

**Chan Grove Remarks on Poetry by Wang Shizhen:
A Discussion and Translation**

by

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ABSTRACT

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The *Chanlin* (Chan Grove) category of collected remarks on poetry is a section of the Qing dynasty literary great Wang Shizhen's (1634-1711) collected remarks on poetry, the *Daijingtang shihua* (1760). The "Chan Grove" is the world of Chan Buddhist monks, and the Chanlin category of remarks includes twenty-eight entries by Wang on poetry by Chan monks or by lay persons affiliated with Chan Buddhism. The Discussion first explores the nature of Chan (Zen) Buddhism and its reflection in Chan-inspired poetry, after which it analyses the relationship between Wang Shizhen's *shenyun* (spirit resonance) poetic theory and his interest in Chan Buddhism. Next, the contents of the Chanlin category of remarks is analysed in terms of how the entries increase our understanding of what *shenyun* means, and, finally, it concludes that although Chan was one of Wang's major inspirations, his poetics was much broader in scope and more secular in interest. The annotated translation of the Chan Grove category of remarks presented here is the first into any Western language; as such, it should make a major contribution to the field of pre-modern Chinese poetry and poetics.

Note: I did this thesis under Prof. Richard LYNN's supervision. The pagination of this version (December 18, 2020) may not be the same as the original I submitted to the University of Toronto.

Contents

Discussion: Background and Introduction to the Translation.....	3
The Translation	57
Bibliography	122

Discussion: Background and Introduction to the Translation

Wang Shizhen (1634-1711) was the most eminent Chinese literary figure in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. He was known as a poet and a literary theorist, although it is primarily his literary theory that has received scholarly attention. Wang was also a powerful, capable, and responsible bureaucrat who reached the top positions in the Censorate (1698-1699) and the Bureau of Punishments (1699-1704); in these roles he had regular contact with Kangxi Shengzi, the great emperor who consolidated the power of the new Manchu Qing dynasty. Thirdly, Wang was a great scholar and bibliophile: he received a post in the Hanlin Academy in 1678 and was involved in the compilation of a massive classified dictionary called the *Yuanjian leihan* 淵鑑類函 in 454 *juan*, among other projects. Finally, Wang was an accomplished traveler, for he journeyed widely, visiting almost every province China on during his lifetime.

Wang Shizhen's published work was voluminous, including collections of his own poetry and anthology of poetry of others, works on poetry theory, travel memoirs, poetry criticism—written in the well-established *shihua* (remarks on poetry) genre—and, lastly, collections of short essays, many of which are less than one page and which comprise anecdotes about friends and noteworthy figures, critiques of poetry and prose, and personal experiences. Only one of his works is actually called a *shihua* 詩話, the

Yuyang shihua 漁洋詩話, but many of his works served as sources for the voluminous *Daijingtang shihua* (Remarks on Poetry by the Classics Vade Mecum Scholar), edited by Zhang Zongnan 張宗柟 (1704-1765). This work is the best collection of Wang's writing about the poetry of his own times and of the past. This present essay is the introduction to a translation of one of the sections of this work, the *Chanlin lei* 禪林類 (*Chan Grove Category*): in this section Zhang Zongnan included all criticism by Wang about the poetry of those who inhabited the "grove of Chan," that is, primarily the world of Chan Buddhism, though some materials seem addressed to more general aspects of Buddhism. Moreover, not all concern monks; for example, entry seven contains Buddhist poems by Zhu Xi's teacher Liu Zihui; entry nine has two poems by what appears to be a mystic attached to no particular school, as well as a satirical poem by one of Wang Shizhen's official-friends; entry eleven is concerns a poem by a disgraced official who found a friend in a monk; and the poem in entry twelve is by a "friend of a friend": it is a poem by Su Maoming about the appearance in a dream of Wang's friend Liu Gongyong (Su and Liu had spent the day visiting a Chan master). This section has twenty-eight entries ranging in length from a few lines to one that is just over a page of classical Chinese in the edition used, and, for the most part, these entries cover the poetry of Song dynasty and seventeenth century Qing monks. Addendums from related passages of Wang's writings, which clarify details, offer additional bibliographical information, or simply add comment, were added as postscripts to many of the entries by Zhang Zongnan, occasionally with Zhang's own additional notes. This section of the *Daijingtang shihua* is of particular interest because of the light it casts on the relation between Wang Shizhen's interest in Buddhism and his poetry theory. Moreover, the *Chan Grove Category* should

prove of interest to readers interested in the *shihua* genre, in Buddhism, especially Chan, and its place in Chinese history, in Chinese aesthetics and poetry, and, of course, in Wang Shizhen's own quasi-mystical *shenyun*—"spiritual resonance"—poetics. It is to address these interests that this essay has been written.

It seems useful to begin with an idea of the genre of this work: what expectations would Wang's readership have had in perusing a collection of remarks on poetry (*shihua*) and to what extent does the *Chan Grove* satisfy those expectations? Usually, a work of remarks on poetry is a somewhat random collection of occasional thoughts, essays, and comments about poetry. This was in fact the format of the very first *shihua*, the *Liuyi shihua* 六一詩話 (Remarks on Poetry From the One in Six Studio) of the towering Song figure Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072). Several writers note the similarities between remarks on poetry and the collected sayings/conversations (*yulu* 語錄) of Chan masters and Neo-Confucian thinkers, and Stephen Owen comments that such a format was congenial to the Chinese reader because of his early educational exposure in the *Analects* of Confucius, the collection of sayings and teachings of the great father of the main current in Chinese thought (*Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 361). A second quality was sociability. *Shihua* writers often wrote about the poetry and exploits of dear friends. A propos of this is the fact that the Song was a great age for poetry societies (*shishe* 詩社 or *yinshe* 吟社), perhaps the most famous of which was the cohort of monks, monk-poets, and poets that formed around Su Shi when he was Magistrate of Hangzhou. A third characteristic was that remarks on poetry works were erudite. A reader was not likely to select a work of remarks on poetry by a complete unknown, who

would probably know nothing and have little of interest to say about the subject. Fourthly, this genre was concerned with preserving the heritage of the past. This may not be immediately comprehensible to the modern reader. Books today are printed on paper whose acid content causes degradation in seventy years and digital media become obsolete in ten, but few worry about important works being lost. In the past, of course, the situation was much different. Books written on vellum in Medieval Europe or on acid-free paper in Medieval China could survive for centuries, but there were far fewer copies of individual works in circulation. Fire or flood conspired to deny posterity of much of its heritage—a frightening fact is that many of the books listed in the *Zongmu tiyao* 總目題要, the list of extant books that accompanied the massive mid-eighteenth century project *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (Complete Library of Four Branches Books), have been lost in only two-hundred and fifty years (*Indiana Companion*, 1:248). A famous writer whose work would be printed in quantity could help lesser known poets by including their poetry in his *shihua*. A final quality relates to the first: personality is perhaps revealed better than systematically presented. A work of *shihua* reveals the personality and primary preoccupations of its author in offhand comments and insights on recurrent themes. A reader chose to read *shihua* obviously because of a passion for poetry, but he would also expect to encounter the noble personality of the author. I am aware of the dangers of describing a typical *shihua*. Authors modify genres simply for the joy of experimentation or to assert their originality. A prominent example is the thirteenth century work *Canglang shihua* (Poetry Talks by [the Recluse of] the Canglang River), which is a poetry theory polemic, a systematic and ideologically-motivated exploration of the subject by the otherwise little known writer Yan Yu 嚴羽 (fl. 1200). The *Canglang*

shihua had a massive impact on centuries of poetry critics, including Wang Shizhen, and we will return to Yan Yu's work later in this essay. Wang Shizhen's *Chan Grove Category*, however, is a fairly typical example of the *shihua* genre. Firstly, it is indeed a random collection of anecdotes, and it is not even immediately obvious that the twenty-eight entries are grouped according to a single theme. Selections from particular works such as the *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake) and *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Records Made While Living in Leisure) are gathered together, but then these works were anecdotal and random in the first place. Sometimes the only connection is geographical: for example, in the fourteenth entry, Qian Weizhi 錢唯治 and Linji 臨濟 are together because both lived in northern Hebei Province. At the same time, we should acknowledge that the *Daijingtang shihua* is much more substantial than the *Liuyi shihua* and needed to adopt the strategy of categorization: every essay in this section is connected somehow with Buddhism, but there were many other sections in the same work, of which the *Chan Grove* is only a small part. Secondly, the *Chan Grove* is extremely social. The entries show us that Wang Shizhen had many "friends beyond the world" (*fangwai zhijiao* 方外之交) and, as noted above, friends who were interested or involved in Buddhism in one way or another. Thirdly, these entries are bibliographically and philologically erudite, which is to be expected given the prodigious command of the literature of the past that Wang Shizhen possessed. Many of these entries are organized by doing "evidential scholarship" (*kaozheng* 考證); Wang will see a poem on an outing to a temple and return home to discover who the author is by looking things up in his well-stocked library, or he will read a poem in another writer's work and check the poem and the given bibliographical details to ensure complete accuracy. Wang's

bibliographical and philological talents are all the more impressive to the present writer, for, unlike myself, Wang Shizhen, of course, did not have electronic databases and dictionaries at his disposal but only his vast reading experience to guide him to reliable sources of information. In fact, as I noted in a footnote to essay three, Wang's miscellaneous works were widely read and heavily relied upon by the *Zongmu tiyao* itself for critical insight and bibliographical detail. Fourthly, we see in the *Chan Grove* a concern for the preservation of the past. Many of the poems in this collection are most easily accessed here because their sources were not recorded in any of the convenient "book mega-collections" such as the *Siku quanshu*. And in some cases, if it were not for Wang Shizhen, the poems so recorded would have been lost forever. A good example of Wang's concern is in entry nineteen, where he expressed his amazement at how a copy of the extremely rare *Song gaoseng shi* 宋高僧詩 (Poetry by Eminent Monks of the Song) had come into his hands after seven hundred years. Finally, this selection of *shihua* relating to Buddhism reveals Wang Shizhen's gracious personality. Wang was not immune to moments of harsh and perhaps unfair criticism (for example, in a footnote to entry sixteen, I note the *Zongmu tiyao* taking Wang to task for his derision of the poetry of the Song era monk Wang Zhi), but he generally appears warm, generous, and reasonable. Recurrently, he invites the reader to appreciate a particular line by expressing his own appreciation. Wang was the great scholar-poet-official of the latter half of the seventeenth century, but his "voice" does not sound like the voice of someone flaunting his authority and expertise. Wang is not at all what one might expect, given his preeminent status, but turns out to be a rather good-natured and well-mannered guide. Perhaps the best example of Wang Shizhen's style in action is in entry twenty-five, where

he criticizes the great poet and critic Qian Qianyi, who had generously offered Wang Shizhen his support when the latter was a young and promising poet and Qian himself was already the grand old man of letters, for his excessive criticism of Chan Master Fazang in Qian's biography of this figure attached to Qian's anthology the *Liechao shiji* 列朝詩集 (Poetry from the Successive Reign-Eras [of the Ming]). It does not sound to as if Wang had lost any respect for his older friend but instead suggested that Qian should have remembered they both came from the same native place. There seem to me to be two reasons for Wang's attitude: a primary condition was that Wang was already a highly lauded literary figure. When he talked, people listened, and he did not have to assume airs or promote himself but remained free to be himself. A secondary factor was that Wang Shizhen, by nature or by ideology, was not an aggressive and self-promoting person. He was not a braggart but rather capable, brilliant, and unassertive, at least in his critical writing, and, as we shall see, in his poetry. We will see when we look at Wang's *shenyun* theory of poetry that Wang took unassertiveness or, rather, the appropriate expression of self as the basis of his poetics. It is my sense that in adult life Wang must have carefully cultivated his mode of expression: this cultivation is reflected in the gracious, tactful, and polite tone taken in the *Chan Grove*.

There are two appropriate goals for this essay. The first is to develop an understanding of Chan Buddhism and Chan poetry, which is relevant because Chan ideas and the Chan attitude or style inform many of these poems. It would be impossible to give a systematic explanation of Chan Buddhism, and I will instead limit myself to more important background aspects as well as several themes that seem to me to recur in the

poetry discussed in the *Chan Grove*. Given the random and anecdotal nature of this work, we cannot expect Wang Shizhen to give us a systematic exposition of his ideas about Chan Buddhism or about Chan poetry. We will also be disappointed if we try to glean from Wang Shizhen's occasional comments something that gives us any insight about these issues. Basically, the only internal evidence for Wang Shizhen's interest in Chan is the fact that he recorded and appreciated poetry by Chan monks or on Chan themes. Therefore, the second goal of this essay is not what the *Chan Grove* tells us *directly* about Wang's conception of Chan but what can be inferred from what he actually says here. In his other writings, Wang occasionally makes comments that reveal how important Chan thinking and practice were to him, and, in his many articles on Wang Shizhen and the *Canglang shihua*, scholar Richard Lynn has probed the close connections between Chan and Wang's literary theory. Our second goal is to explore these connections and hopefully to come to a better understanding of Wang's "spiritual resonance" (*shenyun*) poetics. The conventional view is that the unassertive and Chan-inspired nature poetry of the Wang Wei and Meng Haoran "school" was the most "spiritually resonant," but we will find that there is more to *shenyun* than this. The Chan-*shenyun* poetics connection has already been well explored, and, while I feel I occasionally have some thoughts of my own about this, what I am mainly offering as new is my translation and the additional light it may shed on an already explored map of this territory.

In many of the entries in the *Chan Grove*, Wang Shizhen does not indicate which school of Buddhism the monk he is dealing with was from. This does not present a serious problem, for after the harsh crackdown on Buddhism in 845 that sent monks by

the thousands back to lay life, Chan was the main form of Buddhism among the intellectual and highly literate elite. Within the Chan sect, the Linji or “sudden enlightenment” (*dunwu* 頓悟) school became dominant in China (in Japan both the Rinzai [Linji] and “gradual enlightenment” Sōtō 曹洞 [Caodong] schools developed strong traditions). Although popular movements such as “Pure Land” Buddhism developed in the Song dynasty, the intellectual elite—the only group committed to poetry—remained most interested in Chan. It was in the Southern and Northern Song dynasties that Chan was at its strongest, and the creativity of such figures as Su Shi and Huang Tingjian was enriched by contact with Chan ideas and practitioners. However, there was already interest in Chan on the part of Tang intellectuals, a particularly relevant example of which is Wang Wei’s engagement with Chan.

The Neo-Confucian movement of Zhu Xi in the twelfth century was in part an attempt to reclaim ground lost to Buddhist mysticism, metaphysics, and theories of mind and cognition. In some ways, this attempt became skewed, as, in order to make himself relevant, Zhu Xi spoke in terms that were understood only because his contemporaries were familiar with Buddhism. In fact, Arthur Wright points out how Zhu Xi’s thinking, with its stress on the “slow accumulation of knowledge of the supreme principle and its manifestations in phenomena, understanding, and moral perfection” (Wright, 90), resembles the approach of the “Gradual Enlightenment” (Caodong) school. Further, Wang Yangming’s “direct apprehension of ultimate reality which is within” (Wright, 91) in the fifteenth century was clearly inspired by the doctrine of sudden enlightenment of the Linji school. In other respects, however, Neo-Confucianism won the day and

established itself as the mainstream of Chinese intellectual thought up to the modern era.

The spread of both public and private academies in the Sung and after brought neo-Confucian ideas to communities throughout the empire. No Buddhist temple or monastery was now far away from a secular center which propagated the new Confucianism both as a body of ideas and as a passport to wealth and power. (Wright, 95)

While intellectuals were still free to engage with Chan Buddhism, enlightenment for personal religious reasons became ever less likely to be a life goal. A typical view of Chan Buddhism is that it “lives and lets live,” content to see the universal process play itself out without grand specific goals. Neo-Confucianism, on the other hand, was from its inception a movement of social reform, in which enlightenment served to mould the individual into a healthy and productive member of the group. This difference in attitude is brought out very clearly in entry fourteen, which includes a poem about an inscribed tile by the monk Zhengwu as well as Wang Shizhen’s response:

To send these words to Jiangxi I use an antique awl,
So let the sun roast and the wind blow.
May later generations not be without the means to take care of it—
For we’d like to see the time when the tile disintegrates only because of the elements.

Zhengwu implies that “things falling apart” is all just a matter of course and should not worry us too much. Wang Shizhen wrote this poem on the walls of the temple he is visiting (Linji’s temple, in fact), but he was not so resigned: he was obviously hoping that someone would undertake the restoration of this precious cultural site. In his

life work, Wang Shizhen was ultimately Confucian in outlook, an attitude which, as we shall see, was reflected in his approach to poetry.

Chan Buddhism has been described as a Chinese reaction to the scholastic trend in Buddhism. The original doctrine of the Buddha is that a life of struggle and desire was a life of suffering, but also that there is a cure for suffering: the Eightfold Path. By releasing one's insistence on "I and mine", the force that motivates us to possess things and advance our interests, one is freed from suffering connected with the struggle for existence. Instead of complaining that his stomach was uncomfortable (or whatever complaint), the Buddhist disciple is to remember that personhood is a conceptual illusion; what he thinks of as "himself" is merely a conglomeration of five "accumulations" or "gatherings" (*skandhas*): form, feeling, perception, impulse and consciousness. There may be sickness and a feeling of pain, but that is the interaction of the accumulations and has nothing to do with "I" and "mine." In Mahayana Buddhism, which began to arise in India as early as the second century B.C., this doctrine had been advanced, particularly in the philosophy of Nagarjuna, to the point where the five accumulations and the *dharmas*—the basic building blocks of existence that were the object of intense study in the centuries following the Buddha's death—were just as unreal or "empty" as "I" and "mine." In its ultimate form, this new Buddhism taught that reality was beyond all our conceptions of it, that we only see things as separate from each other because of the categories embodied in language. And it is equally inaccurate to speak of things being one, as in some forms of Hinduism, for "one" is just a concept that maintains its integrity by virtue of its critical opposite, which is "many." Ultimately, you should not say that

things are one or many, separate or together, good or bad, empty or full—the only philosophically safe way to refer to the way things are is by such terms as *tathata* or “thusness.” “Things,” and in Buddhism all things are seeming things, are simply “thus.” Nagarjuna’s Buddhism was a reaction against another current in Buddhism, that of scholasticism, in which scholars dissected and interpreted the words of the Buddha and asserted the existence of at least one kind of entity: the *dharmas*. The emphasis in Nagarjuna is that philosophical statements about reality lead to logical absurdities; Chan had a different stress. Almost all of the doctrines that are thought of as typically Chan, such as the belief in a Buddha-nature (*Foxing* 佛性) which is inside each person as well as present everywhere in nature, has an analog in Indian Buddhism.¹ And the *gongan* 公案 (Japanese, *koan*) system of riddles² that the Chan practitioner had to solve treated the major themes of Buddhism rather than introduced new themes, though the old material was treated with an unmistakably non-traditional method. Perhaps led by the common Chan saying *zhizhi renxin* 直指人心, “directly indicating the human mind,” Alan Watts describes the novelty of Chan as follows:

¹ For example, this quotation from the *Recorded Conversations* of Chan Master Nanquan 南泉 Puyuan 普願 of Chizhou 池州 represents Mahayana doctrine in a different style and vocabulary but does not fundamentally change it: “The Great Tao is totally without anything sacred or secular. Everything that has a name is subject to limitations. Therefore the Elder of Kozei said: ‘This is not mind, this is not Buddha, this is not a thing.’” (Dumoulin, 58). By ridding oneself of the concepts of I and mine, one merges with one’s context, which can be as far-flung as the entire universe. By doing this, one has, as the Chan saying has it, “seen one’s nature and become the Buddha” (*jianxing chengfo* 見性成佛), the Buddha not being any different from the universe. Of course, Chan is beyond even this kind of description, which has become another barrier if the disciple becomes overly concerned with it and cannot move beyond. Still, this thinking does not leap beyond what was already given in earlier forms of Buddhism.

² The purpose of the *gongan* system was to “give the student a thorough working acquaintance with every theme in the Buddhist universe, presenting the whole body of understanding in such a way that he knows it in his bones and nerves. By such means he learns to respond with it instantly and unwaveringly in the situations of everyday life” (Watts, 167). Also, “...the masters talk about Zen as little as possible, and throw its concrete reality straight at us. This reality is the “suchness” (*tathata*) of our natural, nonverbal world. If we see this just as it is, there is nothing good, nothing bad, nothing inherently long or short, nothing subjective and nothing objective. There is no symbolic self to be forgotten, and no need for any idea of a concrete reality to be remembered.” (Watts, 127).

Perhaps the special flavor of Zen is best described as a certain directness. In other schools of Buddhism, awakening or *bodhi* seems remote and almost superhuman, something to be reached only after many lives of patient effort. But in Zen there is always the feeling that awakening is something quite natural, something startlingly obvious, which may occur at any moment. If it involves a difficulty, it is just that it is much too simple. Zen is also direct in its way of teaching, for it points directly and openly to the truth, and does not trifle with symbolism.

Direct pointing (*chih-chih*) is the open demonstration of Zen by non-symbolic actions or words, which usually appear to the uninitiated as having to do with the most ordinary secular affairs, or to be completely crazy. In answer to a question about Buddhism, the master makes a casual remark about the weather, or performs some simple action which seems to have nothing to do with philosophical or spiritual matters. (Watts, 77)

It was thought that a philosophical answer would just let the cultivator indulge his habit of thinking, which is precisely what he needed to transcend to achieve enlightenment and thus be able constantly, spontaneously and therefore unintentionally, to perceive the “thusness,” of things. As Wing-Tsit Chan reminds us, after mentioning the answers “Kill!” and “three pounds of flax” to the two questions of what to do with a confused mind and what the Buddha was: “Any alert mind will soon realize that conceptualization can never discover what the Buddha is and that he should return to his spontaneous mental faculty to look for the answer himself” (Chan, 429). Chan was a specifically Chinese reaction because of the strong note of Daoism that sounds in Chinese Chan Buddhist writings:

. . . the distrust of words, the rich store of concrete metaphor and analogy, the love of paradox, the bibliophobia, the belief in the direct, person-to-person, and often wordless communication of

insight, the feeling that life led in close communion with nature is conducive to enlightenment—all these are colored with Taoism. Indeed Ch'an may be regarded as the reaction of a powerful tradition of Chinese thought against the verbosity, the scholasticism, the tedious logical demonstrations, of the Indian Buddhist texts. (Wright, 78)

All the same, Chan is something more than just Daoist naturalness and letting things take their course. In his comment to the passage in which Master Linji urges his disciples to kill (their ideas of) the Buddha, the patriarchs, their parents (and even themselves) in order to be completely free and natural, Wing-Tsit Chan comments:

This “doing nothing” philosophy means more than the Taoist philosophy of leaving things along and being absolutely spontaneous. It assumes that Ultimate Reality is everywhere and can be discovered without any special searching. Eating, sweeping the floor, simply walking, or anything will do. (Chan, 448)

Perhaps I have placed too much of emphasis on seeing the Chan in oneself and in one's surroundings, which cannot ultimately be separated, and not enough on naturalness. We must not assume that because Chan emphasizes intuition and spontaneity in common with Daoism that these virtues are any less central to Chan itself. Chan enlightenment is not only supposed to allow one to perceive the thusness of reality but also provides complete freedom from the constraints we impose on our ways of thinking. A Chan master does not think of himself as shy or nervous or aggressive, he just expresses himself unaffectedly

The emphasis on seeing and on wordless non-symbolic communication as the

manner of instruction has led some Chinese critics to believe that Chan and poetry have nothing to do with each other. Feng Ban 馮班 (1614-71), for example, said that, “Ts’ang-lang said that to use Ch’an as a metaphor for poetry was precise and illuminating. However, I regard this as mere unintelligibility and confused nonsense,” and Qian Qianyi agreed with him because to him Chan lay beyond words (Lynn, “Wang Shih-chen’s Theory of Poetry,” 223). The oft-repeated and likely apocryphal story of the Buddha holding up a flower in front of his congregation at Vulture Peak and Mahākāśyapa smiling slightly in appreciation, which is thought to embody the essence of Chan, was thought by some to keep Chan and poetry separate, because the sermon the Buddha preached after holding up the flower was only for the benefit of those still looking for words to set them free. Further support for this position are the famous instructional techniques used by Linji and other masters, such as blows to the head and shouts, used in order to shock cultivators out of their conventional style of thinking and being, as in the following charming anecdote about a monk named Cuiwei:

A monk asked Ts’ui-wei, “For what reason did the First Patriarch come from the West?”

Ts’ui-wei answered, “Pass me that chin-rest.”

As soon as the monk passed it, Ts’ui-wei hit him with it. (Watts, 130—*Biyān lu*, 20)

However, this position ignores two points. First, Chan masters make it clear enough that the key to the gate of enlightenment is not to throw away concepts and thinking, for these are just as natural and human and thus just as much expressions of Chan as anything else. The trick, rather, was to avoid getting trapped in thought, in the net of concepts. Huineng states this doctrine very clearly:

What is meant by absence-of-characters? Absence-of-characters means to be free from characters in the midst of them. Absence-of-thought means not to be carried away by thought in the process of thought...

Absence-of-thought means not to be defiled by external objects. It is to free our thoughts from external objects and not to have thought arise over *dharmas*. But do not stop thinking about everything and eliminate all thought. As though as thought stops, one dies and is reborn elsewhere.

(*A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*, 434, quoting *Liuzu tanjing* 17)

Presumably, one has to wait until enlightenment before one could not be carried away by thought in the process of thought, and this seems to be the sense of the following old story:

Before I had studied Zen for thirty years, I saw mountains as mountains, and waters as waters.

When I arrived at a more intimate knowledge, I came to the point where I saw that mountains are not mountains, and waters are not waters. But now that I have got its very substance, I am at rest.

For it's just that I see mountains once again as mountains, and waters once again as waters" (Watts, 126, from *Chuandenglu* 22).

The danger of "mountain" initially is that instead of just seeing the mountain you will label it and miss it. The same danger exists if we look inside and say that we are good or bad, shy or outgoing—if we get "carried away" by thoughts like this, we may come to believe that the words we said are eternally veridical statements about the way things are. We would have, as the Chinese say, put ourselves in a frame. When the disciple has made some advances along the Way, mountains cease to be obscured as "mountains," for he may be looking at what ordinary people would call a "mountain" not perceive the

imaginary “line” that ordinary people see dividing the mountain off from the rest of the universe. And after enlightenment, of course, mountains are once again mountains, but not as they were before. Human beings learn and produce language naturally. There is no child of two who hears the words around him but feels no desire to talk. Language still happens after enlightenment because it is a natural human process, but it is discarded as soon as it comes—we must not be obsessed with it. The second point the Qian Qianyi position ignores is that Linji and other masters might have used strange behavior, spontaneous non-verbal and non-symbolic gesticulations as skillful means to enlighten disciples, but there was also an important place of riddles and poetry in the Chan curriculum, in fact, the earliest examples of *gongan* practice developed in the Linji school, traceable to the *Huanglong sanguan* 黃龍三關 (Three Gates of Master Huanglong [1002-1069]). The answer to the first of these fits into the category of non sequiturs designed to discourage ratiocination, but the answers to numbers two and three are lines of poetry:

- (1) Everyone has his own native place. Where is your native place?
Early in the morning I ate white rice gruel; now I feel hungry again.
- (2) Why does my hand resemble Buddha’s hand?
Playing the *biwa* [*pipa* 琵琶, balloon lute] under the moon.
- (3) Why does my foot resemble an ass’s foot?
When the white heron is standing in the snow, its color is not the same. (Dumoulin, 77-78)

The student has to wrap his mind around the question until the answer came spontaneously and naturally, and the answer is a non-answer, having nothing to do with the question: the fact that the student can produce it proves his spontaneity, his escape

from the bondage of rational thinking, and his intuition for the Chan in his surroundings.

The history of the *gongan* system makes for fascinating reading, but we are concerned here more with poetry. Surprisingly, the earliest Chan poems preceded the riddles by over three hundred years. Here is a poem by Xuanjue 先覺 (665-713):

Over the river, the shining moon; in the pine trees, sighing wind;	江月照松風吹
All night long so tranquil—why? And for whom?	永夜清宵何所為

(Watts, 179, from *Zhengdao ge* 證道歌 (Song of the Realization of the Way), 24)

Why poetry? Perhaps because it was found that the Chan experience was a surpassingly hard one to communicate. There is absolutely no experience whatsoever whose substance can be passed on through language to someone who has never experienced it for himself. The taste of a banana is just as impossible to get as is the kinesthetic feel of an accomplished martial artist or a sense of Chan, unless you can taste, feel, and sense for yourself. That said, it is comparatively easy to take a child to a supermarket, buy him a banana, say, “this is a banana,” and invite him to enjoy the taste; martial arts, Chan, and poetry are harder to get a sense of. Martial artists have found it most effective to guide students through pithy Daoist paradoxes, while in Chan poetry and sometimes poetic riddles, in combination with the occasional blow on the head with a chinrest, have proven the most effective teaching aids. In Chan Buddhism, poems are supposed to be spontaneous expressions of nature, as a certain kind of person in any culture speaking in any language will tend to produce out of his own linguistic ability and his life experience the patterned kind of expression called poetry. As Watts puts it, “the arts of Zen are not

merely or primarily representational. Even in painting, the work of art is considered not only as representing nature but as being itself a work of nature” (Watts, 174). At the same time, we can also take a poem as an attempt to communicate a thought, a feeling, or an entire experience. One who has already understood the thought or had a similar feeling or experience will smile as did Mahākāśyapa when seeing the Buddha’s flower, and one who has not already had such an experience may be pleased by the rhythms and assonances of the poem, which will more likely lodge itself in his memory than any account in utilitarian prose. Thus lodged, the poem becomes a guide which will lead the disciple to his destination if he is persistent, rather like a young man who loves love poetry and becomes determined to go out in the world to experience love for himself. Another reason why poetry was found effective is because of the feeling poetry lovers often have of inexhaustible significance in only twenty words. As one cliché about Chinese poetry has it, “the words stop but the thought is inexhaustible” (*yan zhi yi wuqiong* 言止意無窮). We can talk about what King Lear “means” to us and how it makes us feel, but we and everyone else can discuss the matter for a lifetime and still not exhaust the topic. The Chan experience is “beyond words,” and, paradoxically, so ultimately is true literary expression.

The kind of poem that was considered most quintessentially Chan, most effective as the expression of Chan or as a Chan teaching aid, was the landscape poem, which bears comparison with Chinese landscape paintings:

The Sung masters were pre-eminently landscape painters, creators of a tradition of “nature painting” which has hardly been surpassed anywhere in the world. For it shows us the life of

nature—of mountains, waters, mists, rocks, trees, and birds—as felt by Taoism and Zen. It is a world to which man belongs but which he does not dominate; it is sufficient to itself, for it was not “made for” anyone and has no purpose of its own. (Watts, 178)

And I see the following quality perceived in Song painting as extremely significant:

By filling in just one corner, the artist makes the whole area of the picture alive. (Watts, 179)

There are many ways one can imagine describing a landscape. A completely accurate representation would be to completely reproduce the landscape detail by detail. Perhaps a topographical map would be useful in some contexts, or the sort of description we find in a travelogue. However, none of these seem to get at the feeling one has in a pristine natural environment. Is Chinese poetry more effective for this purpose? It was, in fact, felt that five and seven-line quatrains or even just couplets could do the trick. As Watts says, the arts of Chan are not representational. Neither are they made of fantasy, purely the products of the imagination, for the role of Chan is to relate an individual vitally to his real environment, not to some realm of his imagination. A Chan poem suggests ever so subtly a real feeling felt in a real environment. To say too much would get the reader thinking, which is not what the poem is supposed to do.³ What the poem is supposed to

³ If a disciple had to memorize lengthy texts, too much energy would go into mastering the story. Even if mastered, a long work cannot be kept in consciousness all at once. A short formula, on the other hand, can be fitted into consciousness. There is not room for too much musing on this issue in the main text, but I would like to pursue the side-issue of organic unity briefly. Several poems in this selection of *shihua* are called *gathas* (*jie*); this implies to us that the disciple would do with them what he would do with verses in the sutras: memorized them and held them in memory until they became “startling lines” (*jingju* 警句) and shocked him farther along the road to understanding. Most of the poetry in this part of Wang’s work is not given in full. Here a line is quoted, there perhaps two or four, all of them excerpts from larger works. We should not protest that excerpting does not respect the organic integrity of a work. This was a common habit among writers of *shihua*. Wang Shizhen is showing us lines he has “discovered,” beautiful lines that to him embody the essence of poetry. It is well to say that the collected works of Shakespeare contain the

do is to produce a moment of true revelation, and one way to know if a person has had such a moment is to see the slight smile upon his face. Another way might be to hear a poem that person has produced for himself. A final reason why landscape scenes were effective is because that was what most disciples were ready for. Someone seeking complete peace and tranquility, complete harmony with his surroundings in his thinking and feeling is more likely to find a congenial place to do so in and around a mountain temple than in a busy marketplace. Unless one has reached the point where one can bring the peace of the eternal realm into everyday life—unless one is enlightened—practicing Chan on Wall Street is going to be difficult. One still has desire and fear, and these will constantly be pulling one out of the tranquil center. However, ultimately there is no less Chan or *tathata* in the spray of gore in a battle⁴ as there is in the call of a crane flying over a deserted islet in the Yangzi River. Chan is beyond our fear and desire, beyond beautiful and ugly.

Much of the poetry in the *Chan Grove* expresses Chan truths. Before showing how the poetry in this collection expresses Chan principles and the Chan attitude, however, we should understand that a poet who sets out to compose a poem to convey a certain truth will fail, for such sense of purpose is death to naturalness and creativity. It is one thing to express spontaneously and naturally one's sense of how things are beyond our ideas of good and bad, short and long, of how things look different from different

essence of poetry, but it is more manageable to say that any brilliant line of Shakespeare contains the essence of poetry. A single line, if it is enough to spark us to understanding, is enough. In my own experience of reading, it is only single lines and sometimes only single words that bring me to new levels of understanding. It was not reading the Bible as a whole that gave me this minor revelation but that a certain line “struck” me and provoked one of those rushes of mental activity and energy that constitute the “mountaintop” experience of insight—enlightenment.

⁴ The standard “shock” example was excrement—see Wing-Tsit Chan, 445.

perspectives and therefore have no absolute “aspect,” and of how things flow (water and clouds flow along and things “bleed” into each other). It is quite another matter to start with Huineng’s doctrine of *wunian wuxiang wuzhu* 無念, 無相, 無住, and set out to compose poems to carry these meanings.⁵ The three themes I list below can be seen to

⁵ The website <http://home.kimo.com.tw/123david123/new_page_9.htm> contains a section called 現代詩時代以禪入詩的美學實踐: “Modern day poetry putting into practice the aesthetics of getting into poetry through Chan.” The writer works from three principles of Huineng, which come from a passage we have already encountered in a discussion of the place of words in Chan: “善知識, 我此法, 從上以來, 先立無念為宗, 無相為體, 無住為本. 無相者, 於相而離相; 無念者, 於念而無念; 無住者, 人之本性.” Wing-Tsit Chan gives the following translation:

Good and learned friends, in this method of mine, from the very beginning, whether in the sudden-enlightenment or gradual-enlightenment tradition, absence-of-thought has been instituted as the main doctrine, absence of characters as the substance, and nonattachment as the foundation. What is meant by absence-of-characters? Absence-of-characters means to be free from characters while in the midst of them. Absence-of-thought means not to be carried away by thought in the process of thought. Nonattachment is man’s original nature. (Chan, 434)

The writer then goes on to say that these can be regarded as the three fundamental of Chan aesthetics: “此三者, 可以視禪宗美學的基本意涵.” I am slightly wary of arguing that Chan poetry expresses Chan doctrine, because of the following warning of Dumoulin:

However, one would be presenting a false picture were one to overemphasize the importance of the various doctrinal elements in the Zen of Rinzai. It is only in the later commentaries that they come to play a considerable role. Rinzai himself abominated all rationalization and systematization. He is one of the typical champions of Enlightenment Zen. Almost no one else stressed as he did the suddenness and directness of the Zen experience. (Dumoulin, 24)

Dumoulin is speaking of Linji, but my instinct is that making Chan “doctrine-heavy” turns it into regular Buddhism. However, the use of Huineng’s three principles as a way to organize what I want to say about Chan poetry is convenient. I will deal with the application of the doctrine to the poetry in the main text, but we first need to understand the doctrine.

A—To be without thoughts means not to interpret experience, not to *try* translate what we see and feel into words, which divide the world into “good” and “bad,” “mountains” and “valleys,” and so forth. If applied too strictly, such a prescription goes against human nature, for thoughts come and so do words and the desire to get them out. What Huineng seems to be saying is when words come, let them come; but also let them go as soon as they are out. B—To be without *xiang* is trickier, for the word meant both “characteristic” and “appearance.” We categorize things according to their appearances, and discrete characteristics are isolated from an appearance. Usually what happens after we categorize things is that we forget them and move on. The problem with this approach is that it is over-hasty, and hastiness leads to miscategorization: we misjudge things and take false appearances as real. Huineng is primarily telling us we should not be surprised when appearances change from a different perspective or over time. If we take the appearances of the things we see provisionally and continue to look on with interest, we will tend to understand things better and see the way they truly are. This is what I take “to be free of characters while in the midst of them” to mean. However, on the ultimate level, the way things truly are is without characteristics, which means there are no individual things: what ordinary people see as separate, the sage sees as “bleeding” into each other. A sage just looks at the scene, which is actually much more difficult for people over four or five years old than it sounds! C—To be without *zhu* also involves a dual meaning, for

follow from this doctrine of Huineng, but poems written in order to teach them seem somehow less imbued with Chan meaning. With this caveat in mind, the “three themes” are as follows:

Interest. Included in the category of thoughts and ideas—of which we are to let go—are “I” and “mine.” In the typical Chan poem, there is the feeling of selfhood swallowed up or extended out into the environment, so that there is no sense of authorial presence: Chan poetry tends to be impersonal. Instead of the author, the landscape dominates, and a poem shows us the interest or appeal (*qu* 趣), the thusness (*tathata*), or the sense of Chan which the poet has perceived in the setting. No interpretation is given; what appeals is merely presented. Sometimes the act of noticing is stressed, but not always.

For long I have wandered around under forest trees,
So know something about the charm there beneath them.

The tree snake’s cover of scales is extraordinary,
And the handsome hawk’s feathers green.

When black monkeys approach the mountain stream to drink,
White birds wheel up into the sky.

this term is “attachment”—clutching tightly to interpretations, things, or people—and “fixedness.” *Zhu* in Mandarin means “to live” as well as “stuck fast.” These two meanings are related, because each time we are grasping or find we are attached to something, we are actually being “carried away” from the present by something that is fundamentally not fixed. To realize that all things flow, ourselves included, is supposed to end suffering.

What these three principles come down to, it seems to me, is to not fight change or interpret experience but instead to take it all in and go with one’s daily business without plans, without intentions, and with a constant heightened awareness of one’s surroundings. Language and thoughts and sometimes a poem will come and go, and the right attitude is to just let them come and go.

The clear bell comes from branch tips of trees,
As white birds land on windy rapids.

Changes in Perspective. The lack of fixed characteristics and appearances is revealed by shifts in perspective. In many of these poems, it is noticed that something suddenly looks unusual a new point of view, about which we can draw the conclusion that nothing has an “ultimate aspect”:

Though water born mists often seem dark,
All of a sudden forest snows are as if in spring.

In many of these poems, perceptual tricks are played to startle the reader. The effect aimed at is surprise *jing*. A good example of a “surprising sentence” *jingju* 警句 is the following, which focuses our attention *here* but then immediately surprises us by swiveling the view over *there*:

In Green Waterway flows a full current of water,
And behind Purple Cap array mountains row upon row.

Finally, the mention of surprise in connection with change in perspective should make us think about the shock that is supposed to attend enlightenment. What is finally perceived, of course, is thusness. There are many examples of poems which show the moment of awakening, especially this one:

Only when I roll up the screen do I know a visitor’s arrived,

Or when I hang up the lamp do I see the roosting birds.

Flow. The lack of steadfastness in things means that whether slowly or quickly, all things flow, always responding to each other and transforming. The typical images used are water and cloud.

Thousand layers of roiling mist swirl out from behind the mountain barrier,
Clearly flowing a myriad streams emerge from the roots of clouds.

From high branches they can bear to part,
And on flowing water drift and bob along.

The following couplet from a poem by Hanshan asserts that all things are just as much in flow as is water:

I have cultivated my mind but have not gotten to the realm of no-mind,
The ten thousand forms and the thousand kinds chase the water's flow.

If these poems are true manifestations of Chan, they should be completely natural and spontaneous expressions of inner mental states by poets with Chan in their blood.

However, there are also not a few rather more self-conscious poems, which include too much doctrinal content to reach the ultimate level of attainment:

Lazily calling, monkeys welcome the visitor,
Leisurely accepting it, deer practice Chan meditation.

No fire in the ground stove, sack completely empty,
Snow like falling poplar floss, the year is at its end.
I beg some ramie grass to mend my tattered robe,
Unaware of how solitary and desolate I am.

White hair comes sooner or later,
But blue-green mountains are without past and present.

Do we have nothing in the *Chan Grove* but poetry that can be categorized under one or more of these themes? Judging from the first entry, we should expect something like tranquil transcendence with birds startling us near distant mountain temples to be the dominant note of the whole work. The second entry, however, launches into an historical poem with Huineng storing up energy for the spread of his lightning Chan throughout the land. This is the kind of approach we would expect from someone writing a history of the Chan sect; it is not the stuff of enlightenment. There are, in fact, many poems which do not at first glance seem to have anything to do with Chan. For example: a) a poem about escaping the world with a bottle of wine and a river skiff, which sounds utterly conventional—it could be Tao Yuan drinking with a peasant neighbor (entry sixteen); b) an historically allusive poem that compares Tang general Li Su with Han general Han Xin—the poem is in awe of the force of a personality not of the appeal of an impersonal environment (end of entry nineteen); c) a poem that conjures up an ominous battlefield in the mind of the reader (beginning of entry nineteen); and d) a rich and luxurious dreamscape poem written in a completely individual style (entry eight). These examples, some of which we will deal with below, challenge the implicit polarities or spectrums we have set up. On the spectrums that go from peace to violence and from intensely personal

to coolly impersonal, the typical Chan poem will be at the peaceful and impersonal ends. That there are many poems that do not really seem to fit reminds us that in the end Chan is beyond all categories and is just as much present in the luxurious and the ominous as in the calling of birds or the sounding of bells. That many poems do not seem to be Chan expressions also reminds us that these poets were only human, and being human means being conventional for imitators and expressing individual style for those with more creativity and originality. It does not seem to me that we can say that much more about why or why not individual poems in this collection express Chan—there would be no end to such a discussion. The task for the next and last section of this essay is to guide us in a new direction: Wang Shizhen’s interest in Chan and the relation of this interest to his poetics.

The field of poetry criticism was extremely complex by the time Wang Shizhen entered it. The oldest idea in Chinese criticism was originally expressed in the *Shujing* (Classic of Documents) by the words *shiyanzhi* 詩言志, or “The Poem (*shih*) articulates what is on the mind intently (*chih*)” (Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 26). A poem tells us what the poet’s mind is intent on, what is “on his mind.”⁶ Poetry is thus expressive, which is one of the categories or “conceits” that James J. Y. Liu examines—Liu calls the spontaneous expression of emotion or thought an aesthetics of “primitivism” and dates this line of the *Shujing* to as late as the second century B. C. but probably much earlier (Liu, 69). Another idea labeled as “primitive”—this time by Stephen Owen—was

⁶ “Thought” is an inappropriate translation for *yi* 意, which in Chinese is what is in the “mind,” an equally inappropriate translation for *xin* 心. *Xin* meant both heart and mind together, an idea that in Western terms might be called the integration of our intellectual and emotional life. Therefore, *yi* was a person’s internal state and included both feeling and thinking—it is a comprehensive internal response to an external situation.

that a poet may have feelings and thoughts on his mind because he has been “stirred” to a response by things in the outside world (*ganying* 感應). These “primitive” ideas developed over time, and Owen identifies an “intermediate stage in the theory of the relation between mind and the world” (*Literary Thought*, 205) in the *Wenxin diaolong*, “in which the self (both the receptive “affections,” *ch’ing*, and the volitional or concept-forming *yi*) is “filled” by the external scene” (*Literary Thought*, 206).⁷ The fullest flowering of this theory of mind was the *qingjing jiaorong* 情景交融 model that developed in the Song, “the “fusion of scene and the affections,” in which both self and world are mutually determined” (*Literary Thought*, 206).⁸ A third idea fundamental to Chinese literary thought betrays the influence of philosophy. In philosophical Daoism, represented by such texts as the *Daode jing* 道德經 (The Way and Its Power) and the

⁷ The original line was, “If one climbs a mountain, one’s affections (*ch’ing*) are filled by the mountain; if one contemplates the sea, one’s concepts (*yi*) are brought to brimming over by the sea.” 登山則情滿於山。觀海則意溢於海 (Owen, 205).

⁸ Here are two related translations, the first from Xie Chen (1495-1575) and the second from Wang Fuzhi (1619-1692):

A—“The writing of poetry is based upon emotion and scene. Each by itself is incomplete, and the two do not conflict” (Lynn, “Wang Shih-chen’s Theory of Poetry,” 234). Lynn comments: “the subjective self fuses with objective reality and they become one, and the poetry which results is the scene intuitively grasped by the poet and charged with his emotions and sensibilities” (234).

B—“*Ch’ing* [emotion/inner experience] and *ching* [scene/external world] are called by two different names but are in fact inseparable. Those who can work miracles in poetry fuse the two naturally and leave no boundary line; those who are ingenious can reveal the one in the other and vice versa.” (Liu, 42). Liu comments that Wang Fuzhi, “asserts that “inner experience” and “external world” are only two names by which we refer to two aspects of reality and not two separate entities....only by apprehending reality in its totality can a poet reach the realm of perfect artistry that appears like a natural miracle, but if a poet treats inner experience and external reality as two entities, the best he can attain to is mere “ingenuity.” ”

It is impossible to speak on the ultimate level, because speaking represents reality in highly simplified conceptual form. However, on the level of the everyday, it is possible to *point* upwards to the ultimate level. The following quote from Linji proves he recognized *on the level of the everyday* the same categories of self and environment as were embodied in the *qingjing jiaorong* doctrine:

In some instances I abstract man from the environment; in some instances I abstract the environment from man; in some instances I abstract both man and environment; and in some instances I abstract neither man nor environment. (Dumoulin, 72)

We will see, however, that in the end the objectives of poets who aimed for *qingjing jiaorong* on the one hand and Linji and other Chan masters on the other were different.

Zhuangzi 莊子, the term *dao* 道 or “way” has several interrelated meanings, one of which is “transcendental” or perhaps “metaphysical.” The Dao was at some points rather like the Absolute (*brahman*) of the Hindus and the Buddhists, the source from which all things come when they manifest in the world and the destination to which they return when their existence ceases. The Dao also sometimes seems immanent in Nature, but somehow beyond surface appearances. A similarly metaphysical idea was *li* 理 or “principle,” which, already an important philosophical term at least by the third century, was given a new depth of meaning in the twelfth century by Neo-Confucians such as Zhu Xi. *Li* came to mean the “four-dimensional” principle that determined a certain thing (for example, bamboo) in its unfolding in different circumstances. Again, *li* seems simultaneously transcendent and immanent. When *dao* and *li* were used in literary criticism, they were observed by the poet, who was to have superior powers of observation; and theories based around such terms were called “metaphysical” by James J. Y. Liu.

The situation was not so simple that three distinct principles can be isolated for literary criticism; there were a large number of schools and even larger number of critics, many with easily distinguishable positions. This process of position-taking began in the Song and reached a high point in the late Ming, when several distinct critical views et themselves off from one another.⁹ One of the main issues on which Ming critics took positions was the value of imitation. Generally, there was a split between those who felt that imitation of authorized models was the essential part of an effective poetic education

⁹ In addition to what follows, there is some information about individual positions and school positions in footnote three to page forty-nine in the translation of the *Chan Grove*. The most extreme expression of this position was by the so-called Archaist school in the sixteenth century.

and those who felt that imitation made it impossible for the budding poet to develop an individual voice. Those on opposite sides of this issue can be divided into opposing “Tang” and “Song” camps. Those who believed in the value of imitation tended to extol imitation of Tang poetry, especially the poetry of the High Tang. Although Li Bai, the great poet of gusto, fantasy, and drunken exuberance, was often put on the highest pedestal along with Du Fu, the strictly regulated forms (the *jueju* and *liushi*) that became *de rigueur* in the early eighth century and the cool restraint of nature poetry by Wang Wei and Meng Haoran caused posterity to consider the High Tang a poetic era of comparative impersonality. On the other hand, those who wished to cultivate originality tended to follow the lead of Song poets like Su Shi, who sometimes chose to write about quotidian life and had an unrestrained and expressionist approach to poetry.¹⁰ There was not much conflict between the “expressionists” and “impersonalists” in the Northern Song, but in the centuries following the appearance of the *Canglang shihua* sometime before the middle of the thirteenth century, critical discourse gradually became more polarized. This work made an impact because it defends a single position, that poetic enlightenment and Chan enlightenment were analogous and that Chan could therefore be used to illustrate poetry training and poetic achievement. He Jingming 何景明 (1483-1521), one of the critics who took Yan Yu’s side in the early sixteenth century, turned this into a powerful slogan: *shi chan yizhi* 詩禪一致 (poetry and Chan are just the same). This is the kind of extreme language which rallies supporters and opponents alike to their opposite positions, and we have already noted Qian Qianyi’s rejection of the terms of

¹⁰ A little consideration can destabilize this last distinction, for, in addition to the example of Li Bai, the followers of Huang Tingjian in the Song, who called themselves the Jiangxi School after Huang’s birthplace, were the first group to make imitation the cornerstone of poetics. They also anticipated Yan Yu (see below) in comparing Chan with poetry.

Chan as valid for discussing poetry. Although he does not put a particular stress on it, Yan Yu's curriculum begins strangely, with the shamanistic trance visions of the *Chuci* 楚辭 instead of the homely and folksy airs of the *Shijing* 詩經, one of the *Shisan jing* 十三經 (Thirteen Classics) alongside the *Analects*, the *Shujing*, and the *Mencius*. The significance of this choice, it seems to me, is that it shows us that to Yan Yu poetry was a mystical practice to be mastered by the few and not a spontaneous dip into the well of folk creativity. On the other hand, the aim in studying poetry is declared at the beginning of the *Canglang shihua* to be the analytical knowledge of good and bad quality in poetry: "Judgment (*shih* 識) is the dominant factor in the study of poetry" (*Chinese Literary Thought*, 394). After the *Chuci*, the student of poetry is to read poetry from the Han and Wei dynasties, avoiding the stylized court poetry of the Early Tang, arriving finally at the summit by taking up first the poetry of Li Bai and Du Fu and later the works of other High Tang poets. This was, as Richard Lynn puts it, "a program of exposure and conditioning by models that he was sure would lead the student to success through what in modern terms might be called unconscious internalization" ("The Sudden and the Gradual in Chinese Poetry Criticism," 407). After this process had progressed enough to bear fruit, the poet will "suddenly" achieve poetic enlightenment in the way that a Chan practitioner suddenly (sooner or later) sees the truth of Chan. This initial poetic enlightenment may be the final one along the path or the first of many:

Finally, after a long time, you will spontaneously (*tzu-jan*) achieve enlightened insight. Even though you may not yet have reached the full fruition of your studies, at least you won't have lost the proper road. (*Chinese Literary Thought*, 395)

The fourth chapter of the *Canglang shihua* deals with the curriculum in more detail, and assigns the poetry of different authors to different categories borrowed from Chan and other forms of Buddhism. For example, the poetry of the Han, Wei, and High Tang is called the “primary truth,” and the poetry after the High Tang is called the “secondary truth.” The Linji School, with its emphasis on sudden enlightenment, is associated with the poetry of the primary truth, while the Caodong School, which favored gradual enlightenment, is grouped with the disapproved secondary truth poetry.¹¹ Yan Yu says much else of interest, some of which we will deal with when we approach Wang Shizhen directly.¹² Yan Yu’s approach (mastering the tradition), his classification scheme, and his

¹¹ Richard Lynn has written an article on this issue entitled “The Sudden-Gradual Polarity in Chinese Poetics,” in which critics are seen to be divided on the issue of the nature of poetic enlightenment, a mirror of the similar debate in Chan. Some critics emphasized the necessity of a long, slow accumulation of experience and understanding: this is obviously gradualist. On the other hand, others believed that a poet could just “suddenly” achieve enlightenment without worrying about training and without striving for any goal. It seems to me that in many ways Yan Yu is gradualist despite what he says about the Caodong school and the poetry of the secondary truth. The learning process he proposes seems long and arduous: the pupil has to master the tradition. There may be a sudden jump of enlightenment at the end of the road, but it will have been a long steep road that the enlightened poet has traveled. A further point of interest is that the poets of the Han and the Wei were said by Yan Yu not to need enlightenment: they were already enlightened. I do not know of any parallels in Buddhist literature of this idea of being enlightened to start with. There is a story where the Buddha told someone that what he had to teach was dependent origination: that was enough to enlighten this individual. In Chan Buddhism, enlightenment is made to seem hard because it is so easy or so simple. But no matter how easy or simple enlightenment is, for the Buddha’s interlocutor, Huineng, and Linji there was a specific moment where they reached enlightenment.

¹² Richard Lynn’s analysis of the three ways the Chan-poetry analogy functions provides a context for everything I am saying: 1) in organizational terms, we see that each of Chan and poetry has a method, a set of rules that are passed down by masters that the disciple must internalize and *eventually* transcend. “Within each, truth is one and immutable, and each organization has a tradition that both defines its truth and protects it against the snares and delusions of heterodoxy” (“The Sudden and the Gradual in Chinese Poetry Criticism,” 405). Second, in operational terms, we can see that poetry and Chan are learned in similar ways. “The operation of acquiring enlightenment in poetry, where enlightenment is understood as spontaneous control over the correct poetic medium, is the same kind of operation of acquiring enlightenment in Ch’an, where enlightenment is understood as the achievement of pure consciousness, self-transcendence, mystical experience, and so forth” (405). Third, in substantive terms, “Effortlessness or spontaneous naturalness and the transcendence of all discriminations, perceptual and conceptual, between the absolute and phenomena, between nirvana and empirical existence, are the two principal (and inseparable) dimensions of Ch’an enlightenment. Intuitive control in poetry is, thus, analogous to effortlessness in Ch’an, and intuitive cognition as it is articulated in poetic language is analogous to the transcendence of discriminations in Ch’an enlightenment, though in poetry the objects of cognition do not necessarily extend to the absolute or nirvana” (406). To this third point I would attach what I have said about transcending the discriminations embodied in language while still being in language—this is the goal that both poets and Chan masters strive to attain—Chan masters have to see through the discriminations

central thesis that poetic and Chan enlightenment are the same were fiercely debated. We have noted that Qian Qianyi was opposed both to the slavish imitation of poetry of the past and also to the identification of poetry and Chan; he also utterly rejected classification schemes based on the tradition of Chan:

During the past three hundred years, the illness which the study of poetry has suffered has been very severe. From preceptors in the Hanlin Academy to those who give lessons in village schools, all have come under the influence of Mr. Yen's "Poetic Method" (*shih-fa*) [a section of the *Ts'ang-lang shih-hua*] and Mr. Kao's [*T'ang-shih*] *pin-hui*. People have become thoroughly indoctrinated by them and have literally committed them to memory.... As far as the poetry of the entire T'ang period is concerned, each poet has his own individual spirit and his own individual atmosphere. Now they [Yen and Kao] fix boundaries according to Early, High, Middle, and Late T'ang.... (Lynn, "Wang Shih-chen's Theory of Poetry," 239)

However, we must also keep in mind Richard Lynn's considered judgment that even the poets and critics who took Yan Yu's side in these debates in the end had stronger commitments to Neo-Confucianism (at least to Neo-Confucian ideals) than to Chan:

Although the poetic theory behind this poetry is filled with Ch'an terminology and ideas, it is essentially directed towards promoting a kind of poetry which attempts to integrate man and objective reality. Unlike the Buddhists, who deny the value and very existence of objective reality and who concentrate only upon the perfection of the inner realm of consciousness, the orthodox tradition of poetry balances inner man with his perception and conception of external reality. ("Wang Shih-chen's Theory of Poetry," 255)

made by language while still being in language because they have to interact with others and teach disciples. A master for whom mountains are again mountains can write a poem *here* that points at an experience that happened *there*.

It seems to me that it is not quite the case that Buddhists and even Chan Buddhists deny the value and existence of external reality while affirming the value of the quest for inner perfection. Enlightenment is supposed to consist of transcending the distinction between the inner and outer so that the individual disappears or becomes as large as the cosmos. Or, rather, one's idea of oneself disappears—the enlightened individual completely forgets himself and roams freely, rather like Qian Qianyi's ideal for the poet in his poetry. Chan does not mean going *there* without coming back again: mountains can again be mountains. Chan masters were also in favor of work: Zhenji 真際 (True Limit) of Zhaozhou 趙州 said, “When there's no work for a day, there's no eating for a day” (Dumoulin, 62). However, this particular current in Chan could not turn Chan monks into motivated Confucians: the average Chan monk spent a great deal of time begging and meditating, not actively and intentionally working for the good of others. Wang Shizhen and the poet-critics of the late Ming—most of them active bureaucrats—may have resented conditions under which they had to work but never resented their work as such—it was their sacred duty. And as important as poetry was to them, it was not their whole lives but rather an activity through which they could cultivate themselves to be better poets to be sure *but also* to be productive and creative individuals fully woven into the social fabric. Therefore, while the Chan-poetry identification has much to teach about the process of learning and development that occurs in poetry or any difficult discipline, the long struggle followed by revelations or rapid jump in skill, in the end a Chan poetics seems less appropriate to a poet who is also a responsible social individual than is the poetics of *qingjing jiaorong*. This phrase will be our guide, for we shall find that Wang

Shizhen largely based his *shenyun* poetics upon it.

As a young person, Wang Shizhen loved a certain kind of poetry, perhaps because it was the poetry he heard earliest in life and perhaps also because it suited his character and constitution. That poetry was the serene and tranquil nature poetry of Meng Haoran and especially Wang Wei. The following occasion, which Richard Lynn places before Wang's tenth birthday, shows how his tastes were formed:

My eldest brother. . . liked to compose poetry, so my brothers and I all liked to compose poetry too. Once, at the end of the year, there was a great snowfall. That night we gathered in a pavilion and set out wine. When we had finished half the wine, he brought out Wang [Wei's] and P'ei [Ti's] *Wang-ch'uan chi*. We agreed to write poems echoing its rhyme schemes, and as soon as someone finished a poem, we were quick either to praise it or to point out its faults. ("Wang Shih-chen's Theory of Poetry," 245)

On this day Wang might have been read the following poem, the seventeenth of Wang Wei's *Wangchuan ji*:

Alone I sit in a secluded bamboo thicket,	獨坐幽篁裏
I pluck the zither, again whistling long.	彈琴復長嘯
In the deep forest, where nobody knows where I am,	深林人不知
The bright moon comes to shine on me.	明月來相照

Some of the poems in this series do not have an obvious human presence, but this one does: there is no personal pronoun, but someone, presumably Wang Wei, sits alone, plays the zither and whistles, and is shined on by the moon. This poem shows us a tranquil

environment with still the sense of a person there who is in harmony with the outside world and who is expressing both his own mood and the mood of his surroundings. Therefore, this poem is to be differentiated from the ideal Chan poem, where there is nothing in the poem to suggest the poet except the poem itself. We are here considering the approach, which can not be attributed to any specific school or poet, of “landscape [as] a fitting vehicle for the expression of emotion and personal character” (Lynn, “Wang Shih-chen’s Theory of Poetry,” 245). Wang referred to these poems heard in childhood several times in his critical writing:

Yen Ts’ang-lang employed Ch’an as an analogy for poetry. I profoundly agree with what he says. However, the five-syllable line is especially close to it [Ch’an]. For example, the quatrains in Wang [Wei’s] and P’ei [Ti’s] *Wang-ch’uan [chi]*, word after word, enter Ch’an (*ju-ch’an*).... These quatrains are marvelous truths and subtle words—they are not any different from “Sakyamuni picked a flower and Kasyapa gently smiled.” Those who thoroughly understand this can talk about the Great Vehicle. (Lynn, “Wang Shih-chen’s Theory of Poetry,” 254)

The use of the five-character line should remind us of the quotation about Song painters, who merely filled in one corner. The five-character line was the most brief yet the most effective for presenting the feeling and realization that accompanies intense experience, poetic or mystical. Here is another passage concerned with getting the idea and letting the words go:

Five-syllable quatrains of the people of the T’ang often enter Ch’an (*ju-ch’an*). They have the marvelous quality of making one forget the words as soon as he gets the idea. This quality constitutes the very same axis or pivot as Vimalakirti’s doctrine of absolute silence or

Bodhidharma's doctrine of obtaining the essence. Look at the *Wang-ch'uan chi* of Wang [Wei] and P'ei [Ti]... although it is only of dull capacity (*tun-ken*) and merely the first step to enlightenment, still it is capable of effecting sudden enlightenment (*tun-wu*). (Lynn, "Wang Shih-chen's Theory of Poetry," 252)

The idea of getting the idea and leaving the words behind goes back to the *Zhuangzi*. Of course, to suggest experiences that are profoundly difficult to get across, the poet must make the words beautiful, and the reader must also try to see through the words to what lies beyond, just as you see through "mountains" to see mountains.

Wang Shizhen grew up in an environment saturated with poetry, and the passages quoted above speak to just how vitally important Wang Wei's *Wangchuan ji* was to the development of his critical faculty. As he got older, he read everything under the sun, and, as often happens, certain ideas and writers "jumped" out at him as especially important or interesting. The earliest influence on Wang was the Tang critic Sikong Tu, the author of the influential work *Shipin* 詩品 (The Twenty-Four Categories of Poetry), which expresses in verse a diverse palate of "moods." The arrangement is roughly dialectical, with opposites alternating: "Serene and Placid" *qingdan* (#2) comes right after "Potent and Undifferentiated" *xionghun* (#1). This is (roughly) a poetics based on the *Yijing* 易經 (Classic of Changes) notion of productive opposites in shifting harmony. Here is Wang on Sikong Tu's work:

Ssu-k'ung Piao-sheng arranged his *Shih-pin* in twenty-four modes (*p'in*). Concerning the one he calls "serene-and-placid" he says, "Come upon it and it isn't deep; the closer you draw near the

more tenuous it becomes.” Concerning the one he calls “natural” he says, “If you bend over it’s right there; don’t take it from your neighbor.” Concerning the one he calls “pure-and-extraordinary” he says, “Spirit comes from what is antique and rare; placidity is not something to amass.” These are the very highest of poetic modes.

In Piao-sheng’s discussion of poetry he proposes twenty-four modes. I like most the phrase: “Without writing down a single word, completely get the spirit of it.” (two separate quotations, both from Lynn, “Wang Shih-chen’s Theory of Poetry,” 245)

These quotations, which Wang seems to have committed to memory and must have been often quoted to his disciples, draw on many of the twenty-four categories, but they are all of a type: he is dealing with something transcending the everyday, something elusive and difficult, something quiet and remote. Wang does not think of all the categories as equal: some poetic modes are higher than others. A reading of the full *Shipin* shows us that Sikong Tu’s poetics can admit a Su Shi just as much as a Wang Wei—the twelfth category of “Swaggering Abandon” or “Heroic Abandon” *haofang* 豪放, which later came to be the name of Su Shi’s tradition of poetry. A suggestion of this flavor of life, which a Chan master was supposed to perceive and enact, is partly what Wang Shizhen hoped to achieve in his poetry and what he appreciated in the poetry of others. Of course, this flavor beyond words can not be presented but only hinted at. Words like *qu* 趣 and *tathata* and Chan point directly, but, if we have never had a similar experience, these words will be at best tantalizing guides or, worse, mean nothing. The last line is the most tantalizing of all: completely getting to the spirit of things is what a Chan master does, and it is also what a poet does *when he is in a moment of poetic inspiration*.

The other main influence on Wang Shizhen was Yan Yu, but, again, what Wang sees as crucial in Yan Yu tells us more about Wang Shizhen than about Yan's work (it is almost as if the *Canglang shihua* is more important for Wang Shizhen as a repository of suggestive Chan formulas than for what it said about judgment and about the tradition). Although there are passages where Wang enthusiastically applies a Chan classification to poetry and compares Chan doctrines such as discarding the raft when you have reached the shore (letting go of monastic or poetic discipline once you have reached Chan or poetic enlightenment), he was mainly attracted by talk of the ineffable quality Chan masters and enlightened poets could perceive and put into their poems, which for Wang Shizhen took on immense significance as fusions of perception, the setting, and the individual's emotional state. An idea of the kind of line Wang appreciated in Yan Yu can be gathered from the following quotation from the preface to the *Tangxian sanmei ji*, (Collection of Samādhi [Enlightened] Poetry by Bhadrās [Virtuous Sages] of the Tang):

When Yan Canglang [Yan Yu 嚴羽 ca. 1195-ca. 1245] discussed poetry, he said such things as: "Poets of the High Tang were only concerned with inspired interest (*xingqu* 興趣)." "As antelopes that hung by their horns, they left behind no tracks by which they could be found." "As utterly transparent crystals, their poems defy rational analysis (*buke coubo* 不可湊泊)." "Like a sound in the air, the play of color in the appearance of things, the moon reflected in water, or an image in a mirror, the words come to an end by the thought (*yi* 意) is infinite." Ssu-k'ung Piao-sheng discussed poetry and said: "It's the flavor beyond sourness and saltiness." (Lynn, "Landscape as Enlightenment, 1-2)

These are isolated quotations from Yan Yu, which Yan Yu has taken from Chan masters.

Their fullest explication is to be found in Richard Lynn’s recent article “Landscape as Enlightenment.” The first statement seems a very Chan approach to literature: the poet’s job is to make readers perceive the interest in a thing or a scene that they have not noticed before; the Chan master’s task is to get his disciples to finally *see* through their conventional notions to Ultimate Reality or Buddha nature, which has been there from the beginning. However, the use of the word *xing* 興 goes right back to the *Shijing* and its interpretive tradition, where a *xing* is a suggestive symbol whose meaning can not be translated into ordinary rational discourse. The second statement about antelopes connects with Wang’s respect for the artistry of Tang poets who could remove their presence from their works. As Professor Daniel Bryant reminds us, Wang was, “a poet whose reputation is to a considerable degree based upon admiration for his ability to remove his own presence from his verse” (Bryant, 32). Wang’s approach is related to Chan because in Chan poetry individual presence is removed thanks to his ability to transcend his individuality. The third quotation supports the first—the “meaning” of poem as understood by rational analysis¹³ is pale in comparison with its super-rational suggestive power—and adds the idea that a poem’s beauty also lies in the perfection of its form. Richard Lynn’s final comment on the fourth and final quotation is that they are more than “metaphors for the limitless capacity of verbal connotation and suggestion, all dressed up in fanciful, if not mystical, imagery” (“Wang Shih-chen’s Theory of Poetry,” 228). Through a careful examination of mirror images used in the *Zhuangzi* and in Neo-

¹³ For all his scholarship and learning, I feel that Wang would have agreed with Yan Yu’s assertion that, “Poetry is concerned with a different kind of talent, which is not concerned with books” (Lynn, “Wang Shih-chen’s Theory of Poetry,” 227); he would have agreed although book learning and rational understanding is essential, there is something more to poetic talent. Stephen Owen reminds us that the graphs for “talent” and “material” were often interchanged, which would make the passage mean that it is not just out of book learning that poetry is made (*Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 406). It is for this reason that Yan Yu asserts that Meng Haoran is a greater poet than Han Yu despite the latter’s greater learning (see chapter four of the *Canglang shihua*, translated in *ibid.*, 402, third paragraph).

Confucian texts, Lynn concludes that the poet serves as the water and the mirror, reflecting the manifest world perfectly and completely, *if* he is freed of desire and fear (this last condition should make us think about the goal of the Buddhist cultivator, and it may show the influence of Buddhism on Neo-Confucianism). The difference between Neo-Confucianism and Chan Buddhism, of course, is that in the former philosophy the duality between mirror and what is reflected is respected and that the knowledge that results from being able to reflect the outside world perfectly is to be used to choose appropriate action in the world; while for the latter, we should remember Huineng's poem that there is no mirror, no image, and no dust, at least not ultimately.¹⁴ To Professor Lynn's comments, I would add that all four images can be explained by "the words come to an end by the thought (*yi* 意) is infinite." In each case, we have a finger and a moon. The moon represents something that is extremely hard to see or understand, and the finger tries to make us see and understand. With the first three images, one is presumably to turn and look at the source: the moon itself, the thing imaged in the mirror, and the thing that issued the sound. If only turning to the source were as easy as turning to look at the moon! The last image is similar to the Buddha holding up the flower: it was right there for all to see, but most did not see; the play of colors is there to appreciate in all appearances, but most people look at appearances to categorize them—they say: "A mountain! Not vitally important to me right now, so on to the next thing." Such a person misses everything. A poet or a Chan master is someone who has seen the moon and tries to get others to see it by creating a finite finger that points at something vast. If the poet,

¹⁴ I here assume that the common distinction between provisional and ultimate levels of experience and understanding of the scriptures. This is, again, what I feel is the meaning of the mountains are mountains story. Although mountains can again be mountains, Chan Buddhism throws the emphasis on going beyond dualities not on bringing them into harmony.

whatever his ideology, is successful, the reader will be inspired to potentially endless feelings and thoughts (or he will smile like Mahākāśyapa). The final statement is not by Yan Yu but from Sikong Tu's "Letter to Mr. Li Discussing Poetry" (*Yu Lisheng lun shi shu* 與李生論詩書). The context of this statement is as follows:

The reason people from the north, when eating such food, simply satisfy their hunger and then stop eating is that they recognize it somehow falls short of perfect excellence and lacks something beyond the distinction between "the merely sour" and "the merely salty." As one might expect, the people of Chiang-ling, because they are used to such food, are incapable of making any finer distinctions. (*Chinese Literary Thought*, 351-352)

This is about the finer distinctions in taste that go beyond pure saltiness or sourness. A common person may be content with "salty" and "sour," but he may not be able to appreciate food at different points along the salty-sour spectrum. The goal cannot be to keep on including more and more words for finer and finer distinctions—words would just pile up. It seems to me that the goal may instead be to use a rich vocabulary to indicate finer distinctions *and also* to suggest even finer distinctions. In this way, a person's whole sensitivity increases and he comes closer to being able to taste for himself the most subtle and elusive of flavors.

There is one section in Yan Yu in particular that had an important influence on Wang Shizhen's poetics:

There are two overall situations: 1) straightforward and carefree; 2) firm, self-possessed, and at

ease. There is only one supreme accomplishment: divinity (*ju-shen*).

Where poetry has “divinity” it is perfect and has reached its limit; there is nothing to add to it.

Only Li Po and Tu Fu attained this; the others achieve it only imperfectly. (Owen, 400)

It would help greatly to have an alternative translation. Richard Lynn gives the more direct “enter spirit” for *rushen* 入神 (“Sudden and Gradual,” 406), which makes sense given that Wang would go on to modify this phrase by turning it into *ruchan* 入禪, or “to enter Chan”; it may be that these two phrases mean roughly the same thing, but translating the both of them as “divinity,” as Owen might do, leaves this possibility out. Another translation in addition to “straightforward and carefree” for *youyou bupo* 幽遊不迫 is unavailable, but in another translation Professor Lynn gives us “powerful expressiveness” for *chenzhuo tongkuai* 沉著痛快 instead of “firm, self-possessed, and at ease.” It may help to examine the passage from which I have culled “powerful expressiveness” in greater detail, for it gives us a clue to Wang’s interpretation of the crucial excerpt from Yan Yu above. Wang was describing a conversation with a contemporary painter Wang Yuanqi:

[Wang Yuanqi said] He must consider *chenzhuo tongkuai* 沉著痛快 (powerful expressiveness) as the ultimate perfection (*jizhi* 級致). For the sake of argument I [Wang Shizhen] said, “My dear sir, in the Yuan you advocate Yunlin [Ni Zan] and in the Ming you promote Wenmin [Dong Qichang], but these two painters belong to what is called the “untrammelled category” (*yipin* 逸品), so the “powerful expressiveness” of which you speak, where is it in regard to them? Executive Assistant Wang smiled and said, “Wrong! Wrong! In my opinion, paintings that you regard as *gudan*

xianyuan 古澹閑遠 (antique-and-placid and serene-and-distant) still contain *chenzhuo tongkuai* 沉著痛快 (powerful expressiveness). But this is not something that the vulgar can understand.”

I [Wang Shizhen] then said, “Your discussion of painting is indeed superb. Nevertheless, it does not just apply to painting...[an extended comparison of the traditions of painting and poetry]... As for “powerful expressiveness,” this was not something that only Li Bai, Du Fu, and Changli [Han Yu] had but that Xie Lingyun, Wang Wei, and Meng Haoran, as well as their followers, also all had without exception.” (“Landscape as Enlightenment,” 6-7).

Gudan xianyuan seems to be an analog of Yan Yu’s *youyou bupo*. However, Wang Yuanqi and Wang Shizhen have here gone beyond Yan Yu by saying that there is just as much “powerful expressiveness,” which Wang Yuanqi called the “ultimate perfection,” in Wang Wei as there is in Du Fu and Li Bai. “Powerful expressiveness” seems like a mood, a category of poetry, and in a sense Yan Yu and Wang Shizhen have reduced Sikong Tu’s twenty-four moods to two. It makes sense to us that Wang would search for “the flavor beyond saltiness and sourness”—or the saltiness *in* the sourness—and be fond of the *chenzhuo tongkuai* in *gudan xianyuan* in Wang Wei’s serene nature poetry. For Wang Yuanqi, *chenzhuo tongkuai* was a new way to refer to the ultimate attainment in poetry; thus it may be thought of as analogous to *rushen*, *ruchan*, and, as we shall see, to *shenyun*. For the term *shen*, Professor Lynn has gone back to the *Yijing* for the meaning of entering into the spirits of things and to the Cook Ding part of the *Zhuangzi* for the concept of intuitive control (Cook Ding could butcher an ox without thinking about it because the procedures involved had become second nature). My instinct is that both *rushen* and *chenzhuo tongkuai* referred at least partly to the same heightened state of awareness that is attained by master poets in the realm of poetic creation and by Chan masters who have attained enlightenment. *Chenzhuo* means literally “sunk down and

attached,” which reminds me of how in Chinese martial arts the student is supposed to become “rooted” in the ground, a feeling of profound solidity. As I read it, *tongkuai*¹⁵ refers to a state of *flow* where a person performs at the ultimate level: in such a realm poetry just happens naturally, just flows out instead of being wrung out. This reading makes the fact that Wang Wei also has powerful expressiveness: Wang Wei communed with the environment and let the mood of the environment, which became his own mood, flow out freely: he was “powerfully expressive” of both his own inner state and of his surroundings, and he had thus reached the ultimate level.

Ruchan, rushen, sanmei, and perhaps even *chenzhuo tongkuai*, probably all refer to the same state that an enlightened poet or Chan practitioner enters.¹⁶ And the most important of the terms Wang Shizhen used to talk about this realm was *shenyun* or “spiritual resonance,” which is, very roughly, a feeling a poet can have of “resonating” with the things in his surroundings, and a quality that enters the poetry that comes out of such moments of inspired awareness. An important passage for Wang Shizhen’s understanding of the term goes thus:

K’ung Wen-ku from Fen-yang [K’ung T’ien-yün (*chin-shih* of 1532)] said, “Poetry is for the

¹⁵ *Tongkuai* has two related meanings: a) 心情舒暢—feeling at ease and “flowing clearly”; b) 做事爽快, 不拖泥帶水—doing things energetically, not getting bogged down. The example sentence given by the *Guoyu cidian* is 他是個痛快的人, 不會嚙嗦!—He’s someone who is always up and moving, not someone who is always chattering. The component of flow, given partly by the word *kuai* (quick), is clear. *Chenzhuo tongkuai* meant 形容詩文, 書法遒勁流利—descriptive of poetry or calligraphy that is powerfully fluently flowing.

¹⁶ *Sanmei* is a transliteration of *samādhi* (see above page twenty-two), which means, ““putting together”, “composing the mind”, “intent contemplation”, “perfect absorption.” A high level of meditative concentration” (see the DDB entry for 三昧). All these seem to refer both to the heightened state of awareness of the poets as well as to a quality that can be perceived in poetry that comes out of such states. This dual meaning will become clearer as we discuss *shenyun*.

expression of one's personal character, but, to be worthy of esteem it must be pure and distant (*ch'ing-yüan*)." Hsüeh Hsi-yüan [Hsüeh Hui (1489-1541)] had a high opinion only of Hsieh K'ang-lo [Hsieh Ling-yün], Wang Mo-chieh [Wang Wei], Meng Hao-jan, and Wei Ying-wu. He once said, " 'White clouds envelop dark rocks' green bamboos enhance the beauty of clear brooks' [by Hsieh Ling-yün]—this is purity (*ch'ing*). 'The advent of supernatural things doesn't excite esteem; who will pass on what holds truth?' [also by Hsieh]—this is distance (*yüan*). 'Why must it be strings and woodwinds; mountains and streams have their own pure sounds' [by Tso Ssu] 'The scene darkens and singing birds gather; water and trees provide pure and brilliant beauty' [by Hsieh-K'un]—these last two represent the fusion of purity and distance, and the summation of this marvel lies in *shen-yün*." In the past, when I began to use the term *shen-yün* while discussing poetry for my students, I did not realize that it first had appeared here. (Lynn, "Wang Shih-chen's Theory of Poetry, 248)

Professor Lynn's commentary on this passage is as follows:

Since Wang does not qualify Hsueh's statement in any way, we can assume that his interpretation of *shen-yün*, at least in part, came to the same thing, and he must also have agreed with K'ung that one major function of poetry was to express personal character in an oblique and distant manner. Hsueh's concept of purity (*ch'ing*) seems to signify "pure" landscape, "untainted" by the poet's personality, thought, or emotions, and his concept of distance seems to signify an other-worldly atmosphere or transcendental tone with which some poems are charged. (Ibid., 248)

... Ideally the best poetry should combine both these features. It should incorporate an other-worldly tone in the presentation of pure landscape. The last two couplets (by Tso Ssu and Hsieh K'un) supposedly succeed in doing this, and the kind of poetry which has resulted seems, on the surface, to lack any personal reference to the poet, but somehow his presence is still felt there. Interior mood fuses with exterior scene; one so merges with the other that they are indistinguishable. (Ibid., 249)

And, based upon a review of the contexts of all the places Wang Shizhen uses *shenyun*, Professor Lynn gives the following concluding remarks on its meaning:

In *shen-yün* poetry the presence of the poet is felt in only an oblique and tenuous way; in *hsiung-hun* or *hao-chien* poetry the poet's strongly felt emotions are directly displayed. In the former an attempt is made to achieve a delicate balance between personal states of being and inspired visions of reality; in the latter the poet as personality dominates scene—it is self- or ego-oriented, whereas *shen-yün* poetry attempts to express a state in which the reality of self merges in submission to the larger reality of Nature as a whole.

Shen-yün, then, seems to be a catchall term in Wang's criticism. Sometimes it seems to refer only to personal tone, sometimes to the fusion of intuitive cognition with personal tone, sometimes to intuitive cognition and intuitive control, sometimes to intuitive control and personal tone, and sometimes to all these at once. (Ibid., 253)

In the *shenyun* poem, then, the enlightened poet has through intuitive cognition completely fused with his setting; his emotional response is so finely attuned to the setting that the “mood” of his surrounding have become his own mood; and his second-nature mastery of the process of poetry creation—intuitive control—allows him to render that blissful experience in the form of a poem.¹⁷ Wang Shizhen declares that this “realm of transformation” *huajing* 化境 is the same as the *chanjing*, the “realm of Chan” entered by Chan masters:

‘Abandon the raft and climb the bank’—the followers of Ch’an consider this to be the realm of enlightenment (*wu-ching*), and poets consider it to be the realm of intuitive control (*hua-ching*). In

¹⁷ I wonder if Wang Shizhen felt that the perception and creation of poetry parts of the process had to happen at the same time. In other words, would he accept Wordsworth's poetics of “emotion recollected in tranquility”?

poetry or in Ch'an it ultimately comes to the same thing; there is not the least bit of difference."

Ta-fu [Ho Ching-ming (one of the "Former Seven Masters")] brought this up in a letter he wrote to K'ung-t'ung [Li Meng-yang]. (242)

From the perspective of the unenlightened there will always be dualities: the perception *and* the emotional response, the external realm mirrored by the internal perception, the emotional response mirroring the mood of the external scene, and the response and the control that renders it into a poem. Similarly, to ordinary people, a Chan master just seems another individual. However, *the experience* of an inspired poet or Chan master happens in a realm where there are no divisions, no dualities—everything just flows and become a unity; the impossible task is giving a sense of this transcendent experience *through* words. At this point, it may seem a given that the poetry Wang Shizhen appreciated was landscape poetry and that it was often similar to Chan poetry. The rest of this essay will endeavor to argue: a) that Wang's tastes were catholic and b) that Wang Shizhen's approach should be distinguished from that of a Chan poet.

We may accomplish the first of these goals by looking at the content of the *Chan Grove*. In his two recent articles that evaluate Wang Shizhen's two anthologies *Tangxian sanmeiji* and the newly recovered *Shenyun ji*, Richard Lynn has concluded that Wang Shizhen's tastes are far more varied than was once acknowledged and that the definition of *shenyun* should be expanded or modified in accordance with this fact. I tentatively add my observations of the content of the *Chan Grove* as evidence that potentially supports Professor Lynn's new thesis. Wang Shizhen's poetics have been described as comparatively impersonal: we have already noted Daniel Bryant's comment that Wang

has been admired for his ability to remove his presence from his verse like his mentor Wang Wei. However, such comments as the following show us that Wang Shizhen did not appreciate complete impersonality:

All of these are free of the atmosphere (*qi* 氣) associated with incense, which rarely happens in poetry contained in the Tang dynasty *Great Florescence Collection*. (entry four)

This is what Master Po meant by being free of the atmosphere of vegetables and bamboo shoots. (essay four)

These lines too do not involve language connected with rebirth as a human being (*rendao* 人道). (entry eighteen)

An apologist for Chan might insist quite rightly that Chan does not involve not having emotions but in just having them without naming them—only then can the emotion be truly natural. However, in practice the training Chan monks received tended to make them comparatively cool and passionless. In my understanding, Wang Shizhen would find a person without an emotional response to a scene rather inhuman, and there is an inhuman quality in the Chan approach to life, with its desire to transcend our merely human categories of subject and object, “I” and “other.” Wang certainly did not want to spend his time reading poetry that smelled of incense smoke: *shenyun* does not mean impersonality. Of the atypical examples of Chan poetry found in the *Chan Grove*, the most relevant to the present discussion is:

Auspicious unicorn incense warms a jade hibiscus censer,

A decorated candle produces congealed glow until the red of dawn,
As several leaks shift around north of the yamen barracks,
And a burst of rain drops spatter east of the armory.
In dream I wander outside the yellow chamber with its *luan*'s nest,
My body lying amidst vermilion banners and tiger tents.
A report from the watchtower gate—sunrise is nigh,
Lifting my window blinds—an apricot blossom breeze.
(entry 8)

This rich and luxurious poem was by Su Shi's monk-friend Zhongshu. I will quote again the first couplet from Su Shi's poem to the monk Daotong, which mentions the poetry of Zhongshu (referred to as Shu):

Powerful and brave yet still marvelous or bitterly poor yet still opulent, 雄豪而妙苦而腴
There are only Cong with his zither and Shu with his honey. 祇有琴聰與蜜殊

Su Shi's poem implies that Zhongshu was a specialist of rich, luxurious, opulent scenes. In other words, he was most sensitive to such settings and responded in a way that allowed scene and emotion to fuse. Therefore, although he responds to the finery of his powerful guest's home, his talent for this "style" was still appreciated by Wang Shizhen. Wang proves that he recognized Zhongshu's unique style when he wrote, "This [the poet of the poem just quoted] is the person Dongpo [Su Shi] referred to as 'Honey Shu.'" If Wang had not enjoyed the poem, he would have either not recorded it or he would have expressed his displeasure.

As for the second of our stated goals, we can see the differences between Chan poetics and Wang Shizhen's poetry by looking at Wang's own poetic practice. The poem that follows is the second of a series of twenty poems Wang Shizhen wrote while on vacation in Nanjing translated by Daniel Bryant:

Tied Brocade and Viewing Spring are completely abandoned ruins;
What must be the remorse of jeweled branches and the jade moon!
All that remains is a single stretch of the water of Green Creek,
That still skirts the home of Chancellor Chiang of the Southern Courts.

Professor Bryant's commentary on this poem ends thus:

Wang is not, of course, so crude as to say that he personally is moved by regret for the glories of the bygone days. All the same, the reported remorse of the beheaded consort 'infects' the apparently innocuous description of the physical scene that follows it. But it is part of this scene—the residence of Chiang Tsung, who survived to serve the conquerors of Ch'en—that inspires the remorse. And so the very word 'remorse' itself works two ways: it is imagined as being felt by the consort invoked in the first couplet for an unmentioned event that took place at the scene described at the second. Then, it is felt, but not directly expressed, by the poet, who visits the scene and ponders the meaning of its historical past. The entire poem thus presents us with the seeming paradox of a poet whose reputation is to a considerable degree based upon admiration for his ability to remove his own presence from his verse doing so by methods that betray in his handling of every word—as well as in the structure of the whole—his individual style of perception and expression. (Bryant, 32)

Wang does not intrude upon the poem—he expresses his own feelings subtly and indirectly by ascribing remorse to the branches and the moon of Nanjing. Emotion is

present, but it is not expressed aggressively and indecorously but instead in a highly controlled fashion, in a way that could not offend anyone. Wang's emotion here is appropriate to his surroundings; he was not some bumpkin from the countryside who could not perceive the remorse in the surroundings and was only put out by the rain. Wang's perception had been perfected, and *qingjing jiaorong* had been achieved. Sensitivity to one's surroundings is still an indirect goal of Chan Buddhism—how is Wang Shizhen's approach to this cityscape different from that of the typical Chan monk-poet? First, Nanjing was a city with whose history Wang Shizhen was intensely familiar: his experience is informed by his knowledge of this history. Chan enlightenment is the transcendence of history, of the past as well as of the future: it is of the present moment. It seems to me that Chan poetry that comes out of authentic Chan experiences would not be so conscious of history; the Chan master would not have made all of these historical associations but would instead just see what is in the scene without being conscious of seeing. In both Wang Shizhen and Chan, a heightened sensitivity to the outside world is attained, but in the example above Wang Shizhen comes to terms with a place *and* its history: this is a first difference. A second difference in approach between Wang Shizhen and Chan is Wang Shizhen's stress on craft. It is true that in both cases the idea is to internalize the rules so that they can be forgotten, and Wang Shizhen compared his learning of poetic method to the way a Chan monk cultivates a sense of Chan:

It is recorded in the *Seng-pao-chuan* that the Shih-men Ts'ung Ch'an Master once said to the Ta-kuan T'an-ying Master, "This matter [Ch'an] is like learning calligraphy. When the strokes and dots can be imitated, one is skillful—otherwise he is clumsy. Why is this so? It is because the person involved has still not forgotten the rules (*fa*), and, since he is still bound by rules, he cannot

help but stop and start [i.e., be hesitant]. However, once the brush forgets the hand and the hand forgets the mind, it will be perfectly all right.” These are words about the way a man attains the Way, but they can also serve as an axiom for people like us who write poetry and prose. (“Wang Shih-chen’s Theory of Poetry, 254)

However, on the other hand, there is something definitely different between the utterly unconscious and simple craft involved in the creation of Chan poetry and Wang Shizhen’s studied artistry, by which he presents his internal emotion without seeming to do so. A third difference is that Wang’s goal is partly to present his response subtly and appropriately whereas a Chan master is overwhelmingly concerned with evoking that experience of *tathata* which is beyond “I” and “mine” and “this is a thing.”

In this section, I have sought to relate Chan to Chinese literary criticism, especially to the *shenyun* poetics of Wang Shizhen. We have found that Wang’s reading of Chan through Yan Yu and other sources was indeed an important factor in the formation of his critical views, especially influencing both his conception of the realm of intensified awareness that the poet enters and out of which he creates enlightened poetry, and also his idea of the way poetry can refer to an experience which is beyond words. However, it is difficult to know to what extent we can trust to the word “influence.” Perhaps Wang was drawn to certain ideas in Chan because he had *already* realized something similar in his own practice of poetry. It must also be the case that many points of similarity are coincidental. We could argue that Wang Wei was a stronger influence on Wang Shizhen than Yan Yu or Chan. The conclusion I prefer to draw is that Wang Shizhen absorbed the tradition of poetry and all the different religious and theories of

poetry he was exposed to, was attracted especially to Chan, Yan Yu, and Sikong Tu, *but then went on* to produce something unique in his own right. The realm of Chan is where the distinctions of self and other, of subject and object, fall away and reality is perceived unveiled. A Chan master forgets himself and has pure and unmediated experience; he transcends his individuality. I have suggested that to forget oneself can allow one's personality to flow more naturally. In practice, however, those who cultivated themselves in the Chan tradition and wrote Chan poetry tended to remove all individual flavour from their work. Some, for whom mountains became mountains again, could use the wisdom that transcends all categories of human experience to function better in the human world, but the ideal Chan monk is a wanderer who plays with children, cries, is absolutely unaware and unashamed of who he is, a person certainly without grand designs to make the world better. Wang Shizhen was not a Chan monk, even in spirit. For him, the realm of poetic cultivation was where the scene and the poet's personal tone were brought into fusion through the writing of the poem. Fusion does not erase individuality or result in impersonality. For Wang Shizhen, poetry carries emotion and individuality *appropriately*, in a way that furthers social harmony and does not "rock the boat." His poetics therefore are closer to *qingjing jiaorong* than the three principles of Huineng, and they are related to his commitment to his work in the world, through which he made his contribution to society. For some, like Northrop Frye writing about the Bible in *The Great Code*, writing that makes the greatest impact is that which has had all the individuality stamped out of it. This is not Wang Shizhen: the best poetry for him expresses the unique and distinct voice of an individual who is profoundly sensitive to and in harmony with his environment.

The Translation

ENTRY 1

I had entered High Seat Temple¹⁸ to visit Excellent Personage Shanyu (Mountain Rain). The rain had just stopped when morning came. The mountains and valleys were still and vast, but when roosting birds heard the *bozhuo* (rapping) sound [of the Dharma Drum], *pula* they were startled and flew up. Sitting in the monks quarters, I looked around at the poetry by monks on the walls, which included the line:

Birds announce dawn at the mountain temple.¹⁹

I savored its sense of extraordinary seclusion (*youjue*). Excerpted from *Yuyang wen* 漁洋文 (Prose by Yuyang).²⁰

ENTRY 2

¹⁸ Gaozuo Temple is located in the mountains outside Jinling (Nanjing).

¹⁹ This line of poetry is not found anywhere in the *Siku quanshu* (SKQS) 四庫全書 (Complete Library of the Four Branches of Books). For this translation, unless a search of the SKQS locates another source, it is not provided.

²⁰ *Yuyang wen* 漁洋文 (Prose by Yuyang) in fourteen *juan* was first published as a separate work sometime after 1660 and later reprinted as part of Wang's *Daijingtang ji* 帶經堂集 (Literary Collection of the Classics Vade Mecum Scholar). Wang Shizhen had as a sobriquet 漁洋山人 (Man of Yuyang Mountain).

In the Fifth Patriarch's²¹ lower courtyard at Dongchan 東禪 (Eastern Chan) Temple at Huangmei 黃梅 (Yellow Plum), there is the “waist hanging stone.”²² The Sixth Patriarch hung it from his waist when pounding rice.²³ There is also the “poker maple.” The Sixth Patriarch had stuck a wooden poker upright into the ground, where it again flourished to become a maple tree. The stone is kept at the site of the former rice mortar work space (*caochang* 槽廠), situated in front of the Sixth Patriarch's Seat. Someone had inscribed a poem there which goes:

A chunk of stone with its hole for a rope is a relic of the Patriarch—

²¹ Since the Dongchan Temple was founded by the Fifth Chan Patriarch, Hongren 弘忍 (Vast Forbearance) (688-761), it was also known as the Wuzu si (Temple of the Fifth Patriarch) and was located on Huangmei Mountain in easternmost Hubei. The Sixth Patriarch, Huineng 惠能 (Wisdom's Power), a southern “barbarian” who came to pay his respects to and study with the famous master Hongren. When he arrived at the monastery, he was promptly put to work. When Hongren announced that the disciple who could write the poem that best conveyed enlightenment would take over his begging bowl and become the next patriarch, Shenxiu 神秀 (Spiritual Excellence)—the disciple everyone thought would be chosen—wrote the following poem anonymously on a temple wall:

The body is the Bodhi tree,
The mind like a bright mirror standing.
Take care to wipe it all the time,
And allow no dust to cling. (Watts, 91-92)

Hongren praised the poem, but when Shenxiu admitted in private that he was the author, Hongren said he still had much to learn. Huineng wrote, also anonymously, this poem as a reply:

There never was a Bodhi tree,
Nor a bright mirror standing.
Fundamentally, not one thing exists,
So where is the dust to cling? (Watts, 92)

Hongren passed the patriarchate on to Huineng, but urged him to flee to prevent jealousy. Thus is the story related in Huineng's work *Liuzu Tanjing* 六祖壇經 (Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra) (*Taishō* volume 48 *сутра* number 2008 (T48n2008)).

²² The stone and the poker maple were treasures preserved in the Dongchan Temple—up to Wang Shizhen's own time and later.

²³ The work Huineng was assigned to do after he arrived at Hongren's temple was to husk rice by stepping up on a treadle to pound it; the stone was to give extra weight to the treadle and make the work go faster. In the *Liuzu tanjing*, the stone is mentioned just after Hongren uses his sandal to erase the poem Huineng wrote on the wall. Hongren goes to the threshing room, sees Huineng with the stone around his waist, and signals him to come to a private meeting later; see T48n2008p0349a12-16.

Caoxi's blood and sweat²⁴ all concentrated in it.²⁵

Bright and clear that sheet of moonlight at Eastern Chan Temple,

From the moon that shines everywhere on the four hundred districts of China.²⁶

Excerpted from *Huanghua jiwén* 皇華紀文 (Recordings Gathered from the Imperial Resplendent Realm).²⁷

ENTRY 3

Once having left the city walls of the Metropolitan Area²⁸ to send off a guest, I happened by chance to visit a rustic retreat and saw there inscribed on a wall a poem which is really interesting. The poem reads:

²⁴ Caoxi refers to Huineng. After living at Hongren's temple, Huineng returned to Shaozhou (to the northeast of Guangzhou in Guangdong Province). He lived at the Baolin 寶林 (Precious Forest) Temple near the shores of Cao Stream (Caoxi 曹溪).

²⁵ In Chan, as in all forms of Buddhism, an emphasis is placed on remaining centered, in the middle of the round of existence (*samsara*). "Chan spirituality," Alan Watts says, "is not to think of God when you are peeling the potatoes but just to peel the potatoes" (155). Mastery is demonstrated by complete concentration in everyday events, by utter loss in mundane activities such as peeling potatoes or pounding rice. It seems that the poet is implying that rice pounding was a kind of spiritual training for Huineng: rather than saying that his blood and sweat was expended or used up in this hard work, the poet instead chooses the word *shou* 收 "concentrated." What was gained from this work was, presumably, increased strength of mind and powers of concentration, which he would use later on leading his *sangha*, his community of monks, at his temples in the South.

²⁶ *Zhina* 支那, a transliteration of the Sanskrit *Chīna* (China), was commonly used in Buddhist texts. The moon that rises over Hongren's temple also shines everywhere in China, a metaphor for how Hongren's teachings were spread throughout the land by his disciples—and especially by Huineng.

²⁷ See *Zongmutiyao*, 143:49 (3.1040b10—1226). Wang was sent on a mission in the *jiazi* year of the Kangxi reign (1684) to sacrifice on behalf of the emperor to the Spirit of the South Seas. This is a collection of anecdotal material he gathered in the course of his travels to the far South.

²⁸ In the Qing Dynasty, the Metropolitan Area, or dynastic capital, was Beijing. Wang Shizhen spent the first five years of his official career in Jiangsu, but his promotions later on would have brought him often to Beijing. After 1678, when he promoted to a position in the Hanlin Academy, he would have spent most of his time in Beijing, especially after 1690, after which he assumed some of the highest posts in government. *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake), from which this vignette was excerpted, was published in 1691, when Wang was fifty-six years old. See *Zongmutiyao*, 123:32 (3.652a10—1056).

The spring wind far away reminds me of Heaven's Terrace,²⁹

Fifth month so icy cold might as well say it's Five Terraces.³⁰

Countless fine mountains, I'll never wander them all,

For autumn frost again wants to cover my eyebrows.

When I investigated, I discovered that it was the work of the Ming dynasty monk Yuanying 圓暎 (Perfect Reflection), whose sobriquet was Xuexi 雪溪 (Snowy Mountain Stream), of Xilin 西林 (West Forest) Monastery in Jiashan 嘉善 [between Hangzhou and Shanghai]. For Yuanying there exists the *Xilin ji* (West Forest Collection). Excerpted from *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake).

ENTRY 4

Zhengyan 正崑 (Main Cliff) Chan Master of Qiantang (Hangzhou), courtesy name Huotang 豁堂 (Wide-Open and Empty Hall),³¹ composed poems of clarity and beauty. At

²⁹ "Heaven's Terrace" is Tiantai 天台 Mountain, located in Zhejiang Province about two hundred kilometers southeast of Hangzhou, where the climate in springtime would indeed be spring like.

³⁰ "Five Terrace Mountain" is Wutai 五臺 Mountain, located in modern Shanxi 山西 Province, Dai 代 County. This, like Heaven's Terrace (Tiantai), is one of the mountains sacred to Chinese Buddhists, and it is located slightly to the south of the southern stretch of the Great Wall in Shanxi. This is to say that it was in China's north, to the south of the wastes of Siberia, on about the same latitude (39 degrees north) as northern North Korea: at an elevated altitude in a mountain temple, it would often be icily cold, even in the fifth month of the year. Beijing is even farther north, a touch to the south of the fortieth parallel, so no wonder the poem had resonance for the middle-aged Wang Shizhen. It sounds as if the poet was at home enduring a deep freeze, and was reminded of the cold of Five Terrace Mountain. If we knew the exact year, we might discover that the fifth month was an April or May according to the Western solar calendar. Regardless, the significance of the climate contrast between lines one and two seems clear: Yuanying is surprised by the sudden cold and reminded of the approaching autumn, which is also symbolically his approaching old age. There is a touch of regret in the tone of this poem, but Yuanying was a Buddhist: he but observes and accepts.

³¹ Zhengyan (1597-1670) was an early Qing Dynasty monk who hailed from Nanjing and lived at the Jingci 淨慈 (Purity and Compassion) Temple in Hangzhou, south of West Lake, the destination mentioned at the end of the first poem below; more information concerning Zhengyan is provided in the following entry.

the Linggu 靈谷 (Spirit Valley) Temple at Jinling³² I saw his *Tongfan shiji* 同凡詩集 (Poetry Collection on Being In Common With the Ordinary) in two *juan*, which I loved and so have selected a few poems for inclusion here:

When the moon was straight above the middle of the Imperial Training Ground³³,
Down from the mountain, no one mentioned returning late,
But now the three pine trees cast shadows over half the water of the lake,³⁴
As we follow the sound of the bell all the way back to Purity and Compassion Temple.

In a small boat at Red Cliff, I perform a libation³⁵ to the West wind,
The winners and losers of so long ago in my mind's eye.
I wish I could get Young Master Zhou to look back at me again—
With brasses and strings and iron clapper we'd make East of the River ring with sound.³⁶

The name Huotang 豁堂 (Wide-Open Empty Hall), also written differently below as 夔堂, suggests that the whole world was his “hall.”

³² This is an old name for Nanjing. The temple is to the east of Nanjing, at Mount Zhong 鐘山.

³³ *Yujiaochang* 御教場 (Imperial Training Ground), where soldiers trained, competitions held, and troops reviewed. Since this is Hangzhou, reference here may be to the site of the Southern Song era imperial training ground, when Hangzhou was the national capital—location uncertain.

³⁴ A setting moon, high overhead in the first line, would now cast such shadows, so it must be hours later, close to dawn, when the monks return in a boat, homing in on the sound of the bell of their own temple.

³⁵ “Small boat” alludes to the *Former Red Cliff Rhapsody*—Su Shi’s great meditation on mortality, the past, and joy in life—in which the phrase is “a leaf of a small boat” 一葉之扁舟.” See *Dongpo quanji* (Su Shi’s Collected Works), 33:12 (volume 1107 page 469 column a line 14 of the SKQS [1107.469a14]). Su Shi took a boat out on the Yangtze River and imagined himself before the Red Cliff, the site of Cao Cao’s defeat by Zhou Yu down river from where he actually was in modern Hubei Province. Knowledge of the historical background is essential to an understanding of Su Shi’s poem and of this poem by Zhengyan. In the political instability that followed the downfall of the Han Dynasty, three kingdoms—Wu in the south, Wei in the north, and Shu in the West—struggled for control of the realm. Cao Cao was the leader of Wei, Zhou Yu 周瑜 (175-210) was the naval commander for Wu, and Red Cliff was in central China close to the contested border between these two states. For the raising of the wine cup as a rather informal “libation,” see *Chibi huaigu* 赤壁懷古 (Remembering the Past at Red Cliff): “Life is like a dream, with one cup I return a libation to the river moon.” 人間如夢一樽還酹江月. This song was a postlude to Su Shi’s two rhapsodies, and has often accompanied them in anthologies. My source is Fuller, 251. This song does not seem to have been included in Su Shi’s collected works, but it can be found in the work *Yuxuan lidai shiyu* 御選歷代詩餘 (Extra words to say about the poetry of all the dynasties selected by the Emperor), 71:1 (1492.570b8).

³⁶ Zhou Yu helped his ruler Sun Ce 孫策 (175-200) to quell Jiangdong 江東, the area to the southeast of the stretch of the Yangtze from near the modern Anhui/Jiangsu border to Nanjing. Sun Ce was the elder

Among the men of Jin with their names and principles³⁷ he worshipped Lao and Zhuang,
This romantic devil from Yan³⁸ who argued a refusal to power as did Zhibo.³⁹
Although he was imbued with the purple auspicious pneuma of all the divine continent,
It's a pity you never saw that he was really the new colt.⁴⁰

After several spring days traveling the whole course of Ruoye,⁴¹
I entered the city, my face full of clouds and mist.
I am truly sad that the blessings of the immortals are so hard to enjoy,
For again I have to drink imperial tribute tea in the world of men.⁴²

brother of Sun Quan 孫權 (182-252), who ruled Wu for thirty-one years and was in power at the time of the Red Cliff battle.

³⁷ During the Jin era (265-419), the school of names (*mingjia* 名家) developed elaborate theories (*lilun* 理論) to justify fixed morals and institutions and was the very antithesis of the philosophy of freedom and nature (*ziran* 自然) taught by Laozi and Zhuangzi.

³⁸ Yan district 剡縣 was located in what is modern Xinchang 新 district, Zhejiang. This is the ancestral home of the eccentric and iconoclastic Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210-263), to whom this line refers.

³⁹ Zizhou Zhibo 子州支伯 appears in the *Zhuangzi*. The *Rangwang* 讓王 (Relinquishing Kingship) chapter relates the efforts of the mythical Emperor Shun yield power:

Shun would relinquish All Under Heaven to Zizhou Zhibo, but Zizhou Zhibo said, “Right now I happen to suffer from melancholy, which I am just going to take care of. I do not have time to rule All Under Heaven.” Therefore, though he had the capacity to rule All Under Heaven, he would not exchange it for his life. Herein lies the difference between those who have the Way and vulgar commoners.

See *Zhuangzi zaphan* (Eclectic Chapters), 28, *Rangwang*, 9B:956a. Ruan Ji, who had witnessed the rise of the ambitious Sima family and himself loyal to the Wei Cao sovereigns, was distressed by the ruthless faction of the family represented by Sima Yan and his supporters. He wrote a satirical letter of protest, the “Letter composed on behalf of Zheng Chong Exhorting the Prince of Jin,” which ends with a plea to the ambitious Sima Zhao 司馬昭 (the Prince of Jin and Sima Yan’s father) that he retire from politics and become a recluse, the last thing he would ever want to do. Ruan’s letter is ostensibly written on behalf of the Sima sycophant Zheng Chong 鄭冲, who never would have suggested such a course. See Donald Holzman, *Poetry and Politics: The Life and Works of Juan Chi A. D. 210-263* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 54-55, and *Wenxuan* (Selections of Refined Literature), 40:28 (1329.703b8).

⁴⁰ That is, Juan Ji never realized that Sima Yan, was really ordained by Heaven to become emperor and after generations of division unify all China once again—the achievement of a young ruler, vigorous and headstrong as a new colt.

⁴¹ Ruoye 若耶 stream is located in Shaoxing district, Zhejiang. It is another name for Huansha stream 浣紗溪, named because Xishi, the famous beauty of the Spring and Autumn Era, was supposed to have washed her clothes here. The relevant association in this context was that this was a place of rustic seclusion; the city is Shaoxing, a contrast to the peaceful countryside.

All of these are free of the atmosphere (*qi* 氣) associated with incense, which rarely happens in poetry contained in the Tang dynasty *Great Florescence Collection*.⁴³ Excerpted from *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake), with an addendum:

From *Yuyang shihua* 漁洋詩話 (Discussions on Poetry by Yuyang):⁴⁴ Xu Jien 徐繼恩, courtesy name Shichen 世臣, was a well-known erudite of Wulin 武林 (Hangzhou). After the turmoil,⁴⁵ he became a Buddhist and took the name Zhiyan 止巖 [“Zhi” is a mistake; we should take the evidence of the previous entry and revise it to read Zheng]; and his sobriquet was Huotang 蕙堂. He composed poems of clarity and beauty, never descending to the commonplace and shallow for even one word. I have excerpted several of his quatrains: [the same selection as above⁴⁶, with one addition]:

Houses and bamboos dim in the hazy distance,

⁴² That is, the serene and exquisite joys of the countryside can rarely be enjoyed, and only then on brief occasions; now, the poet has business to conduct apparently in some government office.

⁴³ The *Tang Monks Grand Florescence Collection* 唐僧宏秀集 in ten *juan* is a Song compilation. Five hundred poems by fifty-two monks are included. Regarding Wang Shizhen’s criticism, the entry in the *Zongmu tiyao* on this work comments that there are many monk poets but few outstanding ones:

Of Tang poets, those who can write poetry are many, but the best are none but Jiaoran, Qiyi, and Guanxiu, and Jiaoran was a bit weak, Guanxiu rather rough, and we must grant only Qiyi first place.” (See *Zongmu tiyao*, 187:22 (5.36a7—p1700).

Wang’s comment indicates that the poetry contained in the *Hongxiu ji* is too overtly Buddhist in content and thrust, which Zhengyan, unlike most monk poets, fortunately avoids.

⁴⁴ In three *juan*, written in 1705 during Wang’s retirement and printed in 1710. See *Zongmutiyao*, 196:12 (5.249a16—p1793).

⁴⁵ This refers to the turmoil of the early years of the Qing dynasty after the Ming conquest.

⁴⁶ Also, Red Cliff (Chibi) in the second quatrain above becomes “sheer cliff” (*juebi* 絕壁) in the version here.

Forested hills at river's edge and bays beyond count.

How could any sailboat ever follow the Xiang's turning course,⁴⁷

For I could sketch for you the nine faces of Mount Heng?⁴⁸

This is what Master Po [Su Shi] meant by being free of the atmosphere of vegetables and bamboo shoots.⁴⁹

ENTRY 5

Cangxue 蒼雪 (Pale Snow) Dharma Master was from the South, and his name was Duche 讀徹 (Penetration of Reading). He lived at Zhongfeng 中峰 (Middle Peak) in Wu 吳.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ The Xiang is the great river in Hunan which in one section circles around Mount Heng.

⁴⁸ Mount Heng in northern Hunan is one of the five sacred mountains (*yue* 嶽) in China and has seventy-two peaks (five major ones); the Xiang so twists around in its vicinity that the poet has a view of all sides of the mountain in all its complexity.

⁴⁹ Again, Zhengyan's poetry is declared free of overt Buddhist elements. "Vegetables and bamboo shoots" is an allusion, turned upside down, to a couplet from a Su Shi poem, "Presented to the Poet-Priest Daotong (贈詩僧道通):

Language imbued with clouds and mist has been rare since ancient times,
And never had we any atmosphere of vegetables and bamboo shoots until you.

Here, an "atmosphere of vegetables and bamboo shoots" is obviously a good quality in poetry, and Su praises Daotong as having it, but Wang praises Zhengyan for avoiding such a quality. With Su, it indicates a rarified, passionless tone, for the expression is glossed as "without an air of painful emotion." See *Dongpo quanji*, 25:23 (1107.370b12). However, with Wang, the expression seems to mean an overt sense or tone of a Buddhist monk—too strong a flavor of Buddhism.

⁵⁰ Duche (1587-1656) was from Chenggong 呈貢 in what is now Yunnan Province (all information comes from his biography in the *Zhongguo fojiao renming cidian*). Middle Peak Temple is at Zhixing 支硎 Mountain, Jiangsu. Wu was a state in the Summer and Autumn Period, 770-403 B.C., and was a name through the dynasties for the modern Jiangsu region. By the Ming, Wu comprised a district roughly between Shanghai and Nanjing, the mountain in the southeast. In the thirteenth year of the Shunzhi 順治 reign (1656), Duche expounded the *Śūramgama*, and he seems to have died in the process.

Often in the night he would read the *Śūramgama* 楞嚴 *sūtra*,⁵¹ and once, when the moonlight shone like water, he suddenly called to his attendant:

In the middle of the courtyard, there is a big Wanli coin—you can go and try to pick it up, but when the fellow took a close look at it, it turned out as expected [I. e., an illusion].

The master had completely penetrated the religious canon, and was especially famous for his poetry. He once came up with the lines:

Slanting branches do not obstruct the path walked while chanting sutras,
And fallen leaves completely bury those rapt in meditation.⁵²
It took only one night for the blossoms to open along the lakeside path,
But it was half a springtime our dwelling had to stay in the mountain snow.

There are many of this type. During the second month of the *yiwei* year [1679], his disciple Qiugao 秋皋 (Autumn Pond) paid me a visit. On that occasion, we spoke of these matters. Qiugao came up with the lines:

Birds sing in trees tagged with remnants of snow,
People talk on the mountain under the setting sun.

⁵¹ *Lengyanjing* 楞嚴經 is the short title for *Shoulengyan sanmei jing* 首楞嚴三昧經 (*Sūtra of the Concentration of Heroic Progress*), translated by Kumārajīva at the beginning of the fifth century (T 642.15.629-644); The *Guoyu cidian* entry for the *Lengyanjing* 楞嚴經 describes the content of the text thus: “All phenomena (*xianxiang* 現象) are products of the mind, which is wondrous substance of absolute purity (*qingjing miaoti* 清淨妙體); people stay in the cycle of death and rebirth because they do not know the unreality of phenomena or the true nature of their minds; the prescription to cure these ills is to set oneself in Chan meditation (Chan *ding* 禪定) in order to stabilize the scattered motion of the mind and bring it to a state of meditative concentration.” See DEALT, under the entry for *ding* 定).

⁵² Buried in leaves is a hyperbolic image to express how long the monks have been in meditation.

This also is of the same tradition (*jiafa* 家法). Excerpted from *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake), with an addendum:

From *Yuyang shihua* 漁洋詩話 (Discussions on Poetry by Yuyang): Of recent poetry composed by disciples of the Buddha, I consider that of Duche Cangxue of Diannan 滇南 (Yunnan) the very best; such as:

It took only one night for the blossoms to open along the lakeside path,
But it was half a springtime our dwelling had to stay in the mountain snow.

Or:

The sound of turbulent flow and falling leaves descends together,
Perfectly audible since the chilly door has not been latched.

These are all startling lines. One of his disciples composed the line:

Birds sing in trees tagged with remnants of snow,
People talk on the mountain under the setting sun.

ENTRY 6

Dongpo [Su Shi] most loved a poem by the Hangzhou monk Huiquan 惠詮 (True Meaning of Kindness),⁵³ which contains the line “At Sunset Cold Cicadas Sing,” even to the extent that he composed one of his own to the same rhyme scheme.⁵⁴ Shi Yanzhi 施彥執⁵⁵ also recorded a poem inscribed by Huiquan on Patriarch’s Pagoda located in the hollow on Daci 大慈 (Great Compassion) Mountain [near Hangzhou]:

At valley’s mouth two or three houses,
 The flat fields providing a long distance view.
 In the depths of Spring one often meets rain,
 And in the silence of the night it’s only the singing of frogs.

⁵³ Huiquan was one of Su Shi’s monk friends when Su was magistrate of Hangzhou. Huiquan was also known as Shouquan 守詮 (Guardian of True Meaning).

⁵⁴ The full text of (A) Huiquan’s poem and (B) Su Shi’s reply is recorded in the work *Lengzhai yehua* (Nighttime Discussions Recorded in the Cold Studio), by the Song era monk Huihong 惠洪 (Vastness of Wisdom) (1071-1128), also known as Dehong 德洪 (Vastness of Virtue) and Juefan 絕範 (Transcendent Model):

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| (A) | At the setting of the sun cold cicadas singing,
Alone I return to my temple beneath the forest.
The brushwood gate this night not yet shut,
A sheet of moonlight follows my moving sandals.
I only hear the sound of dogs barking,
As I again pass through the green creeper hedge. | 落日寒蟬鳴
獨歸林下寺
柴扉夜未掩
片月隨行履
唯聞犬吠聲
又入青蘿去 |
| (B) | I only hear the bell from beyond the mists,
But don’t see the fog-bound temple.
This recluse not yet gone to bed tonight,
Grass dew soaking my straw mat sandals. | 唯聞煙外鐘
不見煙中寺
幽人夜未寢
草露濕芒履 |

See *Lengzhai yehua*, 6:4 (863.263a7).

⁵⁵ Shi Yanzhi’s name (*ming*) was Decao 德操, and his courtesy name (*zi*) was Yanzhi 彥執. In Shi’s *Beichuang zhiguo lu* 北窗炙輿錄 (Effective Wheel Grease Pot [erudite and extensive] Records from the North Window), he records Huiquan’s name as Xianjue 先覺 (First Awareness):

In days past, I went with Xianjue in his home neighborhood many times to travel to Daci Hollow, and we often passed by a host of temple buildings. Taking it easy, we read the lines of famous poems previous generations had written up on the temple walls. At the Patriarch’s Pagoda, I got to see a Hui Xianjue poem that went, “At valley’s mouth. . . .”

See *Beichuang zhiguo lu*, A:17-18 (1039.372b13-373a8).

Clouds so dark the moon still cannot get through,
Groves so fragrant one can start to tell which blossoms from which.
Who wakes me on my lonely pillow at dawn?
It's but the whitecaps rolling on the river sand.

This poem is also beautiful. The *Nenggaizhai manlu* 能改齋漫錄 (Casual Notes from the Able to Change Studio)⁵⁶ records a poem by the West Lake [Hangzhou] monk Shunyi, which contains the line “For long I have wandered around below the forest trees,”⁵⁷ about which is said, “Han Zicang 韓子蒼 told me the four lines that come after are different, and the concluding couplet reads:

But just let me hear the sound of dogs barking,
And I'll again enter the green pines.”⁵⁸

According to this passage, this is Huiquan's poem, the one to which Master Po [Su Shi] composed a poem to the same rhyme scheme. But the original poem reads “green creeper

⁵⁶ By Wu Zeng 吳曾 (fl. 1127-1160), the entry in question gives the *Lengzhai yehua* as the source of the poem and then reports Han Zicang's mistake. See *Nenggaizhai manlu*, 3:34 (850.546a6-10). Wang Shizhen turned to the *Lengzhai yehua* to check the accuracy of Wu Chang's work, and the poem is quoted in full from the *Lengzhai* on the next page below.

⁵⁷ The *Lengzhai yehua* lists the poet's name as Qingshun Yiran 清順怡然 of West Lake, whereas both Wang Shizhen and the *Nenggaizhai manlu* leave off “Qing.”

⁵⁸ Han Zicang misremembered these lines of Huiquan he transplanted onto the end of Shunyi's poem: leaves become blossoms and creeper hedge become pines. The quatrain that closes the poem goes:

If tired I sleep on a coiled up rock,	困即蟠石眠,
Unaware how many blossoms fall.	莫省落花數.
But just let me hear the sound of dogs barking,	惟聞犬吠聲,
And I'll again enter the green pines.	又入青松去.

Wu Zeng does not affirm or deny Han's claim, which leaves Wang Shizhen to set the record straight. Han Zicang's was an understandable mistake, because Su Dongpo was also close to Qingshun Yiran (see the footnote three on this page).

hedge” (*qingluo* 青蘿). The *Zhupo shihua* 竹坡 (Discussion of poetry from Bamboo Slope)⁵⁹ identifies the author as Shouquan, and the *Lengzhai yehua* also records Shunyi’s poem:

For long I have wandered around under forest trees,
So know something about the charm there beneath them.
Along the water channel green shade profuse and varied
Does not obstruct the passage of a clear breeze.
Leisurely come to a stone on which I sleep,
So as for fallen leaves I’m unaware how many fell.
When suddenly a mountain bird flies my way,
Its call shattering this place of secluded silence.

It also says that Duke of Jing [*guo*] 荆[國]公⁶⁰ loved this poem. Therefore, this poem of Huiquan is the one to which Po [Su Shi] wrote one to the same rhyme scheme, while it was Shunyi’s poem that was admired by Jiefu 介甫 [Wang Anshi]. Indeed, Han mistakenly recorded them as the same poem. Excerpted from *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake).

ENTRY 7

⁵⁹ This work is by Zhou Zizhi 周紫芝 (b. 1082). Apparently, Wang Shizhen did not know that Huiquan’s other appellation was Shouquan. See *Zhupo shihua*, 2:19 (1480.675b9).

⁶⁰ Duke of Jing is the posthumous title conferred on Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-1086). The *Lengzhai yehua* says, “The Duke of Jing traveled on the lake, was fond of him and promoted his name. In Dongpo’s later years, he also traveled with them and met socially and corresponded many times.” See 6:5 (863-263b6).

Liu Bingshan 劉屏山 [Liu Zihui 子翬 (1101-1147)]⁶¹ was Duke of Letters Zhu's 朱文公 [Zhu Xi 朱熹(1130-1200)] teacher. The poetry in his Bingshan ji 屏山集 (Screen Mountain Collection) often consists of the language of Chan, for example, as in his *Muniu song* 牧牛頌 (Hymn to the Herdsboy):

Allow it grass and rich shoots up to the time when work is all done,
Then let it shiver with cold to lie in chilly mists.
Even if it always obeys tending perfectly,
Still give it a whip where it hurts most.

*Jingshan ji daofu*⁶² (Sending a Cassock from Mount Jing)⁶³ says,

From afar your letter, diligent and attentive, reached my thatched hut,
But I'm so ashamed to be in such sick decline how can I ever bear it?
In an idle moment I got three pieces of Buddha sun cloth
And had a cassock made for you to wear in Qingzhou.⁶⁴

It's bright and eye-catching, but don't brag about the fine, the thick silk,
And the stitched orchids and fabricated water chestnut blossoms were really hard to make.
May this robe cover everything in the billion realms,⁶⁵

⁶¹ Liu Zihui was from Mount Bing in Fujian.

⁶² Jingshan is close to Hangzhou and is famous for the temple built there by the Tang monk Faqian 法欽 (715-193) during the reign of emperor Daizong (763-780).

⁶³ There are three poems in the original, but Wang here only includes the second and third. See *Three poems on sending a cassock from Mount Jing to my son* 徑山寄生子道服三首, *Pingshan ji*, 19:1 (1134.504a4). The tone of the poem seems rather frivolous for the cassock to be a real monk's cassock and the son to be really a monk. The cassock is meant to be worn only in private to keep off the cold. But this is uncertain.

⁶⁴ Qingzhou is located in Shandong to the North.

⁶⁵ *Sanqian jie* 三千界 (three thousand realms) is an abbreviation of *sanqian daqian shijie* 三千大千世界, the Chinese translation of *trisāhasra-mahāsāhasra-loka-dhātu*, one billion worlds, constituting the domain

For I want to share a laugh with you about it, my cold young son!⁶⁶

They are all of this type. Mr. Liu often said to the Duke of Letters [Zhu Xi]:

When I was young, I served as an official in Futian 莆田 [Fujian], and after I became sick,⁶⁷ I met with followers of Laozi and the Buddha, and when I heard of their so-called “purity and quietude” [Daoist] and “perfect stillness” (*nirvāna*) [Buddhist], my heart took joy in it. But only after I returned and was reading Confucian books⁶⁸ did I realize how great is our Way and how complete is its doctrine of substance and function (*tiyong* 體用)—this I now know.

Thus it was that the Duke of Letters [Zhu Xi] too in his teachings first got started by way of Chan. Excerpted from *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake).⁶⁹

of the Buddha: a world consists of the world of desire and the first heaven of the world of form. One thousand times one thousand times one thousand makes one billion. The *locus classicus* is the Tiantai *Lotus sūtra* 法華經: The three thousand realms are *all* the various states—physical, mental, and spiritual—in which beings can exist, and they also represent the myriad of possibilities of all the future states we might experience. First, there are the ten worlds, which are inhabited respectively by hell-beings, hungry ghosts, animals, *asuras*, humans, gods, *śrāvakas*, *pratyekabuddhas*, *bodhisattvas*, and Buddhas. Each of these worlds has the potential for all ten worlds within itself, making 100 worlds by multiplication. Each of these one-hundred possesses the ten factors 十如是 of all existent things. These are marks 相, nature 性, substance 體, power 力, activity 作, primary causes 因, conditions 緣, effects 果, rewards and retributions 報, and, as number ten, the nine factors taken together as a totality. The three realms are: 1) the realm of the five components (*skandas*, heaps), which are form, perception, conception, volition, and consciousness, 2) the realm of living beings (the other living beings around us), and 3) the physical environment. In total, three thousand. See T262.9.5c12, as well as the DDB entry for 三千界. Liu expresses the wish that the wearer of the cassock will reach perfect Buddha enlightenment.

⁶⁶ There seems to be multiple meaning here: the bright colours of the cassock shine with the power and brilliance of the Buddha’s teaching; one who wears it will contribute to the radiation of that teaching throughout the world; and, finally, since the power of the robe reaches everywhere, Liu hopes that his son will come to visit him—as if its power could fetch him there.

⁶⁷ He called himself the “Sick Old Man” (Bingweng 病翁) when he became sick with grief over his father’s death.

⁶⁸ According to his biography in the *Songshi* (History of the Song Dynasty) (*liezhuan* 188), early in life Liu was fond of Buddhist writings but later discovered the *Classic of Changes* and committed himself to Confucianism.

⁶⁹ Both the *Pingshan ji* and the *Quanmin shihua* 全閩詩話 (Complete Discussions of Poetry from Min [Fujian]) quote the *Chibei outan* for evidence for Liu serving when young as an official in Futian. See the introduction to the *Pingshan ji tiyao*, 1 (1134.351b15), and *Quanmin shihua*, 3 :56 (1486.126a12).

ENTRY 8

In the (Casual Notes [from the Able to Change Studio]) there is recorded a poem⁷⁰ by the monk Zhongshu 仲殊,⁷¹ which reads,

Auspicious unicorn incense warms a jade hibiscus censer,
A decorated candle produces congealed glow until the red of dawn,
As several leaks shift around north of the yamen barracks,
And a burst of rain drops spatter east of the armory.
In dream I wander outside the yellow chamber⁷² with its *luan*'s nest,⁷³
My body lying amidst vermilion banners and tiger tents.⁷⁴
A report from the watchtower gate—sunrise is nigh,
Lifting my window blinds—an apricot blossom breeze.

⁷⁰ See *Nenggaizhai manlu*, 11:14 (850.709a5), where the title is given as *A Work Assistant Director of the Left Huang* [in the Department of State Affairs] *Made Monk Zhongshu Compose as Punishment* 黃左丞罰僧仲殊作. However, another source, the *Songbai leichao* 宋稗類鈔 (A Classified Collection of Anecdotes from the Song Era); see 20:30 (1034.510a11), a collection of Song *shihua* compiled by Pan Yongyuan[or yin] 潘永園[因] (1669), the very same poem is given without title, and the name of the person who did the punishing was Wang Anzhong 王安中, who was indeed an *Assistant Director of the Left* 左丞 at the time Zhongshu was alive—he was made a *Assistant Director of the Right* in 1119 and received a promotion to *Assistant Director of the Left* in 1121; see *Songshi*, 22 (*benji* 22), 405, 408. The story goes that Zhongshu was invited to a gathering of guests at Wang Anzhong's house, but he was so tired that he fell asleep in Wang's office. By the time he woke up, befuddled with sleep; the guests had all left, and Wang Anzhong “punished” him by making him write this poem.

⁷¹ Zhongshu became friends with Su Shi while Su was magistrate in Hangzhou. Su called him Honey Shu because he liked honey.

⁷² The Huangge 黃閣 (Yellow Pavilion) is the hall where the grand councilors (*chengxiang* 丞相) convened to consult with the emperor.

⁷³ The *luan* was a fabulous bird, and *luanchao* was a metaphor for a “realm of the immortals” (*xianjing* 仙境), here a place where the most important decisions get made by the powerful.

⁷⁴ A *Tongwei* 彤幃 was both the banner a provincial governor displayed when he set out on an official journey and the a conventional symbol of the ranking official in a district. A *huzhang* 虎帳 was a general's tent headquarters. Both of these phrases complement Wang Anzhong for his great power.

The above poem is a work that Zhongshu presented to Assistant Commissioner of the Left Huang [Wang] Anzhong when at Level River 平江.⁷⁵ This is the person Dongpo [Su Shi] referred to as “Honey Shu.” Excerpted from *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake).

ENTRY 9

At the Tianwang 天王 (Heavenly King) Temple on Liuqiu 琉球⁷⁶ there was a monk with the sobriquet Shoumei Daoren 瘦梅道人 (Thin Plum Man of the Way), who wrote a Seventh Night of the Seventh Month (Cowherd and Weaver Maid Stars Festival) poem that reads:

Outside Lord Tao’s drapes a red dragon descends,⁷⁷

In front of Emperor Hanwu’s palace blue birds come.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ In Jiangsu, west of the modern city of Shanghai. That Wang Anzhong was stationed 守 in Pingjing is not recorded in his *Songshi* biography (*liezhuan* 111).

⁷⁶ The Liuqiu (Ryūkyū) Islands, between Taiwan and Japan, were acquired by Japan in 1879.

⁷⁷ Immortals rode on the backs of red dragons. Lord Taoan 陶安 was one of the immortals included in the Han dynasty work *Liexian zhuan* 列仙傳 (Biographies of Immortals). He was a magician-chemist from the southern state of Chu. A red bird messenger from the Queen Mother of the West 西王母 arrived one day and announced that a red dragon would come to greet him on the seventh day of the seventh month, and as promised, it arrived, so he got on and rode off. See *Liexian zhuan*, B:11 (1058.504a1). The Queen Mother of the West, a major Daoist deity, was likely prepared to teach Taoan the secrets of immortality. It was these mythical associations that interested the poet here.

⁷⁸ On the seventh day of the seventh month, blue birds suddenly gathered in front of the palace of Han Emperor Wu (reigned 156-87). These were messengers from the Queen Mother of the West, as the emperor was told by his official Dong Fangshuo 東方朔. This quotation, as well as the *Liexian zhuan* quotation in the previous footnote, can be found in *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 (Writings about Literary Art Arranged by Category), compiled by Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 (557-641), et al.; see *Yiwen leiju*, 4:34-35 (887.213a2). Ouyang Xun gives *Hanwu gushi* 漢武故事 (Story of Emperor Wu of the Han) as his source, but this quotation is not in the SKQS version of the *Hanwu gushi*.

Also the monk Buji 不羈 (Unbridled) of Wansong 萬松 (Myriad Pines) Temple⁷⁹ has a poem that reads:

The brown leaves fall on the three paths,⁸⁰

The white clouds return to numerous peaks.

My disciples Wang Zhouci 汪舟次 (Ji 楫) of the Hanlin Academy⁸¹ and Secretariat Drafter Lin Shilai 林石夾 (Linchang 麟煇),⁸² were in the *guihai* (1683) year commissioned by the Kangxi emperor as ambassadors to go to his country [the Liuqiu Islands] and saw them [Shoumei Daoren and Buji] there. Shilai has a poem that reads:

Thin Plum Man of the Way, people don't know who he is,

⁷⁹ In the SKQS, this temple is mentioned only in connection with this anecdote by Wang Shizhen, so its location is unknown.

⁸⁰ The association between living in retirement and the phrase the three paths (*sanjing* 三徑) goes back to the work *Sanfu jue* 三輔決錄 (*juan* 1) by Zhao Qi 趙岐 (d. 201), which relates the story of Jiang Xu 蔣詡 of the Han dynasty. This official quit his post and retired to a dwelling in a bamboo grove in which there were three paths below his hu. The most famous instance of this phrase, of course, was in Tao Yuanming's famous poem *Guiqulai* 歸去來 (Let me Return). In Tao's poem, the strength we need to get through winter is symbolized by the pine tree and the chrysanthemum.

⁸¹ Wang Zhouci's title was Examining Editor (*jiantao* 檢討), an official responsible for drafting and editing work preparing imperial pronouncements and for the compilation of imperially sponsored historical and other works. He was responsible for the *Shi liuqiu lu* 使琉球錄 (Record of a Liuqiu Envoy) and the *Zhongshan yange zhi* 中山沿革志 (An Account of the Historical Development of Zhongshan District); see *Zongmutiyao*, 66:44 (2.445a7—p592). These two were sent to confer the title of King of Zhongshan on the ruler of Liuqiu, which represented the efforts of Kangxi to stabilize the realm by bringing all semi-autonomous rulers into harmonious relationship with the central government. When these two men returned, they conveyed the request to let several Liuqiu officials study in Beijing, an episode for which Wang Shizhen wrote the *Liuqiu rutaixue shimo* 琉球入太學始末 (A Complete Account of How Liuqiu Natives Entered the National University); see *Zongmutiyao*, 83:25 (2.735b5—p719). A version of these events is contained in the *Qingshigao*, 526 (*liezhuan* 313): *Shuguo* 屬國 (Tribute States) 1/Liuqiu, 14616a-14624b.

⁸² *Sheren* 舍人 (drafter) is an abbreviation of *zhongshu sheren* 中書舍人 (drafter in the central secretariat), whose responsibilities were handling central government documents. The secretariat was "a top-echelon agency of the central government, nominally responsible for promulgating emperor's orders but usually having broader policy formulating functions" (Hucker, 1619). The review of Lin's work *Yuyan shiji* 玉巖詩集 (Jade Cliff Poetry Collection) in the *Zongmutiyao* claims that he inherited his poetic method (*shifa* 詩法) from Wang Shizhen. See *Zongmutiyao*, 183:15 (4.895b6—p1657).

And when topics of sutras are chanted he just shrugs his shoulders.
 Lines he manages to write such as these about red dragons and blue birds
 Equally deserve transmission with the first and second sections of the *Fannan*.⁸³
 Among the Buddhists, there is even one called “Unbridled”
 Who at Jeta’s Grove,⁸⁴ breezes stirring the trees, transcended the world of dust.
 Their personal styles of poetry in the Tang mode are good,⁸⁵
 In which white clouds and brown leaves compete for clarity and novelty.⁸⁶

Excerpted from *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake).

ENTRY 10

The Buddhist priest Chengchu 成楚 from Xincheng 新城,⁸⁷ courtesy name Jingan 荊庵 (Bramble Hut), received the Five Precepts⁸⁸ at Faqing 法慶 (Celebration of the Dharma)

⁸³ The collected literary works of Li Shangyin 李商隱 (813-858) are entitled the *Fannan wenji* 樊南文集. Li Shangyin was noted for his love poetry, his sophisticated use of allusions and symbols, often obscure. The two lines above seem to be related, both treating the Seventh Day of the Seventh Month and both involving the Queen Mother of the West. The resemblance to Li Shangyin’s poetry is obvious. Of course, the tone of this whole poem is mocking, as will become clearer when Buji’s derivativeness (due to his imitation of poets of the Tang) is made fun of in the following lines.

⁸⁴ Qishu 祇樹 is the Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit Jetavana. Jeta was a prince of the city of Śrāvastī 舍衛國 in the ancient state of Kosala who, with a wealthy merchant named Sudatta, donated lands for the Buddha to live on and teach his disciples. The Buddha is said to have spent the last twenty-five years of his ministry there. See *Foguangshan*, 3920c. Here it simply means a Buddhist temple or monastery.

⁸⁵ *Fengge* 風格 means the particular qualities that characterize an individual poet’s work. Both *fengge* and *ti* 體, also used in this line, can be translated as “style,” but *ti* more precisely means “genre” or “period style”—the more general mode determined by genre or period.

⁸⁶ This competition for newness is vitiated, of course, by the conventionality of the results: “Brown leaves” occurs one-hundred and forty-five times in the *Quantangshi* (Complete Poems of the Tang), while “white clouds” appears *innumerable* times. So it seems that Lin Shilai is poking fun at the meager skills of these rustic obscure monks on the periphery of the Chinese world.

⁸⁷ Xincheng, in Jinan prefecture, Shandong, was also the native place of Wang Shizhen.

⁸⁸ This is the set of five precepts that must be observed by serious Buddhists: “not killing, not stealing, no improper sexual behavior (such as adultery, etc.), no false speech, no consumption of alcohol” (see the DDB entry for 五戒).

Temple, and now lives at Lingyan 靈巖 (Spirit Cliff).⁸⁹ He is rather capable at short poems.

From *Falling Blossoms*:

From high branches they can bear to part,
And on flowing water drift and bob along.

From *After Rain*

When black monkeys approach the mountain stream to drink,
White birds wheel up into the sky.

From *Autumn Days*

When winds come to the evening pond, green lotuses wither,
As frost falls on the autumn mountain, brown leaves increase.

From *Living in the Mountains*

With the “dangerous cliff” line behind me, I penetrate the main meaning,
Before falling into the tiger trap,⁹⁰ I examine the maker of it.

⁸⁹ Lingyan temple, which still prospers, is located on Lingyan Mountain in Changqing 長青 district, Shandong.

⁹⁰ The phrase “tiger trap” is used in the following poem by Dehong 德洪, from the *Shimen wenzichan* 石門文字禪, 13:4 (1116.301a14):

We've been mired long enough in the <i>sanxuan sanyao</i> ,	三玄三要沉埋久,
Government orders have again troubled, roused this school.	正令重煩振此宗.
To use a trap into which a tiger falls requires an evil hand,	陷虎機關須毒手,
The eyes of those still living prize a hidden blade.	活人眼目貴藏鋒.
Those of truth and loyalty will never hold intentions of forest beasts,	真誠莫負叢林志,
My great wish is to follow the tradition of the Buddha and the Patriarchs.	大願當追佛祖風.

That is, the followers of the Linji school have been spending too much time discussing the obscure doctrine of the Three Mysteries and Three Essentials (*sanxuan sanyao* 三玄三要), and now is the time for action. In this context, the tiger trap is one of the tricks that cunning people use to get ahead by harming their fellow men. It is therefore something that the Buddhist must avoid as he seeks to enact a different way of life

From *Clearing Sky*

Thousand layers of roiling mist swirl out from behind the mountain barrier,
Clearly flowing a myriad streams emerge from the roots of clouds.

*Presented to Abbot Xilin*⁹¹

Our teaching overflows from Spirit Mountain's⁹² as this its first branch,
Without a word I obtain the essence, for this is my teacher.
By chance, when we set up the statue of the Buddha, snow flakes fell,
A gorgeous scene sky produced as we sat for our banquet.

I have recorded these here, but the reader should go on to read the whole works these lines were taken from. At the same time, there was the monk Zhiquan 智泉, who was also a Xincheng native. He wrote a *Yizhu shi* 移竹詩 (Poem on Transplanting Bamboo), from which there are these lines:

Taking my leave of Cold Mountain Temple,⁹³
I come to lean on the Bright Moon Hall.⁹⁴

based upon not profit but compassion. However, it may be that in Chan discourse this kind of difficult doctrine was called a “tiger trap”: an obscure but suggestive formula that “traps” a monk into spending too much of his time thinking about it.

⁹¹ This is the early Qing eminent monk Chengzun 成樽, whose courtesy name was Xilin 奚林.

⁹² Lingshan 靈山 (Spirit Mountain) is an abbreviation of Lingjiushan 靈鷲山 “Eagle Peak” or “Vulture Peak,” the site for the preaching of several of the Buddha's Mahāyāna sermons, such as the *Lotus Sutra* and *Sutra of Limitless Life*.

⁹³ In Wu district, Jiangsu Province. The temple was so named because the great Tang monk Hanshan had spent time there.

⁹⁴ Bright Moon Hall was located in Yangzhou (modern Jiangsu Province).

Yangzhou and this temple were about a hundred and fifty kilometers apart, a good few days of traveling.

There is also some excellence to this. Excerpted from *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake).

ENTRY 11

The monk Tiehan 鐵漢 (Iron man) lived below the eastern peak of Ox head 牛首 Mountain in Jinling (Nanjing). While he sat in meditation there alone for several decades, he once raised two monkeys to follow him around. When he needed something, the monkeys always understood what he wanted. He was friendly with scholar Mr. Fang Tan'an 方坦菴 (Gonggan 拱乾) from Longmian 龍眠,⁹⁵ for whom he specially constructed a little pavilion, and, when Fang came, he stayed in it, so it was called "Tan's Pavilion." When the monk died, the monkeys cried so sadly that they could not eat and died. They were buried by the side of the pagoda. On a portrait of them deceased, scholar Fang wrote:

Two macaque monkeys, one walking stick,
And flowers offered on a stone alone proclaim his nobility.
Though this odd master was able to transcend all earthy affairs,

⁹⁵ Longmian 龍眠 (Dragon Sleep) was a mountain in Anhui Province, Tongcheng 桐城 County, which was Fan Gonggan's birthplace. He was a Metropolitan Graduate in the Tianqi 天啟 reign (1621-1628) of the Ming. Captured during Li Zicheng's advance on Beijing, he survived to enter the Qing bureaucracy as a Junior Supervisor of the Household of the Heir Apparent 少詹事. In the fourteenth year of the Shunzhi reign (1657), he tried to cheat through bribery on the Jiangnan civil service examination that his fifth son Zhangyue 章鉞 was taking. His punishment was being sent to the frontier (see *Qingshi zhi*, 83, *xuanju*, 108:3166), to Ningguta 寧古塔, an outpost in Jilin 吉林 province in extreme northeast China. Fang returned to central China later on and adopted the name Su'an 甦庵 (Rebirth Hut). He also wrote the *Ningguta zhi* 寧古塔誌 (Record of Ningguta). Tiehan is listed in the *Zhongguo fojiao renming cidian* as a Qing monk, but it is not clear whether he knew Fang Gonggan before or after the latter's disgrace.

He left behind these stolen unfortunates and wronged his real descendents.⁹⁶

Excerpted from *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake). (The original text is also recorded once each in *Yuyang wen* 漁洋文 (Prose by Yuyang) and *Fengan yuhua* 分甘餘話 [Leisure Talk in Time Left Over From Duties to Share as Morsels of Sweet Pleasure],⁹⁷ but both are omitted here.)

ENTRY 12

When Liu Gongyong 劉公翬,⁹⁸ of the Ministry of Civil Personnel, was in Fengyang 鳳陽 [Anhui], he went with his friend Provincial Graduate Su Maoyou 蘇懋旂 (Ming 銘) to Longxing 龍興 Temple, where all day long he kept up a challenging discussion on abstruse matters with some Chan master. When he returned home that evening, he passed away. That evening, Su dreamed that Gongyong came with a smile and recited a poem:

After sixty-odd years, I awoke from a dream,

⁹⁶ That is, instead of perfectly renouncing all human ties, as a monk should have done, he captured the monkeys and made them his servants—as ersatz children. The monkeys were denied the company of their own kind, and denying existence to children of his own, all the odd monk did was leave the two monkeys to die of grief at his own death. “Stolen unfortunates” translates *zangsi* 贓私, literally “plunder/booty for personal gain.”

⁹⁷ This work was written late in life, in the *yichou* year of Kangxi (1709), when Wang Shizhen had been in retirement for five years. It is a collection of accounts of miscellaneous matters (*zashi* 雜事); see *Zongmutiyao*, 122:34 (3.653a13—p1056).

⁹⁸ In his work *Chibei outan*, Wang Shizhen relates that in 1659 (Shunzhi *yihai*) he was a guest in the capital and heard Liu Gongyong play the *qin* and compose poetry; see 11:14 (870.157a1). In the same work, Wang also states that Liu Gongyong, also named Jiang Jingyi 江靜宜, died sometime after 1667 (Kangxi *dingwei*) when his boat overturned (*juan* 12 (870.174a9).

To find that the four gross elements⁹⁹ float, for I drive them light as wind,
Though yesterday I was with you at Longxing Temple,
Where I still slogged along covered in mud and water.

Excerpted from *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Random Chats North of the Lake). (The original text is also recorded in *Yuyang shihua* 漁洋詩話 [Discussions of Poetry by Yuyang], but this is omitted here.)

ENTRY 13

In Xincheng 新城, I visited Chongning 崇寧 Temple, the buildings of which had fallen into ruin—all one could see were mallow and oats growing there. I remember that in the *renchen* year of Shunzhi [1652], when I had not yet gone through my capping ceremony, I boarded an official carriage with my older brother, the Personnel Evaluator (*kaogong* 考功) [Wang Shilu 王士祿 (1626-1673)], who was on his way to serve under the Minister of Education, and we rested at this place. The sound of Buddhist chanting was really great! On the wall, I saw a poem by Cui Mizhi 崔泌之, [courtesy name] Jizhong 飢仲, which reads:

The Lord of Elephants, of course, does not have just one isolated herd as followers,¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ *Sida* 四大 translates the Sanskrit *mahā-bhūta*, earth, air, fire, and wind, the physical substances of which all things were composed, and which were according to Buddhist thought supported by space. See the entry for in the DDB.

¹⁰⁰ The poem seems to be a polemic against sectarianism and doctrinal strife. The Xiang Wang 象王 or “Lord of Elephants” is the Chinese translation of Gajapati, a term for Śākyamuni, the historical Buddha. As

So let jade drums be and iron flags unfurl,¹⁰¹

For the Dharma's transformative power will in the end bring all fierce fellows home,

And the Yao River drop by drop will finish up in the Lotus Pond.¹⁰²

Since then fifty years have passed [1702] in the snap of the fingers, and, considering the cataclysmic events that have since taken place, this poem truly has not turned out to be just absurd talk! Excerpted from *Canwei xuwen* 蠶尾續文 (Continuation of Prose from the Silkworm's Tail), with an addendum:

From *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease): In the *qiwei* year of the Shunzhi era [1655] at the end of spring, I boarded an official carriage, which stopped for a rest at Gaoqiao 高橋 (High bridge) in North Xincheng and rested there at a Buddhist temple. There was a poem by Cui Mizhi written there in grass script which reads. . . [as

the Lord of Elephants should be universal king of all elephants, so the Buddha is the universal savior of all mankind, not just the followers of one particular school or sect.

¹⁰¹ This alludes to a passage in the *Xu chuan deng lu* 續傳燈錄 (Continuation of the Record of the Transmission of the Lamp) (Taishō, No. 2077), 26:0643c: [Douxu Huizhao Chan Master 兜率慧照禪師 said: “[You monks,] . . . when you are hungry, you eat, when thirsty you drink, so enjoy yourselves without limit. But who loves to vie to be first in snatching the prize [attain Buddhahood]? Instead, you either try to row a boat on dry land or raise waves on mountain tops. Publicly you beat jade drums but secretly unfurl iron banners.” That is, the monks are wasting their time on pointless and absurd argument, while pretending to converse harmoniously (beat the jade drum) but actually treating each other as if they were going to war (unfurl the iron [war] banner).

¹⁰² The Yao 姚 River flows through the native place of Wang Shouren 王守仁 (1472-1529) (Yangming 陽明), and Wang's idealistic Neo-Confucian school of mind is, in fact, called the Yuyao xuepai 餘姚學派. Lianchi 蓮池 (Lotus Pond) is the sobriquet of the eminent monk Zhuhong 祿紅 (1532-1612), famed for his erudition and writing, his eloquent teaching, his important role in the late Ming synthesis of the Three Teachings, and for his converting several late Ming prominent literati to Buddhism. This line declares that the teaching of the Wang Yangming school is being eclipsed by that of Zhuhong and, as such, absorbed back into Buddhism. For Zhuhong, see Yu, Chün-fang, *The Renewal of Buddhism in China: Chu-hung and the Late Ming Synthesis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981). It is likely that “drop by drop” *didi* 滴滴 is punning on *dizidizi* 弟子弟子 “disciple by disciple.”

above]. Cui was a native of Henan, and his rank stopped at the level of district magistrate. He died as a loyalist martyr at the end of the Ming.¹⁰³

ENTRY 14

In the Pavilion of Great Compassion (Dabei ge 大悲閣) in the Longxing Temple 龍興 in Zhending 真定,¹⁰⁴ there preserved ninety linked poems on embroidery by Qian Weizhi 錢唯治, the Song era Defender of the State Military Prefecture Commissioner (*Zhenguojun jiedushi* 鎮國軍節度使), who had been specially promoted to the rank of Inspector Grand Guardian (*Jianjiao taiwei* 檢校太尉), and was serving as temporary Zhenzhou Military Prefect.¹⁰⁵ When I paid a visit to the Linji temple 臨濟寺, Chan Master Yixuan's place of teaching, it was in a ruined overgrown state without a single monk. Today later generations trained in the Linji school have spread throughout the land, and yet the founding temple has fallen into ruin to such an extent as this. Taking the

¹⁰³ Cui Jizhong was a Tianqi era Metropolitan Graduate (1621-1628). His poem talks of war and upheaval, and he knew what he was talking about. He is not given his own biography in the *Mingshi* (History of the Ming) but is recorded as one of the officials who tried to defend Chenzhou (in Henan) from Li Zicheng, the warlord who was finally killed in 1645 after a failed advance on Beijing; see *Mingshi*, 293:7513.

¹⁰⁴ Zhending 正定 is today a county in Hebei, about 400 kilometers up the Hutuo River from Tianjin. At the time of Qian Weizhi (see next footnote) this was a strategically important location, being only a hundred kilometers from the border with the state of Liao. This town was founded in the Tang as the Chengde garrison 成德軍, and was later called Zhenzhou 鎮州. It was to the southeast of Zhenzhou that Yixuan 義玄 built the Linji temple 臨濟院 on the banks of the Hutuo after he arrived in 854—the home temple of the Linji school of Chan.

¹⁰⁵ [Qian Weizhi's success in the early part of his career was due to his father, Qian Chu](#) 錢俶, who was a warlord during the Five Dynasties era, the so-called Liangzhe King 兩浙王 (south of the Qiantang River was East Zhe, and to the north was West Zhe). In the third year (beginning February 10, 978) of Song Taizong's Xingguo 興國 reign period, [Qian Chu presented the emperor with his territory. In return he was named Huaihai King](#) 淮海國王. His first son, Qian Weijun 惟濬 was made Huainan Military Commissioner 淮南軍節度使, while Qian Weizhi was named State Army Military Commissioner 鎮國軍. See *Songshi*, 4:58. Qian Weizhi was promoted several times, finally reaching the rank [of Inspector Grand Guardian](#) 檢校太師.

karmic condition of the times into consideration, does it still have to wait longer?

Zhengwu 證悟 (Proven Enlightenment) Dharma Master of the Song wrote a *gatha* on a money-raising tile for the Mazu¹⁰⁶ Temple Hall 馬祖殿:

To send these words to Jiangxi I use an antique awl,
So let the sun roast and the wind blow.
May later generations not be without the means to take care of it—
For we'd like to see the time when the tile disintegrates only because of the elements.

Since I happened to remember this by chance, I inscribed it on the walls. Excerpted from *Qinshu yicheng houji* 秦蜀驛程後記 (Latter Record of a Journey through Shanxi and Sichuan by Post Station),¹⁰⁷ with an addendum:

From *Fengan yuhua* 分甘餘話 (Leisure Talk Once Duties Are Done to Share as Morsels of Sweet Pleasure): I passed by this place in the *bingzi* year of the Kangxi era (1696). Completely in ruins and desolate, utterly silent and without a single monk. Now, later generations of the Linji school have spread throughout the land, building great shrines on famous mountains and opening halls to attract masses of followers beyond count. And yet the founding temple as been abandoned to fall into ruin to such an extent as this, with not a single person taking responsibility for restoration! Because I remembered what the

¹⁰⁶ Mazu (d. 778) had many students and a huge influence on the development of Chan. Toward the end of his life during the Dali era (766-780), he went to Zhongling 鍾陵, Jiangxi, to live at Kaiyuan 開元 Temple, where he collected a great number of followers from all over China—note the mention of Jiangxi in the first line.

¹⁰⁷ In 1696, Wang Shizhen was sent to Sichuan to perform sacrifice to the Sacred Mountain of the West on behalf of the Kangxi emperor. The first *juan* of *Qinshu yicheng houji* relates the trip from Beijing to Chengdu, while the second brings him from Chengdu to his home in Xincheng. See *Zongmutiyao*, 64:20 (2.407a15—p575).

Song era monk Zhengwu had inscribed on the Mazu Temple Hall, . . . [as above], I immediately inscribed this poem on the temple hall walls. Now [1709], another thirteen years has passed, and I do not know whether or anyone in the end ever undertook this project.

ENTRY 15

The old monk Guoan, sobriquet Huayan Retreat 華嚴菴, bringing along a *juan* of his poetry, paid me a visit. He was a man of Wu (Jiangsu), eighty-four years old. When I looked through the *juan*, I found the lines:

When there's no summer heat outside my window, I sense clouds are rising
If bamboos fill with sound, I know rain is coming.

I rather enjoyed them. *Qinshu yicheng houji* 秦蜀驛程後記 (Latter Record of a Journey through Shanxi and Sichuan by Post Station). (The original text is also recorded in the *Fengan yuhua*, but this is omitted here.)

An appended observation by [Zhang] Zongnan 張宗柟: Zhizhai 芷齋 relates Mr. Haolu's 蒿廬 words: "The two are after all beautiful lines, but I am slightly displeased that the parallel verbs "sense" and "know" are so similar in meaning."

ENTRY 16

The *Xuexi ji* 雪溪集 (Snowy Stream Collection) of the Song era figure Wang Zhi 王銍, [courtesy name] Xingzhi 性之,¹⁰⁸ has appended to it a poem by the Mount Lu 廬山 monk Kehe 可和, which is very beautiful:

In the air a thousand feet long, falling willow floss,
Along the stream an entire flag, opening tea buds.
I love most the bright mud which makes the swallows wheel about so,
That there's no need for wind and rain to make pear blossoms fall.
Layering the river, emerald trees keep ranked geese at a distance,
Piercing the water, green rushes give depth to the bright sands.
I'd like to see a pair of linked boats on which I could really get drunk
Rapt with wine, wind in my hat, I'd just let it go awry.

Excerpted from *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease).

ENTRY 17

The Yuan era monk Wen Riguan 溫日觀¹⁰⁹ excelled at painting grapes. Whether the stems, branches, or leaves, he always used the grass style of brushwork (*caoshu* 草書).

¹⁰⁸ The twelfth century monk Wang Zhi 王銍 left a poetry collection in eight *juan*, three of which had been lost by the Qing. Wang Shizhen in the *Juyi lu* mocked his poetry as not very well crafted (*bushengong* 不甚工), and only gave his praise to this appended poem. The *Zongmutiyao* critique of the *Xuexi ji* protests this view as unreliable; see 158:3 (4.213b17—p1359). Wang Shizhen may have misread Wang Zhi's friend's name, for it is Keshi 可師 in the original text appended to the *Xuexi ji*. Wang Zhi's introduction to the poem goes like this: "I was at Mount Lu with my old friend Keshi. As a part of a poetry society (*shishe* 詩社) he had once answered the rhyme scheme of my poem with his own, which went. . . ." See *Xuexi ji*, 3:6 (1136.564a5).

Once in the study of Vice Censor-in-Chief Song Muzhong 宋牧仲¹¹⁰ I saw one of his grape pictures, after which was inscribed a poem:

Bright moon and clear wind at Zong Bing's lodge,¹¹¹
Evening sun and autumn scenery at Lord Yu's Pavilion.¹¹²
I have cultivated my mind but have not gotten to the realm of no-mind,
The ten thousand forms and the thousand kinds chase the water's flow.¹¹³

We immediately looked up what the *Liuyan zhai[biji]* 六研齋[筆記] ([Notes from the] Six Grindstones Studio)¹¹⁴ had recorded about this picture and this poem, and it turned

¹⁰⁹ Actually Wen Riguan lived mostly during the end of the Southern Song era, but lived into the Yuan until 1296 and was so famous for his grape paintings that he was called Wen Putao 溫葡萄 (Grapes Wen). His Buddhist name was Ziwen 子溫.

¹¹⁰ Song Lao 宋鞏 (1634-1713), courtesy name Muzhong, a close life-long friend of Wang's, had a lengthy and successful official career. See Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, 689-690.

¹¹¹ During the Yuanjia era of Emperor Wen 文帝 (424-454) of the Six dynasties Song dynasty, the hermit monk Zong Bing's 宗炳 (375-443) services were often requested, but he always refused, preferring to live in a hut on Mount Lu 廬山.

¹¹² Yu Liang 庾亮 (289-340) was a powerful Jin Dynasty. Lord Yu's Pavilion was built when he was stationed in Jiangzhou 江州, an administrative area created at the beginning of the Jin that included territory from both Hubei and Jiangxi Provinces. He was specifically in the area of 武昌 in modern Hubei. The tower was located at what was once called Xunyang 尋陽, which was in the Jiangxi part of the Jin administrative district of Jiangzhou. Xunyang was later changed to Jiangzhou, and this area is now called Jiujiang district. The point of the allusion is that this tower offered a perfect view of Mount Lu, whose Shuangjianfeng 雙劍峰 (Paired Swords Peak) the tower directly faces.

¹¹³ These are lines from the second of Guanxiu's 貫休 (832-912) *Shanju shi ershisishou* 山居詩二十四首 (Twenty Four Poems on Living in the Mountains); see *Quan Tangshi* (Complete Poems of the Tang), 23.837.9428.

¹¹⁴ This is a work by the Ming era official, calligrapher, painter, and art critic Li Rihua 李日華 (1565-1635). In it he discussed paintings with inscriptions (*tiba* 題跋) he had seen, including biographical information about the poets and calligraphers. The critique of this work in the *Zongmu tiyao*, 22:28 (3.650a4—p1055), notes that in the *Juyi lu*, 22:31 (3.651b13) Wang Shizhen criticized Li for biographical inaccuracies. However, in this context, it is likely that Wang merely wished to compare the text on the painting in Song Lao's study with that recorded in Li's work. Before the section in the *Jiuyanzhai biji* that Wang quotes, Li Rihua gives some additional background information:

My close friend Wang Ziyu brought over in a parcel a painting of grapes by Wen Riguan to compare with the one that I had previously acquired for my collection. There was no difference between them, but his was older, and Wen's grass style calligraphy was even less restrained and extravagantly developed. All the inscriptions and poetry were also fully recorded on it.

out to be exactly the same. But [recorded here] there was another inscription by the painter himself:

All the world just knows to lament the flowing on of water,
But who is even the slightest enlightened about flowers in the air?¹¹⁵

[At which point Li Rihua adds more comment of his own:]

These are beautiful lines by the great Tang Chan Master Guanxiu 貫修 [(832-912)]¹¹⁶ and this instance of Wen Riguan of the August Song writing them out in his own calligraphy, as such, is a sketching a dragon's beard at the end.¹¹⁷ On the twentieth day of the third month of the *kuisi* year [April 19, 1593], I went by boat to Tianfo 天佛 (Buddha of Heaven) Temple, where in the bright windows was the height of evening. There was an elder brother, the assistant abbot, who was the custodian of it.

Following that there was also written:

The length of the paper is suitable for the inscription of this fine poem—so that later eminent personages will enjoy it with a smile.

See *Liuyan zhai biji*, 3 *bi* 筆, 2:22-23 (867.690a1-2).

¹¹⁵ “Flow of water” is a well worn expression for the inexorable flow of time. In the fourteenth of the Guanxiu series of poems mentioned above, the expression “flowers in the air” occurs. In such a Buddhist context, this was an image which suggests the ephemerality of all passing forms: We may think that the things around us are solid and fixed, but they are just like flowers in the air seen by someone with a cataract and are completely false and illusory. See *Quantang shi* 23.837.9428.

¹¹⁶ Guanxiu (832-912) was known for his *Chanyue ji* 禪月集 (Chan Moon Collection). He was also a noted painter.

¹¹⁷ A “dragon’s beard” is a handsome, luxuriant beard: the addition of Wen’s calligraphy to the picture of grapes, is like adding a handsome beard to a portrait—it enhances it even more.

This refers to the poem above. Following that, there are also listed inscriptions by Zhang Mengying 張夢應 of Yichuan 益川, Zeng Yinsun 曾寅孫 of Shanyin 山陰 [Shanxi 山西], Ye Heng 葉衡 of Boyang 鄱陽 [Jiangxi], and Cheng Fengfei 程鳳飛 of Shangrao 上饒 [Jiangxi], all of which no longer exist, for they were cut off by someone. Excerpted from *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease).

ENTRY 18

Monk Zhipu 智朴 (Wise Uncarved Block) of Pan 盤 Mountain,¹¹⁸ courtesy name Zhuo'an 拙庵 (Retreat of the Inept),¹¹⁹ was from Xuzhou 徐州 (northwest Jiangsu). In the *dingsi* year (1677), he presented me with his poetry and would have me compose introductions to his collected works, the *Leiguang* 雷光 (Lightning Flash) and *Yunhe* 雲鶴 (Clouds Crane), so I had double the poetry to cherish him with. In the *gengwu* year (1690), his servant came down from the mountain, who delivered a poem that reads:

The Academician¹²⁰ Supervisor of the Heir Apparent's Household, my elder poetry uncle—

¹¹⁸ Panshan is just over a hundred kilometers east of Beijing, in Ji district 薊縣.

¹¹⁹ The *Zhongguo fojiao renming cidian* records the name as 智樸. He went to Pan Mountain in 1671, the tenth year of the Kangxi reign. The works Wang Shizhen refers to are the *Leiguanglu* 雷光錄 (*Lightning Flash Records*) and the *Yunheji* 雲鶴集 (*Clouds Crane Collection*); Wang apparently never wrote prefaces to these works, but he did complete a preface to Zhuoan's *Panshan zhi* 盤山誌 (*A Record of Mount Pan*). And, as Wang says elsewhere (see below), he did edit the monk's collection of poetry as a whole. We should also note that Zhipu exchanged response poems (*changhe* 唱和) with both Wang Shizhen and Hong Sheng (see below).

¹²⁰ Zhipu calls Wang Shizhen an academician because Wang had been accorded a Sub-readership in the Hanlin Academy in 1678; his *Qingshi* biography says first he was made an Expositor-in-waiting (*shijiang* 侍講) and Reader-in-waiting (*qianshidu* 遷侍讀), both entry level positions in the Academy. As for the title *gongzhan* 公[宮]詹, this is an informal reference to *zhanshi* 詹事 (Supervisor of the Heir Apparent's Household; Hucker, 3391). According to his biography, Wang Shizhen served as *shao zhanshi* 少詹事

His brush sweeps the style of our age before it with a talent that transcends the world.
Though he might daily pick up the Pan Mountain collection and cherish my lines,
When, with walking stick across his shoulders, will he ever come to see me?

Excerpted from *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease), with two addenda:

From *Juyi lu*: Among Zhuoan's *Shanju shi* 山居詩 (*Living in the Mountains Poems*), there are some which closely resemble the poetry of Hanshan 寒山.¹²¹ Examples of beautiful lines are:

I mend my snowy robes season by season
And burn spring firewood wet with rain.

In Green Waterway flows a full current of water,
And behind Purple Cap array mountains row upon row.¹²²

With a heart at ease working toward the white sun,
Following my inclination, I cut green grass.

The tree snake's cover of scales is extraordinary,
And the handsome hawk's feathers green.

(Junior Supervisor of the Household of the Heir Apparent) from Kangxi 23 to 29 (1684-1690); see *Qingshigao*, 266:9953, and Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, 831.

¹²¹ The poetry of Hanshan was not the work of a single poet but a compilation of poems from different periods of the Tang era—it is principally characterized by Buddhist enlightenment themes and rustic mountain scenery.

¹²² Qinggou 青溝 (Green Waterway) flows in several branches down the east side of Panshan. Zigai 紫蓋 (Purple Cap) is one of the five major peaks of Mount Heng.

The prayer mat is my land of Peaceful Cultivation,
And the autumn scenery my Heaven Where One Lives in Purity.¹²³

Hair at my temples turns white from new places,
But the sky remains blue as of old.

Though bamboo windows let moonlight in,
My thatched hut keeps spring clouds hidden from view.

All of these are worth chanting.

From *Yuyang shihua*: The Pan Mountain monk Zhipu is famous for his poetry. In the days I was at the capital, I once edited his collected works, in which occur the lines:

The tree snake's cover of scales is extraordinary,
And the handsome hawk's feathers green.

These lines too do not involve language connected with rebirth as a human being (*rendao* 人道) [I. e., Buddhist doctrinal matters]. The linked lines verse that Zhipu wrote with Hong Sheng¹²⁴ read:

¹²³ Anyang 安養 (Peaceful Cultivation) is the Buddhist paradise of the Western Realm, and Jingjutian 淨居天 (Heaven Where One Lives in Purity) is the Buddhist Jingtū 淨土 (Pure Land).

¹²⁴ Hong Sheng 洪昇 (ca. 1646-1704) was one of Wang Shizhen's literary disciples and is best known for his play *Changsheng dian* 長生殿 (Palace of Eternal Life). Hong was expelled from his National University position in 1689 because a group of his actor friends performed the play during a period of mourning for a member of the imperial family, after which he lived for the rest of his days in poverty, apparently at the West Lake, Hangzhou.

Green firs confusedly thrust their way up through endlessly cloudy rocks ,
While traces of moss on stones are tracks left by tigers. (Pu's lines)
I come leaning on a stick from beside flying birds,
Looking down at the murky haze, the distant mists azure. (Sheng's)

When Sheng was traveling in Wukang 武康 (Jiangxi), he composed the lines:

Forest moonlight entering from front and back,
Ravine blossoms blooming in spring and summer.

I also edited his collected works.

ENTRY 19

Song gaoseng shi 宋高僧詩 (Poetry by Eminent Monks of the Song) is in two collections—*Former* and *Latter*—and is the compilation of Chen Qi 陳起, [courtesy name] Zongzhi 宗之, of Qiantang [Hangzhou].¹²⁵ For the most part it is modern [regulated verse] five-syllabic verse. I note: The *Former Collection* corresponds to the so-called *Jiuseng shi* 九僧詩 (Poetry of the Nine Monks) in the *Liuyi shihua* (Discussions

¹²⁵ Chen Qi was a prolific anthologist, also compiling, among other works, the *Jianghu xiaoji* 江湖小集 in ninety-five *juan*, which contains the work of ninety-two poets; see *Zongmu tiyao*, 187:25 (5.37a12—p1700). This was followed up by the *Jianghu houji* 江湖後集, in twenty-four *juan*; see *Zongmu tiyao*, 187:28 (5.38b3—p1701). The *Nine Monks Collection* was, as Wang says, a rare work, and thought to be lost at the time the SKQS was compiled; it was later found and published as the *Zengguang Sheng Song jiuseng shi* 增廣聖宋九僧詩 in 1801 by Gu Xiuzhong 顧修重 at Shimen 石門 in his *Gushi dushuzhai* 顧氏讀書齋.

on Poetry from the One in Six Studio [of Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072)].¹²⁶ Lines
praised [by Ouyang Xiu include]:

Spring appears outside Cassia Ridge,
And I'm east of Ocean Gate.

Lines by Xizhou 希晝.

Horses run free over post-surrender lands,
Vultures circle in after battle clouds.

Lines by Yuzhao 宇昭.

Now, these are all recorded in the collection. At the time of Yongshu 永叔 [the courtesy name of Ouyang Xiu] it was already said that this collections had not survived and that for the most part people did not even know what was meant by the “Nine Monks.” However, this collection now some six or seven hundred years later, is actually still whole and complete, so this assertion is almost impossible to understand. I also note: The *Qingbo zazhi* 清波雜誌 (Miscellaneous records from the Clear Waves Gate [Hangzhou]) by Zhou Hui 周輝 [recorded during the Shaoxing era (1131-1163)]¹²⁷ states:

Information passed down from former times about the Nine Monks gives them as: Xizhou of Jiannan 劍南 [Sichuan], Baoxian 保暹 of Jinhua 金華 [Zhejiang], Wenzhao 文兆 of Nanyue 南越 [Zhejiang], Xingzhao 行肇 of Tiantai 天台 [Zhejiang], Jianchang 簡長 of Wozhou 沃

¹²⁶ For a translation of the selection from this work by Ouyang Xiu work that deals with the *Nine Monks Poetry*, see Owen, *Readings in Literary Thought*, 371-372.

¹²⁷ See Zongmutiyao, 141:22 (3.977a10—p1198).

州 [Hebei], Weifeng 唯鳳 of Qingcheng 青城 [Sichuan], Yuzhao 宇昭 of Jiangdong 江東 [Jiangsu], Huaigu 懷古 of Emei 峨眉 [Sichuan], and Huichong 惠崇 of Huainan 淮南 [Anhui].

The names are completely in accord with the present text. Zhou also states:

Copies of the *Nine Monks Poetry* are extremely rare. The introduction that Auxiliary at the Historiography Institute (*zhishiguan* 直史館) Zhang Kang 張亢 [courtesy name Guimo 貴謨] wrote dated the fifth year of the Jingde era¹²⁸ quotes some lines by Huichong 惠崇,

People touring the Winding River¹²⁹ are few,

For the grass entering Weiyang¹³⁰ is so deep.

none of which are recorded in the edition we have now, which must thus be suspected as being a truncated version.¹³¹

So perhaps that book is the same as the one here. But this one does not have the Kang preface either. The scope of poetry by the Nine Monks is more or less the same as that of poetry by the Ten Talents of the Dali era [Post-Anlu Shan rebellion (766-779)],¹³² that is, they are rather constricted by a narrow range of interest, as for example:

Where river divides the line of the hill is broken,

¹²⁸ There was no fifth year. The Jingde era began in January 1004 and ended in February 1008, ending on the thirtieth day of the twelfth month of its fourth year, an error which apparently escaped Wang Shizhen's attention.

¹²⁹ This is the Qujiang 曲江 associated with Tang era Chang'an.

¹³⁰ This is the Weiyang palace 未央宮 in Shanxi, Xian city, within the walls of the old city of Chang'an.

¹³¹ See *Qingbo zazhi*, 11:8 (1039.83a2).

¹³² The leader of this group was Lu Lun 盧綸 (737-798). These poets are identified with social poetry written in five-syllabic regulated verse, a form that came into its own earlier with the High Tang masters. Sikong Shu 司空曙 (d. ca. 790) was perhaps the best of them.

And where Spring enters, fire scars turn green.

Of course, this is a beautiful line. However, when it comes to sneering at Sikong Shu and Liu Changqing 劉長卿 (later eighth century) as if they were nothing more than playboys,¹³³ this is not serious criticism. [The above text is also available in *Canwei wen* 蠶尾文 (Prose from the Silkworm's Tail).] Here I have selected some beautiful lines by these monks, which are listed below:

Xihua:

Only when I roll up the screen do I know a visitor's arrived,
Or when I hang up the lamp do I see the roosting birds.

From Liyinting 吏蔭亭 (Pavilion to Hide from Clerks)

A thousand peaks look down on high waters,
In their autumn aspect leaning on one another far away.
Your path runs into the depths of the clouds,
But my thoughts will come back to me only after you've reached the very summit.

Song seng gui Yandang 送僧歸雁蕩 (Sending off a monk who returns to Yandang Mountain [southeast Zhejiang])

In my native district cold tides run vast and wide,
But in the spring city night dreams last long.

From *Shu Huichong fang* 書惠崇房 (Written on Huichong's Abode)

¹³³ Not one of the group of ten led by Lu Lun, Liu Changqing still shared with them a "concentration on bucolic subjects and a cultivated casualness of manner." See *Indiana Companion*, 1:573.

Those gathered for tea are mostly mountain rustics,

Those calling among bamboos half are sand birds.

From *Song shilang linting* 宋侍郎林亭 (Court Attendant Song's Grove Pavilion)

For spring vegetarian meals mountain herbs grow everywhere,

By night boat letters sent by sea get through.

From *Ji Shouchun Chen xueshi* 寄壽春陳學士 (Sent to Academician Chen of Shouchun [Anhui])

Faint sunshine appears on distant paths,

The last remnants of snow down sometime last night.

From *Ji Guangong* 寄觀公 (Sent to Mr. Guan)

The sound of autumn, it's the moving of all the trees,

Evening scenery, it's the rising of myriad mountains.

From *Ji Li Kan* 送李堪 (Sent to Li Kan)¹³⁴

Baoxian:

Though I have no old friends within the city walls,

Outside the gates are other mountains.¹³⁵

From *Shu Weifeng bi* 書唯鳳壁 (Written on Weifeng's Wall)

High trees keep the glow of sunset low,

¹³⁴ Li Kan, courtesy name Zhongren 仲任, was from Jinling 晉陵, Jiangsu. During the Jingde era, he served as magistrate of Gutian 古田, Fujian, and later he rose as high as *gongbu shangshu* 工部尚書 (president of the board of works). See *Songshi jishi*, 7:4 (1484.178a15), where two of his poems are also recorded.

¹³⁵ This image often meant help from without or friends in other places.

And the cold tide levels distant mountains.

From *Wenzhao shuige* 文兆水閣 (Wenzhao's Water Pavilion)

As the practice of rustic Chan depends on the remoteness of trees,

So the midday meal relies on the purity of spring water.

From *Song Jianchang* 送簡長 (Sending off Jianchang)

I mount the snow to cross a hanging cliff,

And pass through clouds to see a waterfall.

From *Ji Baige Yuanzhen* 寄白閣元貞 (Sent to Yuanzhen (Fundamentally Upright) of Baige [White

Hall, a mountain in Shanxi 陝西])

Mountain's reflection arrives at the flatland,

As lake's gleam brings the surroundings to light.

From *Song Jiang Bai* 送蔣白 (Sending off Jiang Bai¹³⁶)

Half way up the sky mountains far and near,

Under a cold sun waters east and west.

From *Xu Xi bieye* 徐希別業 (Xu Xi's¹³⁷ Country Villa)

In the deep courtyard no people talking,

From tall pines sound of dripping rain.

From *Song Yuzhao* 寄宇昭 (Sent to Yuzhao)

Wenzhao:

¹³⁶ Jiang Bai is an obscure figure and has not been identified.

¹³⁷ Xu Xi is an obscure figure and has not been identified.

I, a guest in Wu and Chu¹³⁸ for ten years,
This, among reeds and rushes a night of wind .

From *Ji Xizhou* 寄希晝 (Sent to Xizhou)

On all the peaks a light dusting of snow,
On the single path a monk walks alone.

From *Ji Yuzhao* 送宇昭 (Sent to Yuzhao)

All along the path the pines and firs are old,
At midnight deep in rain and snow.

From *Su Xishan jingshe* 宿西山精舍 (Spending the Night at West Mountain Monastery [on the southern slope of Mount Lu in Jiangxi])

Xingzhao:

As rows of trees have no shadows left,
The high waters cast an extraordinary gleam.

From *Zhongqiu* 中秋 (Mid Autumn)

For a successful scholar, it is the nature of the string to be straight,¹³⁹
And a flatterer's clinging words are soft.
Because Jinshang managed to speak cleverly once,
Linjun was in despair for a thousand years.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ The expression “Wu and Chu” indicates the territory occupied by the ancient states of Wu (Jiangsu) and Chu (Hubei), to the north and northwest of Wenzhao’s native Zhejiang.

¹³⁹ The straightness of a well-tuned string is a metaphor for upright moral character.

Xiangjiang you gan 湘江有感 (Feelings Inspired by the River Xiang¹⁴¹)

Spending the night in the wilds where a clear stream is deep,
And moonlight shines on the tops of all the mountains.

From *Song Xizhou zhi Jiuhua* 送希晝之九華 (Sending off Xizhou who goes to Jiuhua [Jiangxi])

Distant mountains prolong my desire to leave,
And the great river continually provokes dreams of return.

From *Song Weifeng* 送唯鳳 (Sending off Weifeng)

Heart strings are almost never heard in the world,
And the mirror of thought was a rare thing even in antiquity.

From *Song Conglü* 送從律 (Sending off Conglü)

The spring has penetrated late to your three paths,¹⁴²
Your abode far distant from Nine Rivers.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ Jinshang 靳尚 was one of Qu Yuan's slanderers. Lingjun 靈均 is the courtesy name of Qu Yuan 屈原 (b. 343 B.C.E.), the loyal minister of Chu, who was slandered by jealous rivals and who drowned himself in despair in the Miluo river. He is immortalized in the *Chuci* 楚辭 (Songs of Chu).

¹⁴¹ The poet feels something because the River Xiang, which flows through Hunan and enters Lake Dongting 洞庭湖, figures prominently in the *Chuci*. For example, the third of the *Jiuge* 九歌 (Nine Songs) is "The Lady of the Xiang River"—see Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature*, 157—actually the title in English should be "The Ladies of the Xiang River," for the ladies in question were the two daughters of the sage emperor Yao, who married Yao's successor Shun; when their husband died the two became the deities of the Xiang, with whom it was the objective of the shaman who speaks in these poems to unite. See *Chucibuzhu*, 2, *jiuge*, 64, where the notes tell us that the sources for the story of these two ladies are the *Lienü zhuan* 列女傳 [Biographies of Women] and the *Liji* 禮記 [Book of Rites]. Perhaps more appropriate to the content of this poem above is that when Qu Yuan is banished, he sets to wandering between the Xiang and another river, the Jiang 江. Along the shores of the Jiang, he meets a fisherman who offers him sage advice about going with the flow (see below). For the original text, see *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補注, 7, *yufu*, 179a.

¹⁴² The "three paths" was the residence of someone in retirement from official and even public life (see above).

¹⁴³ Jiujiang 九江 (Nine Rivers) is located in northern Jiangsu.

From *Zeng Mengzhen shangren* 贈夢真上人 (Presented to Excellent Personage Mengzhen [Truth of Dreams])

At the guest lodge you were met by the scent of lotus blossoms,
And in the pavilion for chanting poems you were surrounded by island scenery.

From *Song Pu Fengli* 送蒲奉禮 (Seeing off Vice Director for Ceremonials Pu)

Jianchang:

Red strings because of sadness merely plucked at random,
It's thoughts of you old friend that make me hesitate in vain.

From *Huai Lu Shuwei* 懷盧叔微 (Longing for Lu Shuwei¹⁴⁴)

Taking advantage of this fragrance that makes one want to linger,
I vigorously begin my lonely wanderings.

From *Buchun yao* 步春謠 (Spring Walk Ballad).

As setting sunlight hangs from autumn trees,
Cold weeds cover the abandoned city.

From *Ci Jiangling* 次江陵 (Stopping at Jiangling [South-central Hubei])

To lodge in Chan temples travel via the birds' highway,¹⁴⁵
But maintain your fast when you pass fishing villages.
The snows of Chu will stick so much to your water flask that it will freeze,

¹⁴⁴ Lu Zhen 盧稹, courtesy name Shuwei, was a native of Hangzhou, a young genius who achieved an early successful career as an official in Bianliang (modern Kaifeng), the capital of the Northern Song, to die in the siege of the capital by the Jurchen during 1126-1127 at the age of twenty-six. See *Songshi*, 441:13043.

¹⁴⁵ That is, travel where the birds do, up in the sky—"may you travel as fast as the birds."

And river sand so splatter your cassock that it will turn dark.

From *Song xing chanshi* 送行禪師 (Sending off a Chan master who is on his way)

Weifeng:

Times at the forest wellspring grow late as I make plans to return,

Snow and rain increase with the approach of spring.

From *Da Yuzhao* 答宇昭 (Responding to Yuzhao)

On travelers' roads few people to meet,

And letters from home rarely enter city gates.

From *Ji Xizhou* 寄希晝 (Sent to Xizhou)

Lying quietly, I approach Immortal's Palm,¹⁴⁶

Softly chanting on the far side of Chu waves.¹⁴⁷

From *Ji Wenzhao* 寄文兆 (Sent to Wenzhao)

Huichong:

River ice strong enough to let horses cross,

Frontier snow so thick it can hide eagles.

From *Saishang zeng Wang taiwei* 賽上贈王太尉 (At the Frontier, Presented to Commander Wang)

The lone crane peeps in at the morning lecture,

¹⁴⁶ Immortal's Palm Peak (Xianzhangfeng 仙掌峰) is located in Chong'an 崇安 district, Fujian.

¹⁴⁷ That is, the poet is hundred of miles away, separated by all the waterways of Chu (southeast China), upon which he has traveled east to Fujian.

As a monk next door might listen to a night zither.¹⁴⁸

From *Zeng Wenzhao* 贈文兆 (Presented to Wenzhao)

Ocean sails get through to all the night markets,

And mountain rains all over the spring plowing.

From *Song An xueshi zhi Muzhou* 送安學士之睦州 (Sending off Academician An to Muzhou¹⁴⁹)

For three years you have not come down from the mountain peak,

Your clothes and shoes invaded by ancient moss.

From *Zeng Wuqian shanren* 贈吳黔山人 (Presented to Mountain Man Wuqian)

Though water born mists often seem dark,

All of a sudden forest snows are as if in spring.

From *Lin Yiren bi* 林逸人壁 (Recluse Lin's Wall)

It's fifth month and not yet any green grass,

And the Hutuo¹⁵⁰ flows with broken up ice.

From *Gu saixia qu* 古賽下曲 (Old Frontier Song¹⁵¹)

In the sunset the solitary islet peak is bright,

As insects in the dark sing all around.

From *Shanzhong qiu huai Xizhou* 剡中秋懷希晝 (Autumn in Shan District,¹⁵² Longing For Xizhou)

¹⁴⁸ Both crane and monk equally belong to worlds apart from Chan lectures and romantic music.

¹⁴⁹ The Song era Muzhou corresponds to modern day Jiande 建德 district, Zhejiang.

¹⁵⁰ The Hutuo 滹沱 river flows through Hebei.

¹⁵¹ *Gu saixia qu* 古賽下曲 (Old Frontier Songs) is the title of a well known set of poems by the Tang monk Guanxiu (see *Quantangshi* 23.830.9363). The mention of the Hutuo River tells us this is the northern frontier of Northern Song times, when the northern border between Song territory and the Liao 遼 was south of modern Beijing, very near the Hutuo.

Yushao:

The white road¹⁵³ by Mount Song runs straight,
Green weeds that hem in the Wei River are tall.

From *Song Conglü shi* 送從律師 (Sending off Master Conglü)

Searching for the temple, I've gone far to try out the spring,
Returning home, I've returned late since I bought cranes.¹⁵⁴

From *Zeng Wei Ye* 贈魏野 (Presented to Wei Ye¹⁵⁵)

Huaigu:

Calculating the miles of your journey, the fragrant grasses are now all gone,
Having left your home district, you will find old friends are rare.

From *Song Tian Xi* 送田錫 (Sending off Tian Xi 田錫¹⁵⁶)

Though distant waters away from here are endless,
Now that we're parted when might you arrive?

From *Baling qiujū chōu yǒuren* 灞陵秋居酬友人 (Poem Composed in Response to a Friend While Living at Baling¹⁵⁷ During Autumn)

¹⁵² Shanxian 剡縣 district city is located in Shaoxing 紹興 prefecture, Zhejiang, however, the expression Shanzhong 剡中 can mean both the whole extent of the district—than area in general—as well as referring to those in general who live as “recluses” (*yinshi* 隱士), in which case the title would mean “this recluse longs for Xizhou in autumn.”

¹⁵³ A “white road” was a “great road” (*dadao* 大道). Mount Song is located in Dengfeng 登封 district, Henan.

¹⁵⁴ Cranes, usually made of paper, are still hung up for good luck and as symbols of longevity.

¹⁵⁵ See *The Indiana Companion*, 1:16. Wei Ye (960-1019) apparently lived at the same time as the Nine Monks and was also fond of the Late Tang style and emulated such poets as Jia Dao 賈島 (779-843) and Yao He 姚合 (775-845).

¹⁵⁶ Tian Xi (1209-1264) was a high ranking official of integrity, successful in famine relief.

White hair comes sooner or later,

But blue-green mountains are without past and present.

From *Lankeshan* 爛柯山 (Lanke Mountain)¹⁵⁸

Of these, only Xingzhao's poetry imitates that of Meng Dongye [Meng Jiao 孟郊 (751-814),¹⁵⁹ but as a whole he seems rather weak. In the *Latter Collection Zanning* 贊寧¹⁶⁰ I consider to be the very best of those included, in total thirty-one poets, including Wenying 文瑩, Daoqian 道潛, and Qingshun 清順. Wenying composed the *Yuhu qinghua* 玉壺清話 (Pure Words From a Jade Pot);¹⁶¹ Daoqian is the same person as Canliao 參寥 (1043-1102); and Qingshun was appreciated by Dongpo [Su Shi].¹⁶² The *xuji* 續集 (supplementary collection) contains the poetry of nineteen poets, of which I consider the very best to be by Miyan 祕演. Huihong 惠洪 and Shouquan 守詮 are also both included. Miyan was the friend of Ouyang's Yongshu [Ouyang Xiu],¹⁶³ and Shouquan was also someone Su Shi was fond of. However, Huihong was the most

¹⁵⁷ Baling 霸陵 is located in Shanxi, east of Xi'an.

¹⁵⁸ A Lanke (Rotten Axe Handle) mountain exists in Zhejiang, Henan, Shanxi, and Guangdong, but reference to it here is probably metaphoric and indicates that the poet has in mind the story of the woodcutter who chanced upon immortals up on a mountain while cutting firewood; he put down his axe to watch them play chess, and after a while glanced back at the axe and saw that the axe handle had rotted away. When he returned to his village, he discovered a hundred years or more had elapsed. So "Lanke Mountain" became an expression for a place outside of time and isolated from the human world.

¹⁵⁹ Meng Jiao was a close friend of Han Yu (768-824) and famous for his bitter, anguished expression and difficult, involved diction.

¹⁶⁰ The writer of the *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (Biographies of Eminent Song monks), obviously appreciated by Wang Shizhen more as a biographer and less as a poet.

¹⁶¹ See *Zongmutiyao*, 197:5 (5.256b17—p1796).

¹⁶² For Su Shi's appreciation of Qingshun, see *Lengzhai yehua*, 6:5 (863.263b8).

¹⁶³ According to the *Zhongguo fojiao renming dacidian*, Ouyang Xiu wrote the intro to his collected poetry.

famous of them all. The *Xu Yanzhou shihua* 許彥周詩話 (Discussions of Poetry by Xu Yanzhou)¹⁶⁴ states:

The poem that Juefan 絕範 inscribed, as such, on Li Su's portrait rightly makes him a worthy rival of Qian'an 黔安. (Qian'an indicates Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105).)

Although Zhongshu and Canliao were well known in their own time, they were never able to attain anything like this. Excerpted from *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease).

[Zhang] Zongnan comments: The beginning section of Huihong's poem on Li Su's¹⁶⁵ portrait reads:

On the northern front at Huaiyin¹⁶⁶ Guangwu was made general,

¹⁶⁴ Xu Yanzhou is Xu Yi 許顥 (dates unknown, Northern Song). The entry on this work in the *Zongmutiyao* states that Xu Yi records discussions with Huihong, which indicate that they interacted often during a year the two were in Changsha 長沙, Hunan; see 195:18 (5.224a1—p1782).

¹⁶⁵ Li Su was sent to quell the rebellion of Wu Yuanji in Caizhou. When Wu Shaoyang died in 814, his son Yuanji did not hold a funeral or announce the death, but instead claimed his father was sick. With a false memorial, which ordered that he be made master of his father's soldiers. Thus supported, he approached Caizhou and began to burn and pillage. Li Su apprehended Yuanji and beheaded him in Chang'an, thus pacifying all territory to the west of the Huai River. See *Jiutangshi* (Old History of the Tang), 145:3948-3952. In Hongwu's poem Li Su is compared to Han Xin, Liu Bang's illustrious general.

¹⁶⁶ Huaiyin 淮陰 in Jiangsu indicates the area on the south side of the river Huai. Han Xin had been enfeoffed as Lord of Huaiyin, and his support was crucial to the success of Liu Bang against his southern rival Xiang Yu as they struggled for control of China in the years following the downfall of the Qin dynasty. Xiang Yu had already sent one of his generals, Long Qie 龍且, against Han Xin, but Long's troops were routed and their general killed. Xiang Yu was inspired with fear (see *Shiji benji*, 7:329) and sent one of his men to talk to Han Xin about forming an alliance against Liu Bang, but the astute Han Xin politely refused. Again, from Sima Qian's *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian):

You serve Xiang Yu, your office does not surpass that of a Gentleman of the Interior [Hucker, 3565: "the lowest of 3 rank categories (=300 bushels) into which most expectant appointees serving as court attendants were divided."]. Your post does not do any more than allow you to

For with such spirit how could he stop at merely bolting down Xiang Yu?

If you sir had got a Li You, you could not bear to execute him,¹⁶⁷

But you knew it was actually Yuanji who was in the palm of your hand.

Much of the diction has the same expressive force and form (*fenggu* 風骨) as the poetry of Yuzhang [Huang Tingjian], and throughout the poem the form and spirit (*tiqi* 體氣) are pure and vigorous (*qingqiu* 清遒)—here was a man who did not let himself be bound by the isolation of Chan.

ENTRY 20

In Fujian Province at the Renwang 仁王 (King of Compassion) temple there was a monk who liked to sing the lyrics to *Wang jiangnan* 望江南 (Gazing Toward the South),¹⁶⁸ which one day, as such, he suddenly wrote up on a wall. Someone told those in

wield a single halberd. Your words I will not hear, your plan I will not use. I therefore remain against Chu and remain loyal to Han. The King of Han has given me the seal of a Generalissimo and thousands of household as my fief. He would give me his clothes to wear and his food to eat. My words he hears, my strategies he employs. In my present situation, I have already got all I would have.” See *Shiji*, 92:2622.

Steadfast in his support for Liu Bang, Han Xin went on to destroy Xiang Yu’s forces in the south.

¹⁶⁷ In the beginning of his career, Li You served Wu Yuanji as an Army Commander but was captured in 817 by Li Su, who, like Han Xin, knew the man he had caught was courageous and honorable. He took Li You into his tent and nursed his wounds. Finally, he sent the prisoner of war to the capital with a memorial to the emperor to spare his life. See *Jiutang shi*, 161:422. However, Wu Yuanji (next line) manifestly was not a Li You and deserved to die.

¹⁶⁸ Jiangnan is the area to the south of the Yangzi, and, in the Tang *Wang Jiangnan* 望江南 was the titles of a famous song. Reference here is probably to the lyrics by Bai Juyi, the first stanza of which is:

Jiangnan is so fine,
That scenery once so familiar—
At sunrise, blossoms redder than fire,
And, when spring comes, river water as blue as indigo.
Could I ever forget Jiangnan?

See *Quantang shi*, 2.28.407.

authorities about it, and so he was invited to be master of the entire temple. After a long period of dissatisfaction, he wrote another poem on the wall:

At the beginning all I wanted was to change my job,
But when I was able to change my job I cannot stand what it changed to,
For how can it compare with being up in the King of Compassion pavilion,
Leaning at ease on the railing and singing *Gazing Towards the South*?

Hanlin academician Li always praised this poem¹⁶⁹ and, whenever he was tired of being an official, he would exclaim, “I just want to sing the *Wang Jiangnan*.” This is similar to not having free time to sing the lyrics of *Weicheng*,¹⁷⁰ but this monk’s poem is particularly beautiful. Excerpted from *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease).

¹⁶⁹ The *Songshi jishi* 宋詩紀事 (Recorded Anecdotes Related to Song poetry), by Li E 厲鶚 of Qiantang, records a passage from the *Liu Houcun shihua* 劉後村詩話 (Liu Houcun’s Remarks on Poetry): Hanlin scholar Li is identified as Li Yuanshan 元善. See *Songshi jishi*, 93:41 (1485.778b7). Li Yuanshan is Li Yun 李韶, who was known to posterity for his uprightness of character and his willingness to speak his mind about injustice and corruption. However, his *Songshi* biography (*juan* 432) records how he tried to resign over and over again. Li Yun’s could speak his mind, but his advice went unheeded. His highest ranks were Hanlin Academician Drafter Zhizhigao 知制誥 and Reader-in-waiting. He was finally allowed to resign in 1247, four years before his death at the age of seventy five.

¹⁷⁰ Weicheng, north of the Wei river, was located in Shanxi 陝西. The *Weicheng tune* 渭城曲 is the melody to which the famous poem *Song Yuan Ershi Anxi* 送元二使安西 (Sending off Yuan the Second On His Mission to Anxi) was composed by Wang Wei 王維 (599-659):

The morning rain in Weicheng wet the light dust,
At the guest house green as can be it’s willow bedecked spring .
I urge you sir to finish another cup of wine,
For once out Yang Pass there’ll be no old friends there.

渭城朝雨浥輕塵，
客舍青青楊柳春。
勸君更盡一杯酒，
西出陽關無故人。

See *Quan Tangshi* 4.128.1307, and *Yuefu shiji*, 1139.

[Zhang] Zongnan comments: The *Chibei outan* states: A Song era collection of *xiaoshuo* 小說 (anecdotes)¹⁷¹ records an account by Zhang Zishao 張子韶.¹⁷²

In the alley there was a man who made his living by selling cakes and played the flute for pleasure. When he made enough money to allow him to eat his full, he would go home, lie down, take up the flute and play it. He lived in this way for years. There was a rich man living next door, who, after thoroughly examining the kind of person the flute player was, wished to back him in business with more than a thousand cash. At first the flute player was not willing, but after the rich man pressured him, he finally agreed. However, as soon as he got his hands on the money, the sound of the flute sound was heard no more—only the sound of money counting. The man greatly regretted what he had done and soon returned the rich man's money. Thereupon, he began selling cakes again, and by the next day the sound of his flute resumed as before.

This is exactly the same kind of story as that told by Liu Bochu 劉伯芻 of the Tang about the congee and cakes man of a village in An district 安邑, who was so very busy he had no free time to sing the *Weicheng* song. Nowadays, there are many scholar-bureaucrats who do not attain the degree of integrity of that flute player. [Zhang]

Zongnan also comments: *Chapu jiwén* 查浦輯聞 (Collection of Anecdotes from Chapu)¹⁷³:

¹⁷¹ It appears that Wang is basing the following account on Shi Decao's *Beichuang zhiguo lu* 北窗炙輠錄 (B:16 [1039.387a8]); compare Wang's use of this same source in entry #6 above

¹⁷² Zhang Jiucheng 張九成, courtesy name Zishao 子韶, was primus at the Metropolitan Examination in the second year of the Shaoxing era of Gaozong 高宗 (1133). Both he and Shi Decao wrote books about the *Mencius*: the *Mengzi zhuan* 孟子傳 (Commentary on Mencius) by Zhang Jiucheng, and *Mengzi fati* 孟子發題 (Raising Questions about the *Mencius*) by Shi Decao; they were close friends according to the introduction to *Beichuang zhiguo lu*; see *Zongmutiyao*, 141:26 (3.979a6). Wang Shizhen's version is shorter than the passage in the *Beichuang zhiguo lu*.

Liu Bochu 劉伯芻¹⁷⁴ lived in a village in An district, where in his neighborhood was a cake maker. Every day at the crack of dawn, he would sing songs as he was at the stove. Once when Liu casually had him in for a chat, the man complained to the utmost of his bitter poverty, so Liu gave him ten thousand cash to support the business, in repayment for which he would take some cakes every day. But afterwards there was silence and no sound of singing was heard. Upon asking why, Liu received this answer: “Singing requires ease and comfort, but lately my own way of doing things has had to expand somewhat, and my state of mind has become coarse, so I don’t have time to sing the *Weicheng*.” The palace attendant [Liu Bochu] sighed and said, “officials are just the same.” For this is what is recorded in the *Liu binke jiahua lu* 劉賓客嘉話錄 (A Record of Choice Anecdotes About Advisor to the Heir Apparent Liu).

ENTRY 21

The work *Tanjinji* 鐔津 (*Collection*) in fifteen *juan* is the work of the Song era monk Qisong 契嵩,¹⁷⁵ in which his thirty pieces entitled *Fei Han* 非韓 (To Refute Han)¹⁷⁶ are contained. His poems also contain many outstanding lines, such as:

¹⁷³ This work is by Cha Sili 查嗣璫, courtesy name Deyin 德尹, a Metropolitan Graduate in the thirty-ninth year of Kangxi (1700). He attained the rank of Expositor-in-waiting in the Hanlin academy. His work consists of passages copied from various authors, rarely changed in the least, as a convenient guide to source material. See *Zongmutiyao*, 133:13 (3.826b11). Chapu was a place near Nanjing. Cha also left his collected poems, the *Chapu shichao* 詩鈔; see *Qingshigao*, 148:4383.

¹⁷⁴ The earliest version of this story seems to have been in the *Liu binke jiahua lu* 劉賓客嘉話錄 (A Record of Choice Anecdotes About Advisor to the Heir Apparent Liu), by the Tang writer Wei Xuan 韋絢; see *Liu Binke jiahua lu*, 2 (1035.457a7). Liu Bochu was a Tang official who died in 815, according to his biography in the *Jiutangshu*; see 153:4085. The Mr. Liu in the title of this work, however, was the famous mid-Tang poet and essayist Liu Yuxi 劉禹錫. As for the connection between Wei Xuan and Liu Bochu, the latter was a close friend of Wei Xuan’s father, Wei Zhiyi; see *Jiu Tangshi*, 135:3732. Richard John Lynn translates this anecdote in “Wang Shizhen’s Poems on Poetry,” 82-83.

¹⁷⁵ Wang Shizhen apparently knew only an incomplete or shorter version, as the full version consists of twenty-two *juan*. Qisong was from Tanjin district in Guangxi, hence the name of his collected works. During the Qingli reign 慶曆 (1041-1049), he began living in Hangzhou at the Lingyin 靈隱 (Numinous Mystery) temple near the West Lake. His sobriquet Mingjiao 明教 (Clear Teaching) was given to him by

I practice forbearance like some secluded plant,
And regard my self as of the same stuff as a cloud.
Mulberries and *zhe* trees in the rain are green,
Smoke from human settlement beyond the frontier rarely occurs.

At the edge of Heaven, the sun about to come out,
In the farmstead, a cock announces the hour.

Fine hills follow along the shore,
As a torrential rain brings blossoms down.

Clouds confuse the paths of flying birds,
Rain emerging from an ancient dragon's pond.

The bright moon comes out already full,
The white clouds return not many as yet.

the Renzong emperor in the Jiayou reign (1056-1063). He died in 1072, so there must have been many of opportunities for him to meet Su Shi when Su was Hangzhou magistrate. See *Zongmutiyao*, 152:37 (4.107b4—p1313).

¹⁷⁶ Han is Han Yu, a dedicated anti-Buddhist Confucian (among other things). The critique of Qisong's work in the *Zongmu tiyao* describes the "strength of his pen" (*bili* 筆力) as "manly and brave" (*xiongwei* 雄偉):

Using Confucian principles to discuss things, he was stubborn, biased, and argumentative, while by the standards of the *dharmā* he was also too heavy in his impetuous and intemperate speech. This is not what is called becoming free of bindings and seeing as empty all kinds approaches that discriminate between self and other.

However, Qisong's poetry seems more tranquil.

All these lines are beautiful.¹⁷⁷ The *Mengliang lu* 夢梁錄 (Record Made of a Dream While Millet Porridge Cooked)¹⁷⁸ states:

His [Qisong's] surname was Li 李 and his courtesy name Zhongling 仲靈. In the Jiayou reign he presented the *Bujiao pian* 輔教篇 (Essays on Supplementing Teaching) to court and was given the sobriquet Mingjiao chanshi 明教禪師 (Clear Teaching Chan Master).

The *Linjian lu* 林間錄 (Records From the Grove) states:

When Song Mingjiao first arrived at the Kaixian Temple,¹⁷⁹ the abbot [because he (Song) was an attractive youth astute in the study of letters] ordered him to take charge of books and records, but he laughed and said, “How could I ever prepare a cup of ginger almond tea for you?” Thereupon he left and went to the West Lake.¹⁸⁰

This is an example of what Master Po [Su Shi] meant by saying that Qisong Dharma Master often took offense and that no one ever saw him genuinely smile,¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ These lines are all from poems in the *Tanjin Collection*. Many of the poems were sent to other poets, or were written in response to poems Qisong had received. Wang Shizhen has taken these lines out of context, but, as he wanted readers to concentrate on individual outstanding lines and not on the context, I am justified in presenting them here as excerpted couplets without reference to the original poems.

¹⁷⁸ This work is by Wu Zimu 吳自牧, who recorded events and institutions of the Southern Song capital at Linan (Hangzhou). Wang Shizhen relies on Wu's work for biographical information. See *Zongmutiyao*, 70:39 (2.521b15—p625).

¹⁷⁹ Located in Jiangxi Province on the southern slopes of Mount Lu 廬, this was a monastery with an extensive library.

¹⁸⁰ This section is taken verbatim from the original *Linjian lu*, A:63 (1052.823b2), with the one missing parts provided within square brackets. Before passing by Kaixian Temple, Qisong went from Mount Dong 洞 to Mount Kang 康.

¹⁸¹ The only place Qisong appears in Su Shi's writings is in several passages relating the same incident:

Chan Master Qisong was often glared angrily, and no one ever saw him genuinely smile, but Master Haiyue Huibian 海月慧辨 (Ocean Moon, Wise Discernment), was always friendly, and no one ever saw him angry. In Qiantang, I personally saw these two people sitting as if in meditation

Excerpted from *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease).

ENTRY 22

Monk Yuanjing 元璟 (Original Luster) from Guiji 會稽 [Shaoxing district, Zhejiang], courtesy name Jieshan 借山 (Relying on the Mountain), and a native of Pinghu 平湖 [Shaoxing district], used to offer poems as introductory gifts, in which there are some rather outstanding lines, such as:

Let us care for each other as if we were gulls
Separated only by a few inches of windy mist.

As monks next door tend to chanting sutras,
Government students come up with money for wine.

Dragged by the wind, the goose's yellow fades,
Blown on by the cold, the duck's green lies flat.

I sit and regard the small boats of spring,
Chanting all the way to my hometown city walls.

when dead. At Song's cremation (*chapi* 茶毗, Sanskrit: *jhāpeti*), the fire could not destroy his body, and though firewood was increasingly added to make a fierce blaze, finally there still remained the five parts of his body [trunk and four limbs] not destroyed. By comparison, Ocean Moon's face during the cremation remained just as it was while alive—smiling. So I knew that these two had done the work of the Buddha, the one with angry glares and the other with friendliness.

See *Dongpo quanji zhilin*, 103:1 (1108.623a10). Qisong died in 1072, and Huibuan died in 1073.

The clear bell comes from branch tips of trees,
As white birds land on windy rapids.

Homesteads collect cypress seeds,
Maple trees wear frost flowers.

Late cabbages split the bamboo grove,
Autumn waters skirt the roots of a bamboo hedge.

Many kingfishers there in the mist,
And also among the blossoms crying *gouzhou*.

The sound of a flute shatters the wintry islet,
A thousand sails merge with setting sun.

Lazily calling, monkeys welcome the visitor,
Leisurely accepting it, deer practice Chan meditation.

Try to see the green lotus blossom buds
Sunk upside down in emerald glass.

In divining where to build your meditation hut, you are like Pure Name,¹⁸²
And I love your three transcendences¹⁸³ worked hard at all your life.

¹⁸² Vimalakirti is transliterated into Chinese as Weimojie 維摩羅, but the literal translation is Jingming 淨名 (Pure Name). Vimalakirti was the great lay disciple of the Buddha who lived apart from other disciples by himself in a small hut.

¹⁸³ The three transcendences (*sanjue* 三絕) are transcendent talent (*caijue* 才絕), transcendent learning (*shujue* 書絕), and transcendent foolishness (*chijue* 痴絕), a combination of qualities first ascribed to Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (341-402); see Gu's biography in *Jinshu* 晉書 (History of the Jin), 92.

The green of mulberry strands fill the path before the gate,
Where when guests arrive secluded birds call a few times.

My narrow whip charging through mud to visit Iron Cliff,
At Copper mine¹⁸⁴ for a snack I have some “before rain” tea.¹⁸⁵
For no reason, throwing this spring sad traveler into confusion—
There at the corner of the building, a bough of mountain apricot blossoms.

Shards of jade, a group of peaks embrace a village,
Sweet streams as if milk emerge from the roots of clouds.
Old fellows carrying firewood, cutting bamboo, leaning on plows,
Most of them the “ten leaves” descendants of the “Poplar Family.”¹⁸⁶

Guo Yang Tieya guli 過楊鐵崖故里 (*Passing by Yang Tieya's old village*)

Excerpted from *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease).

[Zhang] Zongnan adds this explanation: One of Jieshan's courtesy names was Hongjiao 紅椒 (Red Pepper), and another was Wanxiang 晚香 (Evening Incense). He wandered over an extraordinary wide territory. In the days when my late gentleman [Wang Shizhen] resided at his high official's residence in the capital, he made friends with this man from

¹⁸⁴ Tongkeng 銅坑 (Copper Mine) mountain is to the west of Hangzhou, to the south of Changhua 昌化, while Tieya 鐵崖 (Iron Cliff) Mountain in Shanyin 山陰 district [modern Shaoxing, Zhejiang]—perhaps one hundred kilometers on horseback.

¹⁸⁵ This was green tea harvested before the rain, the time at which the leaves would be especially tender.

¹⁸⁶ Yang 楊 is the poplar tree but is also the surname, Yang. Yang Weizhen (1296-1370), sobriquet Tieya 鐵崖 (Iron Cliff), hailed from Shanyin 山陰. His father had built a hall at Tieya Mountain (see *Mingshi*, 285:7308), hence Weizhen's sobriquet. Yang had a successful official career but loved to roam the mountains and rivers and to compose old-style *yuefu* (Music Bureau) poetry, which was collected in the work *Tieya guyefu ji* 古樂府集 (Ancient-Style Ballads by Tieya), which was greatly admired by Wang Shizhen, who called their vitality (*qi* 氣) “uninhibited” (*linli* 淋漓)—this early in Wang's career, in poem sixteen of his series *Lunshi jueju*; see “Wang Shizhen's Poems on Poetry” by Richard John Lynn, 77.

beyond the mundane world. When Jieshan became old, he lived at Huacheng 化城 (Transformation Castle) monastery at Danghu 當湖.¹⁸⁷ And several years after my late gentleman had retired to his native place [Xincheng, Shandong], he once go and visit him, and I, who went along too, recorded a matched couplet, which had been inscribed on the two sides of the Maitreya dais:

Widely exposing the skin of his belly, he awaits Buddhahood,
Opening his mouth in a great big smile, watching the hustle and bustle of human life.

There is also some excellence to this. Late in life, in composing offer and response poetry he was most closely associated with Chubai anzhu 初白菴主 (Master of First Light Retreat).¹⁸⁸ Whenever he met common fellows and talked about poetry, he always heaped on abuse, and it was because of this he was often regarded as uncongenial by the world.

ENTRY 23

Dharma Master Shun 順 of Baiyang 白楊 (Aspen)¹⁸⁹ composed a *gatha* which reads:

Brown leaves fallen from the forest carried away by flow of water,
White clouds emerging from the valley rolled back by the wind.

¹⁸⁷ The *Zhongguo fojiao renming cidian* states that Yuanjing was tonsured at Huacheng Monastery, when his character was “immature and rash” (*zhilu* 稚魯). Danghu 當湖 (On the Lake) is in Pinghu district, on what is called Donghu (East Lake) or Yingwu 鸚鵡 (Parrot) Lake.

¹⁸⁸ This was Cha Shenxing 查慎行 (1650-1727), sobriquet Chubai 初白, a major contemporary poet and friend of Wang Shizhen, who also wrote on the *Classic of Changes* and, among other things, published an immensely influential annotated collection of the poetry of Su Shi.

¹⁸⁹ Shun is Fashun 法順 (Obedient to the Dharma) (1076-1139), who lived at Baiyang in Fuzhou 撫州, Jiangxi. His *gatha* is contained in the *Wudeng huiyuan* 五燈會元 (Fundamentals Gathered from the Five Lamps), along with biographical information; see 20:9 (1053.855b9).

In terms of an eye for the right word in writing literature, these are surely miraculous lines. Excerpted from *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease).

ENTRY 24

Fanan 竺庵 (Buddhist Hermitage) Chan Master (1610-1666) of the Qixia 棲霞 temple [south of Nanjing], courtesy name Dacheng 大成 (Great Achievement), was a disciple of Juelang 覺浪 (Waves of Awareness), Mr. [Dao]sheng [道]盛 (Abundance [of the Dharma]) [1592-1659]. He composed a poem in response to the same rhyme scheme as one by Hanshan 寒山:

When I wear worn and filthy clothes,
it provokes everyone to remonstrate and ridicule.
When I wear bejeweled court dress,
it makes everyone say they must have them too.
When I wear a feather cloak,
it makes everyone laugh out loud,
But if I did not wear any clothes at all,
would anyone recognize how marvelous I am?

Also:

A white crane wants to ascend the sky,
But a brown crane does not agree,

So they fly to Parrot Island,
And look for food on an islet in Dongting Lake.¹⁹⁰
A thousand years and then another thousand years,
Pair by pair they change their feathers.
That two by two they finally become immortals,
Who can talk about this to common people?

Excerpted from *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease).

ENTRY 25

Chimu 尺木 (Foot of Wood) Chan Master, courtesy name Xingxiu 性休 (Nature at Ease) [d. 1653], was a member of the Ming imperial family. He received the Precepts from Tiangu 天鼓 at Kongjiong 崆峒 [Henan] and attained the Dharma from Butui 不退 at Hanyang 漢陽 [Hubei].¹⁹¹ He lived at the Yongqing 永慶 (Eternal Blessings) temple in Qinzhou 沁州 [south Shanxi], and once wrote a poem on a *Painting of a Fisherman*, which reads:

To the East, West, North, South, roaming everywhere at will,
A myriad *li* on the Yangtze in your own single boat.
In dreams unaware you yourself are a traveler,
To awake and find the sky and water touched alike by autumn.

¹⁹⁰ Parrot Island 鸚鵡洲 is located in the Yangtze, in Hubei, Hanyang district; Lake Dongting 洞庭 is located in northern Hunan; the Yangzi flows through it from west to east at its north end.

¹⁹¹ Xingyong 行勇 (Practice Bravery) (1617-1655) had the courtesy name Butui 不退 (No Retreat).

He composed the *Tongdi jilu* 銅鞮語錄 (recorded Conversations from Tongdi¹⁹²), which was disseminated through Buddhist temples. Excerpted from *Juyi lu* 居易錄 (Recordings Made While Living at Ease), with an addendum from the *Juyi lu*:

I once read the *yulu* 語錄 (Recorded Conversations) of Chan Master Zang 藏禪師 of Sanfeng 三峰¹⁹³ and his *Wuzongyuan* 五宗原 (Source of the Five Schools),¹⁹⁴ I regard him as a dragon-elephant [most eminent teacher] in this era of the latter Dharma.¹⁹⁵ His raising points of wisdom and transmission of proofs [of the true Dharma] are developments out of Linji's 臨濟 and Fenyang's 汾陽 teachings concerning the Three Essentials of the Three Mysterious Gates (*sanxuan*[*men*] *sanyao* 三玄[門]三要),¹⁹⁶ and

¹⁹² Xingxiu was from northern Shanxi 山西 Province and he moved to the south to live in Qinzhou, as noted above. Tongdi was the name of a mountain, a river, and a county in Qinzhou, which was both the name of the administrative area and district town where Yongqing Temple was located.

¹⁹³ This is Fazang 法藏 (Treasury of the Dharma) (1573-1635), who walked to Sanfeng [Southern Jiangsu at Changshou] in 1610.

¹⁹⁴ The five kinds of schools are: (1) *yinyuan zong* 因緣宗, schools that hold to the doctrine of dependent origination, (2) *jiamingzong* 假名宗, schools that hold to the doctrine that all naming is provisional, (3) *buzhenzong* 不真宗, schools that hold to the doctrine that all things are unreal, (4) *zhenzong* 真宗, schools that hold to the doctrine that all things are real, (5) *fajiezong* 法界宗 schools that hold to the doctrine of the Dharma-Realm.

¹⁹⁵ Also called the degenerate or degenerating *dharma*, this was the third of the three periods after the Buddha's final nirvana. The first period was that of the true dharma, when practice and enlightenment exist, the second was that of the semblance dharma, when practice but not enlightenment exist. In the degenerate period, the Buddhist doctrine still exists but there is no longer any practice.

¹⁹⁶ The Linji School of Chinese Chan Buddhism was named after its founder Linji Yixuan (d. 866-7). In the tradition of his Dharma-grandfather Mazu Daoyi, Linji made use of such soteriological methods as sudden shouts and blows with the staff to enlighten students. The Three Essentials of the Three Mysterious Gates comprise one of the more obscure of Linji's doctrines. In Dumoulin's translation, the original passage in the *Linji lu* is as follows: "Each statement must necessarily comprise the three mysteries; each mystery must necessarily comprise the three essentials" (*The Development of Chinese Zen*, 23). This was a difficult teaching, and over the years it was explicated in different ways. Fenyang (Shanzhao 善昭 (Shining with Goodness) (947-1024) offered his explanation of the three essentials in the *Rentian yanmu* 人天眼目 (The Essence of Man and Heaven), a Song compilation of verses and stories from the early masters of the Linji school); see *juan* 1; *Foguangshan fojiao cidian* 1.543b. This poem, contained in the *Guoyu cidian* (see under *sanxuan* 三玄), was also from *Rentian yanmu juan* 1:

The Three Essentials of the Three Mysteries are things impossible to analyze,
But when you get the meaning by forgetting the words it's easy to get close to the Dharma.

wished to be distant heir to the Dharma tradition of Jiyin 寂音 (Silent Sound), so he certainly was a *tiantong zhi zhengzi* 天童之諍子 (Heaven-Sent Servant Boy admonisher).¹⁹⁷ However, Muweng 牧翁 (Old Man Mu) [Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1562-1664)] in [the biographical entry for Sanfeng Fazang] in his *Liechao shi[ji]* 列朝詩[集] (Poetry from the Successive Reign-Eras [of the Ming]) called him an usurper who tried to found a heterodox teaching of his own, adding that the Jingling school of poetry,¹⁹⁸ the religion of the Western countries [Christianity], and Sanfeng's Chan, all got mixed up and broke out together, inflicting the evil of heterodoxy on those times. The Chan master and Old Man Mu were both natives of Changshou 常熟 [Southern Jiangsu], and yet he

¹⁹⁷ In Buddhist lore, a *Tiantong* (Serving Boy of Heaven) is sent to protect the Dharma on earth among men and to help them attain it.

¹⁹⁸ Jingling 竟陵 in Hubei, is the native place of Tan Yuanchun 譚元春 (1585-1637) and Zhong Xing 鍾惺 (1574-1624), the founders of the school. Poetry criticism in the late Ming dynasty was a complex situation. At one extreme was the Archaist school led by Li Panlong 李攀龍, which advocated imitation of selected poetic models from the Tang in order to assist a poet to develop a proper style. At the other end of the spectrum was the Gongan school of Yuan Hongdao 元宏道 and his brothers, which called for the acceptance of novels and folksong as literature and for “clarity and sincerity in literary expressions” (*The Indiana Companion*, 1:955). The Jingling school's approach to poetry was:

... to take inspiration from the vital essence of earlier poetry, its *hsing-ling* [*xingling*] 性靈, or “native sensibility.” That is, Chung and his junior colleague, T'an Yüan-ch'un praised originality over imitation, using the catchphrase *shen-yu ku-ch'iao* 深幽孤峭 (profundity and detachment). In contrast to the Kung-an school of Yüan Hung-tao and his brothers, Chung and T'an espoused refined diction and original inspiration. (*The Indiana Companion*, 1:369)

Qian Qianyi was also opposed to the Archaist school for its stress on imitation, because, “he regarded poetry as the spontaneous and direct expression of real, strongly felt emotion” (Lynn, “Wang Shih-chen's Theory of Poetry,” 239). With such views, he found the Gongan school more congenial. Qian Qianyi did not seem to have as deep-seated a conflict over poetics with the Jingling school as he did with the Archaist school—he shared with Yuan Hongdao and the Jingling school the use of the term *xingling* (see the quotation from Richard Lynn below), but he felt the quality of the poetry produced even by its leaders was mediocre. Tan Yuanchun was more in favor of imitation of ancient models than Zhongxing, and this helped to earn him the nickname “poetry devil”(shiyao 詩妖) from Qian Qianyi (*The Indiana Companion*, 1:750).

Poetic theory that compared poetry with Chan has a complex history that began in the Tang and reached a high point with the Song critic Yan Yu. Qian Qianyi rejected the idea that poetry had anything to do with Chan enlightenment, Neo Confucianism enlightenment, Daoist enlightenment, or any kind of religious enlightenment! For him, poetry was much simpler: “Ch'ien also dismissed the idea that poetry had anything to do with “enlightenment” and the search for sagehood: Poetry is where the heart's wishes go. One molds his native sensibilities (*hsing-ling*) and wanders amidst scenery. Every person says what he wants to say—that's all there is to it!” (Lynn, *Ibid.*, 239).

[Qian Qianyi] slandered and insulted him like this! Could he not have said anything else about him? This is just incomprehensible.

ENTRY 26

The monk Chenghan 澄澗 (Limpid Flood), courtesy name Yingzi 郢子, was from Jining 濟寧 (Shandong) and was a skilled poet. A quatrain of his reads:

It was last night I first took down the First Night lanterns,¹⁹⁹
And again I want to see the mountains from Moling.
Neither able to ride a horse nor take a boat to get there,
I'm so free and easy, who'd recognize this Six Dynasties monk anyway?²⁰⁰

This poem was widely praised at the time. Excerpted from *Yuyang shihua*; see also *Chibei outan*.

ENTRY 27

¹⁹⁹ Shangyuan 上元 or Yuanxiao 元宵, the Lantern Festival, which falls on the fifteenth of the first lunar month and signals the end of the lunar New Year's celebrations.

²⁰⁰ The Six Dynasties era (222-589) include the Three Kingdoms state of Wu, the Eastern Jin, the Song, the Qi, the Liang, and the Chen, all of which made Jiankang 健康 [from the Ming era on Nanjing] their capital. Moling 秣陵, alternately Jinling 金陵, are other names for the Southern Dynasties capital. Chenghan is a monk out of his own time and wants to travel back to the illustrious era of Buddhism at the capital of the Six Dynasties era. However, neither horses nor boats can take him there, and, anyway, he is so free and easy, who would ever recognize him as a monk then if, in fact, he ever managed such time travel!

During the Xining 熙寧 era of the Song [1068-1078], from Guiji 會稽 [Shaoxing], the monk Chongxi 重喜 (Double Happiness) [of the Fayun 法雲 (Dharma Clouds) temple] composed a poem that reads:

No fire in the ground stove, sack completely empty,
Snow like falling poplar floss, the year is at its end.
I beg some ramie grass to mend my tattered robe,
Unaware of how solitary and desolate I am.²⁰¹

This poem is very beautiful, so it is a pity that he did not meet Master Po [Su Shi], so he could have evaluated him together with Foyin 佛印 (Impression of the Buddha) [1032-1098],²⁰² Canliao [see above, #19], Shouquan 守詮 [see above, #19], and Qingshun 清順 [see above, #19]. Excerpted from the *Gu fuyuting zalu* 古夫于亭雜錄 (Miscellaneous Records from the Ancient Fuyu Pavilion).

ENTRY 28

²⁰¹ The *Zhongguo fojiao renming cidian* records that when Chongxi was young he could not read or write, but once, while sweeping the floor, he experienced a revelation and discovered that he could read and compose poetry. The *Zhupo shihua* corroborates this story, adding that he made his living by fishing and liked to chant *Guanshiyin pusa* (Bodhisatva Avalokiteśvara):

For a long time he did not recognize characters, but one day he was able to write poems and *gathas*—the *gatha* he often recited was, “No fire in the ground stove. . . .”

See *Zhupo shihua*, 18 (1480.675a12).

²⁰² Foyin, a prominent poet in his own right, and Su Shi became acquainted when Su was banished to Huangzhou 黃州 and the monk was living on Mount Lu 廬山.

The *Liutang waiji* 柳塘外集 (Outer Collection from Willow Pond) in two *juan*²⁰³ consists of the poetry of the Song era monk Wuwen 無文 (Without Embellishment), Daocan 道璨 (Brilliance of the Way), from Mount Lu. It somewhat follows the Jiangxi 江西 school in terms of poetic method.²⁰⁴ Zhang Yinxuan 張印宣, courtesy name Shikong 師孔, of Jiangdu 江都 [Jiangsu] made a trip to the Kaixian 開先. In the sutra library there he managed to copy out this work, and then published it so it could circulate in the world. Excerpted from *Fengan yuhua* 分甘餘話 (Leisure Talk in Time Left Over From Duties to Share as Morsels of Sweet Pleasure).

²⁰³ This work consists of four *juan* according to the *Zhongguo fojiao renming cidian*. The critique in the *Zongmutiyao*, giving a different account, states: “the scope of the poetry is too narrow and never is capable of avoiding the atmosphere of vegetables and bamboo shoots. Yet, in short pieces and quatrains, the poet was able to make excellent use of the brevity of the form and at times achieved the ultimate in clarity. This work never appears in bibliographies after the Song, but in the Kangxi *jiayan* year [1674], the monk Dalei 大雷 (Great Thunder) got a look at an old edition, while monk Yuanhong 元宏 (Primal Vastness) edited the first printed edition.” See *Zongmu tiyao*, 165:7 (4.330b4—p1410).

²⁰⁴ Huang Tingjian was from Jiangxi, and his followers and imitators in succeeding generations called themselves the Jiangxi school. The important element in a poetic education, according to Huang, was absorbing the tradition and creating an individual style.

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