawʔ	兮 gi

It is immediately apparent that the entire poem is dominated by the two vowels -ə and -a; the only recurrent exceptions to this pattern are the words "person" or "girl" (*ren* 人 / *njin) and the rhythmic particle *xi* 兮 (*gi). Stanzas 1 and 3 rhyme on *-aw while stanza 2 rhymes on *-əw. All three stanzas begin with the verb-object phrase "The moon comes forth" (*yue chu* 月出) that, despite its syntax, sounds like a rhyming binome (*ŋjuat-khljuat). The meter of this song is lively: in lines 1, 2, and 4 of each stanza, it is dum-dum <u>dum</u> *xi*, but the third lines are all dum <u>dum-dum</u> *xi*. This latter form matches the typical rhythm of the "Nine Songs" (as in the two couplets quoted above from "Mountain Spirit").

Moreover, each line varies only with one character—or one binome—from the corresponding lines in the other two stanzas. In line 1, the moon is characterized as "bright" (皎), "brilliant" (皓) and "radiant" (照); in line 2, the woman is described as "adorable" (僚), "lovely" (懰), and "vibrant" (燎); in line 3, she is further described with her "sensual allure" (窈糾), "beguiling charm" (優受), and "enchanting appeal" (夭紹); and in line 4, the singer's heart is said to be "anxious" (悄), "troubled" (慅), and "haunted" (慘). These are the words that matter; all others are the repetitive framework around them. Their correspondences can be shown as follows:

		Stanza 1	Stanza 2	Stanza 3
Line 1	The moon	皎 (*kiaw?) bright	皓 (*kəw?) brilliant	照 (*tjaw) radiant
Line 2	The lady	僚 (*riaw(?)) adorable	懰 (*Crəw?) lovely	燎 (*riawh) vibrant
Line 3	The lady	窈糾 (*?iəw?-kjaw?) sensual allure	懮受 (*?jəw?-djəw?) beguiling charm	夭紹 (*?jaw-djaw?) enchanting appeal
Line 4	The heart	悄 (*?sjaw?) anxious	慅 (*?səw?) troubled	慘 (*?saw?) haunted

Both semantically and phonetically, these essential words form a tight net throughout the poem. First, they closely correspond to one another between the three stanzas; second, because of their positions as the rhyme words in each line, they match one another within each stanza. The effect is an astonishing sound pattern that must have lent itself to an impressive performance at once coherent and variegated, aurally fusing into one the appearance of the moon, the captivating air of the woman, and the male speaker's tormented emotion. Yet even within this pattern, not all expressions are equal—clearly, because of its binomial form and the resulting different meter, the three phrases in line 3 of each stanza form the true core of the entire song. While the words in lines 1 and 2 of each stanza create semantic and phonetic correspondences between the moon and the lady, lines 3 and 4 leave the nature analogy behind. Instead, they create the stimulus (line 3) and sympathetic response (line 4) between the lady and the speaker that this song is all about.

As soon as one represents the binomes of line 3 phonetically, their coherence becomes apparent: they do not express three different qualities of the lady but say the same thing in three different ways. The individual graphs in these binomes are utterly irrelevant; as has long been noted, such descriptive rhyming, alliterative, or reduplicative binomes cannot be decoded based on the meaning of each character. Instead, they constitute indivisible words.[48] Abundant evidence for the same phenomenon is now furnished by the *Poetry* quotations in early manuscripts. While graphic variation is common across almost all types of words of these quotations, it is particularly intense in descriptive binomes.[49]

One example of this phenomenon is the word *yaotiao* 窈窕 (*?iəw?-gliaw?) in "Guanju" that is written *jiaoshao* 茭芍 (*kəraw-tiawk) in the "Wu xing" manuscript from Mawangdui. What is more, I believe that the sexual reading of "Guanju" in the "Wu xing" and "Kongzi shilun" manu-

scripts confirms the observation by the Qing scholar Ma Ruichen 馬瑞辰 (1782-1835), namely, that the characters *yaotiao* 窈窕 in "Guanju" write the same word that is written *yaojiao* 窈糾 (*ʔiəwʔ-kjawʔ) in "Yue chu"; and this word, furthermore, corresponds closely to *youshou* 優受 (*ʔjəwʔ-djəwʔ) as well as *yaoshao* 夭紹 (*ʔjaw-djawʔ) in the same song.[50] In other words, on grounds both semantic and phonetic, the manuscript evidence has now established a direct connection between the key words in "Guanju" and "Yue chu"—two songs that in the Mao prefaces are placed at opposite ends in the moral discourse of early China: the former purportedly praising the virtue of the queen, the latter "criticizing being fond of sexual allure/desire" (*ci hao se* 刺好色) and directed against those in office who "are not fond of virtue but delight in glorifying sexual allure/desire" (*bu hao de er yue mei se* 不好德而悅美色). Or phrased in a different way: the Mao reading of *yaojiao* in "Yue chu" matches the implied meaning of *yaotiao* or *jiaoshao* in the "Kongzi shilun" and "Wu xing" manuscripts. In this perspective, a couplet from "Guanju" can finally be placed next to one from "Yue chu":

"Alluring is the fair lady	窈窕淑女
Awake and asleep I desire her."	寤寐求之
("Guanju," stanza 2)	

At leisure she is in her sensual allure—	舒窈糾兮
My toiled heart, how anxious.	勞心悄兮
("Yue chu," stanza 1)	

To remove any doubt, the Mawangdui manuscript comments on the line in "Guanju" that it expresses "sexual desire" (*si se* 思色).

"Yue chu" is one of the ten "Airs of Chen" in the *Poetry*. Without exception, the Mao reading finds them sexually suggestive and as such serving as political admonition of lascivious rulers. In "Guanju," by contrast, the same suggestive language is redefined in moral terms; beginning with the individual word glosses (such as "pure and secluded" for *yaotiao*) and ending in the preface, any expression of sexual allure and desire is forcefully suppressed. The manuscripts—and arguably the above-cited passages in the *Analects*, in the *Xunzi*, and by Liu An—take a different path: they recognize the language of desire not as an expression and criticism of depravity but as the most powerful means to advance the audience toward morality and ritual propriety. The fact that this reading is found not only in tiny fragments scattered across several transmitted sources but also in the "Kongzi shilun" of around 300 BCE and the Mawangdui "Wu xing" of more than a century later indicates its wide and continuous acceptance from late Warring States through early imperial times. With the

"Kongzi shilun," this hitherto nearly invisible hermeneutic tradition is now associated with Confucius himself, the purported compiler and foremost interpreter of the *Poetry*. It redefines a song like "Guanju" as much as one like "Yue chu" and collapses the perceived distance between them.

Another song that the "Wu xing" commentary on "Guanju" draws into the picture is "Zhongzi, Please!" (Qiang Zhongzi 將仲子; Mao 76), one of the notorious, purportedly lascivious "Airs of Zheng" that the tradition after Mao has struggled to reconcile with the *Poetry* as a collection "without wayward thoughts" (*si wu xie* 思無邪; *Analects* 2.2). "Qiang Zhongzi" contains the words of a woman who tries to restrain her lover in his all-too-public advances; through its three stanzas, it admonishes him that while he is truly loved, "the words of father and mother," "the words of my older brothers," and "the many words by the people" are "still to be feared" (*yi ke wei ye* 亦可畏也). Compare this to the passage from the "Wu xing" commentary cited above where the text refers to "Guanju" in order to explain the poetic principle of "illustration" (*yu* 諭):

> If [his desire] is as deep as this, would he copulate next to his father and mother? Even if threatened with death, he would not do it. Would he copulate next to his older and younger brothers? He would not do it either. Would he copulate next to the countrymen? He would not do it either. [Being fearful] of father and older brother, and only then being fearful of others, is ritual propriety. Using [the expression] of sexual allure to illustrate ritual propriety is to advance [in moral conduct].

It is not difficult to see that this passage imagines the male lover in "Guanju" ("Awake and asleep I desire her") in the very terms of "Qiang Zhongzi" where he is admonished not to give in to his desire in front of parents, brothers, and the people around who all are "still to be feared." Once again, the difference between "Guanju" and one of the seemingly most indecent songs of the *Poetry* is erased—and so is some of the distance that for all too long has separated us from a recognition of the ancient songs in what might come close to their earliest reception.

Concluding Remarks

There is no question that any *Poetry* reader after the Han had to reckon with the Mao recension of the text, as the competing Western Han Three Schools of interpretation gradually lost their influence and, indeed, their texts. According to the "Monograph on the Classics and [Other] Writings" (Jingji zhi 經籍志) in the seventh-century *Suishu* 隋書, the recensions of both the Lu and the Qi *Poetry* had disappeared for centuries, and the Han *Poetry* was

no longer taught.[51] Judging from the imperial catalogue, by the seventh century, scholarship of the *Poetry* was completely focused on the *Mao Poetry*. This situation poses a nearly insurmountable problem when seeing *Poetry* quotations in early manuscript that are full of textual variants. Because the vast majority of these variants are merely graphic in nature, writing the same word with a different character, our approach to reading *Poetry* quotations in early manuscripts is invariably guided by, and often limited to, the Mao glosses on the corresponding characters in the received text. These glosses are not only our earliest explanations for the words in question but also have been accepted by the subsequent literary and lexicological tradition. Thus, looking up *yaotiao* in a dictionary will always send us back to the original Mao gloss, however problematic and ideological it may be.

To harmonize possible variant readings in excavated (or looted) manuscripts with their received counterparts means to bury them once again in the very tradition that had lost, and often purposefully excised, them in the first place. As an alternative, I suggest we look for every piece of evidence that has survived somewhere else, cast out of sight, that might offer an alternative to the Mao reading and possibly fit better what we now find in the manuscripts. Such pieces of evidence are the brief comments in the *Analects*, the *Xunzi*, and by Liu An cited above. Even more fruitful, a look beyond the tradition of classical learning might show us a rather different reception of the *Poetry* that only gradually begins to receive proper attention: the use of the "Airs" in later poetry.[52] It is here where one finds an example such as Lu Ji's 陸機 (261-303) poetic exposition "Seven Summons" (Qi zheng 七徵), written after the model of Mei Sheng's 枚乘 (d. 141 BCE) "Seven Stimuli" (Qi fa 七發), where a courtier tries to lure a noble but aloof man back into the world of sensual experience. Speaking of sexual allure and desire, the speaker declaims:

I have heard:	
North of the Mei River, there was the longing [of a man] gathering dodder;	蓋聞沬北有采唐之思
On the banks of the Qi River there were the sighs [of a man saying] "accompany me."	淇士有送予之歎
In "Guanju," "waking and asleep" leads to troubled thoughts;	關雎以寤寐爲戚
In "Zhen Wei," "dissolute amusement" leads to pleasure.	溱洧以謔浪爲歡
As for	
Enchanting consorts and voluptuous women,	若夫妖嬪豔女

One searches the crowd and picks the exquisite. . . .[53] 蒐群擢俊

Here, it is only the context that reveals a strongly sexual reading of "Guanju": the first two lines allude to "Among the Mulberries" (Sangzhong 桑中; Mao 48) in the "Airs of Yong" (Yong feng 鄘風); next, "Zhen Wei" 溱洧 is the title of Mao 95, the final piece of the "Airs of Zheng." In the Mao reading, both songs are yet other examples of songs where the imagery of allure and desire serves to criticize sexual dissolution. Lu Ji may not have viewed the songs as satire, but, as is clear from the context, he fully recognized their expressions of erotic enticement—and placed "Guanju" squarely into their middle.[54] Whatever the line on "Guanju" may refer to, it is not the praise of the queen. When Lu Ji, one of the most prominent writers of his age, gave "Guanju" the same sexual reading that we now see in early manuscripts, he must have expected his perceptive audience to smile with appreciation. Not all was lost in tradition. Not all is.

Endnotes

1. The glosses were first published in several installments in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* between 1942 and 1946, paralleled by Karlgren's translations of the entire anthology. Both glosses and translations were reprinted as books in 1950 (translations) and 1964 (glosses) by the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm. The glosses were translated by Dong Tonghe 董同和, *Gao Benhan Shijing zhushi* 高本漢詩經注釋 (Taipei: Zhonghua congshu bianshen weiyuanhui, 1960). In 1996, Li Xiongxi 李雄溪 published *Gao Benhan ya song zhushi jiaozheng* 高本漢雅頌注釋斠正 (Tapei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1996), collating and correcting Karlgren's glosses on the *ya* 雅 and *song* 頌 sections of the *Poetry*.
2. In the introduction to his translation *The Book of Odes: Chinese Text, Transcription and Translation* (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1950), p. 1, Karlgren announces that his translation is "not intended to have any literary merits, I endeavoured, on the contrary, to make it as literal as possible, intending it to serve such students of sinology who wish to acquaint themselves with this grand collection, which has played such an enormous part in the literary and cultural history of China." To me, such a statement makes little sense. In order to get acquainted with "this grand collection" of poetry, one would

need to get at least some sense of its poetic diction, even though "poetry is what gets lost in translation," as famously put by Robert Frost.

3. Paris: E. Leroux.
4. The yet unpublished Qinghua University slips contain a different version of "Cricket" (*Xishuai* 蟋蟀; Mao 114) and at least three other songs that are not part of the current version of the *Poetry*; see Chen Zhi, "The Rite of *Yinzhi* (Drinking Celebration) and Poems Recorded on the Tsinghua Bamboo Slips" (paper presented at the "International Symposium on Excavated Manuscripts and the Interpretation of the *Book of Odes*," University of Chicago, September 12-13, 2009).
5. The current essay builds upon my research of the last several years. I have previously discussed some of the basic textual material in two essays: "Excavated Manuscripts and Their Socratic Pleasures: Newly Discovered Challenges in Reading the 'Airs of the States'," *Études Asiatiques/Asiatische Studien* 61.3 (2007): 775-93; and "Beyond the Mao Odes: *Shijing* Reception in Early Medieval China," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 127 (2007): 131-42. In addition, I briefly draw on "Speaking of Poetry: Pattern and Argument in the 'Kongzi shilun'," a paper I presented first at the "International Symposium on Excavated Manuscripts and the Interpretation of the *Book of Odes*," University of Chicago, September 12-13, 2009, and then at the international conference "Literary Forms of Argument," Oxford University, September 16-19, 2009.
6. The historical event of three brothers being buried alive with Lord Mu of Qin 秦穆公 in 621 BCE is elaborated upon in *Zuo zhuan* 左傳, "Wen gong" 文公 6 (621 BCE).
7. With this, I do not necessarily mean to follow Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145-ca. 85 BCE) who sees Confucius as the editor of the *Poetry* as a defined collection (*Shiji* 史記 [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982] 47.1936). However, recent manuscript finds fully corroborate that by the late fourth century BCE, a century and a half after Confucius' death, he was uniquely associated with the songs and seen as their most authoritative teacher and interpreter.
8. Michel Foucault, "Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?" (1969), English "What Is an Author," here cited from *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Critism*, ed. Josué V. Harari (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), pp. 141-60.
9. I strongly suspect that initially, this statement was not about the composition of poetry but about its recitation, invocation, and perform-

ance. However, the "Great Preface," presumably composed in the first century CE, unambiguously assigns it to the moment of textual production.

10. I consider the "Kongzi shilun" not an abstract discussion of the *Poetry* but a specific, and possibly local, teaching and study manual for how to apply the songs in various contexts.
11. Among many other studies on the topic, a comprehensive account of *Poetry* citations in the *Zuo zhuan* is given in Zeng Qinliang 曾勤良, *Zuo zhuan yinshi fushi zhi shijiao yanjiu* 左傳引詩賦詩之詩教研究 (Tapei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1993); in addition, see Mark Edward Lewis, *Writing and Authority in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 147-76, and David Schaberg, *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), pp. 72-78, 234-42, passim. For examples of the flexible interpretation of the *Poetry* see the excellent study by O Man-jong 吳萬鐘, *Cong shi dao jing: Lun Maoshi jieshi de yuanyuan ji qi tese* 從詩到經：論毛詩解釋的淵源及其特色 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2001), pp. 16-43.
12. Ma Chengyuan 馬承源, ed., *Shanghai bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu (yi)* 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書(一) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2001), pp. 13-41, 121-68.
13. Huang Huaixin 黃懷信, *Shanghai bowuguan cang zhanguo Chu zhushu "Shilun" jieyi* 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書《詩論》解義 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2004), pp. 1-22. Li Xueqin's rearrangement of the slips was only one of several such attempts within months of the original Shanghai Museum publication; see Xing Wen, "Guest Editor's Introduction," *Contemporary Chinese Thought* 39.4 (2008): pp. 7-10.
14. In the present essay, I shall not burden the reader with extensive philological notes on the original text. Following the original publication of the text in December 2001, an avalanche of textual criticism emerged in dozens, if not hundreds, of publications in Chinese. Excellent surveys of the more relevant discussions may be found in Liu Xinfang 劉信芳, *Kongzi shilun shuxue* 孔子詩論述學 (Hefei: Anhui daxue chubanshe, 2002) and Chen Tongsheng 陳桐生, *"Kongzi shilun" yanjiu* 《孔子詩論》研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004). In my translation and representation of the Chinese text, I selectively adopt readings from an array of studies, combined with my own reasoning. Furthermore, I offer the Chinese texts according to these interpretations and transcriptions into later standard characters, replac-

ing the often different characters in the original bamboo manuscripts. Readers who might benefit from detailed discussions of specific words and characters are referred to the original publication edited by Ma Chengyuan and to the subsequent books by Liu Xinfang and Chen Tongsheng.

15. As an alternative, the word *dong* 動 here might be understood as "as they move [the listener]." Furthermore, some scholars have suggested to read the character in question as *zhong* 終 ("in the end" or "as they end"), which is a possible but phonologically inferior choice.
16. Throughout this essay, I am using { } parentheses for tentative suggestions of missing words in the text. I often follow Huang Huaixin, *Shanghai bowuguan cang zhanguo Chu zhushu "Shilun" jieyi*.
17. Huang Huaixin, *Shanghai bowuguan cang zhanguo Chu zhushu "Shilun" jieyi*, pp. 23-50.
18. Wang Xianqian 王先謙, *Xunzi jijie* 荀子集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 19.336.
19. *Shiji* 史記, 84.2482 ("Qu Yuan Jia sheng liezhuan" 屈原賈生列傳) where the comment is without attribution. See, however, Hong Xingzu 洪興祖, *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 1.49 where it is quoted and properly attributed to Liu An in Ban Gu's 班固 (32-92) "Preface to the 'Li sao'" (Li sao xu 離騷序).
20. See Liu Xinfang 劉信芳, *Jianbo Wu xing jiegu* 簡帛五行解詁 (Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 2000), pp. 158-60; Wei Qipeng 魏啓鵬, *Jianbo "Wu xing" jianshi* 簡帛《五行》箋釋 (Taipei: Wanjuanlou, 2000), pp. 126-28; Pang Pu 龐樸, *Zhubo "Wu xing" pian jiaozhu ji yanjiu* 竹帛《五行》篇校注及研究 (Taipei: Wanjuanlou, 2000), pp. 82-83; Ikeda Tomohisa 池田知久, *Maôtai Kanbo hakusho gogyôhen kenkyû* 馬王堆漢墓帛書五行篇研究 (Tokyo: Kyûko Shoin, 1993), pp. 533-45; Jeffrey Riegel, "Eros, Introversion, and the Beginnings of *Shijing* Commentary," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57 (1997): 143-77; Mark Csikszentmihalyi, *Material Virtue: Ethics and the Body in Early China* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 366-67. As with the "Kongzi shilun" quotation above, I transcribe the text as interpreted in modern characters.
21. I do not subscribe to the idea that the *Analects* can be stratified into different chronological layers, not to mention that such layers can then be dated. Instead, I accept the competing view that the text was compiled in the Western Han out of a multiplicity of statements attributed to, and anecdotes involving, Confucius; see John Makeham, "The Formaton of *Lunyu* as a Book," *Monumenta Serica* 44 (1996): 1-

24; Zhu Weizheng 朱維錚, "Lunyu jieji cuoshuo" 論語結集脞說, *Kongzi yanjiu* 1 (1986): 40-52; and Mark Csikszentmihalyi, "Confucius and the *Analects* in the Han," in *Confucius and the Analects: New Essays*, ed. Bryan Van Norden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 134-62. This view of the *Analects* is strongly substantiated by Michael J. Hunter's (Princeton University) dissertation currently in progress.

22. According to *Hanshu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 44.2145, Liu An wrote his commentary on the "Li sao" on the occasion of his statutory visit to the imperial court in 139 BCE, reportedly in just one morning.
23. Again, in this I do not posit that *Analects* 13.5 precedes the "Kongzi shilun." It could reflect a more generally available piece of early lore, or it even could be a later summary of the kind of recitation practiced in the *Zuo zhuan* and taught in the "Kongzi shilun."
24. Huang Huaixin assumes that the comment following the missing characters refers to "Xiang shu" 相鼠; see *Shanghai bowuguan cang zhanguo Chu zhushu "Shilun" jieyi*, pp. 127-29.
25. Here, slip 29 breaks off. It is not clear to me whether or not the section continues onto slip 23, as Huang Huaixin, *Shanghai bowuguan cang zhanguo Chu zhushu "Shilun" jieyi*, pp. 143-53, assumes.
26. Huang Huaixin, *Shanghai bowuguan cang zhanguo Chu zhushu "Shilun" jieyi*, pp. 94-153.
27. See Yang Bojun 楊伯峻, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhu* 春秋左傳注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1993), p. 1022 ("Xiang gong" 襄公 15).
28. See Wang Xianqian, *Xunzi jijie*, 21.265; Liu Wendian 劉文典, *Huainan honglie jijie* 淮南鴻烈集解 (*Xinbian zhuzi jicheng* ed., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 2.78.
29. Zhu Xi, *Shi jizhuan* 詩集傳 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1958), pp. 3-4.
30. See Cheng Junying 程俊英, *Shijing zhuxi* 詩經注析 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996), pp. 9-12.
31. Gao Heng 高亨, *Shijing jinzhu* 詩經今注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1987), pp. 4-6.
32. Qu Wanli 屈萬里, *Shijing quanshi* 詩經詮釋 (Taipei: Lianjing, 1983), pp. 8-9.
33. Legge's translation of the first two couplets captures the reading by Zhu Xi: "I was gathering and gathering the mouse-ear, / But could not fill my shallow basket. / *With a sigh for the man of my heart, I placed it there on the highway*." See James Legge, *The Chinese Classics, Vol. IV: The She King* (repr. Taipei: Southern Materials Center, 1985), p. 8.

The translation of Karlgren, *The Book of Odes*, p. 3, proceeds along the same understanding: "I gather the küan-er plant, but it does not fill my slanting basket; *I am sighing for my beloved one; I place it here on the road of Chou*."

34. Ma Yinqin, "Shangbo jian 'Shilun' yu 'Shixu' shishuo yitong bijiao: jianlun 'Shixu' yu 'Shilun' de yuanyuan guanxi" 上博簡《詩論》與《詩序》詩說異同比較—兼論《詩序》與《詩論》的淵源關係, *Jianbo yanjiu* 簡帛研究 (2002-2003): 98-105.
35. Huang Huaixin, *Shanghai bowuguan cang zhanguo Chu zhushu "Shilun" jieyi*, p. 134.
36. Strictly speaking, the first sentence of the preface is separate from the following and probably represents a different textual layer; on this structure of the "upper" and "lower" parts of the prefaces, see Steven Van Zoeren, *Poetry and Personality: Reading, Exegesis, and Hermeneutics in Traditional China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), pp. 92-95. Van Zoeren argues that the "upper" parts of the prefaces—usually the first one or two sentences—are chronologically earlier than their subsequent elaborations, or commentaries, in the "lower" parts. In the case of "Juan'er," I would argue, however, that the two parts represent two separate teaching traditions, with the "lower" part quite likely predating the "upper" one.
37. The authorship of the "Kongzi shilun" has become an obsession in certain circles. Li Xueqin and others who believe in Zixia's authorship refer to Confucius' brief praise for his expertise in *Analects* 3.8 ("Bayi" 八佾) and to three later statements on Zixia's teaching of the *Poetry* that range from the *Hanshu* "Monograph on Arts and Letters" to Lu Deming's 陸德明 (556-627) *Jingdian shiwen* 經典釋文 preface—that is, sources postdating Confucius (or Zixia) by five hundred to one thousand years. On this extremely tenuous basis, Xing Wen has stated as recently as in 2008: "According to the transmitted textual evidence available to us, Zixia is very likely the author of the bamboo 'Shilun.'" See his "Guest Editor's Introduction," *Contemporary Chinese Thought* 39.4 (2008): 6. *Pace* such strong convictions, I completely agree with scholars like Chen Tongsheng, *"Kongzi shilun" yanjiu*, pp. 85-88, who has argued that we cannot identify the author of the manuscript beyond the general observation that he was a Warring States man learned in the *Poetry* and influenced by contemporaneous discourses on self-cultivation.
38. For an analysis of all these variants see Kern, "The *Odes* in Excavated Manuscipts," in *Text and Ritual in Early China*, ed. Martin Kern

(Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), pp. 149-93.

39. To complicate matters further, the chronological relation between the "upper" and "lower" prefaces (see above) is uncertain.
40. Arthur Waley, *The Book of Songs*, ed. (with additional translations) Joseph R. Allen (New York: Grove Press, 1996), p. 5.
41. Legge, *The Chinese Classics, Vol. IV: The She King*, p. 1.
42. For the full discussion of the early commentaries on "Guanju," see Wang Xianqian 王先謙, *Shi sanjia yi jishu* 詩三家義集疏 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), pp. 4-16; see also Karlgren, *Glosses on the Book of Odes* (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1964), pp. 86-87.
43. See the excellent article in Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osprey), last accessed December 27, 2009.
44. The date is based on Karlgren, "The Early History of the *Chou Li* and *Tso Chuan* Texts," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 3 (1931): 44-54.
45. All phonetic transcriptions after Axel Schuessler, *A Dictionary of Early Zhou Chinese* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987).
46. *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), p. 79.
47. Transcriptions after Schuessler, *A Dictionary of Early Zhou Chinese*. Strictly speaking, Schuessler—like other historical linguists—does not offer phonetic transcriptions but rather a highly complex notation system of phonological distinctions within early Chinese. We do not know whether the words sounded the way they are transcribed; what we do know from these reconstructions (especially for the main vowels and finals of the words, although with less certainty for their initials) are the distinctions and correspondences between the words. It is therefore valid, as I do in the following, to speak of phonetic relations between words because these relations are real; what is not necessarily real (but also less important) is the way they are transcribed.
48. See George A. Kennedy, "A Note on Odes 220," in *Studia Serica Bernhard Karlgren Dedicata: Sinological Studies Dedicated to Bernhard Karlgren on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Søren Egerod and Else Glahn (Cophenhagen: E. Munksgaard, 1959), pp. 190-98; David R. Knechtges, *Wen xuan, or Selections of Refined Literature*, vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 3-12.
49. See Kern, "The *Odes* in Excavated Manuscripts," pp. 175-76.
50. Ma Ruichen 馬瑞辰, *Mao shi zhuan jian tongshi* 毛詩傳箋通釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989), pp. 417-18.
51. See Kern, "Beyond the *Mao Odes*," pp. 131-33.

52. An outstanding example among a number of new books on this topic is Wang Zuomin 汪祚民, *Shijing wenxue chanshi shi: Xian Qin—Sui Tang* 詩經文學闡釋史（先秦—隋唐）(Beijing: Renmin chubanshe 2005).
53. *Lu Shiheng wenji* 陸士衡文集 (*Sibu congkan* ed.), 8.9a-b. Yan Kejun 嚴可均, *Quan shanggu sandai Qin Han sanguo liuchao wen* 全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), "Quan Jin wen" 全晉文 98.2a, notes "Seven Diminutives" (Qi wei 七微) as a variant title. See also the discussion in Wang Zuomin, *Shijing wenxue chanshi shi: Xian Qin—Sui Tang*, pp. 280-81.
54. Furthermore, a variant reading of the first two lines, preserved in the eighth-century literary compendium *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985, 57.1031-33), suggests an additional allusion to "A Fellow" (Meng 氓, Mao 58), another song from the "Airs of Wei" (Wei feng 衛風) that according to Mao criticizes improper seduction and licentious mingling. For a fuller discussion, see Kern, "Beyond the Mao *Odes*."

Why Didn't Zhao Mingcheng Send Letters to His Wife, Li Qingzhao, When He Was Away?

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This paper concerns the relation of poetry to biography in the song lyrics (*ci* 詞) of Li Qingzhao 李清照 (1084-1150s). My aim is to call into question expectations that readers bring to Li Qingzhao's poetry, expectations that have affected and been reinforced by scholarship on her in recent years. I focus on periods of separation from her husband that Li Qingzhao is said to have endured during her twenty-seven years of marriage. We begin with the following song by her:

To the tune "A Single Cutting of Plum Blossoms"	一翦梅
The scent of red lotuses fades, jade bamboo mat autumn.	紅藕香殘玉簟秋
Lightly she unties her gauze skirt	輕解羅裳
To board the magnolia boat alone.	獨上蘭舟
Amid the clouds, who sends a brocade letter?	雲中誰寄錦書來
As the wild-geese character comes back	雁字回時
The moon fills the western tower.	月滿西樓
Blossoms fall on their own, the water flows by itself.	花自飄零水自流
One type of longing	一種相思
Idle sadness in two places.	兩處閑愁
There's no means to get rid of this feeling.	此情無計可消除
As soon as it leaves the brow	纔下眉頭
It surfaces in the heart.[1]	却上心頭

In the first stanza, "wild-geese character" refers to the configuration of the birds in flight, likened to the Chinese character *yi* 一 "one," if it is a straight line, or *ren* 人 "person" (or *ba* 八 "eight") if it is a "v" formation.

By legend, wild geese were said to be bearers of letters from loved ones far away. Because of an allusion, a "brocade letter" specifically implies a missive from a distant spouse.[2] In song lyrics "western tower" is by convention the dwelling of a woman, and it is where we often find a solitary woman whose lover has left. Here, even though the migratory geese are returning, raising hopes for the delivery of a letter, the question in line four is best understood as rhetorical, meaning that no letter has come. That is the way the line is normally read.[3]

The Yuan dynasty miscellany, *Langhuan ji* 瑯嬛記, by Yi Shizhen 伊世珍, quotes this song lyric by Li Qingzhao and provides an explanation of its origin. Not long after Li Qingzhao was married, her husband, Zhao Mingcheng 趙明誠 (1081-1129), "went off on distant travels bearing a chest of books" (*fuji yuanyou* 負笈遠遊). Li Qingzhao could not bear to see him leave and so she found a length of brocade and wrote out this song lyric on it and gave it to Mingcheng as a farewell present.[4] Yi Shizhen identifies the source of his information as something called an "*Unofficial Biography*" (*waizhuan* 外傳), which presumably was a fictionalized account of Li Qingzhao's life, or perhaps of the lives of Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng together. It is, first of all, interesting to see that such an "unofficial" and probably romanticized account of our poet's life existed as early as Yuan times, though unfortunately it did not survive.

Scholarly opinion of Yi Shizhen's work is not high. It is often denigrated as being full of unreliable or spurious accounts. The *Unofficial Biography* that is Yi Shizhen's source here is one of these works whose credibility is low. Immediately preceding the account of the origin of this song lyric, the same source records a story about a prophetic dream Zhao Mingcheng had about his future wife before his betrothal. In his dream Mingcheng was reading a book, and when he awoke he remembered three lines from it, but their meaning eluded him. When he repeated the lines to his father, the father decoded them—by splitting up and recombining graphic elements, and by identifying sound puns—reducing them to "husband to a literary woman" (*cinü zhi fu* 詞女之夫). Soon none other than Li Qingzhao was selected to become his wife. This story is likely part of a legend that had grown up around the famous couple.

Despite the dubious character of the information in the *Langhuan ji*, the notion that Zhao Mingcheng went off on a distant journey soon after Li Qingzhao married him evidently had considerable appeal. The *Langhuan ji* passage was quoted in numerous Ming and Qing period collections of song lyric criticism and anecdotes. It is also cited and accepted as fact in the long and influential account of Li Qingzhao's life by the Qing scholar Yu Zhengxie 俞正燮 (1775-1840).[5] It is even repeated in recent scholarship on Li Qingzhao, including Xu Peijun's 徐培均 authoritative annotated

edition of her complete works, published by the Shanghai Ancient Texts Publishing Company in 2002.[6]

The durability of this idea of Zhao Mingcheng's early absence from his wife is not due solely to *Langhuan ji*. It also owes something to a few words from Li Qingzhao herself, contained in her famous "Afterword" 後序 to Zhao Mingcheng's *Records on Metal and Stone* 金石錄. This is what she says:

> Two years later (after her marriage), my husband came out to serve as an official, whereupon we ate vegetarian meals and wore clothes of coarse cloth, intent upon obtaining from every distant place and remote region as many of the world's ancient inscriptions and rare engraved words that we could.[7]

Mindful of these words, Xu Peijun "corrects" the *Langhuan ji*. It was not to find a teacher or pursue his general studies (which is what the phrase *fuji yuanyou* 負笈遠遊 implies) that Zhao Mingcheng left, but rather to collect the rubbings that would eventually constitute the contents of *Records on Metal and Stone*.

Yet the "Afterword" passage lends itself to more than one interpretation. If the sentence above is read by itself, taken out of context, it does indeed seem to suggest that Zhao Mingcheng went off on far-flung travels to collect ancient inscriptions. But it looks different in the original context, as seen below:

> It was in the *xinsi* year of the Jianzhong period (1101) that I married into the Zhao family. At that time, my late father was serving as vice director of the Ministry of Rites, and the grand councilor (her father-in-law, Zhao Tingzhi 趙挺之) was vice director of the Ministry of Personnel. At the time my husband was twenty-one years old and was a student in the National University. The Zhaos and Lis are undistinguished families that have always been poor. On the leave days of the first and fifteenth of every month, when he requested holiday leave, we would pawn some clothes to raise five hundred cash. Then we'd walk to Xiangguo Monastery to buy fruits and rubbings of inscriptions. We'd take them home, sit down together and spread them out, savoring them. We felt that we were living in the harmonious era of Getianshi.[8]
>
> Two years later, my husband came out to serve as an official, whereupon we ate vegetarian meals and wore clothes of coarse cloth, intent upon obtaining from every distant place and remote region as many of the world's ancient inscriptions and rare

> engraved words that we could. As the days and months passed, our collection grew. The grand councilor (Zhao Tingzhi) resided inside the imperial compound, and many of our relatives and friends worked in the palace libraries and archives. They had access to lost odes, little-known histories, and such books as those recovered from the walls of Lu and the tomb of Ji.[9] When we came upon such rare works, we exerted ourselves to make copies of them. Once awakened to the flavor of this activity, we could not stop. Later, whenever we came upon a piece of calligraphy or a painting by a celebrated artist, whether ancient or recent, or a precious vessel from the Three Dynasties, we would take off a layer of clothing to pawn for it. I remember that once during the Chongning period (1102-06) someone brought a peony painting by Xu Xi (10th century) to show us. He was asking two hundred thousand for it. In those days it would have been hard even for young persons in eminent officials' families to come up with such a sum. The man left it with us for two days, but we finally decided we could not purchase it and returned it to him. Afterward, my husband and I looked at each other dejectedly for several days.[10]

Seen in this light, it appears that Zhao Mingcheng never left the capital, and indeed that he, with the assistance of his wife, used his proximity to the palace archives and his personal ties through his father and other high-ranking friends and relatives to build their collection of rare books, rubbings, and antiquities. The chronology is important. Li Qingzhao was married in 1101, when Zhao Mingcheng was still a student in the National University. It was, according to her, two years later (1103) that Mingcheng began his official career. We do not know in what office or capacity that career began. But we do know that in the tenth month of 1105 he was appointed vice minister of the Office of State Ceremonies (*honglu shaoqing* 鴻臚少卿).[11] This was a surprisingly eminent court appointment for such a young man, and surely came to Mingcheng because by then his father was so eminent in the early years of Huizong's reign (his two older brothers also received prestigious appointments at the same time).

Actually, Huang Shengzhang 黃盛璋 addressed the issue of Zhao Mingcheng's purported early departure from the capital in his 1957 seminal study of Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng.[12] Huang rejected the tradition that Zhao Mingcheng ever left the capital (or his wife) during those years, and he even proposed an explanation of how the erroneous understanding had come about. The language Li Qingzhao uses in her afterword is that Zhao Mingcheng "*chu shihuan*" 出仕宦. Huang says that *chu* 出, which Yi Shizhen (following the *Unofficial Biography*) took to mean "went out [to

the provinces]" to take up office, should be understood as "*chu er shi yi*" 出而仕矣, meaning that Zhao "came out [from the National University]" or "went out [into the world]" to join officialdom. Huang finds support for this reading in the transcription of the afterword by the early Southern Song scholar Hong Mai 洪邁. Hong Mai's version of the afterword text simply says that Zhao *cong huan* 從宦 (or in some editions *cong guan* 從官) "joined officialdom."[13] Huang Shengzhang goes on to find fault with the *Langhuan ji's* claim that Li Qingzhao's "A Single Cutting of Plum Blossoms" could have been written as a farewell song to Zhao Mingcheng, noting several features of the piece that make it implausible to fulfill such a role.

Several of the scholars who have published accounts of Li Qingzhao's life and works in recent years accept Huang Shengzhang's argument and new understanding of the whereabouts of Zhao Mingcheng during the early years of his marriage, including Wang Xuechu 王學初 (Wang Zhongwen 王仲聞), Chen Zumei 陳祖美, Yu Zhonghang 于中航, Zhuge Yibing 諸葛憶兵, and Deng Hongmei 鄧紅梅.[14] As mentioned above, however, the traditional view of the early departure of Zhao Mingcheng from his wife is still accepted by some. Xu Peijun's support for it factors into his dating of two of Li Qingzhao's song lyrics (including "A Single Plum Cutting") that refer to separation from a loved one to the period.

Yet when we look at those scholars who agree with Huang Shengzhang on this point, we find an interesting phenomenon. Most of them suggest another type of separation that Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng had to endure early in their marriage. There are two features of these alternative separations that are immediately striking. The first is the variety of them that have been suggested, all subsequent to Huang Shengzhang's publication, and most in the past ten to fifteen years. Each scholar has his or her own suggestion for a separation, and each tends to be supplanted by the next publication that posits a new one. In other words, there is no clear consensus about exactly how the young married couple was separated and for what reason. The second, which is probably related to the lack of a clear consensus, is that each suggestion has certain weaknesses and might readily be challenged. I will briefly summarize three of these suggestions, and points that might be raised against them, below.

Chen Zumei maintains that it was Li Qingzhao who left the capital and returned to her natal home in Zhangqiu 章丘 (Shangdong). She was forced to leave because of the decrees banning Yuanyou party officials and their offspring from office and from residence in the capital in 1103, and she was not able to return for good to the capital until that ban was lifted in 1106. Yet in between, during certain periods that the political feuding subsided and the ban was relaxed, Li Qingzhao managed to come back to the capital

for brief periods (e.g., in 1104), only to be forced to leave again when the political situation worsened again.[15]

We know that Li Qingzhao's father, Li Gefei 李格非, was listed on all of the various lists of Yuanyou faction "traitors" issued at the instigation of Cai Jing 蔡京 between 1102 and 1104. That was only natural, because he had served as professor in the National University during the Yuanyou period and was associated with the literary circle of Su Shi. It is also true that certain decrees in the persecution campaign of those years specified prohibitions to be imposed not only on the Yuanyou officials but also upon certain members of their families. A decree issued in the third month of 1102 orders that the "sons and younger brother" of Yuanyou officials must live in the provinces and prohibits them from entering the capital.[16] A decree issued in the ninth month of the year prohibits imperial clan members from marrying the "sons and grandsons" of Yuanyou faction members, adding that if such a marriage is promised but not yet carried out, the betrothal shall be terminated.[17] It is these decrees that Chen Zumei cites as the cause of Li Qingzhao's departure from the capital.

It is not at all certain, however, that such prohibitions would have applied to the daughters of Yuanyou faction officials. Such application would have greatly multiplied the number of persons affected by the ban. The low status of daughters in clans also argues against them being included along with "sons and grandsons." It seems particularly improbable that the ban would have applied to daughters who were already married. The wording of the second decree mentioned above, which concerned imperial relatives (Zhao Mingcheng's family was not one of them), implies that nothing was to be done in the case of marriages already formalized, as Li Qingzhao's had been. Besides, this particular daughter happened to have a father-in-law who in 1102 became vice grand councilor, that is, next to Cai Jing the second highest official in the empire. Even in the unlikely case that daughters were included in the ban, if an exception were going to be made for any of them, it might well be one with such lofty connections. Another consideration is that in her own narrative of her married life of this period, Li Qingzhao says nothing about separating from her husband and returning to her parents' home. Actually, as we see in the passage quoted earlier, Li Qingzhao's memory of these years (the "Chongning period") appears to be of an integral time when she and her husband were together. She represents the years as contended ones, when she and Zhao Mingcheng were busy in their leisure time assembling their collection. The only disappointment she registers from the years is over the Xu Xi peony painting they could not afford, even though they were "young persons in an eminent official's family." If Li Qingzhao herself was affected by the Yuanyou persecution, she gives no hint of it in her afterword, even though

that narrative was written thirty years later, when that period of persecution had come to be widely condemned and its victims thought to have been vindicated by subsequent events.

Another scenario of early separation of the married couple is put forth by Zhuge Yibing, in his literary biography of Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng published in 2004. Zhuge reminds us that when the couple was first married Zhao Mingcheng was still a student in the National University.[18] As such, he points out, Mingcheng would have been obliged to reside in the dormitories at the university and would only have been allowed to return home to visit his new wife on the first and fifteenth of every month. There is a problem, again, of reconciling this account of early separation with the way Li Qingzhao herself describes the early days of her marriage ("We felt that we were living in the harmonious era of Getianshi"). Li Qingzhao does refer to the free time she and her husband had together on the first and fifteenth of every month, when they would go to the Xiangguo Monastery market to buy books and rubbings. But that might simply mean that those were the holidays on which Zhao Mingcheng had no obligations at the university. It does not necessarily mean that Mingcheng only spent two nights at home per month. One would think that the son of the vice grand councilor might have some special privileges his classmates would not enjoy. Nevertheless, Zhuge uses the purported university residence of Zhao Mingcheng to account for Li Qingzhao's song lyrics on separation that he dates to the period. In one of them, the speaker complains, as she stands on a high balcony looking out, that she is receiving no "distant letters" (*yuanxin* 遠信).[19] To accept Zhuge's understanding of the provenance of this song, we must believe Li Qingzhao is exaggerating her separation to quite an extreme extent.

In Deng Hongmei's *New Biography of Li Qingzhao* 李清照新傳, published in 2005, one more early separation of the young married couple is posited.[20] This one, she argues, came after Li Qingzhao's return to the capital in 1106, at the end of the Chongning period persecution of Yuanyou partisans. At the court, these years were marked by intense rivalry and in-fighting between Cai Jing and his former assistant, Li Qingzhao's father-in-law, Zhao Tingzhi. Tingzhi had briefly been elevated to the post of grand councilor in 1105, which he shared with Cai Jing. (It is because Tingzhi finally achieved this post, the highest possible, that Li Qingzhao refers to him by this title in her afterword.) But their co-incumbency of that highest post lasted but one month, whereupon Tingzhi requested permission to resign. The emperor, evidently pitying him, presented him with an estate in the capital to reside in during his "retirement." In early 1106, the sighting of a spectacular meteor helped to change Huizong's mind about the wisdom of the persecution. Soon, Cai Jing was removed from office, and Zhao Tingzhi

was reinstalled as sole grand councilor. But this arrangement was also short-lived. Cai Jing was back in favor by the beginning of 1107 (the first year of the Daguan period). Back in power, Cai Jing took revenge upon the man who had become his nemesis. Zhao Tingzhi was stripped of office in the third month. Five days after this humiliation, Zhao Tingzhi died at his residence in the capital. Unfortunately, we do not know the particulars of his death. Three days later, Cai Jing took action against Tingzhi's three surviving sons (including Zhao Mingcheng). They were charged with being implicated in their late father's corruption in office. A case was mounted against them, and they were eventually arrested and imprisoned. The charges proved impossible to substantiate, however, and by the seventh month they were exonerated and released.

The standard account of Li Qingzhao's life says that in the final months of 1107 she and Zhao Mingcheng left the capital to return to the late father's home in Qingzhou 青州 (Qingzhou, Shandong), where they would remain for over a decade, the first few being spent in mourning for Zhao Tingzhi. But Deng Hongmei has discovered a poem that, she contends, requires a different scenario. The poem was written by Xie Yi 謝逸 (1068-1113), a Jiangxi poet who befriended several of the literati of the day. The poem is entitled "Sending Off Zhao Defu (Zhao Mingcheng) to Accompany his Parent(s) in Huaidong" 送趙德甫侍親淮東. Based on this poem, Deng Hongmei hypothesizes the following elaborate narrative: struck by the double tragedies of her husband's sudden death and the criminal charges against her sons, Mrs. Zhao (née Guo) left the capital at the time of her sons' arrest and sought refuge in the southern city of Nanjing, not far from where her husband had once served (elsewhere in the Huaidong circuit). When the charges against him were dropped in the seventh month, Zhao Mingcheng left the capital to go fetch his mother and bring her back up north to Qingzhou, to commence the mourning period. But he did not travel directly there or go with haste. Taking advantage of the opportunity to add to his collection of rubbings by visiting distant regions, he traveled overland southwest into Sichuan, then down the Yangzi River through the Three Gorges and on to Nanjing. Xie Yi's poem makes mention of the Qutang Gorge 瞿塘峽 and its famous Yanyu Reef 灩澦堆 as places Zhao Mingcheng will sail past. Zhao Mingcheng did not return to the capital with his mother until the summer of 1108, after which mother and son, together with Li Qingzhao, went into mourning at Qingzhou.

Deng Hongmei deserves credit for uncovering a poem addressed to Zhao Mingcheng that has never been noticed before. Yet the conclusions she draws from it are problematic, in several respects. Aside from the poem, there is no reason to think that Mrs. Zhao suddenly decided to remove herself from the capital and embark on a distant southern journey to

Nanjing. It seems inherently improbable that she would do so, when she was still waiting to learn the outcome of the charges against her three sons, whose fate was now tied inextricably to her own. It stretches credulity even more to suppose that, if Zhao Mingcheng did need to go south to retrieve his mother, he would have indulged himself by going hundreds of miles out of his way into Sichuan and then sail leisurely down the Yangzi all the way to Nanjing. The family had just been plunged into mourning, coupled with tremendous setbacks in its official standing and the prospects for the sons' future careers. What son would go sauntering so far out of his way if the immediate task were to bring his mother home for mourning?

Second, Deng assumes that Xie Yi was in the capital when he wrote his poem, bidding farewell to Mingcheng. In fact, it is clear that at this late stage of his life, Xie Yi had already returned to his native Linchuan (modern Fuzhou shi 撫州市, south of Nanchang in central Jiangxi), where he spent his final years. Xie Yi had been in the capital years before, when he tried without success to pass the examinations and become an official. Eventually, he abandoned the pursuit, and returned to Linchuan, where he evidently supported himself by taking students. Several tomb inscriptions that Xie Yi wrote for Linchuan natives from the period 1103-1109 make it clear that he was back in Linchuan both before, during, and after 1107, the year of Zhao Tingzhi's death in the capital. (In some of these inscriptions, he describes the relatives of the deceased personally coming to his house to ask him to compose an elegy.)[21] The most one can say, in other words, is that at some time Xie Yi sent off Zhao Mingcheng on a trip from Linchuan east to Huaidong (modern Jiangsu). Incidentally, for Mingcheng to have visited Xie Yi in Linchuan means that he took another detour of a couple hundred miles, southward, if he was boating down the Yangtze from the Three Gorges to Nanjing.

Finally, the poem by Xie Yi does not fit the circumstances of Zhao Mingcheng's life in 1107. The poem makes no reference to the recent death of his powerful father or the fact that Mingcheng was now in mourning. Quite to the contrary, the poem is forward-looking and buoyant. It speaks of Mingcheng as a talented young man with a splendid future, akin to legendary steeds in divine stables, who should not, as he goes off to make his way in the world, be in any hurry to "sell himself" to just any patron. The poem belongs, in fact, to a well-known type of verse addressed to young men, celebrating their early achievements and promise. It would be inappropriate as something written for Mingcheng when he was in the throes of the events that befell him in 1107.

The poem remains something of an enigma. Perhaps it was not written for *this* "Zhao Defu." (Xie Yi left no other works addressed to Zhao Mingcheng or to "Zhao Defu".) Or if it was, it must have been written at an

earlier stage of his life. The poem mentions the addressee's unusual level of maturity "before he reached twenty years of age." Perhaps, the poem was written during a youthful southern tour that Zhao Mingcheng took before his marriage at the age of twenty-one and entry into the National University. At this point we cannot know. But the poem certainly does not appear to be what Deng Hongmei would make it to be.

At this point, it will be useful to take a step back from various conjectures and ask why it is that scholars writing about Li Qingzhao, even in the latest studies, are so eager to establish that husband and wife were separated early on in their marriage, even when the evidence for such separation is sparse and and the findings mutually contradictory. There are several reasons. The first is the perceived need to spread Li Qingzhao's surviving song lyrics more or less evenly throughout her adult life in the dates assigned to them. The problem here is that the great majority of her pieces are written in the voice of a lonely woman, and in many of them it is clear that the man in her life is not with her. With certain pieces, especially those in which reference is made directly or indirectly to the advanced age of the woman speaking or being described, it is assumed that the composition happened during the years of her widowhood, after Zhao Mingcheng died when she was forty-six. But it would be awkward to assign all of the solitary woman poems to those years, because that would make for a very uneven distribution, leaving too few poems for the early years. To make matters worse, there are several poems featuring loneliness that make it clear that the absent loved one is still alive—they mention recent parting scenes or expected letters—so they cannot be dated to the years of Li Qingzhao's widowhood.

There are other factors at work here, less obvious than the satisfaction that comes from a neat and more or less balanced distribution of her surviving song lyrics through all the periods of her life. Li Qingzhao's song lyrics contain, as we have said, a preponderance of compositions that present images of female loneliness, yearning, and sometimes even hints of bad temper or bitterness. Readers are hard put to imagine that Li Qingzhao could feel this way when Zhao Mingcheng was with her. With a modern poet, of course, we have no trouble accepting the idea that she or he may feel isolated, lonely, or frustrated in love even when the lover or spouse is in the next room. But somehow with Li Qingzhao that possibility does not occur to us. Partly, I think, it does not occur to us because we tend to make blanket assumptions that people who lived in pre-modern times were not as psychologically complex as we are. This assumption, with which we flatter ourselves, needs to be questioned. But with Li Qingzhao there are, in addition, special considerations at work in our reading and reaction to whatever she says.

The marriage between Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng has long been idealized as a rare pairing in pre-modern China between two persons of learning and sentiment who were genuinely devoted to each other. It is not just in modern times that the marriage has been thought of this way. It was already considered so from at least the early Ming period, if not before.[22] Of course, this image of the marriage can be traced back to Li Qingzhao herself, as she described it so effectively in her afterword. But there have been no shortage of later elaborations of what Li Qingzhao began, as we glimpsed in the *Unofficial Biography* above. It is fair to say that, through the centuries, hers became one of the most celebrated marriages in Chinese history, admired for the loving devotion of the two partners from the time they first came together and made all the more poignant by the awareness that the marriage was cut short by an untimely death, so that the surviving partner was doomed to an old age of nostalgia and regret. This image of the marriage is certainly intact today, propagated not only at the level of popular culture (for example, in the several Li Qingzhao Memorial Halls in Shandong and Zhejiang) but also in scholarly writings.

Owing to what we know or think we know about the marriage, there is a strong impulse to read everything Li Qingzhao wrote in the light of her purported marital devotion. Doing so reinforces the image we already have of the marriage before we approach her writings in any detail, and we welcome such reinforcement. Doing so also makes each individual composition more moving and effective. When we read Li Qingzhao's song lyrics we think we are hearing expressions of her devotion to her husband or of longing for him when the two had to be apart. The impression of authenticity of expression enhances the impact of each song. When Liu Yong 柳永 (*jinshi* 1034) or Yan Jidao 晏幾道 (ca. 1030-ca. 1106) presents in a song lyric the complaints or yearnings of a lonely woman, we know that there is a divide between male author and female persona. At some level we are aware that there is artifice in what we are reading. With Li Qingzhao we are apt to think that artifice has vanished. For once, we tell ourselves, we are privy to the unmediated emotional expression of an historical woman, addressing the man who really was her husband.

The scholarly preoccupation with separations during the years of Li Qingzhao's marriage is not confined to the early years of her life together with Zhao Mingcheng in the capital. It extends to the period of their forced "retirement" to Qingzhou. That period began soon after Zhao Tingzhi's death in 1107 and seems to have lasted fourteen years. So far as we know, Mingcheng was not reinstated to official service until the autumn of 1121, when he was posted as governor to Laizhou 萊州 (Yexian, Shandong). There is some speculation that Mingcheng's reinstatement may have come a

few years earlier, but there is no source confirming any such earlier appointment, as we would expect if there had been one.

The scholarly literature gives much attention to Zhao Mingcheng's absences from home during these Qingzhou years. He regularly went off, we are told, to climb distant mountains and scour the countryside in search of ancient inscriptions to add to his collection. Many of Li Qingzhao's song lyrics that speak of her lonesomeness or of parting scenes are consequently dated to these years. Such was her literary reaction, we are supposed to believe, to Zhao Mingcheng's antiquarian perambulations about the region.

Yet when we look with a more critical eye at the evidence for Mingcheng's absences, we are apt to conclude that, just as with the preceding years in the capital, scholars have stretched minimal evidence to maximum inferences. Mingcheng did indeed take several trips during these years. But there is little reason to think that he was absent often or for long periods of time. Thanks to notations Mingcheng made on certain inscriptions in his *Records on Metal and Stone*, explaining how he acquired them, or to stone inscriptions he left at the places he visited, which have been preserved in the original or in rubbings, we know the date and destination of several of his outings during these years. He had two favorite destinations. The place he visited most often was Heaven View Mountain 仰天山 south of Qingzhou. The mountain was known for its Luohan Grotto 羅漢洞, a deep cave that had a crack in one part of its roof through which the moon shone on the Autumn Moon Festival. It was from this fissure that the mountain got its name. Heaven View Mountain was about forty miles from Qingzhou. We know of altogether four trips that Zhao Mingcheng made there. These took place in 1108 (on the Double Ninth Festival in the ninth month), 1109 (on the Duanwu festival in the fifth month), 1111 (on the Mid Autumn Moon festival in the eighth month), and in 1121 (in the fourth month; perhaps this last visit was precipitated by his appointment in that year to Laizhou, which lay in the opposite direction from his favorite mountain). There is one other inscription he left there that is undated, next to the inscription of 1108, and this may have come from a fifth trip.[23]

Aside from Heaven View Mountain, Zhao Mingcheng also liked to travel to Lingyan Monastery 靈巖寺 in Changqing County 長清縣. Changqing was south of the city of Jinan 濟南, and was located some 108 miles from Qingzhou. Mingcheng visited this monastery three times, as he records in an inscription he left there on his last visit.[24] He went there in the ninth month of 1109, in the summer of 1113, and in the third month of 1116. On the second of these visits he continued on to Tai Mountain 泰山, which he climbed together with friends.[25] Tai Mountain was close-by. It stood another twenty-five miles to the southeast of Changqing County, so that it would have been on Mingcheng's way back home.

We have, then, seven or eight trips, scattered over a period of fourteen years. The furthest of the trips was just over one hundred miles. As for their duration, we cannot be certain, but what evidence there is suggests the trips did not last long. We note that most of the trips to Heaven View Mountain coincided with seasonal festivals, suggesting that their duration was short. Only one of Zhao Mingcheng's site inscriptions specifies the duration of a visit. That is the one from the 1109 trip to Lingyan Monastery. Mingcheng says "In all we stayed two days and then went home" (*fan su liangri nai gui* 凡宿兩日乃歸). The schedule of the 1113 trip seems to have been similarly brief. Mingcheng was at Lingyan Monastery on the sixth day of the intercalary month (June 22). Two days later he stood on top of Mount Tai.[26]

When we compare what is claimed by scholars about song lyrics by Li Qingzhao that are conventionally dated to these years with what can be verified about Zhao Mingcheng's actual absences, a certain discrepancy is apparent. It is difficult to reconcile the concentration of the songs on the problem of loneliness, not to mention the depth of the despondency they contain, with what we know about Mingcheng's travels. We are talking here not about a discrepancy between the song lyrics and what we can construct about Zhao Mingcheng's travels, but rather about the gulf between what scholars claim the song lyrics express or react to and those travels.

Consider the following composition, one of Li Qingzhao's best known ones. It is assigned by Xu Peijun to the year 1109 and said to have been inspired by Zhao Mingcheng's trip that year to Lingyan Monastery.[27] That was the trip on which, according to Mingcheng's own account, he spent two nights at the monastery before going home.

To the tune "On top of Phoenix Tower, Recalling Flute Music"[28]	鳳凰臺上憶吹簫
Incense lies cold in the golden lion	香冷金猊
The bedcover is tossed crimson waves.	被翻紅浪
Arising, she is too languid to comb her hair,	起來慵自梳頭
And lets the jeweled make-up case gather dust.	任寶奩塵滿
The sun climbs to the curtain hook,	日上簾鉤
She fears nothing more than longing for a distant one and parting pain.	生怕離懷別苦
How many things have happened!	多少事
About to speak, she stops.	欲說還休
Grown thin of late	新來瘦
Not from sickness over wine	非干病酒
Or from sadness over autumn.	不是悲秋

No more, no more!	休休
When he left this time	這回去也
A thousand verses of "Yang Pass"	千萬遍陽關
Would not have detained him.	也則難留
The Wuling man is distant now	念武陵人遠
Clouds lock shut the tower in Qin.	雲鎖秦樓
It's just the flowing river before the tower	唯有樓前流水
Should remember me	應念我
Staring transfixed there, all day long.	終日凝眸
At the spot where I stood and stared	凝眸處
Today are added	從今又添
Some layers of new sorrow.	幾段新愁

Naturally, we cannot *prove* that Li Qingzhao did not write this just as Xu Peijun imagines that she did, speaking in her own voice and describing her longing for Zhao Mingcheng when he was off on his short trip to Lingyan Monastery. Yet we can readily observe that several of the statements of the composition are at variance with its purported provenance and purpose. The woman in the song, who alternates in the song between speaker and a subject who is being observed or described, seems to be enduring a distant and long-term separation, so much so that she claims to have grown thin from her longing, and the box that contains her make-up has dust accumulated on its cover. "Yang Pass" is a parting song sung when someone is going off on a journey rather than on a pleasure outing or excursion. If the traveler could not be persuaded to delay his departure no matter how many times implored to do so, it is plausible to think that this was more than a whimsical outing.

Sensing, probably, the awkwardness of connecting such a composition to a local sightseeing outing, other scholars have recently suggested a different provenance for the song.[29] It was written, they assert, when Zhao Mingcheng was reinstated to official service and left Li Qingzhao behind in Qingzhou to go assume a new assignment elsewhere. But this scenario brings its own set of problems. We know for certain, thanks to Li Qingzhao's and Zhao Mingcheng's own writings, that Mingcheng served as governor in Laizhou from the autumn of 1121 to the autumn of 1124, that is, he fulfilled the standard three-year stint. We also know that he next served in the same capacity in Zizhou (淄州), from 1124 until 1126, when the impending Jurchen invasion changed everything. Some scholars want us to believe that Mingcheng left Qingzhou a few years before he assumed his post in Laizhou in 1121, and then these same scholars date compositions such as "On Top of Phoenix Tower" to those years. But there is no evidence of that early departure, nothing that establishes Mingcheng anywhere else or

holding any other office before 1121. The only sources are such literary compositions as the one under discussion that scholars date to this period, without external support, and then discuss as if they were "evidence" of the marital separation they posit. The circularity of such reasoning is clear.

There is a way out of this problem, and indeed a way out of the problems posed by all the contradictory separations of Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng that have been proposed, discussed earlier. The solution is to dispense with the assumption that whenever Li Qingzhao wrote song lyrics she wrote in a narrowly autobiographically way, so that any woman we find in her compositions corresponds to the historical Li Qingzhao and anything that woman says to a beloved is a statement addressed to Zhao Mingcheng. If we understand instead that Li Qingzhao, like every other important song lyric writer of her time, relied heavily upon conventional voices and images of lonely lovers with which to present and fill her songs, then what we will be apt to hear in "On Top of Phoenix Tower" is just such a conventional persona speaking rather than the historical Li Qingzhao. We could easily find similar voices of women protesting the departure of the man they love in song lyrics by Liu Yong, Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072), Qin Guan 秦觀 (1049-1100), or for that matter by nearly any other male song writer of the era. Viewed this way, the project of locating "On Top of Phoenix Tower" in the chronology of Li Qingzhao's life becomes quite meaningless, as does the need to link it to an actual separation between husband and wife.

We could have reached this point in the argument by more direct reasoning, yet that approach would have the disadvantage of failing to engage the vast native scholarship and criticism on Li Qingzhao, which as learned and valuable as it may be is also often fraught with questionable claims. One could simply say that we should recognize in Li Qingzhao the same ability to create and manipulate literary personas and fictive subjects that we regularly accept in the works of her male counterparts. That she is female and the other important writers male is no reason for making autobiographical assumptions about her works that we would be reluctant to adopt for other writers. It is unacceptable to contend that she would have been incapable of writing in a voice other than her own, when we recognize that male authors did that regularly. Furthermore, to think that Li Qingzhao wrote solely as devoted wife to Zhao Mingcheng and was unable to write otherwise is to reduce her literary identity and self-image to that of wife to Zhao Mingcheng. It would be problematic to do this with any woman, and it seems particularly so with a woman as outspoken and talented as Li Qingzhao. Yet that is exactly what the bulk of Li Qingzhao criticism has always done.

In closing, I will discuss one more composition by Li Qingzhao by way of illustrating the difference made once we dispense with the assumptions normally applied to her writings.

To the tune "Low Rows of Hills"[30]	小重山
Spring returns to Long Gate, spring grasses are green.	春到長門春草青
The Yangzi plum is beginning to open	江梅些子破
But not fully in blossom.	未開勻
In the emerald clouds basket, jade is ground into dust.	碧雲籠碾玉成塵
The lingering morning dream	留曉夢
Is broken by a cup of spring.	驚破一甌春
Flower shadows weigh down the double gates.	花影壓重門
The thin curtain is covered with pale moonlight.	疏簾鋪淡月
A lovely evening it is.	好黃昏
Three times in two years I have neglected the Lord of the East.	二年三度負東君
——	歸來也
——	著意過今春

The basket mentioned in the first stanza is the container for tea leaves or cakes of ground tea ("emerald clouds"), which were infused as a powder ("jade ground into dust") into hot water for drinking.

Our understanding of this piece is bound to affect the way we read the last two lines, which can be taken in radically different ways. The way the composition has normally been understood is that Li Qingzhao is alone, once again, in the springtime and waiting for Zhao Mingcheng's return.[31] The theme of loneliness is already broached in the opening line, since Long Gate is the name of the Han Palace in which Empress Chen was confined after she lost Emperor Xiaowu's favor. In this reading, the reference in the second stanza to neglecting the Lord of the East (the god of spring) three times in two years alludes to husband and wife being separated for long periods during the past two spring seasons. The last two lines then become Li Qingzhao's plea to her still absent husband: "Come home now / Let us make a point of enjoying this spring."

Some recent scholars, who prefer to construct a more independent and self-reliant Li Qingzhao, have proposed an alternate reading, although the standard reading remains the one already described.[32] The composition, this revisionist opinion says, was written upon Li Qingzhao's return to the

capital at the end of the Chongning period in 1106. She has rejoined her husband now and is determined not to waste this spring as the last two were wasted when she was alone in her natal home. Thus the last lines should be read, "Now I have returned / Let us make a point of enjoying this spring." One obvious objection to this reading, however, is that it is hard to reconcile the opening line with it. If Li Qingzhao had just rejoined her husband, why does she begin by alluding to an empress who was living in solitude? To solve this problem, it is suggested that the first line refers to the Yuanyou faction members, who had fallen out of favor. But now "spring" (i.e., political favor) has returned to them. This introduction of a political element into the poem is awkward (now we have dual subjects, the returned Li Qingzhao *and* the Yuanyou faction members) and ultimately unpersuasive. Moreover, it seems that the woman in the song, confined to Long Gate Palace, has not just returned from some place outside the capital. She's been there all along. Another problem is that throughout the composition it continues to sound like the woman we are viewing and eventually hear speak is alone. There is no hint of anyone being with her. Indeed, the reference to a dream implies that the one the woman is thinking of is accessible only in a dream, not in waking moments.

Different as these two readings are, they both assume that it is Li Qingzhao who is speaking in the song, and that the issue mentioned in the closing line—the key issue in the poem—broaches one way or another the reunion of Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng.

Yet another reading of the song is possible, but it has never been suggested before because it abandons the presumption that the "return" mentioned at the end must refer to Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng getting together after a period of separation. We notice, first of all, that the composition begins with a borrowed line from a song lyric by Xue Zhaoyun 薛昭蘊 (10th century) found in *Among the Flowers* 花間集.[33] That composition remains true to the allusion to Empress Chen in the sense that the entire piece is devoted to an extended description of a solitary woman who is consumed by longing, who cannot even achieve the dream she wants to dream, who weeps as she walks aimlessly about the courtyard. One of the things that Li Qingzhao liked to do as a writer was to borrow lines from earlier poets and recast them, putting them into a new setting or otherwise transforming them. Borrowing, specifically, an opening line from an earlier song lyric and then dramatically recasting the composition that follows it is something Li Qingzhao did with an opening line she took from one of Ouyang Xiu's songs (*tingyuan shenshen shen jixu* 庭院深深深幾許).[34] Having begun with this line and its allusion to a woman who lost favor in ancient times, what is striking in what follows is the insistence upon how pleasant everything is. The spring scene is lovely. The plum blossoms are

not, as so often in these songs, already starting to fade and drop. They have yet to fully open, suggesting that the scene is only going to become more attractive than it already is. The woman does not even seem to care much about her dream. The tea to which she helps herself wakes her up so thoroughly that there is no longer any possibility of recapturing the dream. And there is no suggestion that this is something she regrets.

The opening lines of the second stanza emphasize the beauty of the scene as evening descends. The shadows of the flowers are made to sound more substantial than the double gates themselves, and moonlight streams toward her room, flooding the blinds. No wonder the speaker observes that it is, indeed, a lovely evening. The "Lord of the East," already personified in this appellation, is often spoken of in song lyrics as someone who comes and goes, bringing the spring with him or taking it away. Compare these examples: "She resents the Lord of the East / For being in such a hurry, / He's just like a man on his travels in the mortal world" 怪東君, 太匆匆, 亦是人間行客;[35] "May the Lord of the East soon devise a plan for his return" 東君早作歸來計.[36] The second of these (which predates Li Qingzhao's composition) applies the same phrase, *guilai* 歸來, to the Lord's movement that is found in Li Qingzhao's poem, and in both cases it is of course spring's return that is meant. Li Qingzhao's song opens with the report that spring has indeed returned. It is very natural, then, to read her last two lines this way: "Now that he (the Lord of the East) has returned again / I will make a point of enjoying this spring." The woman in Li Qingzhao's song may not have a mortal companion, but the Lord of the East has come back and she is determined to enjoy the spring that he has brought. This is utterly different from the mood that pervades Xue Zhaoyun's song. As often, Li Qingzhao has transformed the poem with which she began.

No doubt there will be readers already familiar with this song in the conventional reading who will be unwilling to accept the new interpretation. For many readers, hearing a loving Li Qingzhao implore her husband to return home in the spring will seem so "right," matching all that we think we know about her, it will be impossible to read the song any other way. No matter, the key point is not so much to argue the relative merits of the two (or three) readings, or to supplant an established one with a new one. It is more important to see what a difference it makes if we drop the assumption that Li Qingzhao is always speaking as "Li Qingzhao" in her song lyrics and always addressing the man who was her husband in real life. That the alternate reading has apparently never even occurred to anyone or been discussed in the scholarly literature speaks volumes about the weight of traditional images of Li Qingzhao and the impact and limits of Li Qingzhao criticism.

Endnotes

1. Li Qingzhao, *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu* 李清照集箋注, ed. Xu Peijun 徐培均 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002), 1.20; cf. *Quan Song ci* 全宋詞, ed. Tang Guizhang 唐圭璋, 5 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), 2: 928.
2. The allusion is to the famous palindrome in brocade that Su Hui 蘇蕙 sent to her distant husband, see *Jin shu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 96.2523; from *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu* 李清照集箋注, 1.22, n. 4.
3. See, for example, the explanation of the line in Xu Beiwen 徐北文, *Li Qingzhao quanji pingzhu* 李清照全集評注, 2nd ed. (Jinan: Jinan chubanshe, 2005), p 7.
4. Yi Shizhen 伊世珍, *Langhuan ji* 瑯嬛記, quoted in Chu Binjie 褚斌傑, et al., *Li Qingzhao ziliao huibian* 李清照資料彙編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), pp. 28-29.
5. Yu Zhengxie, "Yian jushi shiji" 易安居士事輯, *Guisi leigao* 癸巳類稿 15, quoted in Chu Binjie, *Li Qingzhao ziliao huibian*, p. 107.
6. Li Qingzhao, *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu*, 1.22, and also in Xu's chronological biography, pp. 423-24.
7. Li Qingzhao, *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu*, 3.309.
8. Getianshi 葛天氏 is a legendary king whose reign was marked by harmony and peace.
9. The reference is to two famous discoveries of ancient writings. The first took place in the second century B.C., when walls in the former residence of Confucius (in Lu 魯) were found to contain texts long hidden there, and the second took place in the third century B.C., when the *Bamboo Annals* 竹書紀年 and other works were recovered from a Warring States period tomb in Ji Prefecture 汲郡 (Ji County, Henan).
10. Li Qingzhao, *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu*, 3.309-10.
11. See Xu Peijun's chronological biography, Li Qingzhao, *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu*, p. 427.
12. Huang Shengzhang 黃盛璋, "Li Qingzhao shiji kaobian" 李清照事跡考辨, *Wenxue yanjiu* 文學研究 3 (1957): 177, reprinted in Zhou Kangxie 周康燮, ed., *Li Qingzhao yanjiu huibian* 李清趙研究彙編 (Hong Kong: Chongwen shudian, 1974), p. 197.
13. Hong Mai 洪邁, *Rongzhai suibi* 容齋隨筆, ed. Kong Fanli 孔凡禮 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), "Sibi" 四筆 5.684.
14. Wang Xuechu 王學初, *Li Qingzhao ji jiaozhu* 李清照集校注 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1979), p. 25; Chen Zumei 陳祖

美, *Li Qingzhao xinzhuan* 李清照新傳 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 2001), pp. 64-65; Chen Zumei, *Li Qingzhao ci xinyi jiping* 李清照詞新譯輯評 (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian, 2003), pp. 50-51, Yu Zhonghang 于中航, *Li Qingzhao nianpu* 李清照年譜 (Taipei: Commerical Press, 1995), p. 47; Zhuge Yibing 諸葛憶兵, *Li Qingzhao yu Zhao Mingcheng* 李清照與趙明誠 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), pp. 47-49; Deng Hongmei, *Li Qingzhao xinzhuan* 李清照新傳 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005), pp. 47-55.

15. Chen Zumei, "Li Qingzhao nianpu jianbian" 李清照年譜簡編, *Li Qingzhao xinzhuan*, pp. 274-75; cf. Chen Zumei, "Li Qingzhao nianpu" 李清照年譜, in *Li Qingzhao pingzhuan* 李清照評傳 (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 1995), p. 291.
16. Yang Zhongliang 楊仲良, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian jishi benmo* 續資治通鑑長編紀事本末 (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2003), 121.13a/p. 3773.
17. Yang Zhongliang, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian jishi benmo*, 121.16a/p. 3779.
18. Zhuge Yibing, *Li Qingzhao yu Zhao Mingcheng*, pp. 38-43.
19. Li Qingzhao, "Yulou chun" 玉樓春 (紅酥肯放瓊瑤碎), *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu* 1.27; *Quan Song ci*, 2: 926.
20. Deng Hongmei, *Li Qingzhao xinzhuan*, pp. 59-66.
21. Xie Yi 謝逸, "Chen fujun muzhiming" 陳府君墓誌銘, "Gu Chengfeng lang Wang Jizhi muzhiming" 故承奉郎王及至墓誌銘, "Jiang jushi muzhiming" 江居士墓誌銘, and especially "Wu furen muzhiming" 吳夫人墓誌銘, *Quan Song wen*, 2877.3.254-55, 257-58, 262, and 2878.4.268-69. In this last piece, the place name Linru 臨汝 is the name of a former county in Linchuan.
22. As seen in the poem on a portrait of Li Qingzhao written in the early Ming by Wu Kuan 吳寬, quoted in Chu Binjie, *Li Qingzhao ziliao huibian*, p. 31.
23. On these visits to Heaven View Mountain, see Yu Zhonghang, *Li Qingzhao nianpu*, pp. 60-61 (1108), 61 (1109), 65 (1111), and 84-85 (1121).
24. The inscription, a rubbing of which is held in the Beijing Municipal Library, is recorded in full in Yu Zhonghang, *Li Qingzhao nianpu*, pp. 62.
25. Yu Zhonghang, *Li Qingzhao nianpu*, pp. 67-68.
26. Yu Zhonghang, *Li Qingzhao nianpu*, p. 68.
27. Li Qingzhao, *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu*, 1.61.

28. Adopting the version of the text in Li Qingzhao, *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu*, 1.57-58, which incorporates several textual variants not followed in the *Quan Song ci*, 2:928 version of the piece.
29. Chen Zumei, *Li Qingzhao xinzhuan*, pp. 96-97, Deng Hongmei, *Li Qingzhao xinzhuan*, pp. 85-87, Zhuge Yibing, *Li Qingzhao yu Zhao Mingcheng*, pp. 91-93.
30. Li Qingzhao, *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu* 1.94; *Quan Song ci*, 2:929.
31. This is the way that Xu Peijun and Zhuge Yibing both understand the piece. Xu assigns the piece to the year 1128, after Li Qingzhao arrived in Jiangning, see Li Qingzhao, *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu*, 1.94. Zhuge Yibing dates the piece to 1119, when Li Qingzhao was still in Qingzhou, her husband, as Zhuge would have it, having left two years before, see *Li Qingzhao yu Zhao Mingcheng*, pp. 88-89.
32. See Chen Zumei, *Li Qingzhao ci xinyi jiping*, p. 72, and Deng Hongmei, *Li Qingzhao xinzhuan*, pp. 55-56.
33. Zhao Chongzuo 趙崇祚, *Huajian ji zhu* 花間集注, ed. Hua Zhongyan 華鍾彥 (Henan: Zhongzhou shuhua shu, 1983), 3.90.
34. Li Qingzhao, "Linjiang xian" 臨江仙, *Li Qingzhao ji jianzhu* 1.105; *Quan Song ci*, 2:929.
35. Chen Ji 陳紀, "Juan xunfang" 倦尋芳, *Quan Song ci*, 5:3392.
36. Shen Tang 沈唐, "Shuangye fei" 霜葉飛, *Quan Song ci*, 1:171.