THE POETRY OF YANG WAN-LI

by

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B.A., University of California, Berkeley, 1968
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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department
of
Asian Studies

We accept this thesis as conforming to the
required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
August, 1975

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Abstract

Yang Wan-li (1127-1206) is regarded by Chinese literary historians and critics as one of the three most outstanding *shih* poets of the twelfth century. The present study attempts to explore Yang Wan-li's unique contribution to Chinese literature largely by utilizing the tools of traditional Chinese literary criticism, rather than emphasizing European methodology as is the case with most studies on non-European literature done by Westerners.

I begin with an extensive account of Yang Wan-li's life, paying particular attention to the influence that his political career had upon his literary works. However, the biography is not merely limited to a study of Yang's official life, for the very personal nature of his poetry allows us to explore the inner workings of his mind, and, in particular, the important role played by Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism in determining his outlook on life and his attitudes toward literature.

The next major section focuses on Yang's theory of literature and how his Ch'an background led him to view the writing of poetry as an intuitional process which results from sudden enlightenment. Such a theory caused him to reject thoughtless imitation of earlier poets and to advance the idea of natural, unadorned verse. The most concrete expression of Yang's theory of poetry is his "live method" (*huo-fa*), a poetic method which

includes such elements as iconoclasm, illusionistic and paradoxical language, surprise and sudden enlightenment, humor, and extensive use of colloquial language.

After this general discussion of Yang's literary theory and practice, I proceed to explore some of the major themes of Yang Wan-li's poetry, finding that a considerable body of his poetry is concerned with the Buddhist theme of illusion and reality. However, Yang's career as a Confucian bureaucrat also was of the utmost importance for his poetry, and he frequently describes his family and his general relationship with society. He is particularly original in his verse of social criticism and the life of the lower classes.

However, the most common subject of Yang's literary creations is nature, a tendency which is consistent with the esthetic interests of both painters and poets of his period. Yang's nature poetry has great similarities to the visual art of his contemporaries, and the striking innovations in Yang's nature poetry are easily compared to contemporary changes in Chinese painting. Yang's landscape poetry, in particular, is found to be intimately connected with Ch'an Buddhist mysticism. His poetry on plants and animals, like the painting of the period, is in harmony with the scientific, analytical tendencies of the culture as a whole.

I conclude with a study of Yang Wan-li's position in Chinese literature. The influences of earlier poets on his verse are analyzed and the traditional opinions concerning the evolution of his style are found to be erroneous. Yang's poetry

is compared and contrasted with the work of the two most prominent shih poets of his period, Fan Ch'eng-ta and Lu Yu. Finally, I give a brief account of Yang Wan-li's influence on later poets and critics.

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Introduction

The poetry of Yang Wan-li belongs to an age which has been almost totally neglected by Western historians of Chinese literature. Although a reasonable amount of material has been published concerning Chinese literature before the tenth century, post-T'ang literature in the classical language is almost a total blank. The tremendous body of material is no doubt one of the reasons for this neglect, but the generally antiquarian interests of many scholars of classical Chinese is probably the most important factor. However, as research on later literature progresses, Western scholars will likely discover that the later periods of Chinese literary history are just as rich as ancient and early medieval times. This dissertation is an attempt to fill in one of the many gaps in our knowledge of the history of Chinese poetry, the southern Sung dynasty during the twelfth century.

The twelfth century, in which Yang Wan-li lived, was one of the most productive periods in Chinese culture. In philosophy Chu Hsi was completing his synthesis of neo-Confucianism, which would exert a strong influence on Chinese thought down into modern times. The arts of Chinese painting and calligraphy had entered one of their most glorious ages, and the ceramics of the Chinese were prized and imitated all over Asia. Poetry witnessed the perfection of a new form, the tz'u, and

colloquial drama and short stories were gradually evolving. All of these innovations in the cultural field were supported by an unprecedented economic growth and a startling advance in science and technology.

Yang Wan-li's poetry did not develop in isolation from this new culture, and throughout the dissertation we have attempted to relate Yang's highly original poetry to the innovative spirit of the age in which he was living. Although many modern critics tend to minimize the cultural milieu of an author in favor of a more formalistic, analytical approach to poetry, we have felt that Yang Wan-li's works are best understood by reference to the intellectual and artistic background of his age. The poet of Yang Wan-li's age was not just a poet, for he frequently combined his literary pursuits with an active political career, speculation in the realms of religion and philosophy, creation of works in the visual arts, and, in some cases, original research in the natural sciences or medicine. To study the poetry of such men in isolation from other areas of Chinese culture seems absurd in the extreme.

Not only have we treated Yang Wan-li's poetry in its relationship to other cultural phenomena of his age, but our general approach to Yang's works has been deeply influenced by the methods utilized by Chinese literary critics. The reader will find little use made of the traditional tools of the Western literary critic, because we felt that these tools are, perhaps, not as helpful for the study of Chinese literature as the methodology and terminology employed by critics of Yang Wan-li's

own literary tradition. Thus, the reader will discover that we continually employ the terminology of Ch'an Buddhism to analyze Yang's works, not only because Yang was deeply influenced by that philosophy but also because most of the critics of his age utilized Ch'an language in their own writings. We have found a study of Yang's "live method" more fruitful than, say, an analysis of his poetic "imagery." We do not wish to negate the usefulness of Western literary criticism but only to point out that the native Chinese tradition is of great utility in studying Chinese literature, and, indeed, might help in the study of Western literature just as Western methodology has proved so valuable to research in certain areas of Chinese literature.

Anyone wishing to understand Yang Wan-li's poetry owes a great debt to the research done by Chou Ju-ch'ang in this field. Although his book Yang Wan-li Hsüan Chi 楊萬里選集 is only meant as a selection of his works for readers who are beginning the study of classical Chinese poetry, it contains a huge amount of valuable material for the serious scholar. Chou's introductory chapter to Yang's poetry is somewhat limited due to the ideological problems of modern China, but his discussion of the "live method" was an inspiration to further study of this problem. His footnotes to the poems selected are a model for other scholars to imitate, and we have usually followed his elucidation of difficult points in the poems such as literary allusions or unusual language. Not only is his commentary on individual poems of the greatest aid to the reader but his standards of selection are very high. Although we

have translated many poems by Yang Wan-li not contained in Chou's selection, his book contains most of Yang Wan-li's best poetry in each major category, and, hence, the majority of poems translated here also appear in Chou's work.

The major defect of Chou Ju-ch'ang's book is that the "Marxist" approach he frequently uses obscures the strong influence that Ch'an Buddhism had on Yang Wan-li's poetry. However, it is most likely that Chou's silence on Yang's interest in Ch'an was a result of the political pressures that bear on all intellectuals in modern China. Chou had done extensive research on Chinese Buddhist philosophy as his footnotes to individual poems attest, but, perhaps, he felt it more prudent to gloss over Yang's Buddhism in order not to offend the generally anti-Buddhist sentiments of the present government. Evidently his efforts were not completely successful, for the most recent reprint of his work omits his introductory essay on Yang Wan-li's poetry entirely.

Biography

Yang Wan-li楊萬里, whose style was T'ing-hsiu廷秀, was born in Chi-shui吉水 of modern Kiangsi province in the year 1127, the first year of the reign of the first southern Sung emperor Kao Tsung高宗.[1] Many of the greatest poets of the southern Sung were born at about the same time. Thus, Yang was two years junior to Lu Yu陸游 and one year junior to Fan Ch'eng-ta范成大. Although Yang's family was not of peasant stock, his background was quite humble, for none of his ancestors had occupied more than the lowest local positions.

The years immediately preceding Yang's birth had seen political events which had disastrous effects on the next two hundred years of Chinese history. From a relatively strong beginning under the emperors T'ai Tsu太祖 (960-976) and T'ai Tsung太宗 (976-998), the Sung dynasty had weathered a series of shocks from the Liao dynasty of the Khitan Tartars and a long drawn out contest of party strife between reformers and conservatives. The last effective emperor on the northern Sung throne, Hui Tsung徽宗 (1101-1126), was a fine painter noted for his patronage of the arts, but in the political sphere he was totally inept. Hui Tsung spent huge sums of money constructing gardens around the capital city located in

modern K'ai-feng 開封. The high taxation which the court luxury necessitated was partially responsible for a series of popular uprisings, the most serious of which was the revolt of Fang La 方臘, a Manichaean who vowed to kill the corrupt official in charge of Hui Tsung's gardening projects.[2]

Luckily for the Sung empire, the Liao ruling house had also reached its nadir at this time. The last emperor of the house, T'ien Tso Ti 天祚帝 (1101-1125), was as addicted to falconry as Hui Tsung was to gardening and sent embassies to foreign countries each year to buy prized falcons.[3] Although falconry was possibly a more masculine sport than gardening, the Khitan had long ago lost the martial vigour which had enabled them to attack the Sung with impunity in earlier years. Into the power vacuum which resulted, stepped a new Tartar race, the Ju-chen 女真, who were not yet corrupted by the arts of civilization. In the year 1114 the leader of the Wan-yen 完顏 clan, A-ku-ta 阿骨達, attacked the Liao empire, and when the Liao attempted to punish him, they were badly beaten.[4] The following year A-ku-ta declared himself emperor of the new Chin 金 dynasty, and Chinese historians have given him the title T'ai Tsu 太祖. In 1120 T'ai Tsu proved his claim to imperial title by defeating the Liao again and occupying their northernmost capital city Shang-ching 上京.[5]

Upon hearing of the Chin victories over the Liao dynasty, Hui Tsung was overjoyed. Numerous attempts by the Sung army to recapture territory lost to the Liao had failed, but now

the Sung government had a new means of increasing its land with little expense and effort. The two most powerful individuals in the Sung government at the time were the eunuch T'ung Kuan 童貫 and the man he had recommended to the emperor, the prime minister Ts'ai Ching 蔡京 . Both of these men urged the emperor to form an alliance with the Chin against the Liao, and so already in 1118 ambassadors had been dispatched by the sea route to the north.[6] In 1120 more ambassadors were sent, and they succeeded in concluding a treaty with the Chin. According to the terms of the treaty, the Chin were supposed to attack the Liao middle capital of Chung-ching 中京 , while the Sung would assault Yen-ching 燕京 . If the armies succeeded in overthrowing the Liao, the Sung government would be satisfied with the return of certain Chinese territories lost to the Khitan during the Five Dynasties and would pay the yearly tribute, which they had given the Liao, to the Chin.[7]

The Chin Tartars were intelligent enough to scent a good deal, and in the following year they began their attack on the Liao. In 1122 they were able to take the middle capital Chung-ching, forcing the emperor T'ien Tso Ti to take flight.[8] Meanwhile, Hui Tsung had sent the eunuch T'ung Kuan to attack Yen-ching, but the Sung army was so feebly led that the campaign ended in total failure,[9] and a second campaign later that year was even more disastrous, resulting in thousands of casualties and a disorderly retreat.[10] The Chin armies did not give the Chinese another chance to blunder, for they soon occupied Yen-ching with little trouble.[11]

By this time the Chin Tartars were fully aware of the complete impotence of the Sung military. Nevertheless, they observed the treaty with the Sung government at least on the surface and promptly turned over the land promised earlier. Peace was maintained for a couple of years, but the Chin found a casus belli when a former Liao general surrendered to the Sung and used his border post as a base for attacks against the Chin.[12] Although the Sung government executed him when the Chin complained, the Chin launched their attack in 1125. They found many Chinese military men willing to cooperate with them, and as their armies neared K'ai-feng, Hui Tsung abdicated the throne to his crown prince, who was given the title Ch'in Tsung 欽宗.[13]

In 1126 the Chin armies surrounded the capital K'ai-feng, and when it became apparent that no assistance was coming from other Sung armies, the Sung government was forced to conclude a very shameful peace with the Chin. In order to buy off the Chin army, the Sung had to make an immediate present of two hundred thousand taels of gold and four million taels of silver.[14] Nevertheless, once the Chin army had lifted its siege, another Chin army appeared and demanded more ransom. The Chinese government was furious and declared the peace treaty ineffective. In the eighth month of 1126, the Chin sent one more army, and in the eleventh month, the army captured K'ai-feng city.[15] The emperor Ch'in Tsung personally went to the Chin camp to beg for mercy, but the Chin kept him prisoner, and in the second month of 1127 the people of K'ai-

feng paid an additional ransom of over seventy thousand taels of gold and a million taels of silver.[16] However, the Chin were still dissatisfied, and in the fourth month they forced the returned emperor Hui Tsung, Ch'in Tsung, the empress, and about three thousand other imperial relatives and high officials to return with their army back north. The northern Sung empire had ceased to exist.[17]

The Chin quickly overran north China and set up a Chinese official as puppet emperor. However, in the same year the ninth son of Hui Tsung ascended the imperial throne in Nanking, thereby inaugurating the southern Sung dynasty. It was in this troubled year that Yang Wan-li was born. Although we know very little about Yang's youth, we can be quite certain that the family was little troubled by the disorders of the period except indirectly due to tax increases and fiscal disorder. Kiangsi lay far from the main theater of battle, and Yang did not experience the bitterness of exile from his native village as Hsin Ch'i-chi 辛棄疾 did,[18] nor did he suffer the life of a refugee as Lu Yu did. Lu Yu was born on the banks of the Huai River in Kiangsu province, which was one of the main battlefields, and he summed up his childhood experiences years later when he wrote, "When a child, I died ten thousand times, escaping from the barbarian soldiers."[19] Although Yang Wan-li was reared in poverty, he did not suffer the trauma of warfare, a fact which partially explains his happier outlook on life when compared to many of his contemporaries.

Although Yang's family was fairly poor, he claimed that there had been officials in the Yang clan previously. Therefore, he pursued a classical education from an early age, and in the year 1154 he had his first success in official life, obtaining his chin-shih degree at the relatively young age of twenty-eight. The famed poet Fan Ch'eng-ta passed the chin-shih in the same year, and it is quite likely that they became friends at this time.[20] Although they were never able to spend an extended interval of time together, they were quite close and exchanged a large number of poems in later years. As was the custom, Yang was given a position in local government soon after he passed, and his three year term as Finance Inspector 司户 at Kan-chou 贛州 was his first lengthy stay away from his family.[21] Even so, Kan-chou was not more than a hundred miles south of Chi-shui, so he could have frequently gone home to see his parents.

After the customary three years of service at Kan-chou, Yang was transferred to the post of Assistant Sub-prefect of Ling-ling 零陵丞, which was under the jurisdiction of Yung-chou 永州. This was a slightly higher post than the former one, but it was no sudden rise to fame and fortune, and now Yang was stationed far away from his family, in southwestern Hunan province. Nevertheless, the three years that Yang spent at Ling-ling were among the most significant in his political and literary career, so they deserve our full attention. The most important event in Yang's life during the year 1161 was his meeting with the famous Sung general Chang Chün

張浚, but before we can fully understand the impact this meeting had on Yang, we must review the early history of the southern Sung and explain how Chang Chün had ended up in remote Hunan by 1161.[22]

Although Kao Tsung had come to the throne in 1127, the Chin Tartars had not let him rest easily. While still at Nanking, Kao Tsung appointed Li Kang李綱 his prime minister, and Li soon was making every effort for a recovery with a fair degree of success due to the activities of the Sung general Tsung Tse宗澤, who was based near the former capital K'ai-feng. Unfortunately Kao Tsung fell under the influence of a group of officials who counselled appeasement, and after Li Kang resigned, the emperor moved his residence to Yang-chou揚州.[23] This was the signal for renewed assaults by the Chin armies. The pacifists hampered Tsung Tse's efforts at defence, and in early 1129, his position became so precarious that Kao Tsung was forced to retreat from Yang-chou across the Yangtze River to Hang-chou杭州, where he prepared to set up his capital.[24] But his actions were premature, for the Chin continued their assault, and in the twelfth month they took Hang-chou and laid it waste.[25] Kao Tsung escaped to Ming-chou明州 in Chekiang but was pressed so hard he had to escape by sea to Wen-chou溫州 in southern Chekiang province.[26] The Sung dynasty seemed to be drawing to a close.

Kao Tsung was saved with a series of brilliant military maneuvers by a group of new generals who appeared just in time. In 1130 Han Shih-chung韓世忠 met the Chin army and navy

in a battle on the Yangtze in which he attempted to stop the Chin from crossing back north. Although Han was defeated, he greatly increased Chin fears of being cut off from their supply lines if they should venture too far south of the Yangtze.[27] Meanwhile, the renowned Chinese general Yüeh Fei 岳飛 had risen to prominence, and when the enemy's armies came south in 1133 and 1134, the Chinese successfully held them back. In 1135 the now confident Chinese generals petitioned Kao Tsung to renew the attack against the north, but Kao Tsung hesitated.[28]

Perhaps, the reason Kao Tsung was not very interested in recapturing north China was that such a success would almost inevitably result in the return of his father Hui Tsung and the previous emperor Ch'in Tsung, who were now captives in the north. There obviously could not be three emperors of China at the same time, and so Kao Tsung was willing to forget the Chin's insult to his filial piety as long as they kept Hui Tsung and Ch'in Tsung far away from the Chinese capital. Such considerations may explain why Kao Tsung easily fell under the spell of the pacifist prime minister Ch'in Kuei 秦檜, who advised a peace treaty with the Chin.

Nonetheless, Kao Tsung had need of his new generals a while longer, because widespread banditry plagued the government south of the Yangtze. Yüeh Fei, Han Shih-chung, and Chang Chün all played an important role in suppressing these bandits in the hope that peace in the south would lay the foundation for the recovery of the north. But the most startling development was Yüeh Fei's counter-attack against the Chin which

followed upon the anti-bandit campaign. In 1140 Yüeh Fei pushed north defeating enemy army after army and eventually camped within range of the northern Sung capital K'ai-feng.[29] Yet in the same year Ch'in Kuei commanded Yüeh to give up the campaign and return south.[30] In 1141 both Yüeh Fei and Han Shih-chung were ordered to the capital, where Yüeh Fei was murdered at the instigation of the prime minister Ch'in Kuei.[31] In the same year Ch'in Kuei encouraged Kao Tsung to submit to one of the most humiliating treaties in Chinese history. Besides requiring the Sung government to pay a huge indemnity in silk cloth to the Chin every year, the treaty recognized the Chin occupation of north China and put the Sung in the position of a vassal state with regard to the Chin.[32]

During the fifteen odd years of Ch'in Kuei's control of the Sung government, most of the famous generals were eliminated one by one, and the war party among the officials was rapidly liquidated. In fact, the only general of prominence who remained after these purges was Chang Chün, and he was already an old man when Yang met him in 1161. Chang had probably been spared because he was not among the most prominent and aggressive of the Sung generals, but even so he had met with difficult times under the reign of Kao Tsung. When he was about to return to his native Szechwan to go into mourning for his mother, there was an inauspicious astrological configuration, and the government asked for opinions from officials. Chang Chün said that although there had been peace with the Chin for a few years, the enemy would soon seek an excuse to

attack the Sung, and the government should prepare immediately. When Chang's opinions became known to the appeasement party, they attacked him violently, claiming he was insane to think such preposterous thoughts. In addition, they maintained that it would be dangerous to allow Chang to return to Szechwan, which was so far away from the central government that he might cause disorder by expressing his disapproval of current policy. Therefore, it was decided that he should be sent to Yung-chou in Hunan province, where he could mourn his mother for the required three years and be kept away from his supporters in Szechwan.[33]

When Yang Wan-li heard that such a famous man was living so near to him, he was eager to meet Chang, for although the old general was temporarily out of favor, he was still influential and could be of use to a young official such as Yang. However, Chang was not an easy man to visit, because since his virtual exile, he had closed his door and refused all intercourse with the outside world. In fact, Yang failed to see Chang after three personal visits to the general's house, and only after Yang wrote him a number of letters did Chang consent to see this young local official. Yang was extremely impressed by the man whom he saw, and he probably held Chang Chün in higher respect than any of the other statesmen of his day. During their meeting, Chang encouraged Yang to "study with a sincere intention and upright mind."[34] As a result, Yang immediately changed the name of his study to Ch'eng-chai 誠齋 or Sincere Studio, and in later times he used the study's

name as his hao. In addition to urging on Yang's studies, Chang Chün impressed on Yang the urgency of the present political situation in China, and although we do not know anything of Yang's previous political convictions, he was henceforth firmly in the camp of those who supported strenuous resistance against the Chin Tartars.

Chang Chün exerted the greatest influence on Yang's political views at this time, but his literary activities came under the influence of another friend he made while at Ling-ling, namely, the southern Sung poet Hsiao Te-tsao 蕭德藻. Both Yang and Hsiao were serving in minor local posts, and although Hsiao had to leave Ling-ling in 1162, Yang spoke of their friendship with great tenderness in later years. In a poem which Yang wrote to Hsiao shortly after their parting, Yang expresses his new commitment to official life:

Sent in Reply to the Judicial Officer Hsiao Te-tsao's Rhymes

Vulgar things near my eyes only increase my sleep;[a]
After our parting, how emaciated my friend has become.
I still spur my crawl in pursuit of your gallop;[b]
I'm not yet satisfied being just another duck in the water![c] [35]

Despite Yang's expression of his ambitions for office, the principal influence of Hsiao on Yang was not political, for the year 1162 was one of innovation for Yang the poet, too. It is not certain how long Yang had been writing poetry at this time, and, alas, we shall never know, because Yang burned over

a thousand of his earlier works in 1162, and all of his surviving poetry comes from after this date.[36] Previous to 1162 Yang had expended his poetic talents in imitating the verse of the Kiangsi school, which had formed around Huang T'ing-chien 黃庭堅 (1045-1105) in northern Sung times and remained popular in Yang's youth. Yang himself came from Kiangsi as many of the major poets of the period did, and the style undoubtedly had an irresistable attraction to him while he was still young. Although we have no way of reconstructing the conversations between the young poets Yang and Hsiao, we can be certain this friendship was one of the major factors which led to Yang's rejection of the earlier Kiangsi style. According to Yang, their very first meeting involved the writing of poetry:

> I first got to know him at Ling-ling. As soon as we talked, our minds were in accord, so I carried my bedding to his lodging, where we slept on opposite beds. At the time, the weather was hot and Tung-fu [Hsiao Te-tsao] wanted to set off early in the morning. At the fifth watch he got up before me, and blowing on the lamp so it flickered, he scratched his head as if he were occupied with something. I got up to watch him and saw he was composing a poem as a parting gift. I also wrote a poem in answer to him. Tung-fu was so delighted he said: "Making friends is like getting engaged. Each of us has put aside a piece of paper!"[37]

Hsiao Te-Tsao's poetry was similar to the freer style which emerged after Yang's burning of his earlier works, and the southern Sung poet and critic Liu K'o-chuang劉克莊 (1187-1269) considered the style of the two poets to be quite similar: "Hsiao Te-tsao's 'mechanism' was similar to Yang Wan-li, yet his talent was more sparing than Yang while his thought was more forced."[38] Nothing could be more forced than Yang's earliest surviving poetry, so here it is likely that Liu is comparing Hsiao's verse with the late Yang Wan-li. Yang tells us that he somewhat regretted burning his youthful works, but the act was symbolic of the dramatic changes in his life during his stay at Ling-ling.

Despite Yang's new political commitment, he constantly thought of his family back at Chi-shui, and as the year 1162 drew to a close he wrote:

I Receive a Letter from my Old Parents (First poem of two)

During holidays, it's hard to be a traveler,
Though I frequently get letters from home.
My mother asks when I'll come back;
What are both our thoughts like?
I force myself to drink wine, yet how can I finish it?
It increases my sorrow and cannot eliminate it.
Formerly, when I was poor, before becoming an official,
How could father and son be separated then?[39]

This feeling of isolation and loneliness reached a high point

when Yang set out from Ling-ling to return home for the New Year holidays:

On the day before New Year's Eve, going home by boat, I stop for the night at Crooked Whirlpool City and sleep at the Govern Peace Monastery

The river's broad, the wind biting, so cold it goes
through cotton;
Sandbanks are many, beaches few; our boat goes upstream.
When was the city ever far away, but our boat can't
approach it;
Yet in my mind I've already arrived by the side of the
lamp's light.
At night I put up in an ancient temple, sloshing
through mud to enter;
When the damp kindling catches fire, it sounds like
insects chirping.
A cold window, freezing walls, how can I get to sleep?
But at least this is better than gazing at the sky
under sparse boat matting.
The city people sing and shout, celebrating the New Year;
While this poet's knees are bent as high as his chin.
When I return home, if my children ask me what this
was like,
Could I bear to tell them about my feelings tomorrow?[40]

After the holidays, Yang did not have to part from his

family immediately, because he moved them to Ling-ling sometime after New Year. His term of office was up in the spring and he probably thought that he would have leisure time to enjoy with them before his replacement came. Unfortunately the replacement was delayed by a number of months, and his parents and children had to return home before he did. To add to his misery, no sooner had they left than he came down with a very serious case of typhoid fever. As Yang tells us in the introduction to a poem written at this time: "After I quit as magistrate of Ling-ling, I suddenly came down with typhoid. Although I consulted a doctor for twenty days, I was like a man carrying a load; the farther I went the heavier it got. Then I changed doctors, consulting Doctor T'ang Kung-liang, and after nine days I was well. I thanked him with the following long poem:"

You size up diseases as you would size up an enemy;
You use medicines as if hitting a bull's-eye.
Like Huai-yin you have a hundred victories in a
hundred battles;[a]
Like Yu-chi you fire a hundred times without a miss.[b]
Old T'ang, your method of pulse-taking is brilliant,
exalted;
If you examine a man, how could the disease
urchins escape?[c] [41]

It was fortunate that Yang had recovered from typhoid so

quickly, for great political changes were in the air, and an undreamed of opportunity for public office had come to him. To understand these changes, we must go back a few years in history. Largely due to the appeasement policies of Kao Tsung, there were nearly twenty years of peace between the Chin and Sung governments. However, in the year 1149, a wild and irresponsible ruler by the name Wan-yen Liang 完顏亮, who is also known as Fei Ti 廢帝, came to the throne of the Chin dynasty. In 1161 he attacked the Sung without provocation and camped his huge army at Ts'ai-shih 采石, north of the Yangtze River in Anhwei. The first Sung army sent to meet him ran in retreat before even giving battle, but the reorganized army managed to stop the Chin from crossing the river. The result of this defeat for the Chin was that certain officials set up another emperor and Wan-yen Liang was assassinated by his underlings.[42]

Despite this minor victory, Kao Tsung was tired of the changes of fortune of an imperial life, and in 1163 he abdicated the throne in favor of his son, who was the next emperor Hsiao Tsung 孝宗 (1163-1190). Yang obviously heard the news with high hopes, for the new emperor had a very different personality from his father. The recent victory had encouraged Hsiao Tsung into thinking that there was hope after all of gaining back the northern half of the empire. Yet the greatest reason for Yang's joy was that Hsiao Tsung had recalled Yang's mentor Chang Chün and made him commander over the whole strategic Yangtze and Huai River areas.[43] Most important of all, Chang had strongly recommended Yang to the central government,

and as soon as he had recovered fully from typhoid, Yang set out for the capital city. He intended to visit his home first and then proceed on a leisurely trip to Hang-chou. When he set out from Ling-ling he wrote:

> I thought of returning home day after day, just empty talk;
> Yet now the oars really are dipping in the water's moon.[a]
> At midnight I still can hear the drums of the prefect tower;
> By tomorrow morning I ought to have lost Yung-chou's mountains.[44]

Meanwhile, the plans to attack the Chin were developing apace. Chang Chün appointed the two generals Li Hsien-chung 李顯忠 and Shao Hung-yüan邵宏淵 to lead the Sung armies, advancing northward through Anhwei province. Although there was initial success, the two generals argued continuously, and in the fifth month, the Chin Tartars took advantage of the confusion to deliver the Sung armies a crushing defeat at Fu-li 符離 in modern Kiangsu.[45] Chang Chün was immediately demoted and the counter-attack ground to a halt. The emperor sent down a proclamation blaming himself for taking part in the warfare and suggesting that the defeat was a punishment for his own sins. Sometime shortly after his departure from Ling-ling, Yang heard of the most recent developments and wrote:

After Reading the Proclamation of Self-Censure

(Two poems of Three)

Don't read the Proclamation of Wheel Tower,[a]
For it makes a man's tears drip down.
Heaven, you make room for these barbarians,
So emperors thirst after talented helpers.[b]
What crime do our boys of good family have?
They know who their great general is![c]
I wish to make Dangerous Ford our example;[d]
We will still recover from Goose Gate's troubles.[e]

This disorder commenced on the day of my nativity,
Yet I am about to reach the age of strong service.[f]
The Central Plain still exists only in our dreams;
Just the Southern Frontier is a source for sorrow.[g]
His Highness is an extraordinary ruler;
All you officials, don't be so self-righteous.
We still haven't built a Metal Tower,[h]
Yet we are already aspiring to restrengthen Yen.[i] 46

As he continued on his route to the capital city, Yang encountered the general Li Hsien-chung, who had been sent, into exile in Ch'ang-sha 長沙 immediately after the debacle of Fu-li. Li Hsien-chung's story was particularly tragic, because he had been in the military since following his father to war at the age of seventeen. When the family was captured by the Chin over two hundred of his relatives were slaughtered, and Li barely managed to escape with a few friends to the

Hsi-hsia 西夏 kingdom. The Hsi-hsia attempted to prevent Li from returning to the Sung, but Li managed to raise an army and deliver a stunning defeat to the Hsi-hsia.[47] When Yang met him, the dejected general was on his way to his exile:

> On the road I met the old general Li Hsien-chung, who had kept his treasuries and storehouses to himself at the battle of Fu-li. As a result he caused resentment among the officers, who scattered, and he was exiled to Ch'ang-sha.
>
> If a covetous general is worthy of employ,[a]
> The military books do not misunderstand the present.
> I only mourn surrendered armor high as Bear Ear Mountain;[b]
> Who begrudges gold for war steeds' hooves?[c]
> Why is he exiled to the same prefecture as Chia Yi;[d]
> He admires Chu Yüan alone,[e]
> Where can a scholar like me speak?
> My poem finished, I chant it slowly to myself.[48]

Yang obviously realized that his hopes for high official position were now completely dashed and the central government was impotent to resist the Chin challenge at least for the near future. Perhaps, he even began to have doubts about his new found poetic innovations, for several days later he wrote:

Spending the Night at Tu-hsi

Thin clouds blind the beautiful moon,
But the wind becomes her metal eye-scraper,[a]
I'm traveling because I'm engaged with my work,
But what business do the clouds have traveling?
Why does the cold of such a night
Meet only with a traveler like me?
How could people like us forget our emotions;[b]
Can we stop the autumn from making us sad?
My short lamp doesn't understand anything,[c]
For he calls me to recite a new poem.[49]

Sometime in the twelfth month of the year, Yang finally reached the capital city of Hang-chou. Although Chang Chün had been demoted, he still held an official position in the central government, and he managed to recommend Yang to the authorities. At the time Yang visited Hang-chou it probably was the largest city in the world with a population in excess of one million.[50] Yang did not like big cities, and he did not write any poems about the dazzling New Year festivities which he certainly witnessed. However, he did join his new friends in a number of excursions to certain sights such as the West Lake, which were practically obligatory for a young poet to visit. About West Lake he wrote:

Misty boats, horizontal and sideways, lie in willow
port bays;

Cloudy mountains appear and disappear midst willow rows.
How could climbing a mountain equal wandering by this lake?
For in the heart of the lake, I can see all the mountains I want![51]

Due to the good offices of Chang Chün, Yang was offered the post of Instructor of Lin-an Fu 臨安府教授 sometime in the first month of 1164. Nevertheless, he did not seem fated for higher official career, for shortly before the first full moon of the New Year, Yang received news that his father was very ill, so he quickly set out on the path home:

I have come a thousand miles plotting for five pecks of rice;[a]
My old father waits and waits, so I should go home.
No matter how good the spring scenery is, what does it mean to me?
Fine rain and plum flowers only make me sad.[52]

When Yang returned home his father was already dead, and Yang commenced the long three year mourning period prescribed by society and the government. After a few months of mourning at home, he was further grieved to hear that his teacher Chang Chün had also passed away soon after Yang had left the capital. Yang wrote three funerary odes to his old teacher, but he obviously realized that his future hopes for a career were dimmed considerably.[53] In any case, he could take no new post until

the three year period was finished.

Throughout the rest of the year Yang wrote very few poems except for a few funerary odes and parting poems to certain of his neighbors who left the village to official posts. By the beginning of 1165, his sorrow had lightened considerably, and he began to take a number of short trips to various beauty spots in Kiangsi province. One day while enjoying such an excursion he wrote:

While I Am Riding a Palanquin the Wind Turns the Pages of My Book

Holding books, I get on the cart, forcing myself
to go out to the mountains;
I spread the books out but don't read them, for
my eyes turn hazy first.
For no reason at all, the spring wind is jealous
of me;
She blows open the pages and flips them one by one![54]

This poem and others of the period suggest that Yang was putting into practice his new idea of writing simple poetry, which he had probably discovered while still at Ling-ling with Hsiao Te-tsao. In the last two lines of a poem he wrote to a friend at about the same time Yang states:

I stand up and search for a verse a while,
But the verse is in the mountains before my eyes.[55]

Despite this greater feeling of naturalness in his poetry, Yang had not totally resigned himself to his father's death, and on one of his short excursions he wrote:

On the Road to Hao-yüan

A long pavilion, a short pavilion, three or five;
This is still the road I traveled as a boy.
I still remember the sky was cold, the sun small
and yellow;
My father walked in front, while I looked on in back.
Today I am not sad because I have reached the end of
the road;
Like a sick goose, I fly alone having lost my old
gander.
For three years I've closed my doors midst the pine
tree wind;
From this time on, my travels will begin again.[56]

Yang was not merely talking about his local travels in Kiangsi, for he knew that he must soon make another attempt to win public office in the central government. In fact, he left Chi-shui at the end of the year and arrived in Hang-chou sometime close to the New Year of 1167. The political situation in the capital had changed completely from the heyday of Chang Chün. Shortly after the rout of Fu-li, the Sung emperor had signed a new peace treaty with the Chin government. The feeble counter-attack of the Chinese had aroused a certain degree of respect

among the Chin, for the Sung government no longer had to use the language of a vassal state when referring to the Chin rulers. Nevertheless, the yearly indemnity which the Sung had to pay was quite huge. Chang Chün's fall from favor had not precipitated a violent purge of the pro-war faction, but their warnings concerning the Chin were unheeded by Hsiao Tsung, and there was virtual peace between the two governments for the next forty some years. All the same, ardent patriots sent up countless memorials to the emperor urging attack, but Yang learned the result of these labors after talking to a minor official he befriended in the capital:

A Colophon on the Memorial of Ten Thousand Words by the Fu-kan Wei Chih-yao from Szechwan

His short lamp midst the rain, his hair is like snow;[a]
A traveler with long sword, he has no fish to eat.[b]
Why take the trouble of sending up memorials with
mournful cries?
Truly the men of this age respect only Master Fiction![c] 57

Yang quickly realized that he could not obtain a central government post under the conditions existing in the capital, yet he remained there until autumn of the year, discussing the political situation with friends. It also seems that his early interest in Ch'an Buddhism was renewed at this time, for we find increasingly frequent references to Buddhism in the poems of the period. In one poem to a friend Yang alludes to

"Questions and answers in the monk's room, the lion roars."[58] This is a specific reference to the method of teaching used by the Lin-chi臨濟 Sect of Ch'an Buddhists known as kung-an 公案 or, literally, 'public case.' When the student asks a question the monk answers him with a bewildering statement designed to destroy the concept of duality inherent in discursive thought. Lin-chi masters also frequently shouted, i.e., "roared," at their students and at times pummeled them with a stick. By the time Yang returned home he had reached the depth of his depression, and he may have even considered the drastic step of becoming a monk. However, when sending off a friend from Chi-shui he seemed to feel that both the official and monastic life were beyond his reach:

> To select officialdom or Buddhism, both remote, remote;
> They never concerned me from the beginning, so I became recklessly sad.[59]

Yang remained in Chi-shui for the next two years of his life, meeting friends, writing poetry, and waiting for an opportunity. He had already reached the age of forty without any outstanding accomplishments in either literature or politics to his name, so when his eyes began to fail he became distraught:

Because of My Aging Eyes I Gave up Books and Sighed

I'm old, and books no longer have any place;
After all, my eyes already see flowers.
Ink soldiers are not friends to ones death;
Cassia wine seems to be my livelihood.
After snow, the frost increases in strength;
While chanting poetry, my hat lies crooked.
My small son knows I'm just lazy;
Reciting lessons at night, he raises a racket on purpose![60]

By the time New Year of 1166 came along Yang had already resigned himself to the possibility that he might never be anything more than a minor poet looking up to such great men as Tu Fu. All hope of high position seemed equally futile:

On the night of the first full moon, our village has a custom of grinding rice into the shape of cocoon fibers and writing auspicious expressions, which we then place inside them in order to divine our luck for the coming year. We call this "cocoon divination." I wrote a long poem about this in jest.[a]

Last year at first full moon I resided at Three
    Thoroughfares;[b]
Braving the rain, I looked at the lamps, forcing
    myself to make merry.
This year at full moon time, I'm living at home again,

And our village doesn't even have lamps, just rain,
Across the creek in the bush shrine, a few flutes
and drums,[c]
Yet I wonder if there still are any revelers out.
The children cook jade rice into cocoon threads
And in the middle, they hide lucky words, praying
in secret.
My little son implores that he will get an official
post early,
While the little girls just ask for the silk harvest
to be good.
All his life this master has laughed at the children's
foolishness,
But on this occasion even I play like a child.
I don't desire to plant my legs in the Golden Flower
Palace,[d]
Nor do I wish to set up a nest in the Imperial Grove
Gardens.[e]
I only want to recite Tu Fu's seven-character poems,
And be able to eat my fill all the year long.
In my heart I know the cocoon divination doesn't always
come true,
But, when in my drunkeness, I get a good fortune,
I'm wild with joy![61]

Yet the last line of the poem, in addition to displaying a warm sense of humor, betrays Yang's continuing aspiration to officialdom, and despite his frequent protestations to

the contrary, in 1169 he wrote:

Gazing Afar on an Autumn Evening

During the rich harvest of our village,
I hear the sound of people laughing and talking.
The creek's mist is redder, damper at evening;
The pine's sun yellower and lighter as it sets.
Since we are not deep into autumn,
Why is the air so pure already?
I shouldn't be idle much longer;
Soon I'll go hunting for honor and fame.[62]

Yang did not have to go to the capital to seek "honor and fame," for in the beginning of 1170, he was appointed governor of Feng-hsin County奉新縣, which was not much over a hundred miles to the north of Chi-shui. According to Yang's biographers, he was a model governor and adopted a policy of laissez-faire toward the people in his district. When people owed tax money to the government, Yang did not send collectors into the countryside to force collection but merely displayed the names of offenders in the market place and filled his tax quota without causing any undue trouble. However, Yang did not entirely enjoy his new work, for he found it so time-consuming that it interfered with his writing. In the middle of his travels about the district on official business he wrote:

Passing West Mountain[a]

In one year I've trodden the road past West Mountain
twice;
West Mountain laughs at me, so he should know enough
to say:
"In your breast you have a hundred gallons of red and
black ink dust,[b]
But you don't even have half a line equal to 'wind
the pearl curtain in the rain.'"[c]
Out of politeness I buy wine and thank West Mountain:
"I'm grateful for your mountain scenery, for you've
given me a lift.
Yet my temple hairs are turning white from collecting
taxes,
And even if dust filled up my whole breast, when would
I have time to worry about it?[63]"

Yang had no desire to continue in one local post after another, and his ambitions were clearly set on Hang-chou. In order to gain attention, he busied himself with preparing a large treatise on government in thirty chapters which he entitled "A Policy of a Thousand Precautions."[64] It is interesting to note the various subjects Yang discussed in his work. Three chapters were devoted to each of the twelve topics: (1) "The Way of the Ruler," (2) "The Conditions of the State," (3) "The Source of Government," (4) "Talent," (5) "A Discussion of Ministers," (6) "A Discussion of Generals,"

(7) "A Discussion of Soldiers," (8) "Controlling Officials," (9) "Selecting Laws," (10) "Penal Laws," (11) "Excess Officials," (12) "Government of the People." Yang's efforts were not buried in the mass of paperwork at the capital, and the prime minister Ch'en Chün-ch'ing 陳俊卿 was extremely impressed. Therefore, in the tenth month, Yang was given the post of Professor of the Directorate of Education 国子博士. Although he had looked forward to a post at the capital for a long time, he left Feng-hsin with considerable trepidation:

> A Proclamation Compels me to Fill my Post at the Academy and so I Set off from Ming-shan Post Station in the Morning
>
> Several shops, as if scattered yet close together;
> A thousand peaks, ordered yet in disarray.
> Marks on the ice still bear waves;
> The frosty grass itself turns into flowers.
> Ordinary, mediocre, I fit my position at court;
> Spot after spot, my temples are already white.
> Everything in the capital city is wonderful,
> But not as good as returning home early![65]

Before we proceed to follow the course of Yang's life in the capital, it would be best to look at his "Policy of a Thousand Precautions" in greater detail, for he did not drastically alter his political views for the rest of his life, and the ideas expressed in this document help us to understand

Yang's subsequent career. Although the policies which Yang supported do not have any striking novelty, this set of documents displays a great understanding of the political and military problems of the southern Sung dynasty. One of the most startling features of Yang's discussion of penal law is the rather legalist stand which he takes. In this regard he shows a remarkable similarity to the famous northern Sung reformer Wang An-shih 王安石 (1021-1086), a figure who was held in low esteem by more orthodox Confucians such as Chu Hsi but whom Yang admired intensely. With regard to punishments Yang wrote:

> I have heard that the humanity of a Sage must have its limits. If his humanity does not have limits, though wishing to be humane to all the world, he will actually harm all the world. If his humanity causes harm, it is not a fault of the humanity, but a fault of the humanity not being limited. Certainly, when something reaches an extremity, it will revert. If one is humane without limit, then upon reaching an extremity, he will have to revert and end up doing harm. This harm does not come from outside of his humanity but arises within it. Yet, isn't setting limits in order to perfect ones humanity better than not setting limits and harming ones humanity? Therefore, the mind of the sage loves the world without limit, yet in giving his humanity to the world there is a limit. He extends it with his mind which has no limit but restrains it with humanity that

sets limits. Therefore, his humanity has limits but that with which he practices humanity has no limits. In ancient times when the Investigator of Criminals was about to complete a case, he would report to the king, and the king would command the three ministers to attend the hearing. When they were about to carry out the punishment, the king would say, "Pardon him!" and the Investigator of Criminals would say, "It is impossible!" The king would again say, "Pardon him!" and the Investigator of Criminals would again say, "It is impossible!" If he had pardoned the man three times but the Investigator of Criminals did not finally agree, then they would execute the man. The king would then cancel his banquets and not make merry on this account. Now, despite the honor of the Son of Heaven, if he were opposed by the Investigator of Criminals three times, although the Son of Heaven wished to save the man, he would watch him die in the end without intervening. When they did not agree after three pardons, why did not he pardon the man a fourth time? If they did not agree after four pardons, why did he not pardon the man numerous times? Or rather, when they did not agree after one pardon, why did he not pardon the man himself, and why did he have to listen to the Investigator of Criminals? . . . This was simply because pardoning is the humanity of a sage. The pardoning is limited to three times, because humanity must have limits.[66]

If Yang Wan-li's attitude toward punishments corresponds to Wang An-shih's attitude toward law, there is even a closer resemblance in the military policies which the two men advocated. In general, the military policy of the Sung from the first emperor T'ai Tsu onward displayed a marked dislike for professional military men and large standing armies. Such views were no doubt due to fear of military revolts such as those which brought the T'ang empire to ruin and which T'ai Tsu himself had witnessed and utilized to bring himself to power during the Five Dynasties. By the time of Wang An-shih, the result of such military thinking was clear to anyone who contemplated the continuous defeats of Sung armies at the hands of the Liao and Hsi-hsia, while by the time of Yang Wan-li a drastic change of military policy was imperative for national survival. To counter the military threat Wang An-shih established the pao-chia 保甲 system, which was like various collective guarantee systems used in earlier times.[67] The purpose of the pao-chia was to create a class of soldier farmers similar to the fu-ping 府兵 so effective in the early years of military conquest of the T'ang dynasty. In his "Discussion of Soldiers" Yang writes:

> I have heard that one who plans for the world cannot be greedy for profit, but also cannot be overcautious about harm. If one insists on doing something because he is greedy for profit, when harm comes, he will not think about it. If one insists on doing something because he is overcautious about harm, he will certainly

lose some profit. Men who discuss this all say: "The law of rural soldiers cannot be put into practice. The people take pleasure in farming but they do not take pleasure in becoming soldiers. If you take what they desire from them and force them to do what they do not desire, then you will have the harm of disturbing the people. To make farmers into soldiers is not according to their habit. When defending, they will disperse, when attacking they will run, and then you have the harm of failure." These men see how Shih Ching-t'ang's 石敬瑭 Chin dynasty registered the rural soldiers of the various districts and called them the "Military Pacification Army."[a] And yet, the people could not make a livelihood, so this is what they mean by "disturbing the people." They also see how the Chin dynasty set up soldiers whom they called the "Army of the Heavenly Majesty." In the end it was useless and was disbanded, so this is what they mean by "failure."[b] They only know of this and nothing more. They do not know that one can pacify the people without disturbing them, and one can succeed without failure . . .

. . . If a hundred men holding weapons attack a tiger, the tiger will win, but if a single man carrying a hoe meets with a tiger, the man will win. This is not because the hundred men are weak or the single man is strong . . . The single man occupies a position in

> which he will surely die, and this is the reason he will surely live. These hundred men occupy a position of life, so how could they obtain victory? Therefore, those who were good at using soldiers in ancient times employed death to seek life and did not seek life with life. Don't the people of the frontier seek life because of death? Nevertheless, when putting the law of rural soldiers into practice on the frontier, it absolutely must not be done by the officials. If the officials do it, then there will be trouble, but if it is privately done, then there will be happiness. If the officials do it, then the enemy will suspect something, but if it is done privately, the enemy will not know where to look. We should order the commanderies and counties along the Huai not to prevent the local ruffians from gathering forces and carrying arms. Also, we should secretly search for those who are talented and strong, honoring and rewarding them. At times we should remit their taxes and levies slightly, or on the grounds of using them to eliminate bandits, present them with a post to reward their merit. Hopefully, the frontier people will take pleasure in war, and if one day there is an emergency, the enemy will not easily come south.[68]

The practicality of Yang's program was somewhat problematical, but in any event, such a policy would probably never gain much favor with the imperial house, because the Sung emperors had

labored hard to eliminate any military rivals, and they had a clear memory of the numerous peasant rebellions that had broken out during Kao Tsung's reign.

Yang was fully aware of the contradictions existing between the people and the government, and he wrote of this subject in rather unconventional language in his "Government of the People:"

> I have heard that the people are the life of the state but the enemy of the officials. The officials are the delight of the prince but the distress of the state. The rise and fall of the empire and the length of the dynastic fortunes all arise from this alone. Yet, what evil do the officials do toward the people that the people hate them? It is not that they are enemies of the people. Yet if they do not treat the people as enemies the great ones will be without merit, and their subordinates will have fault. Fault drives them from behind while merit entices them from ahead. Although they do not wish to be enemies of the people, they have no way out. For this reason, when a new policy is forming and the emperor has an idea but has not yet decided, the officials all agree with him. When the emperor has a command but has not put it into practice yet, the officials all precede him. The reason the officials all agree with the emperor's decision and precede the emperor's practices is not because they are

> praising what is of benefit to the people; they praise what is unbeneficial to the people. Why is it they do not praise what is beneficial to the people but praise what is unbeneficial to the people? Men who praise what is beneficial to the people are without merit, while men who praise what is unbeneficial to the people have merit. For this reason, policies which are unbeneficial to the people are not necessarily all the fault of the emperor. When the court intends to take some money beyond the quota and asks the government officers in a certain locality, they will certainly answer that it is good. The people say that it is not good, but the officials do not report it. Not only do they not report it, but the officials subsequently cheat the emperor saying: "The people have all paid with pleasure!"[69]

After this general discussion Yang proceeds to apply his ideas to recent events in the Sung empire:

> On the streets I have heard that the rising of the Lin Bandits last year was brought on by local officers who administered the "equal grain purchase" poorly, but did anyone tell His Majesty this?[a] All the empire knew that the court was intending to eliminate such taxes as this. Nevertheless, I have also heard that in certain commanderies of Kiangsi, a commandery A,

which does not produce silk, has said to the court that it desires to buy silk from commandery B. But what does this mean? There is nothing the people despise more than doing business with the officials. It starts out as "business" but ends up being confiscation. This is why a Sage is careful about beginnings. Now the various cities of commandery B are being levied [for silk] according to the same amount as their [normal] taxes, yet the people are not being compensated with money. People who do not acquiesce are punished by the officials. Supposedly they are being reproved for not paying their normal taxes, but in reality these cruel exactions are being made for the neighboring commandery. Moreover, the so-called "equal buying" is already included in standard taxes.[b] In addition, the so-called "Huai uniforms tax" is also included in the standard taxes.[c] Now we also demand silk of the neighboring commandery. These three types of silk levy along with the silk of the standard taxes are a four-fold exaction.[d] How can the people stand for this? Yet the officials do not let you know.[70]

Yang's policies were not calculated to win him friends in the court or among the more corrupt local officials, so when he arrived in Hang-chou shortly after New Year's of 1171, he quickly became involved in the swirl of the capital's politics. In that year Hsiao Tsung attempted to appoint his son-in-law

Chang Yüeh張說 to an influential position in the military. Many officials thought Chang was incompetent and a public uproar ensued. The opposition centered around Chang Shih張栻 who was the son of Yang's mentor Chang Chün. Although Chang Shih was not a great military leader like his father, he supported the same forward policy against the Chin, which had led his father to disgrace. In the capacity of Lecturer in Waiting 侍講 where he was supposed to discuss new policies in the presence of the emperor, Chang violently attacked the appointment of Chang Yüeh, which he felt would only add to the military confusion of the dynasty. Since Chang Shih's war policies were already unpopular with the emperor, Chang was appointed Governor of Yüan-chou 袁州 to remove him from the central government.[71] Yang immediately came to Chang Shih's defence, and in a memorial Yang sent to the emperor he dared to imply that Hsiao Tsung wished to demote Chang Shih to avenge Chang Yüeh. Yang was no doubt paying back a debt of gratitude he owed to Chang Chün, but his actions were also motivated by the political policies which we have already seen expressed in his treatise.

ChangYüeh was finally confirmed in his new post and Chang Shih left for Yüan-chou. It is somewhat puzzling that Yang was not demoted along with him, but Yang's biography tells us that his spirited defence of Chang Shih won the poet much admiration among other officials, and Hsiao Tsung probably did not think it worth his trouble to disturb someone in such a low position as Yang and thereby excite more public disapproval.

After this initial storm in Yang's career in Hang-chou, his life was relatively uneventful for the next two years. In the ninth month of 1172 he was promoted to the post of Executive Assistant of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices 太常丞 in which he oversaw certain court rituals, and he held this post simultaneously with that of Right Executive of the Ministry of Personnel 吏部右侍郎 . In the fourth month of 1173 he was again promoted to Vice-director of Construction 將作少監 . None of these posts were even remotely powerful, and Yang was mostly busied with the preparation of government documents. Immersed in this paperwork, Yang had absolutely no time to devote to poetry and the three years he spent in the capital produced no poems worthy of notice.

Luckily for the history of Chinese literature, Yang was appointed Governor of Chang-chou 漳州 in Fukien province in the first month of 1174. When Yang set out for his post in Chang-chou, he was already very tired of official life:

> In the year chia-wu I set out as Governor of Chang-chou. In the morning I left by boat at Dragon Mountain and in the evening I slept at T'ung-lu. (Second of two poems)
>
> Racing about on the roads, I have never got any peace;
> I even envy the mountain people who live so leisurely.
> Think of the day when I return to mountains and live
> in peace;
> Then I can forget racing and running about on roads
> forever![72]

In fact, Yang never did go to Chang-chou, because he suddenly gave up his post and returned to Chi-shui instead.

Although Yang may have been partially motivated in his refusal of the governorship of Chang-chou by a desire to retire from official service, other motives seem to have been equally strong. According to a poem he wrote shortly after his return to Chi-shui, various friends had recommended that his governorship be transferred from Chang-chou to Ch'ang-chou 常州, a much more desirable post, because Ch'ang-chou was located in the more economically advanced province of Kiangsi and also much more convenient in maintaining contacts with the capital city.[73] When Yang was not immediately granted this transfer, he put in his resignation. At this time he was only forty-nine years old, and he most likely resigned in order to encourage the government to give him the position he desired.

However, the government did not agree to this change immediately, and Yang spent the next two years at Chi-shui waiting further instructions. He had earned a fairly sizeable amount of money during his years in the capital, and he could now afford to engage in some of the delights proper to a scholar official. During the two years of retirement, there are frequent references to gardening projects, and Yang was particularly delighted by a small library pavilion called the Snow Angling Boat, which he had constructed the first year back in Chi-shui:

I Sleep Exhausted at Snow Angling Boat[a]

I made a small study, which was shaped like a boat, so I named it Snow Angling Boat. While I was reading there, I fell asleep from exhaustion. Suddenly a breeze entered the door and stirred up the overwhelming fragrance of some plum flowers in a vase. I was startled awake and wrote this short poem.

A small pavilion, bright window, I close the door half way;
Reading books, I fall asleep,------zzzzzzz, zzzzzzz.
For no reason at all, I'm disturbed by these plum flowers,
Who blow their perfume at me on purpose and ruin my sweet dreams.[b] 74

This period of leisure also allowed Yang to continue his studies of Ch'an Buddhism, which had occupied second place only to his poetic writing. When he mailed a poem to an old friend who was serving in Kuang-tung, Yang wrote: "Since my friend left me it's been exactly three years. With whom can I discuss poetry and expound on Ch'an?"[75] Most significant of all, Yang Wan-li had started to completely reject the bookishness of the scholar tradition, an attitude which harmonized with Ch'an tenets:

Reading Books

While reading books, I don't tire of toil,
But working too hard makes me tired and dizzy.
I'd best sit meditating with my books;
And the books and I will both forget words.[a]
When I feel like it, I open the pages,
And suddenly I arrive at the Spring of the Hundred Sages.
I say I'm enlightened, but there never was any enlightenment;
I speak of mystery, but from the beginning there's been no mystery.[b]
When I find something that harmonizes with my mind,
All I feel is total delight.
Who is it that makes this pleasure?
It is neither I nor is it Heaven.
I laugh at myself, I've never been right;
I throw the book down at the foot of my pillow![76]

Despite Yang Wan-li's new found enlightenment, he was rapidly becoming depressed by the government's delay in confirming him in his new post, and as the year 1176 came to an end he wrote:

A Rainy Night

It's late in the year, so how can I lack emotions?
My poem complete, I just chant it alone.
The fireflys' lights are cold and turning pale;

The autumn rain becomes heavier toward evening.
Accompanying my old age, my poverty's still in good
health,
So why would my wine want to keep back my sadness.
The chirping bugs accompany the falling leaves;[a]
They beat out a rhythm and sing a song for me.[77]

Yang's friends in the court must have prevailed over his enemies, for in the fourth month of 1178, Yang set out from Chi-shui to become the governor of Ch'ang-chou. Just after his departure Yang encountered difficulties which were symbolic of the problems he anticipated in his new position:

On the tenth day of the fourth month of ting-yu I went to my post at Pi-ling, and when traveling by boat was hampered by the wind, so I spent the night at the mouth of the Chou-po River. (Second poem of two)

Ten miles of river travel is one day's voyage;
Since leaving the mountains, it seems the north wind's
mad at us.
On the east window, the water's reflection, on the
west window, the moon;
Together they shine on this sleepless man in the boat.[78]

Yang's premonitions were quite correct, because he was so busy with paperwork and trifling duties that he had practically no time for writing poetry. Yang had frequently worried about

these occasional fallow periods in his writing and the generally small quantity of his poems. His new position in Ch'ang-chou greatly exaggerated this problem, for he tells us: "In the summer I went to my position in Ching-ch'i, and as soon as I reached my post, I read lawsuits and arranged the local revenue, associating only with red and black ink."[79]

Yang Wan-li was surely a man caught in a spiritual and literary crisis when he arrived in Ch'ang-chou. He probably already realized that high position was never to be his, and so the only claim to fame which he had was his poetry. Yang had already reached the age of fifty by now, and although he had written much fine poetry, he still obviously did not qualify as a great poet. Tu Fu had died when he was fifty-eight. Nevertheless, spiritual crises frequently lead to sudden "conversions," and Yang was no exception, for at the beginning of 1178, he had an experience, which in its depth and suddenness, was closely similar to the profound sudden enlightenment of a Ch'an monk:

> On New Years Day of wü-hsü (1178) I was on vacation, and lacking official business, I wrote poetry on this day. Suddenly I was as if enlightened . . . I was then very joyful. I tried having my son hold the writing brush while I orally composed several poems, and they came gushing forth without any of the previous grinding.[80]

Yang Wan-li had experienced a profound awakening of his poetic creativity, for in the single year 1178, he wrote more poems than he had in the last eight years of his life, and this great burst of writing came while he was busily engaged with local government. In a poem written soon after his enlightenment, Yang describes the new ease which he felt in writing verse:

Drinking Late

One by one I recite the poems, one by one I copy them;
I have a cup of wild vegetables and some mountain
dainties, too.
The spring almost doesn't brace this man's drunkeness
When the moon arrives at the tip top branch of the plums.[81]

Yang Wan-li's poetic enlightenment had been preceded by a much greater awareness of Ch'an, as we have already seen. Although it would be hazardous to make an estimate of Yang's spiritual level in 1178, it seems that his poetic enlightenment was only part of a deeper spiritual enlightenment. Though he does not inform us definitely of a sudden awakening in the Buddhist sense, a poem he wrote in the same year describes a mystical experience of the Buddhist variety:

While on Vacation, I Read Books in Abundant Planting Pavilion on a Clear Morning

Since I brought my family to govern Ching-ch'i,
A year has already suddenly passed.
My official residence isn't really bad,
But my feelings are always devoid of joy.
If my servants don't get sick,
Then my children are surely crying.
Formerly I was poor, sighing I was never full;
But this autumn it's not hunger that bothers me.
In morning I get up with a book in my sleeve,
And climb to the pavilion quickly to enjoy myself.
Traces of dew, stars and moon still remain;
Winds and air, no windows or shutters.
Suddenly I feel my old sick body
Can't stand these robes of linen.
How could I get through yesterday's heat?
The morning coolness is what I treasure!
White birds far off look like butterflies;
Black locusts hum like poets chanting.
The color of pine trees turns my spirit to snow;
Fragrance of lotuses ices my gall.
Suddenly, where have happiness and sorrow gone?
My body, too, disappears completely.
My children don't understand anything,
For they call me to come home and eat breakfast.[82]

The "old, sick body" of which Yang speaks is the body which the Buddhists say suffers from old age, sickness, and death. In a flash of intuition Yang leaves this body behind and transcends the duality between happiness and sorrow.

Yang's children calling him from his state of enlightenment to attend to more practical matters such as eating breakfast, suggests that his spiritual quests were limited by more practical matters such as caring for his family by working for the government, and a poem he wrote shortly afterward hints that his worldly problems were still far from an ideal solution:

My Son Cries in Want of Food

How could I ignore our emperor's kindness giving us
food and warmth?[a]
But my young son, used to poverty, is always starving.[b]
Morning after morning I hear him crying-----
Just when the cooking grain is almost done![c] 83

Nevertheless, as the footnote shows, the last line of the poem suggests the dream-like nature of the official career Yang was pursuing. In fact for the Ch'an Buddhist true enlightenment consists in the realization that illusion and reality are identical and that the life of the ordinary world is the same as the life of the enlightened. The ideal of the Ch'an school and, indeed, of most other Chinese schools of Buddhist thought was the legendary figure of Vimalakīrti, a rich merchant who

lived fully in the world of action and yet possessed a richer understanding of the Buddhist doctrine than the monk disciples of Buddha, who engaged in constant meditation and fasting.[84] It was at about this period in Yang's life when he realized the truth of this Vimalakīrti ideal:

Approaching Holidays

In the holidays I'm not without work,
Yet in my business, I naturally have leisure.
Using the wind I bother the white bird
To send a letter calling the green mountain.
A collection of poetry, one or two volumes;
My library, three or four rooms.
When I feel like it, I can write poetry,
Yet I still say I'm in the world of dust![85]

In Yang's condition his leisure is his business and his business, his leisure, and he is both within and outside of the world of dust.

In the first month of 1179 Yang Wan-li was appointed Intendant for Ever Normal Granaries, Tea, and Salt of Kuang-tung province 廣東常平茶鹽 . He left Ch'ang-chou very satisfied with both his accomplishments as a poet and an administrator: "At this time, not only did I not feel the difficulty of writing poetry but also I did not feel the difficulty of being a governor."[86] However, Yang did not set out immediately for Kuang-tung, for he wished to return home first,

and so in the third month he began a leisurely journey back to Chi-shui. On the way he stopped to visit his friend, the poet Fan Ch'eng-ta, who was living in the city of Suchow in Kiang-su province at this time. The trip west was an extremely fertile period for Yang and within less than a year he wrote over two hundred poems, which he later sent to Fan for the poet's approval.

Sometime in the early summer Yang arrived home where he remained for the rest of the year enjoying himself and writing continuously. However, he was not able to stay idle for long, for after the New Years's celebrations of 1180, Yang set forth on the long and perilous journey south to Canton. Besides a number of stages by land, Yang had to pass through a series of highly dangerous river gorges on his way south:

> Having passed all the dangerous rapids, I can't stand any more;
> Yet suddenly I am startled by sheer cliffs, azure, precipitous.
> Undying thousand year old trees hang upside down,
> Brushing against the racing currents of thousand yard lakes.[87]

Although Kuang-tung was not so terrifying a place as it had been in T'ang times, Yang felt that he had entered a new and somewhat alien world:

Passing Chen-yang Gorge (Fifth poem of six)

In the shadow of a banyan tree, our single reed boat
lies horizontal.
Midst the cries of partridges, the mountain peaks turn
greener.[a]
When southerners come here, even their hearts are broken;
But I'm not a southerner, so what can I do?[88]

In contrast to most T'ang poets who served in the deep south, Yang did not bemoan his fate upon arrival in Canton, and in a manner typical of Sung intellectuals, he immediately set out to explore the unusual natural phenomena of the tropical climate and utilize this new material for his poetry. One of the most delightful products of Kuang-tung is the lichee, and judging by the number of poems Yang wrote about this fruit, he considered eating it to be one of the high points of his visit:

On the Eighth of the Fourth Month I Eat New Lichees

A little spot of rouge dyes its stems' edges,
Then suddenly red covers its green robe completely.[a]
Its purple jade bones are as slender as a clove,
While its snow white flesh is cool in the noon heat.
How could I bear touching this icy pellet on my palm?[b]
Still its flavor along with wine is hard to forget!
This old glutton wants to eat three hundred lichees,
But I fear their sweet chill will freeze my intestines
to pieces!![89]

Yang's peaceful career as a provincial official was soon disturbed, for in 1181 his area was invaded by rebel forces under the command of a bandit chieftain Shen Shih 沈師.[90] Shen's uprising had begun in Ch'ao-chou, but after clashing with government forces there, he marched south. During these years there were numerous popular uprisings in the south, largely due to the excessive taxation of the central government which was necessitated by the huge military expenses for national defence and the tribute to the Chin Tartars. Yang himself was very much aware of the explosive situation which existed in the countryside, as we have already seen, and although he was totally faithful to the central government, he must have accepted his new post as Judicial Intendant of Kuang-tung 廣東提點刑獄 with considerable trepidation, for he was now in charge of suppressing the revolt. It is worth noting that two of the other most famous poets of the period, Hsin Ch'i-chi and Fan Ch'eng-ta had to engage in similar distasteful military operations against local bandits. When we take into mind the general dislike of warfare current among most Sung literati, we can easily understand Yang's sentiments expressed in a poem written while engaging in the hazardous journeys during the campaign:

A Bamboo Branch Song of Gorge Mountain Monastery[a]

When tortoises and fish reach here, they always turn
back;
Not only tortoises and fish, even the crabs are worried!

Then why does this poet make light of his old life?
He goes to Shao-chou to clash with sandbanks and smash
against rocks![91]

The hardships of the military campaign reminded Yang of his former hardships as a youth:

. . .
When young I was poor and lowly;
I didn't have land big enough to set up an awl.
With my writing brush plow I tilled paper fields,
And I drew black water from my pool of ink.
. . .
If my cries of hunger couldn't be heard,
I was so used to hunger, I just didn't cry.
I have been racing swiftly for thirty years;
What has all this toil and labor got me after all?
My hair has turned white by following roads,
And my face has blackened from wind and snow.
As night approaches I'm at White Sand Rapids;
My life is as fragile as a strand of silk.
Vast waves whirl our single leaf of a boat;
I cry to heaven and call upon gods and spirits.
If my life is preserved, it will be by accident;
What can the power of man accomplish?[92]
. . .

If we were not familiar with Yang's usual optimistic outlook on life, we might suspect that he is only engaging in self-pity. Yet a good deal of his frustration was no doubt due to a feel-

ing that he was now in the same category as those officials he had declared an enemy of the people in his earlier writings.

His Confucian background required him to serve the government that had appointed him to his post, and Yang's contradictory emotions can be seen in a poem he wrote only a few months after the one above:

The Old Road

In my life I've grown tired of traveling by road,
But on this journey I'm so happy I couldn't refuse.
How am I different from other men,
Do I tire of idleness, take joy in driving myself on?
When I am engaged in traveling on the king's business,
Forgetting my body, how can I be self-conscious?
Bandits from Fukien have entered my department;

It is important that these creeping vines not be
allowed to grow.
Officials are so angered their caps shoot up;
And people cherish feelings for requiting the state.[93]

The campaign lasted only a few months, and Yang was totally successful in routing the rebel armies. Shortly before the fight drew to a close Yang wrote:

I Send Out a Command to Summon the Soldiers
of All the Commanderies

The Fukien bandits leered at Kuang-tung in the evening,[a]
Yet by morning the southern soldiers had all gone east.
Our armies' cry shakes the cliffs and valleys;
Our banners' shadows delight in the frosty wind.
Those leopards and tigers flocked together from all
quarters,
But the Spear Comet was cleared away with one laugh.[b]
As for insignificant rats like them,
Our superficial merit is hardly worth reporting.[94]

In spite of whatever misgivings Yang might have felt while on the military campaigns, his victory was of immediate advantage to his political career. When the emperor heard of his exploits, Yang was quickly recalled for service in the central government, and at the end of 1181, he headed back to Hang-chou, intending to stop at his home in Kiangsi on the way. He never reached the capital, because in the seventh month of 1182, his mother died, and he now began the expected three years' mourning period. Yang's observation of his mother's mourning period was much stricter than after his father's death. Not only did Yang refuse the official post offered him as would be customary, but he also stopped all literary activity for the next three years. After his father's death Yang had written quite a number of poems and even taken short trips away from Chi-shui. Now he remained isolated at home and did not even

engage in correspondence with his friends. It seems somewhat difficult to account for Yang's greater strictness of behavior after his mother's death, for he spoke of his father much more frequently in his verse than his mother. Possibly, Yang was now a relatively famous man, and society expected him to display a greater degree of filial piety than during his more obscure youth.

In 1184 Yang's mourning came to an end, and in the eleventh month he was appointed Assistant Officer of the Ministry of Personnel 吏部員外郎. His first important act in the new post was to send up a memorial in the fifth month of 1185 by request of the emperor due to an earthquake which had recently shaken the capital. Although most enlightened scholars in Sung times did not believe in omens and prodigies, the central government was extremely sensitive to natural disasters and was afraid that the people would take such events as a sign that the imperial house had lost the mandate of heaven. Hence, the emperor usually requested officials to criticize his faults when some disaster occurred in order to show his concern for the people's welfare and willingness to correct any personal shortcomings responsible for heaven's anger.

In his memorial Yang warned the emperor that the Sung government should renew its hostilities with the Chin before it was too late:

> North and South have been at peace for more than thirty years. But if one day they cut off relations, the feel-

> ings of the barbarians will be hard to judge, and some will say: "They are suffering from the calamity of five chiefs fighting for the throne or from the same calamity as the Hsiung-nu when troubled by the Eastern Han or the Northern Wei when distressed by the Jou-jan."[a] If, however, none of these things come true, some will say, "They will fear us," and others will say, "They will not dare to plot against us." Do they really fear us and dare not plot against us? It is rumored in the streets that they are repairing the walls and moats of Pien-ching and opening canals in Hai-chou.[b] Moreover, to the north and south of the Yellow River they are conscripting soldiers from the people and increasing dispatch cavalry and building horse stables. They are also registering wells and springs. They appropriate sea-going vessels and move them inland where they are repaired and made new. Their intentions are extremely secretive and their restrictions very tight, so that our spies are not able to enter.95

Yang's call for greater military preparedness was totally ignored by Hsiao Tsung and his pacifist court.

Despite Yang's futile call to arms the proper authorities were duly impressed by the poet's patriotism and soon afterward he was promoted to Office Chief of the Ministry of Personnel 吏部郎中 . In this position he managed to exert a slightly greater influence on policy. According to Yang's

biography, shortly after Yang had been promoted, the prime minister Wang Huai 王淮 asked Yang: "What is the most important thing with which a prime minister ought to concern himself?" In true Confucian fashion Yang is supposed to have answered: "Talented men!"[96] When Wang pressed Yang further about which individuals were most talented, Yang submitted a list of sixty names, which is still preserved in his complete works. In addition to naming old friends such as Hsiao Te-tsao, it is quite interesting to note that the first name on the list was Chu Hsi 朱熹, the famous neo-Confucian philosopher.[97] Although Yang and Chu were not extremely close friends, they did exchange a few poems, and Chu himself was a very good friend of Chang Chün's son Chang Shih. Yang had been interested in neo-Confucian thought for some years,[98] but the main reason he recommended Chu Hsi for high position was the Sung philosopher's impeccable standard of conduct and possibly more important, Chu's opposition to southern Sung pacifism.

In 1186 Yang Wan-li was promoted four times, and when he obtained the position of Reader in Waiting to the Crown Prince 太子侍讀, he was honored by the emperor presenting him the purple fish sash. He was now on reasonably intimate terms with the imperial family and high officials, and we are assured that the crown prince was delighted when Yang read to him from the memorials of the famous T'ang prose stylist Lu Chih 陸贄. Actually, Yang's association with the upper crust of Sung society had an extremely detrimental effect on his poetry. He was now away from the natural surroundings which were the usual material of his verse, and while Yang was in the capital, he

wrote a host of extremely insipid poems celebrating various court events or mourning the demise of certain high functionaries.

We could almost accuse Yang of sycophancy in some of these poems, although, of course, such hack work was expected of officials close to the imperial family. That such poems do not express Yang's true feelings can be seen from the following work composed at this time:

> Written on Portrait of the Duke of Ch'iao Welcoming the Grand Empress, Shown to me by Ts'ao Chung-pen; I Recorded the Entire Painting from "Ordering the Imperial Insignia" Onwards.[a]
>
> Spring days are long in front of Palace of Virtue and Longevity;[b]
> When flowers bloom inside the palace, the outside is fragrant, too.
> The Grand Sovereign nourishes his spirit up in the Jade Empyrean,[c]
> So men of the capital have not gazed on his pure light a long time.
> This morning we suddenly see them putting the imperial insignia in order,
> Kingfisher flower banners and yellow tent chariots descend from heaven.
> One shout of "Make way!" and a myriad men look on;
> Ice melts in the Heavenly Street, but snow remains on upper stories.

From the north comes yet another red parasol,
Eight phoenix bells, three coursers, and golden hub caps.
It seems the Mother of Jasper Pool is in this carriage[d]
With her phoenix slippers, rosy robes cut from cloud
and mist.
The Grand Sovereign gazes at her, his heavenly
countenance beaming;
In the spring wind of myriad states, the hundred
flowers dance.
This is a portrait of Grand Empress Tz'u-ning's
returning chariot;
Mother and son as they were before, no equal in a
thousand ages.
Arboreal clouds and frontier snows, the banners' feet
damp;[e]
Imperial willows and palace plums, their cold shadows
sparse.
All along, the Tz'u-ning Empress has been cut off by
sandy wastes;
She begged geese to send a letter, but geese are hard
to trust.[f]
What man is this who welcomes back her black steed
chariot?
A descendant of the Martial Emperor of Wei, General
Ts'ao Hsün.[g]
Originally the general was only a broad-robed scholar,
But suddenly heaving his shoulders, he drew a five
stone bow.

With only a salute to the Khan, who seemed a small boy,
He brought back her compassionate carriage, as easily
as breaking a branch.
His merit covers all the world, but it was only sport
for him,
And with a laugh he follows the Red Pine Immortal,[h]
waxing his pair of boots.[i]
He floats to the south of South Mountain and the north
of North Mountain, too.
Don't you see that when Yüeh Fei's work was done, he
didn't get out of the way?[j]
But I tell you the Prime Minister of the Ch'in family
is glaring![k] 99

Although the events in the poem had taken place forty-three years earlier, Yang would have been very foolish to publish his poem under the current circumstances. The poem seems to be a simple celebration of Kao Tsung's filial piety, but it is actually a bitter satire on Kao Tsung's hypocritical concern for his father Hui Tsung and even suggests that Kao Tsung was directly responsible for Yüeh Fei's death. Kao Tsung was merely in retirement at the time, and Hsiao Tsung would have been deeply offended by such accusations against his own father. The appeasement party at the court was certainly not about to admit the sinister deeds of Ch'in Kuei, the very architect of their pacifist policies.

In 1187 there was a serious drought, and the emperor re-

quested advice from his officials, so Yang Wan-li sent up the second important memorial since his appointment to the capital. In this work, he did not discuss military affairs but concentrated more on internal policy. Yang stated that the drought was caused by a "perverse vapor" which blocked up the passage of the yin and yang between heaven and earth:

> But what is this perverse vapor then? The sound of the people's sighs is extremely minute but it is sufficient to be heard by august Heaven. The people's thoughts of hatred are extremely hidden but they are sufficient to reach the exalted God. This is the reason why such a perverse vapor has been formed and why the vapors between heaven and earth have been cut off. When someone loves the people like Your Highness and cares for the people like Your Highness, how can there be such things as hatred and sighs? It is probably because the grace from above does not flow downwards and the feelings from below do not penetrate upwards . . . Above there is a prince who lightens taxation, yet the people do not receive his true kindness. Above there is a prince who examines punishments, but the people do not obtain his deep love.[100]

Yang continues to say that although the emperor remits taxes and makes laws to benefit the people, all is to no avail because of corrupt officials. Yang did not dare directly attack the emperor himself in such documents, but as we have seen in

the poem above, he was fully aware of the hypocrisy of the imperial family itself.

In the tenth month of 1187 Yang was promoted to Vice-director of the Imperial Library 秘書少監, a post in which he was in charge of documents for that branch of the government. In the same month the retired emperor Kao Tsung, whom Yang despised so much, passed away, and since Hsiao Tsung wished to observe the three year mourning period, he sent down a decree which in effect handed over power to the Crown Prince for the duration. According to the decree a Hall for Discussing Affairs 議事堂 was set up, in which the Crown Prince was to decide all political matters in the presence of the officials already serving in the court. Yang probably recognized the ineptitude of the future emperor Kuang Tsung 光宗 and protested strongly that the urgency of national affairs required the presence of Hsiao Tsung in state decisions. When Yang's protests were ignored, he attempted to resign from his post but to no avail.

As the year 1188 wore on Yang became further embroiled in court strife. In the third month of the year a Han-lin Academy scholar Hung Mai 洪邁 suggested that a number of dead military and political figures who had lived during the reign of Kao Tsung should be allowed to enjoy sacrificial offerings in the temple of the deceased emperor. When Yang saw that his master Chang Chün was not included in the list of names, he became outraged and immediately sent up a memorial attacking Hung Mai for his arbitrary and dictatorial conduct. Even worse, Yang Wan-li bluntly said that Hung Mai's actions were no dif-

ferent from "calling a stag a horse."[101] This accuasation was particularly serious for not only did it defame Hung Mai's character but it also indirectly slandered both the Crown Prince and Hsiao Tsung. When Chao Kao 趙高, the Machiavellian prime minister of the Ch'in dynasty plotted to put the second son of Ch'in Shih Huang 秦始皇 on the throne in place of the rightful heir, he decided to utilize a ruse to ascertain the loyalty of the courtiers around him. Chao presented the prince with a stag and said that it was a horse, whereupon the prince asked all the courtiers what the animal was. Those who said the animal was a stag and not a horse were judged undependable, and Chao quickly proceeded to assassinate them. In addition to comparing Hung Mai to the notorious Chao Kao, Yang had suggested that the Crown Prince was not the rightful successor and that Hsiao Tsung was as evil as Chinese historians have judged Ch'in Shih Huang to be.

The emperor Hsiao Tsung flew into a rage and is supposed to have said: "What kind of ruler does Wan-li take me for?"[102] In a less humane age of Chinese history Yang could have expected the executioner's axe or at least banishment to such an unhealthy place as Hai-nan, where he would hopefully die of malaria. Nevertheless, the Sung dynasty was more civilized, and Hsiao Tsung is said to have had a grudging appreciation of Yang's audacity.

Actually, the main struggle was not over whether Chang Chün would enjoy the imperial sacrifices, and the real cause of dissension was the continuing fight between the pro- and anti-war parties in the court. Refusing the sacrifices to

Chang Chün was a blow to the prestige of the advocates of military action against the Chin. We must remember that Hsiao Tsung himself had initiated Chang Chün's unsuccessful counter-attack, and although its failure forced the emperor into the pacifist camp, he very likely held a secret admiration for men like Yang Wan-li. Thus, in the fourth month of 1188, Yang was appointed governor of Yün-chou 筠州 near modern Kao-an 高安 in southern Kiangsi province.

Before we trace the subsequent events in Yang's political career, we should say something about his personal life in the capital from 1184-88. Although Yang spent much of his time associating with high officials and the imperial family, he also renewed contacts with a number of old acquaintances and made new friendships. Yang's first poem to Yu Mou 尤袤 (1127-1194) dates from 1178, but the two poets do not seem to have been on very close terms until Yang's residence in the capital. They exchanged a large number of poems at this time, so one suspects that Yang was influenced by Yu Mou's views on literature. Unfortunately very few of Yu Mou's poems have been handed down to posterity, despite later critics rating him as one of the four best poets of the southern Sung, so that we have practically no way to determine exactly what Yu's influence was.[103]

Yang met another literary great during this period, and Yang's long association with the fiery patriot poet Lu Yu left an indelible impression on his verse. The first poem Yang wrote to Lu Yu dates from 1186, although the two poets had certainly known one another much earlier. Yang's friendship with

Lu was much more dramatic than his relation with Yu, as we can see in a poem written shortly after Yang and Lu renewed their friendship:

A Cloud and Dragon Song in Fun of Lu Yu[a]

Master-cloud Yang was from Inky Pool,[b]
And Scholar-dragon Lu from In the Clouds.[c]
Heaven was jealous of their clever words,
So she kept them apart, never letting them meet.
We meet again suddenly in Ch'ang-an Market;[d]
It must have been three thousand years since we parted.
How many times have the Queen Mother's peach blossoms fallen?[e]
The handle of the Big Dipper is rotten, the Milky Way dry.
The hair on our temples has turned to silk as white as snow;
Two old men stare at each other, faces red as cinnabar.
I beg to ask: "Since our parting, where have you gone?"
"The Wei river flows east, but I have gone up west."[f]
Your golden seal big as a dipper, how much cash is it worth?[g]
Your brocade sack like a mountain, how many poems in it now?[h]
A poet is never afraid of ending his chanting;
He only fears no wind or moon in the world.
Don't you see that the Han Marquis of Level Ford[i]
Had scholar caps and chariot awnings floating like clouds in his eastern pavilion?[j]

And haven't you seen at the same time the great generals
Had nobles and ministers surround in worship like stars
racing about?
But now these clouds have dispersed and the stars
scattered, too,
And there aren't even deer climbing their terraces and
pavilions or sheep climbing their mounds.[k]
When can I climb Mount Lu with you[l]
And turn our ink-stone water into water falls?
Grinding sickles, we'll chop up the Sun-rise Tree;[m]
We'll beat its bark into paper and tailor smoke and mist.
With the heavenly loom we can weave cloud brocade into
lines of verse![n]
The sea plums of Lone Peak have all opened now;[o]
Though it's already the Shang-ssu Festival, no travelers
have gone yet.[p]
I'm dying to go there with you at once:
"One cup, one cup, and one cup more!"[q]
Who cares if Jade Mountain falls over or not?[r]
And what matters the fame of my poetry to me?[104]

From the poem we can see that Yang was not able to see Lu daily in the capital, for Lu only visited Hang-chou on his way to various local posts he was holding at the time. Although Yang already belonged to the pro-war faction, his contact with Lu Yu fortified his former views and political themes became increasingly common in his verse for the next few years.

One of the greatest results of the many friendships Yang made or renewed during these years was a great increase in the fame of his poetry. His renown as a poet was also helped along by the recognition he achieved in the Kuang-tung military campaigns, and it is interesting to note that the first collection of works he had printed was the Nan-hai Chi 南海集 or Collection of the South Seas, which Yang wrote while at Canton. Yang's works had circulated among his friends in manuscript form for a number of years, but he waited until 1186 until he had this first collection printed. Obviously the reception was good, for in 1187 Yang published the Ching-ch'i Chi 荊溪集 written while he was governor of Ch'ang-chou and the Hsi Kuei Chi 西歸集, which recorded his trip from the capital to Chi-shui in 1179. In 1188 Yang felt sufficiently brave to publish his more youthful poems written between 1162 and 1177, which he entitled Chiang Hu Chi 江湖集 or Collection of Rivers and Lakes. Yang Wan-li divided his various collections according to distinct periods in his political life, and he was very careful to arrange the works in strict chronological order, a practice which he never abandoned. The great caution which he and his descendants used in editing his complete works is largely responsible for the generally good condition of the text which survives. After these first printed editions came out, the demand for Yang Wan-li's poetry was strong enough to enable him to publish all subsequent collections as soon as the poems were completed.

When Yang Wan-li set out for Yün-chou in 1188, he does not seem to have felt any particular disgrace, and in fact, he

was deeply relieved. He intended to return home to Chi-shui first, and his expectations of rest and relaxation after the hectic life of the capital inspired him to write:

Sleeping on the Boat at Noon

A single leaf boat shakes unsteadily;
Dazed, my wonderful thoughts are penetrating.
I change into a Lacquer Garden butterfly[a]
And fly into the Great Locust Palace.[b]
There is wine to tempt and lead me on,
But no tea to rob or attack me.
All my life I haven't slept enough,
So now I can settle the account midst the splash of oars![105]

As one can imagine, Yang's return trip was extremely relaxed, and he did not even reach his new post until winter time. After arriving in Yün-chou, Yang spent much of his time enjoying the local sights. He renewed his interests in Ch'an Buddhism and frequently compares himself to a Buddhist monk during this period. When sending off a friend to the capital, Yang wrote:

Sending Off Tseng Wu-yi to Become a Historian

Jade rainbows race in the water of Lucky Pattern River;[a]
My home was to the west of the water, yours to the east.
At times we thought of each other, and immediately
ordered carriages;

On adjoining couches we listened to pine wind in the
night's rain.
Meanwhile, as poor officials, we scattered our separate
ways;
I was a south flying honker, you a north flying goose.
This morning the post rider knocks on the watch tower
gate:
"There's a guest, a guest, who's come to see you!"
I hear that you are taking your family to the emperor's
capital;
Beating drums, you set off on boat, travelling up to
heaven.
Still you were able to go out of your way by several
miles
To come and visit this monk in his hermitage of Kiangsi.
Two poet immortals reside in the Imperial Secretariat[b]
Midst red peonies, green moss, and the shadows of
purple myrtles.
If they ask you what this mountain monk is doing:
As the day gets late and orioles sing, he sleeps and
never wakes up![106]

The peace of mind which Yang achieved at Yün-chou is best summed up in a poem he wrote shortly after sending his friend off:

I Rest at Noon in Yün Monastery

I don't come to Yün Monastery so often,
But whenever I come, it's always nice.
The wind falls from the forest's branches,
And blows the bamboo roots' grass in disarray.
Both my cap and sandals, above and below, are cool,
While orioles and magpies, left and right, chatter.
The sound of the city is really not very close,
But if you listen quietly, even distant sounds can be heard.
As I sit on the stone bench, it becomes warm,
And the moss path is as pure as if swept.
I try to write the word "sad" in the air,
But I've already forgotten its radical![a]
What's more, I've even forgotten sadness itself,
So how could I still remember old age?
When strangers come to talk of worldly affairs,
I want to laugh, yet I'm just too lazy to laugh![107]

Yang Wan-li hoped that the world would leave him alone for the rest of his life, but political events altered his plans for retirement. In the second month of 1189, Hsiao Tsung abdicated the throne in favor of the Crown Prince, who now became the new emperor Kuang Tsung (1190-95). Six months later Yang Wan-li was called back to the capital as Director of the Imperial Library 秘書監, and he arrived at Hang-chou in the ninth month. The first important act which Yang performed

upon reaching the capital was to have the poems he had written in Kiangsi printed, and he wrote a preface to his new Chiang-hsi Tao Yüan Chi 江西道院集 or Collection of the Kiangsi Hermitage in the tenth month. Although Yang was now enjoying considerable fame as a poet, the political situation to which he returned was much tenser than when he had left the capital in 1188. The new emperor was totally incompetent, and the Empress Li 李 actually made all political decisions. Unfortunately, her discretion was hardly better than that of her husband, and in an attempt to consolidate her power, she tried to sow dissension between Kuang Tsung and his retired father, claiming that Hsiao Tsung wished to replace his son with another heir.

Luckily for Yang Wan-li, he did not need to be caught up in the internal dissension of the court, because in the twelfth month, he was appointed Welcoming and Accompanying Ambassador 接伴使 to the Chin, and so he was able to leave the capital on a lengthy voyage. To understand Yang's duties we must explain the diplomatic relations between the southern Sung court and the Chin. According to the terms of the new peace treaty after Chang Chün's campaigns against the Chin, the Chinese and Tartars were on equal terms as far as diplomatic protocol was concerned. Nevertheless, it was stipulated that the Chin and Sung should exchange ambassadors on New Year's Day and imperial birthdays. Yang's function was to welcome and entertain the ambassador from the Chin, P'ei-man Yü-ch'ing 裴滿餘慶, who was to arrive in Hang-chou in the twelfth month to congratulate Kuang Tsung on the New Year.

Yang's mission was extremely sensitive, because even the smallest mistake or unintended slight could be viewed as an excuse for Chin military actions or at least a stiff reprimand for the Sung court. Yang's close friend, the poet Fan Ch'eng-ta, had a harrowing experience when he went on a mission to K'ai-feng in 1170. When Fan attempted to present a private petition for a change of protocol, the Chin emperor was so infuriated by Fan's disregard of normal procedures, that he came close to ordering Fan executed on the spot. Fan bravely stood his ground, and the Chin emperor finally gave in and received the poet's petition, but the Chin ruler made a very threatening report to the Sung government.[108]

Yang did not have to travel in enemy territory but was only expected to meet the Chin ambassador after he had crossed the Huai River boundary between the two states. Yang's trip northward from Hang-chou started out auspiciously, and as he crossed the Yangtze River he wrote:

Crossing the Yangtze River[a]

(Second Poem of Two)

Heaven made this natural moat to protect the skies of Wu;[b]
It's equal to Yao-han, a pass where two can hold off a hundred.[c]
This ten thousand mile silver river drains into the jasper sea,
And a pair of jade pagodas outline Metal Mountain.[d]
Banners and flags on the other shore, Huai-nan is close;[e]

Drums and trumpets blare midst frost; all calm north
of the frontier.
Many thanks to the River God, for the wind is just right;
I cross a thousand acres of vast waves in an instant.[f] 109

On the surface, the poem seems to be a celebration of a pleasant journey across the river, but Yang was obviously aware that the southern dynasties of the North-south Period had also relied upon the Yangtze River as a "natural moat" to protect themselves from northern barbarian invasions, just as the southern Sung was doing now. A river that the poet could cross so easily could also be navigated by Chin warships, and we have already seen how Yang had warned the Sung government about Chin naval preparations.

When he passed Kua-chou or Melon Island Yang wrote:

Passing Melon Island Market[a]

Sad at night from wind and waves, I can't get to sleep;
A dawn crossing, pure and peaceful, everything's at ease.
With a few strokes on the metal gong, we're at the river
port;
A single sail full of frosty sunlight, our boat goes up
the Huai.
Pi-li's horses are dead, not even their bones are left;[b]
A-liang's tower has collapsed, now only wild fields.[c]
North and South have rested their arms for thirty years
now,

So mulberry patches and wheat mounds grow all the way
to heaven.[110]

Once again there is a deceptive aura of peace about Yang's poem. He refers to the unsuccessful attempts of the Chin to cross the Yangtze and conquer the Sung and reminds his reader that there has been peace for thirty years with the enemy. Yet Yang had severely criticized Sung complacency during this mock peace, and from the complete absorption of the peasants in agricultural pursuits, it was clear that his plans for training a peasant militia had been completely ignored.

As the poet passed the strategic bridge over the Yangtze he wrote:

Gazing Afar as my Boat Passes Yangtze Bridge[a]

Today the Huai's bank is called our northern frontier,
But in olden times, the Huai bank was set down as
southern domain.[b]
Nowhere in this level waste is there any rampart at all;
Beyond the tips of branches on the distant trees is
simply sky.
Whoever won or lost on the battlefields of past or
present?
Are the strategic points of Chinese and barbarians only
mountains and rivers?
The Six Dynasties cannot be lightly ridiculed or slandered,
For the heroes Wang Tao and Hsieh Hsüan were not just an
accident![c] [111]

He carefully noted the peaceful atmosphere and even more important the total lack of military fortifications in such an important area. The high point of the poem is his suggestion that the Sung dynasty had done even worse than the southern dynasties in training and using good generals. Historians after the North-south Period certainly "ridiculed" the southern dynasties for the ineptness of their rulers and military weakness, yet when Yang suggested that the Sung dynasty was even weaker, he was insulting the Sung emperors almost as audaciously as when he suggested that Kao Tsung was another Ch'in Shih Huang.

Yang finally reached the boundary on the Huai River, and now his mood was much tenser than before:

On First Entering the Huai River

As soon as our boat leaves the sandbanks of Flood Lake,[a]
We arrive at the Huai River, and my mood is no longer good.[b]
Why is it that only the Sang-kan River is far away?[c]
Everything north of midstream is as far as the ends of heaven.[112]

Although Yang was not a northerner, he felt the same frustration as such northern poets as Lu Yu and Hsin Ch'i-Chi, when he realized that he did not have the freedom to visit the homeland of Chinese culture in the north:

Boats from the two shores race away from each other,
But when their waves clash together, trouble's in
the making.
Only the gulls and egrets aren't under any constraint;
They go back and forth from north to south, flying
about at ease.[113]

This frustration changed to indignation and anger when he thought about the political background of the Sung fiasco:

Liu Ch'i, Yüeh Fei, Chang Chün, and Han Shih-chung
proclaimed our country's might;[a]
While the two prime ministers Chao Tung, and Chang Chün
built the imperial foundation.[b]
Within a foot the long Huai divides us into North and
South;
My tears moisten the autumn wind--who should I blame
for this?[114]

Yang Wan-li was not an effusive poet, and it is very rare that we find the word "tears" even mentioned in his verse, in contrast to T'ang and earlier poets who were forever reaching for their handkerchiefs to dry their eyes. Yang's "tears" were tears of rage over what he considered the unforgivable political blunders of the southern Sung. Three of the generals he mentioned, Liu Ch'i, Yüeh Fei, and Han Shih-chung, were all eliminated by the emperor Kao Tsung and the prime minister Ch'in Kuei after they had served out their usefulness in con-

solidating the emperor's position in the south. Chang Chün, Yang's teacher, had been disgraced after the inept support given him by Hsiao Tsung. Yang clearly knew whom he could blame for the disaster which had lost half of China to the Chin.

Yang spares us from any account of the demeaning rituals which he had to follow while welcoming the Chin ambassador. However, the shame which he felt had stirred his entire being, and when on the return journey he stopped at Chin Shan 金山 or Metal Mountain, a famous scenic wonder with many splendid Buddhist monasteries, Yang wrote:

After the Snow Stops I Climb Metal Mountain at Dawn

East of Scorched Mountain, west of Metal Mountain,[a]
Metal Mountain opens the empyrean as high as the
    southern dipper.
Heaven took the waters of three rivers and five lakes,[b]
Joining them into this one river we name the Yangtze.
It comes from above the nine heavens
And drains beneath the nine levels of the earth.[c]
When it meets a peak, that peak immediately snaps;
Meeting a rock, that rock immediately crumbles.
The force of heaven and earth collects in this river;
If one of its waves beats at you, who dares resist?
How strong is this Metal Mountain?
It stands mid-stream alone in the upper reaches.
Not one speck of dust follows the sea wind dancing;
Not one pebble follows the sea tide away.

On its four sides it has no stem, beneath no root;
Floating in the void, it leaps forth to rest in the river's heart.
Golden palaces and silver look-outs rise on its peak;
Beating drums and clanging bells are heard all over China.[d]
The poet treads on snow to come for this pure excursion;
And heaven's wind blows him right up the coral tower.
Not for this Floating Jade Peak do I drink from my jade-boat cup;[e]
Surely the Great River is ashamed of us!
Surely Metal Mountain mourns for us![115]

Yang's poem starts innocently enough as a powerful description of the outstanding scenery found around the island, but when one reads the last two lines, one realizes that even the mountains feel a revulsion for the disgusting defeat of the Sung armies led by their incompetent emperors. Metal Mountain could not be swept away by the Yangtze River, but the Sung dynasty was clearly doomed.

Yang returned to the capital about New Year of 1190 and was given an assignment as Reviser of the Veritable Records 实錄檢討 in addition to the post he already had in the Secretariat. Since Hsiao Tsung had abdicated the throne, it was necessary to finish preparations of the historical records or "veritable records" of his long twenty-seven year reign. In the eighth month Hsiao Tsung's Calendar was completed, and Yang was requested to write a preface, which was

one of his duties as a historian. However, Yang's enemies at court found out, and Yang's superiors changed the commission to an official in the Board of Rites, who had no right to take part in the preparation of the Calendar. This action was an intended insult to Yang, and he immediately requested retirement from the government, because the central authorities obviously had no confidence in his competence to fulfill his duties. Kuang Tsung saved Yang's face by personally requesting him to stay in the government, but in the end Yang did not write the preface.

In the eleventh month The Sagely Government of Hsiao Tsung 孝宗聖政 was completed by the court historians, and Yang Wan-li was appointed to be one of the scholars who would present the book to the retired emperor. When Hsiao Tsung saw Yang Wan-li's name on the list of scholars, he was extremely vexed and is reported to have asked his son Kuang Tsung, "What is Yang Wan-li still doing here?" When Kuang Tsung acted as if he did not understand, Hsiao Tsung continued: "He compared me to Chin Yüan Ti 晉元帝 in his official writings. What did he mean by that?"[116] Yüan Ti, who reigned from 317 to 323, was the first emperor of the eastern Chin dynasty and according to Chinese historians was responsible for the failure of the Chinese dynasty to reconquer north China much as Hsiao Tsung had failed to counter-attack the Tartars. Hsiao Tsung's displeasure was so great that not only was Yang prevented from taking part in the presentation ceremonies but but he was also demoted to Assistant Fiscal Intendant for Chiang-tung 江東轉運副使. Unperturbed by all these

blows Yang published his sixth volume of poetry and headed to his new post.

Yang had already reached the age of sixty-three, and he had totally given up any ambitions for high office he might have held earlier. Yang's new work was certainly preferable to the career that he had pursued in the capital, because although he was based in Nanking, he had to travel continuously around the beautiful countryside near Nanking, and he was inspired to write much poetry about the natural wonders to be seen there. In fact, when Yang set out for Nanking one of his friends joked with him that the only reason he wanted to go to the new post was because he "lacked a Collection of East of the Yangtze."[117]

Yang was not to stay in Nanking for long, for subsequent political events got him in trouble with the authorities again. In 1192 the court decided to begin circulating a paper currency backed by iron coinage in the Chiang-nan region. The Sung period is extremely well-known for its revolutionary innovations in the monetary field, and in 1024 the Sung issued the first paper currency known to mankind. At first Sung monetary innovations were carefully regulated, but after the fall of the northern Sung, Chinese finances were thrown into a fairly chaotic state for a while, although business continued to thrive in the big merchant cities along the Yangtze.

One of the most serious problems of Sung fiscal policy was the great demand in foreign countries such as Japan for Chinese copper cash. In addition to using paper money as a replacement for copper cash, the Sung government attempted to solve this problem by minting coins in other metals and encouraging the

use of gold dust and silver ingots. In northern Sung times the government issued large quantities of iron money in border areas in the hope of creating an "iron barrier" between the inner copper cash economy and foreign states which wished to import Chinese copper, and by southern Sung times the government went a step further and issued a paper currency backed up with iron money in the Huai River region to prevent the flow of copper cash to the Chin.[118]

Such a strategy was possibly useful in the Huai area, but the Chiang-nan region was the heartland of the southern Sung economy, and the introduction of paper currency backed by iron was a more serious problem than in border places. When Yang heard of this policy, he was greatly distressed, because his work was closely related to commercial activities in the Chiang-nan region, and he immediately sent up a memorial in protest. Yang did not attack the new paper currency itself but rather the extremely questionable means by which the government intended to bring the money into circulation. According to the new law, the new currency would be used for paying the salaries of all military personnel and government officials in Chiang-nan. The payment was supposed to be equal to the former salaries in copper cash, since the government was to establish a fixed rate of exchange between iron and copper money. The only problem with the system was that iron coinage was not in general use in the Chiang-nan area, and, in fact, the government proposed to forbid its circulation other than in the Huai region. In effect, the government officials would be receiving their pay in paper currency which was supposed to be backed by iron,

but which they could only change into the copper cash current in Chiang-nan. Yang Wan-li clearly recognized the danger of such a policy:

> The Huai area is using iron coinage, and so if they use the new paper currency, having paper currency will be the same as having iron cash for which it can be exchanged. This is the same as a mother [the iron money] and its child [the paper currency] not being separated from each other. Yet, in Chiang-nan iron money is prohibited, and when the new paper currency is put into circulation, I do not know what the military people will do if they take the paper currency and exchange it at the market. If they want to exchange it for copper money, certainly no one will give them any, since it is not "capital paper currency" [a form of paper currency backed by copper cash]. If they want to exchange it for iron money, there will not be one piece of iron money for which it can be exchanged. If there is paper money without coinage for which it can be exchanged, it is the same as a child without a mother.[119]

In essence, the new policy called for paying government servants with a form of money which was without value to them, and the result would be complete economic disorder. When the measure became law, Yang Wan-li refused to carry out the government orders, and as a result, he offended the prime minister.

In the eighth month of 1192 he was immediately transferred to Kan-chou, but he refused to take his new post and sent in a request for retirement, which was granted. Before he left Nanking he published the poems which he had written there and entitled them Collection from East of the Yangtze 江東集. Yang arrived in Chi-shui before the beginning of autumn, and since he already was sixty-five, he had no further intention of serving the government. Shortly after he arrived back home, Yang wrote:

Watering a Pot of Calamus and Narcissus Flowers

When I re-read old poems, they become new again,
But after finishing them, I'm so drowsy I stretch
and yawn.
Innumerable flowers in the pot complain of their
thirst,
But this old fellow only wants to be a lazy man.[120]

Although Yang was now in retirment, he continued to watch the political situation in the capital carefully, and what he saw did not please him. Two years after he left service, the retired emperor Hsiao Tsung died, and his son Kuang Tsung, who had developed an uncontrollable hatred for his father, refused to take part in any of the funeral ceremonies for the departed emperor.[121] The prime minister at the time Chao Ju-yü 趙汝愚 and a powerful official Han T'o-chou 韓侂胄 conspired together with Kao Tsung's Empress Wu 吳, and they set up

Kuang Tsung's son as the emperor Ning Tsung 寧宗 (1195-1225) forcing Kuang Tsung into an early retirement.[122] Han T'o-chou was a direct descendant of the famed northern Sung official Han Ch'i 韓琦, and his family was allied to the Sung imperial line through marriage, so he was able to have close access to the new emperor. Han T'o-chou was an extremely ambitious man, and before long he forced Chao Ju-yü out of office and gained complete control over the central government.[123]

Meanwhile, the scholar officials in the capital had formed into two parties which were engaged in a bitter power struggle. The first was led by Chu Hsi, who had finally been given high office by Chao Ju-yü, and they were proponents of the thoughts of the northern Sung philosopher Ch'eng Yi 程頤, who had become one of the patron saints in Chu Hsi's great synthesis of neo-Confucianism. The second group, which was favored by Han T'o-chou, adapted a more legalistic approach patterned after the reforms of Wang An-shih. As could be expected, Chu Hsi soon clashed with Han, and when Chu attempted to persuade Ning Tsung to eliminate Han T'o-chou from power, the philosopher was quickly driven from office.[124] After Chao Ju-yü's expulsion in 1195, Han T'o-chou started a general campaign to eliminate all opposition. The excuse he used was an attack on "False Learning" or Wei Hsüeh 偽學, which obviously included all neo-Confucianists following Chu Hsi. However, the charge of "False Learning" was soon expanded to include any individual who disagreed with Han T'o-chou's policies.[125]

In 1195 Han T'o-chou attempted to recall Yang Wan-li to the court. Yang was already an old man, so he could be trusted

not to cause any undue trouble, and Han badly needed famous intellectuals serving under him to give his rule greater respectability in the eyes of other scholar officials who had witnessed the wide scale purges of highly respected thinkers and political figures. We have already noted Yang's relationship with Chu Hsi, and by this time Yang had developed an intense hatred for Han T'o-chou's policies. Thus, when he received the summons, Yang pleaded old age and remained in Chi-shui.

Han T'o-chou probably felt slighted by Yang's refusal of the post, but another event made the break between the two men permanent. After he gained power, Han began spending government funds lavishly on a number of projects, the most important of which was the construction of his Southern Garden 南園. Han wished to gain acceptance for this burden on government finances, so he offered Yang Wan-li a high government post if the old poet would write a record 記 to commemorate the opening of the garden. When informed of Han's request, Yang is reported to have said: "The office can be abandoned, but this record cannot be written!"[126] Yang had written many records for various construction projects of his friends and acquaintances, and since such documents were highly prized if written by a famous literary figure, Yang must have received payment for some of them. There was nothing ethically wrong about receiving public office in exchange for such a service in the view of Sung scholars, and the principal reason Yang refused was his extreme distaste for Han T'o-chou's actions. Han never forgave Yang's insult.

Meanwhile, Yang lived at Chi-shui in virtual isolation

taking occasional excursions around the nearby countryside and still busily writing poetry. The poetry of these last fourteen years of retirement was gathered together posthumously by Yang's son, but all of Yang's earlier works had already been printed by this time. Yang was fully aware that he was one of the major literary figures of his period, and although he suffered from increasingly bad health in his seventies, his poetic output hardly diminished at all. When he was seventy-eight years of age he wrote:

> After a relapse of bladder disease the doctor says I should avoid writing because it strains my heart; so when I get up in the morning I warn myself. (Second Poem of Two)
>
> Recklessly addicted to poetry, I weary my heart in vain;
> So I beg forgiveness from orioles and flowers to stop
> my bitter chant.
> I don't owe any debts to T'ao Yüan-ming or Hsieh Ling-yün,
> So why do <u>they</u> come looking for me at night in my dreams?[127]

By this time it seems that the old poet had totally transcended the normal concerns of the world, and although Han T'o-chou's attacks against him were growing in severity, Yang lived in a state of near perfect detachment.

The reason for Yang Wan-li's peace of mind is that he had reaffirmed the Vimalakīrti ideal which he had discovered in middle age. References to Vimalakīrti become more common in

his later poetry and the philosophy of the Buddhist layman is given expression in a number of poems:

The Realm of Idleness

If you want to hold to the Realm of Idleness,
It's not outside the Mundane Realm.
Bright moon and pure wind,
What day don't we face one another?[128]

Such an approach to life allowed Yang to bear the most excruciating pain with good humor:

While ill, my feet start hurting again. After I sit exhausted the whole day, I write the following to banish my depression.

Flowers fill my eyes, and snow covers my head;
I have passed three or four more years in uncertainty.
Who would know my ailing legs keep me from walking;
If people saw me crouching, they'd say I was sitting in meditation!
When I drop my fan by the table side I'm too lazy to pick it up,
So how can I possibly search for my book beneath the window?
Men of the world are always envious of flying immortals,
But I'm envious of walking men, who seem immortals to me![129]

Yang's illness obviously reminded him of the famous malady of Vimalakīrti, and when some relatives and friends came to visit him he wrote:

> Vimalakīrti's grave illness was not easy to cure,
> But as soon as Manjuśrī asked the question, he lost
> the baleful malady.[130]

The Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra starts with the Buddha attempting to send one of his disciples to visit Vimalakīrti, who has recently fallen ill. However, when all of Buddha's disciples, refuse to go out of fear that the sage will expose their inferior knowledge of Buddhist philosophy, the bodhisattva of knowledge, Manjuśrī, agrees to lead them. The assembly of the Buddha, Manjuśrī, and the numerous disciples at Vimalakīrti's mansion gives rise to a profound discussion of Buddhism, which culminates in Manjuśrī asking each of the bodhisattvas to give his explanation of the meaning of non-dualism. Each provides a complex answer, but when it is Vimalakīrti's turn to speak, he remains silent.[131] This is the "thunderous silence" of Vimalakīrti so often referred to by Ch'an and other Chinese Buddhists, and it is this realization of non-duality which enabled Yang to transcend the worries and illnesses of his later years.

Han T'o-chou had finally eliminated all of his enemies in the central government, but since he was not able to gain acceptance from the intellectuals, he possibly felt that the only way to consolidate his position was to engage in military ad-

ventures. There had been peace now between the Chin and Sung for over thirty years, and there were no overt actions by the Chin government that would suggest a resumption of hostilities. When a Chinese ambassador returned from the Chin court, he reported that the Chin government was in a state of disarray and the country was ripe for invasion, because the Chin armies were busy in the north fighting off the rising power of the Mongols.[132] By 1204 Han T'o-chou had started massive preparations for an invasion and had posthumously enfeoffed Yüeh Fei to encourage martial bravery. The general Wu Hsi 吳曦 was sent to Szechwan in preparation for the Chinese onslaught.[133]

Yang's family hid all news of these war preparations and other actions of Han T'o-chou from Yang, because they were afraid that such news might harm the old poet, whose health had become increasingly frail. In 1205 Han summoned Yang back to the capital once again, but instead of merely politely refusing on grounds of health, Yang sent a reply accusing Han T'o-chou of undermining the security of the state and engaging in traitorous conduct. Yang's memorial was suppressed by Han's friends.

In 1206 the big moment came, and Han T'o-chou gave the orders to begin the attack against the Chin. At first the Chinese armies were successful, but the Chin had gotten wind of Sung intentions as early as 1205, and they were extremely well prepared, so that the Sung armies met several serious defeats. Han T'o-chou's trusted general Wu Hsi surrendered to the Chin armies and requested to be enfeoffed as king of Szechwan.[134] All of these disastrous setbacks had been hidden from Yang

Wan-li by his family, but one day in the fifth month, a distant relative, who had recently returned from the capital, informed Yang of all that had happened before the family could stop him. Yang's biography says that Yang "cried so mournfully he lost his voice. He repeatedly called for paper and wrote: 'Han T'o-chou is a traitorous minister,. He has monopolized power with no superior, mobilized the army to harm the people, and plans to endanger the nation's altars. Although I still have a head, there is no path for me to avenge the state. I can only engage in lone indignation.' Then after he had written fourteen words to part with his wife and children, his writing brush fell, and he passed away."[135] Although this account was probably manufactured by Yang's biographers for the sake of dramatic effect, anger at Han T'o-chou's campaign could easily have hastened Yang's demise. Yang had always been in favor of a military reconquest of north China, but he was certainly aware of the poor state of Sung military preparation and the self-seeking nature of Han's plans for attacking the Chin.

Shortly before Yang died on the eighth of the fifth month, 1206, at the age of eighty, he wrote the following short poem:

Falling Flowers

The red and purple blossoms turn to mud, the mud to dust,
And the wild wind doesn't care about people who pity flowers.
Though the falling flowers don't say a word when they leave the tree,
They ask the yellow orioles to tell the spring.[136]

This work could properly be regarded as Yang's swan song, for like the flowers of late spring he was swept away by the irresistible forces of nature, yet his poetry has lived on as an expression of his entire life.

Yang was buried in his native village of Chi-shui, where his tomb survives to this day. In keeping with his nature it is a very modest structure.[137] Four years after Yang's death he was given the posthumous title Wen-chieh 文節 or Literary and Frugal. In the year 1208 Yang's eldest son gathered together the poetry Yang Wan-li had written after 1192 and published it under the title T'ui Hsiu Chi 退休集 or Collection of Retirement. Somewhat later the various collections of Yang's poetry were put together with all of his prose works and published under the title Ch'eng-chai Chi 誠齋集 or Collection Works of the Sincere Studio, the name deriving from Yang's hao Ch'eng-chai. Altogether there are about three thousand two hundred poems in this collection, and Yang's complete prose writings comprise about eight hundred twenty pages in the modern SPTK edition.

Yang's dislike for Han T'o-chou was fully confirmed by subsequent events. After the military disaster of 1206, the Sung government was badly shaken and Han T'o-chou asked for peace terms from the Chin. The Chin government demanded Han's head before peace could be discussed, and Han was naturally quite angry at this suggestion, so he planned further military operations against the enemy. In the mean time Ning Tsung's empress had taken an extreme disliking to Han, and with the cooperation of a number of high officials at court, she encouraged

Ning Tsung to do away with him. Ning Tsung was happy to oblige his empress, and one morning in 1207 when Han T'o-chou was on his way to court, he met with a party of soldiers who were sent by the emperor to kill him.[138] In 1208 a humiliating peace was concluded with the Chin, and Han T'o-chou's head was sent in a special case to the Chin imperial court.[139] The southern Sung court managed to survive another seventy-two years until it was snuffed out by Kublai Khan's hordes.

Although Yang Wan-li's character should be reasonably clear to the reader by now, it is customary in Chinese biographies to assess the moral qualities of the subject. Such judgements are frequently quite unreliable, but it does not seem out of the place to venture a few opinions about Yang's conduct in his public life. Though Yang pursued a public career, which was expected of any educated man in Sung times, he seems to have controlled any ambitions he had for high office with an extremely strong sense of moral propriety. When he retired from his position at Nanking, he was entitled to ten thousand strings of cash, but he left the money in the public treasury instead. His home in Chi-shui was extremely simple, and the Yang family did not enlarge or decorate it during three generations.[140] We have frequently mentioned Yang Wan-li's fearless criticism of government policies which he considered wrong. Although describing a man as an outspoken critic of corrupt government is a favorite Confucian cliché, Yang's frankness frequently harmed his advancement in office and partially accounts for his failure to rise to any high position. In short, Yang Wan-li came close to living up to the Confucian

ideal in his public life.

But as we have seen, Confucianism was by no means the only philosophy that guided Yang's life, and he seems to have reached near perfection in the realization of the Ch'an ideal, too. A few years before he died, Yang wrote:

> It doesn't matter whether one stays home or goes out,
> For you transcend the world while in its midst.[141]

Just as Vimalakīrti, the rich Indian merchant, possessed a knowledge of Buddhism superior to Buddha's monk disciples, so Yang Wan-li, the Confucian scholar bureaucrat, managed to transcend the cares of this world, living both within and outside of it.

We have said little about Yang's wife and children. Although Yang refers to his sons frequently in his poetry, he rarely mentions his wife, which was quite usual for Chinese poets. However, she was an important influence on his life and a very interesting figure in her own right. Even when she was seventy years of age, she would get up very early in the morning and first cook a bowl of rice gruel for her servant before she took any food herself. When she was over eighty years old, she continued to plant hemp by hand and weave her own clothes. Altogether she bore Yang four sons and three daughters, but she refused to allow anyone else to nurse her children. When asked why she did not have a wet nurse, she replied: "How would I feel using the child of starving people to nurse my own children?"[142] Yang's eldest son Chang-ju 長儒 was also a good poet and devoted himself to a life of public service. He was

just as frugal as his father, and when Chang-ju died, he was still a very poor man in spite of many opportunities to line his pockets with bribes as many contemporary officials did.[143] Yang Wan-li's high sense of moral integrity was shared by all members of his family.

References to the page numbers of Yang Wan-li's poems are as follows. The first number refers to the chüan and page numbers in the Ssu Pu Ts'ung K'an (abbreviated SPTK) 四部叢刊 edition of the Ch'eng Chai Chi (abbreviated CCC) 誠齋集. The second number is that of the chüan and page in the Ssu Pu Pei Yao (abbreviated SPPY) 四部備要 edition. If a third number appears, it is the page number of the poem in Chou Ju-ch'ang's Yang Wan-li Hsüan Chi (abbreviated YWLHC) 楊萬里選集. The texts of SPTK and SPPY have been compared and all significant variants noted. Generally speaking, the readings of SPTK have been accepted in preference to SPPY, since SPTK is a copy of a Sung edition, and SPPY invariably introduces errors due to misreadings of characters and reliance on later editions of Yang Wan-li's works.

[1]Other than the poetic and prose works, the main source for Yang Wan-li's life is his biography contained in Sung Shih 宋史, chüan 433. Also useful is a nien-p'u 年譜 in Hsia Ching-kuan 夏敬觀, Yang Ch'eng-chai Shih Hsüan Chu 楊誠齋詩選注, Wan Yu Wen K'u Hui Yao 萬有文庫薈要, no. 0908, repr. Taipei, 1965. Hsia Ching-kuan corrects a number of minor errors in Yang's biography by reference to internal evidence in the poems. Another nien-p'u in Hu Ming-t'ing 胡明廷 "Yang Wan-li Shih P'ing Shu 楊萬里詩評述," Ta Lu Tsa Chih 大陸雜誌, chüan 9, no. 7-8, p. 51-60, contains some valuable information

but is mainly based on Hsia's work. Weng T'ung-wen's Répetoire des date des hommes célèbres des Sung, a Sung project publication, refers to another nien-p'u by Ts'ui Chi 崔驥 in Chiang Hsi Chiao Yü Yüeh K'an 江西教育月刊 no. 19, but this work has not been available to me. Chou Ju-ch'ang's footnootes to Yang's autobiographical poems also contain a wealth of information, and I have made use of them where necessary. Citations are not given for minor biographical details from Yang's chronologically ordered poems and their prefaces.

[2]Pi Yüan畢沅, Hsin Chiao Hsü Tzu Chih T'ung Chien (abbreviated HTCTC)新校續自治通鑑, Shih Chieh Shu Chü世界書局 Taipei, 1961, p. 2424. I have relied on the HTCTC throughout for the political history of the period.

[3]Ibid., 2358.

[4]Ibid., 2360.

[5]Ibid., 2419.

[6]Ibid., 2396.

[7]Ibid., 2421-2422.

[8]Ibid., 2438.

[9]Ibid., 2444.

[10]Ibid., 2451.

[11]Ibid., 2454.

[12]Ibid., 2488.

[13]Ibid., 2496.

[14]Ibid., 2507.

[15]Ibid., 2555.

[16]Ibid., 2565.

[17]Ibid., 2568.

[18]A good biography of Hsin Ch'i-chi is contained in I. Y. Lo, Hsin Ch'i-chi, Twayne Publishers, Inc., New York, 1971. Hsin's youth is dealt with in pp. 22-25.

[19]SPPY, Lu Yu, 陸游, Lu Fang Weng Ch'üan Chi (abbreviated LFWCC) 陸放翁全集, 65-6a.

[20]Fan Ch'eng-ta's biography is found in chüan 386 of the Sung Shih (abbreviated SS). There is a good biography in Chou Ju-ch'ang 周汝昌, Fan Ch'eng-ta Shih Hsüan 范成大詩選, Jen Min Wen Hsüeh Ch'u Pan She 人民文學出版社, Peking, 1959, pp. 251-61.

[21]For all official titles I have depended on E. A. Kracke, Translation of Sung Civil Service Titles, Paris, 1957.

[22]Chang Chün's biography appears in chüan 361 of SS. Yang Wan-li himself wrote an extensive account of Chang's life, which is recorded in CCC, 115-1001-13.

[23]HTCTC, 2635.

[24]Ibid., 2777.

[25]Ibid., 2809.

[26]Ibid., 2817.

[27]Ibid., 2828-2831.

[28]Ibid., 3161-3162.

[29]Ibid., 3261.

[30]Ibid., 3261-3262.

[31]Ibid., 3300. Helmut Wilhelm doubts the purity of Yüeh Fei's motives for reconquering north China, and suggests that Kao Tsung and Ch'in Kuei killed Yüeh to prevent the ascendance of military power. Wilhelm's argument would, of course, cause one to question the entire pro-war faction. However, the pro-war faction consisted largely of Confucian scholar officials, who had nothing to gain from a military takeover, so I suspect the traditional vilification of Ch'in Kuei may be much closer to the truth. See Helmut Wilhelm, "From Myth to Myth: The Case of Yüeh Fei's Biography," Arthur Wright ed., Confucianism and Chinese Civilization, New York, 1964, pp. 225-226.

[32]Ibid., 3296-3299.

[33]SS, 5433-c.

[34]Ibid., 5594-c.

[35]1-4a; 1-1a; 1.

a. An allusion to Tu Fu's poem: "If there are no vulgar things near my eyes/ Though extremely sick, my body feels light." See A Concordance to the Poems of Tu Fu (abbreviated TF), Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series, Supplement No. 14, repr. Taipei, 1966, 356/29/7.

b. Li-k'uai literally means 'to pass over clods' and refers to a horse that runs swiftly. Yang is saying that his

talents are no match for Hsiao Te-tsao.

c. A reference to a conversation concerning poetry between Hsieh An 謝安 and Wang Hui-chih 王徽之. Wang compared poor poetry to a duck floating in the water, and Yang feels that his own verse has not risen above mediocrity. He also has ambitions to rise above the mediocrity of his current official post.

[36]Yang describes his burning of the earlier poems in a preface to his earliest collection. See CCC, 80, 672-a.

[37]CCC, 81-676b.

[38]SPTK, Liu K'e-chuang 劉克莊, Hou Ts'un Hsien Sheng Ta Ch'üan Chi 後村先生大全集, 174-1557a.

[39]1-7a; 1-4b.

[40]1-7b; 1-5a; 11.

[41]1-12a; 1-9a.

a. Marquis of Huai-yin is the title of Han Hsin 韓信, great military strategist of the early Han, who eventually revolted against Liu Pang. His biography is in Shih Chi 史記, chüan 92.

b. Yu-chi was a famous archer of the Chou dynasty.

c. The disease urchins are the illnesses which plagued Duke Ching of Tsin during the Spring and Autumn Period. When the duke called in a good physician, the two boys

were frightened and escaped to "the region above the diaphragm and below the heart." The duke subsequently died. See Tso Chuan, 成公十年.

[42]HTCTC, 3597.

[43]Ibid., 3664-3665.

[44]1-12b; 1-10a.

a. That is, the reflection of the moon in the water. In Yang's poetry this image is frequently a symbol for the emptiness of phenomenal existence, but here it does not seem to have any special significance.

[45]HTCTC, 3668-3669.

[46]1-13b; 1-11a; 16.

a. Here Yang is comparing Hsiao Tsung's Proclamation of Self-censure to a proclamation issued by Han Wu Ti after he became disgusted with military reverses in his campaigns against the Hsiung-nu. Yang is encouraging Hsiao Tsung not to adopt a similar defeatist attitude.

b. Fei-p'i literally means 'not a bear' and is a reference to Wen Wang 文王 meeting Lü Shang 呂尚. Before Wen Wang went out hunting he had his fortune told, and the soothsayers answer was: "What you will catch will not be a dragon, not a deer, not a tiger, and not a bear. What you will catch will be a man to aid you in becoming a hegemon."

Wen Wang subsequently met his future minister Lü Shang while on the hunt.

c. Allusion to a poem by Tu Fu: "They ask who their general is/ Fearing it is Huo Ch'ü-ping," i.e., the soldiers are afraid that their general will be wasteful of lives as the Han general Huo Ch'ü-ping 霍去病 was. Yang is implying that Chang Chün is more popular with his men. See TF, 87/16b/12.

d. The name of a place where the emperor Kuang Wu Ti 光武帝 passed during the extremely difficult period in which he was fighting to restore the Han dynasty after Wang Mang's usurpation. Yang is comparing the Han restoration to the hoped for recovery of the north from the barbarians.

e. Reference to a Han general Tuan Hui-tsung 段會宗 who managed to obtain merit fighting the barbarians at Goose Gate in modern Shansi, despite his old age. Yang is comparing Chang Chün to the old Han general.

f. The age of strong service was forty.

g. At Yang's time the northern frontier of the southern Sung was located roughly on the southern limits of Chinese civilization in early Chou times. Yang is comparing the former strength of the Chinese with the present weakness.

h. A tower built by the king of the state of Yen during the Warring States Period to attract talented officials to his court. Yang is critical of Hsiao Tsung's selection of officials in his confidence, who have been responsible for the military disaster.

i. Yang means that since Hsiao Tsung has not yet selected worthy officials, he should not be worrying about reconquest of the north but should put the court in order first.

[47]SS, 5446a.

[48]2-15a; 2-2a; 22.

a. The word chung is used here in the sense of 'suitable.' When this sentence is read together with the title, the poem becomes somewhat puzzling, for there is no hint of malfeasance on the part of Li Hsien-chung during the campaign, and, in fact, the SS paints him as the only hero of the military debacle. According to the SS account, Li refused to distribute the booty to his officers, thereby causing resentment among them, and this is probably what Yang means by describing the general as "covetous." However, if Li had engaged in any unlawful activities, it is difficult to explain how he was appointed to a major military position soon after his temporary disgrace. See SS, 5446-b.

b. When the Han military leader Liu P'en-tzu surrendered, the armor was piled as high as Bear Ear Mountain. See Pan Ku 班固, Han Shu 漢書, K'ai Ming Shu Chü 開明書局 repr. Taipei, 720-d.

c. Niao, short for yao niao 要褭, is the name of a famous horse in ancient times. One of Li Hsien-chung's greatest problems was that the civil authorities did not give him enough money to run his campaign effectively.

d. Li Hsien-chung was exiled to Ch'ang-sha just as the Han scholar Chia Yi, who was a victim of court intrigues.

e. The story of Chu Yün 朱雲 is a favorite with Confucian scholars. Chu Yün criticized the prime minister of Han Ch'eng Ti 漢成帝 and grabbed hold of the railing in the court when the emperor ordered him to be dragged away. When the railing broke, the emperor awoke to his faults and awarded Chu Yün for his forthright criticism instead of punishing him. Ch'eng Ti ordered that the railing not be repaired, so he would not ignore criticism in the future. Unfortunately Hsiao Tsung was not so open-minded and refused to listen to Li Hsien-chung's criticisms.

[49]2-16b; 2-3b.

a. The chin pi or metal eyescraper was an instrument used in ancient India for eye operations such as removing cataracts. The wind scrapes the eyes of the moon; i.e., the wind blows clouds away from the moon's disk.

b. Allusion to the Shih Shuo Hsin Yü: "The sages forget feelings and inferior men are not up to feelings. Feelings concentrate in people like us." See SPTK, Shih Shuo Hsin Yü 世說新語, 104-b.

c. Allusion to a poem by Han Yü: "The long lamp is eight feet, needlessly long/ The short lamp is two feet; convenient and bright." See SPTK, Han Yü 韓愈, Chu Wen Kung Chiao Ch'ang Li Hsien Sheng Chi 朱文公校昌黎先生集 5-59b. The short lamp in Han Yü's poem is one used by a poor scholar before he obtains a high position.

[50]For an account of Hang-chou shortly after Yang's time with a discussion of the population problem, see Jacques Gernet Daily Life in China on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion, New York, 1962, 22-58.

[51]2-18b; 2-6a.

[52]2-19b; 2-6b.

a. The five pecks of rice is Yang's official salary, a reference to T'ao Ch'ien's refusal to compromise himself for such a paltry amount.

[53]2-21a; 2-8b.

[54]2-23b; 2-11a.

[55]2-23a; 2-10b.

[56]4-35a; 4-1b

[57]4-38b; 4-5a; 49.

a. The short lamp is one used by a scholar who has not obtained high position.

b. Allusion to FengHsüan 馮諼 of the Warring States Period who served under Meng Ch'ang Chün 孟嘗君 of the state of Ch'i. When he first became a retainer of the prince, he was not highly valued and played his long sword singing that he wished to return home because he had no fish in his food. See Ssu-ma Ch'ien 司馬迁, Shih Chi 史記, Kai Ming Shu Chü, Taipei, 198-c.

c. Reference to Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju's famous poem the "Tzu-hsü Fu" or "Prose-poem of Master Fiction." The work is narrated by a fanciful character Master Fiction and describes the wonders of the imperial hunting parks in extravagant language. Yang suggests that only such unrealistic writing is appreciated by the present government.

[58]4-39a; 4-6a.

[59]4-39b; 4-6b.

[60]4-43b; 4-10a.

[61] 5-46a; 5-2b; 53.

SPPY has 吉語 'auspicious expressions' for 古語 'ancient expressions' of the SPTK. Since the SPPY version makes more sense in the context and the words 吉語 are repeated in the eighth line, the SPTK text is probably corrupted due to similarity in shape of the two characters.

a. We find a reference to a similar custom in the T'ien Pao Yi Shih: "In the capital on the night of the first full moon, people make flour cocoons and put paper lots or strips of wood with official positions written on them into the pastry. People choose them and use them to tell their fortunes." See YWLHC, p. 53.

b. San-ch'ü or Three Thoroughfares is Ch'ü-chou in modern Chekiang province.

c. The exact significance of the word ts'ung is not clear and there are various explanations as to what a "brush shrine" is.

d. Name of a palace of the Han dynasty, which at the time of the emperor Ch'eng Ti was used as a lecture hall. Yang means that he doesn't have any ambitions to pursue a literary career in the court.

e. A hunting park of the Han emperor Wu Ti, which was located west of the capital Ch'ang-an. The park was

the subject of a famous poetical work by the Han court poet Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju.

[62]5-50b; 5-7a.

[63]6-55b; 6-5b; 57.

a. West Mountain or Hsi Shan is in the west of Hsin-chien County 新建 of Kiangsi province.

b. Yang is saying that he is only concerned with the paper work of a government official. In ancient times official documents were written out with black and red ink.

c. In other words, Yang is so occupied by official duties that he cannot write lines as famous as Wang Po's "In the evening, pearl curtains are rolled up in the West Mountain rain." See SPTK, Wang Po 王勃, Wang Tzu An Chi 王子安集, 2-31b.

d. In this line the word tu does not mean 'alone' but 'how', which is Sung colloquial.

[64]The treatise appears in CCC, 87-724-774.

[65]6-56a; 6-6a.

[66]CCC, 89-763.

[67]The pao-chia system and other reforms of Wang An-shih are treated in James Liu, Reform in Sung China, Harvard U. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1959.

[68]CCC, 88-754.

a. Shih Ching-t'ang was the founder of the Latter Chin dynasty of the Five Dynasties Period. Shih set up the Military Pacification Army in 943. Shih-chin literally means the 'Chin dynasty of Shih.'

b. Because of peasant unrest, the name of the army was changed to Army of Heavenly Majesty the following year. One year later the Chin dynasty was destroyed by the Khitan.

[69]CCC, 89-770.

[70]Ibid., 89-771.

a. The Lin Bandits were peasant rebels who revolted in 1165 in Hunan province. The equal grain purchase, which was one of the main causes of discontent, was a government program which was supposed to buy grain from the peasants to feed military and civil personnel. Frequently local officials did not pay the peasants for the grain but pocketed the government's money.

b. The equal buying was similar to the equal grain purchase but it entailed official purchase of silk instead of grain.

c. This was a silk tax supposedly levied to buy uniforms for soldiers stationed on the front lines in the Huai River region.

d. The peasants had to pay four kinds of taxes altogether, (1) the standard land tax, (2) the equal purchase tax, (3) the Huai uniform tax, and (4) the new silk tax levied for the sake of the neighboring commandery. This is, of course, an over-simplification, because many other taxes were levied.

[71] SS, 5585-b.

[72] 6-61a; 7-4a.

[73] See CCC, 7-65a.

[74] 7-66a; 7-8b; 63.

In the preface SPPY has 女匕 for 似 of SPTK.

a. The name of Yang's study is a reference to Liu Tsung-yüan's line: "I fish alone in the cold river's snow." See SPTK, Liu Tsung-yüan 柳宗元, Chu Shih Yin Pien T'ang Liu Hsien Sheng Chi 註釋音辯唐柳先生集 43-218a.
The object of the fishing is to catch nothing.

b. Literally, "dream soul."

[75] 7-72b; 8-6b.

[76] 7-69b; 8-3b.

SPTK has 眠 for SPPY's 邊. I follow SPPY.

a. Forgetting words was an ideal of both Taoists and Ch'an Buddhists. Ch'an was the doctrine which does not "set up words 不立文字."

b. One of the basic tenets of the Ch'an Buddhists is that enlightenment is nothing special or secret. See p. 152.

[77]7-70a; 8-4b; 65.

a. The word chiang is used in the rather unusual sense of 'together with' or 'accompany.'

[78]8-75b; 9-1a.

[79]CCC, 80-672.

[80]Idem

[81]8-80b; 9-6a.

[82]9-88b; 10-6a.

蓍 of SPTK is an obvious misprint for 期 of SPPY.

[83]11-106b; 12-6b; 95.

a. The emperor's kindness is Yang Wan-li's official salary, which was considered a privilege conferred by the emperor.

b. For ch'ang chi see T'ao Ch'ien's poem "Drinking Wine": "Formerly I suffered from always starving/ So I threw away my plow and learned to be an official." See SPTK, T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛, Chien Chu T'ao Yüan Ming Chi 箋注陶淵明集, 3-34a.

c. This line seems to refer to the famous T'ang ch'uan ch'i story Chen Chung Chi 枕中記, which tells of a poor man named Lu Sheng who met a Taoist magician

in an inn while traveling. The Taoist gave Lu Sheng a pillow, which he claimed would grant all wishes to the possesser. At that moment the magician was cooking grain for dinner, and Lu Sheng fell asleep on the pillow. Lu Sheng dreamed that he was married to a beautiful wife and after obtaining his chin-shih degree, he eventually became prime minister, dying at the age of eighty with many prosperous offspring. When he awoke, he saw that the inn hadn't changed and that the grain had not cooked yet, but even so, Lu Sheng refused to believe everything had been a dream. The point of the story was the ephemeral nature of human life and the folly of seeking high position and riches.

[84]The story of Vimalakīrti is contained in the Vimalakīrti-nirdesa-sūtra or 維摩詰所說經 in Chinese. It is translated with copious annotations in E. Lamotte, L'enseignement de Vimalakīrti, Louvain, 1962.

[85]11-103b; 12-3b.

[86]CCC, 80-672.

[87]15-141a; 16-5a.

[88]15-141b; 16-5b.

a. The partridge adds to the melancholy of the traveler, because it is supposed to cry 行不得也 or 'you can't go on.'

[89]15-143b; 16-7a.

SPTK has 蒂 for SPPY's 葉 in the first line.

a. The green robe is the color of the unripe lichee. In the first line only part of the lichee is ripe, but in the second line the entire fruit is ripe.

b. The lichee seems to have a cooling effect when one eats it in a tropical climate.

[90]HTCTC, 3945.

[91]16-150a; 18-1b.

a. A bamboo branch song is a form of folk song first popular in Szechwan which was later utilized by upper class poets to describe rural scenes, after Liu Yü-hsi composed imitations.

[92]16-153a; 18-4b.

[93]17-158a; 19-4a.

SPTK has 豈 for 行 of SPPY in the third line. SPPY seems to make better sense here.

[94]17-158a; 19-4b.

a. The Fukien bandits are Shen Shih's troops.

b. The Spear Comet's appearance was supposedly a sign of revolt.

[95]CCC, 62-500b.

a. During the middle of the first century B. C. there were five rival shan-yü or chiefs fighting for the

Hsiung-nu leadership. The Eastern Hu were a serious menace to the Hsiung-nu at the beginning of their imperial period and also at various later times. The Jou-jan were a group of nomadic tribes who gave great difficulties to the northern Wei. Yang is referring to the recurring border problems of the Chin Tartars, who now had to fend off the rising power of the Mongols.

b. Pien-ching is the name of the northern Sung capital and southern capital of the subsequent Chin, modern day K'ai-feng. Hai-chou is the area around the Liao River basin in modern Liao-ning.

[96]SS, 5595-a.

[97]Chu Hsi's biography is found in chüan 429 of SS.

[98]Yang wrote a commentary on the I Ching in line with northern Sung neo-Confucian interests, but his most important neo-Confucian work is his Yung Yen or Talk of the Mean, contained in CCC, chüan 91-94. Unlike Chu Hsi, Yang's poetry has little or no specifically neo-Confucian content.

[99]19-183a; 21-10a; 131.

In the second line SPPY has 內 for 中 of the SPTK, in the tenth line 騎 for 騑 , and in the fifteenth line 母 for 后 . I have followed the SPTK readings in all these cases.

a. The Duke of Ch'iao was Ts'ao Hsün, 曹勛 who followed the emperor Hui Tsung into captivity and later escaped

back to the southern Sung to encourage Kao Tsung to attack the Chin Tartars and rescue Hui Tsung. Due to the pacifistic sentiment in the court, Ts'ao's advice was ignored and he was demoted. Later when Ch'in Kuei 秦檜 managed to bribe the Chin to send the deceased Hui Tsung's coffin back to the Sung, Ts'ao Hsün was appointed ambassador to Chin to receive the coffin and accompany back the still living wife of Hui Tsung. Ts'ao Chung-pen is an obscure individual, but he was surely a descendant of Ts'ao Hsün. The "Grand Empress" is Hsien-jen T'ai-hou the wife of Hui Tsung and mother of Kao Tsung. Note that the events described in the poem occurred forty-three years before the poem itself was written.

b. The "Palace of Virtue and Longevity" was Kao Tsung's residence after he abdicated in favor of Hsiao Tsung.

c. The "Great Sovereign" is the retired emperor Kao Tsung.

d. The Mother of Jasper Pool is the mythical Hsi Wang Mu, but actually Yang means the returning empress of Hui Tsung.

e. Reference to the empress' return from the northern cold of the barbarian Chin.

f. This is an allusion to the story of Su Wu, a poet of the Han dynasty who was captured by the Hsiung-nu and carried off beyond the northern frontier. When Han

Chao Ti asked for Su Wu to be sent back, the Hsiung-nu chieftain refused to acknowledge the poet was still alive. Later a Chinese ambassador tricked the Hsiung-nu chieftain by saying that when the emperor was hunting in the imperial park, he shot a wild goose with a note from Su Wu stating he was still alive. The Hsiung-nu were then forced to return him. Obviously the empress had tried to get through to her son Kao Tsung but was unsuccessful.

g. Allusion to Tu Fu's poem "Presented to Ts'ao Pa": "General, you are a descendant of the Martial Emperor of Wei." See TF, 121/12/24. Although he had the same surname, Ts'ao Hsün was not a descendant of the renowned Ts'ao Ts'ao of the Three Kingdoms. Yang is merely comparing their valor.

h. The Red Pine Immortal was a mythological figure who had attained immortality by Taoist yoga and alchemy. Ts'ao Hsün is obviously thinking of retiring to the hills.

i. Waxing of boots is an allusion to the biography of Juan Fu 阮孚 in the Chin Shu: "Fu loved sandals by nature. Someone went to visit Fu and saw him just as he was waxing his sandals. Fu sighed saying, 'I don't know how many sandals I can wear in one life.'" See Chin Shu 晉書, K'ai Ming Shu Chü 1214-d. Ts'ao is preparing for hikes in the mountains of his retirement.

j. The great patriotic general of the southern Sung, Yüeh Fei, was murdered by the prime minister Ch'in Kuei, who feared that Yüeh would become too powerful if he succeeded in taking back the northern territory lost to the Chin Tartars. Yang is advising Ts'ao Hsün to remove himself from politics before he becomes powerful enough to arouse the envy of a Ch'in Kuei.

k. Allusion to Tu Fu's satire on another evil prime minister of T'ang times: "Be careful not to get too close in front, because the prime minister is glaring." See TF 26/4/26.

[100]CCC, 62-505a.

[101]SS, 5595-b.

[102]Idem.

[103]Yu Mou's biography is in SS, chüan 389.

[104]19-183b; 21-10b; 135.

SPPY has 贈 for 調 of SPTK. 調 is considerably more lively in its meaning, so I have accepted this as the proper reading. In the fourth line, SPPY has 從 in place of SPTK's 逢 .

a. The title of the poem refers to the frequent use of the two characters 雲 and 龍 in the poem. Lu Wu-kuan is Lu Yu.

b. Yang Tzu-yün or Master-cloud Yang is the Han Confucian thinker Yang Hsiung. Inky Pool is a place where the famed calligrapher Wang Hsi-chih was supposed to have

practiced his writing. However, there seems to be no connection between Yang Hsiung and Inky Pool.

c. Yün-chien or In the Clouds is in modern Sung-chiang County of Kiansu province and was the home of Lu Shih-lung or Scholar-dragon Lu, the Chin dynasty poet Lu Yün 陸雲. In the poem Yang Wan-li corresponds to Yang Hsiung and Lu Yu to Lu Yün because of the identity of the surnames, respectively.

d. Although the capital was at Hang-chou during the southern Sung, Yang still uses the name of the capital of the T'ang dynasty, Ch'ang-an. This is a common anachronism of Sung poets.

e. Allusion to the Hsi Wang Mu, in whose realm there was a miraculous peach tree that bore fruit only once in three thousand years.

f. Allusion to the annals of the northern Wei emperor Hsiao Wu Ti: "Yü-wen T'ai sent the great metropolis commandants Chao Kuei and Liang Yü with two thousand of armored cavalry to him and carried the emperor over the River. He said to Liang Yü: 'This water flows to the east, but I am going up west. If I can ever return to my ancestral temples in Lo-yang again, it will be because of your merit.' The tears of the emperor and his vassals streamed down." See Pei Shih 北史, K'ai Ming Shu Chü, 2758a.

g. The seal is one of an official in government. A big seal is the sign of high office.

h. Reference to the biography of Li Ho in the T'ang Shu: "Every day at dawn he went out riding a weak horse, followed by a small female slave with an old brocade sack on her back. When he thought of a poem, he wrote it down and tossed it into the sack. As soon as he went home, in the evening, he completed the poem." See Hsin T'ang Shu 新唐書, K'ai Ming Shu Chü, 4104-d. Lu Yu was noted for the immense quantity of his poetry, and he left more poetry than any other poet of the Sung dynasty.

i. Allusion to Kung-sun Hung 公孫弘, a prime minister of the Han dynasty. During his age, it was the custom to choose the prime minister only from the nobility, but Kung-sun Hung had no noble title when he was selected for the post, so he was immediately enfeoffed as P'ing-chin Hou or Marquis of Level Ford.

j. According to Kung-sun Hung's biography in the Han Shu: "He built an eastern pavilion to attract worthy men." Han Shu, K'ai Ming Shu Chü, 504-c.

k. From the biography of Huai-nan Wang in the Shih Chih. Wu Tzu-hsü remonstrated with Fu-ch'a, the king of the state Wu, but Fu-ch'a would not listen to his advice so Wu Tzu-hsü said: "Today I see deer wandering on the terraces of Ku-su." He meant that if the king

did not follow his advice, the state would be overthrown and deer would wander about the capital city Ku-su. See Shih Chi, K'ai Ming Shu Chü, 260-cd.

l. Mount Lu is one of the foremost holy mountains of China and lies in northern Kiangsi province.

m. Fu-sang was the tree from which the sun rises, according to popular Chinese mythology.

n. Allusion to Li Po's lines: "His handwriting on a foot of white silk/ Looks as if the sky had dropped its cloud brocade." See Hanabasu Hideki 花房英樹 Ri Hyaku Kashi Sakuin (abbreviated LP)李白歌詩索引, Kyoto, 1957, 632.04.

o. Located at Hang-chou's West Lake.

p. The Shang-ssu Festival was the first ssu 巳 day in the third lunar month.

q. This line is a direct quote from Li Po. See LP, 815.02.

r. An allusion to Li Po's poem: "Jade Mountain fell by itself, nobody pushed it!" See LP, 207.28.

105 24-229b; 27-3a.

a. Lacquer Garden is the place where Chuangtze became an official. Chuangtze states that once he dreamed he was a butterfly but after he awakened he could not decide if he was Chuangtze dreaming he was a butterfly

or a butterfly dreaming he was Chuangtze. See SPTK, Nan Hua Chen Ching 南華眞経 , 1-26ab.

b. Great Locust Palace is a reference to the T'ang story Nan K'o T'ai Shou Chuan 南柯太守傳 in which a certain Ch'un-yü Fen 淳于棼 slept under a locust tree and dreamed he entered the tree, which was actually a huge palace. Both allusions heighten the sense of the dream-like nature of the phenomenal world.

[106] 25-236b; 27-10a.

a. Chi-wen or Lucky Pattern is another name for the Kan River of Kiangsi.

b. The two immortals are probably Yu Mou and Lu Yu.

[107] 25-237b; 27-11a.

a. By forgetting the heart or mind radical of the Chinese character for sadness, Yang has attained the Ch'an state of mindlessness or wu-hsin.

[108] See SS, 5491 for a full account.

[109] 27-255a; 29-4a; 170.

a. The ordinary name in Chinese for the Yangtze River is Ch'ang Chiang and only the section near Yang-chou is known as the Yangtze.

b. Allusion to the biography of K'ung Fan 孔範 in the Nan Shih: "When the Sui army was about to ford the Yangtze, all the officials [of Ch'en] requested to make defense preparations, but Fan sent up a memorial saying: 'The Yangtze River is the moat of heaven and has been a boundary line since antiquity.

How will the barbarian army be able to fly across?'" See Nan Shih 南史, K'ai Ming Shu Chü, 2729-b. Subsequently, the Ch'en dynasty was destroyed by the Sui armies. In Yang's time the Sung government similarly depended on the Yangtze River as a natural defense line.

c. Yao-han is the famous Han-ku Pass in modern Honan province, which formerly was an important pass protecting the central region in Han and T'ang times. A very small force in control of the pass could hold off a large army and possession of the pass was often decisive in determining the outcome of political struggles in Chinese history.

d. A strategic mountain located in the Yangtze River west of Chenkiang in modern Kiangsu province.

e. In other words, the enemy armies of the Chin Tartars are just across the river.

f. On the surface the last two lines seem to be merely thanking the river god for making the weather good so that the poet can cross easily, but it is obvious that if the poet can cross so easily in good weather, the enemy can cross just as easily and attack the Sung empire.

[110]27-255b; 29-4a; 172.

a. Kua-chou or Melon Island is to the southwest of Yang-chou in Kiangsu province and was a strategic point in the southern Sung dynasty.

b. Pi-li is another name for the northern Wei emperor T'ai Wu Ti, who attempted to defeat the Sung dynasty of the North-south Period. He attacked as far south as Kua-chou and then was defeated by the general Shen P'u 沈璞 .

c. A-liang is the Chin emperor Fei Ti, who led an expedition against the southern Sung in 1161. Upon attempting to cross the Yangtze River at Ts'ai-shih, he was defeated by the Sung navy and assassinated by his own troops in a military coup. According to Yang's footnote to the poem: "In the hsin-ssu year (1161), Wan-yen Liang [Fei Ti] came south raiding and built a tower facing the river. He was assassinated in it according to the local people."

[111]27-255b; 29-4a; 173.

SPPY has 更 for 便 of SPTK in the fourth line, an obvious error.

a. In Sung times a bridge was built on Yangtze Ford south of modern Yang-chou. For obvious reasons the bridge was an important point in the Chinese defences.

b. In early Chou times the area of Chinese culture did not extend south of the Huai River, so the southern Sung dynasty was south of the traditional territory of the Chou kings. The southern domain or fu is a reference to an ancient system whereby the country was divided into regions according to their distance from the capital. Each increase in distance of five hundred li was taken as a different division, so these "domains" surrounded the capital like concentric rings. Altogether there were nine of these domains, the ninth reaching the limit of Chinese civilization.

c. Wang Tao and Hsieh Hsüan were two famous generals of the eastern Chin dynasty at the beginning of the North-south Period. Hsieh Hsüan is particularly renowned as the commander of the Chin armies at the battle of Fei-shui where he defeated the northern barbarian king Fu Chien, saving China from barbarian conquest. Yang implies that although everyone looks down upon the eastern Chin as a period of weakness, at least that dynasty had two famous generals such as Wang Tao and Hsieh Hsüan. The Sung dynasty is so badly governed it cannot produce great generals but kills the great generals it has such as Yüeh Fei.

[112]27-257a; 29-5b; 175.

a. This lake is in the west of Kiangsu province.

b. Yang is unhappy because he is on the border between the Chin and Sung.

c. Sang-kan is the name of a river which rises in Shansi, passes to the southwest of Peking, and then enters the sea near Tientsin. At the time the area was occupied by the Chin forces, but formerly it had been on the northern frontier.

[113]Idem.

[114a]. All four of the men mentioned were famous generals at the beginning of the southern Sung and were greatly feared by the Chin.

[b]. Both Chao Teng and Chang Chün became prime ministers in 1135 during the reign of Kao Tsung, but they were removed from their high positions after Ch'in Kuei came to power.

[115]28-261b; 30-1b; 178.

SPPY has 晚 for 曉 in the title.

a. Chiao Shan or Scorched Mountain lies to the northeast of modern Chenkiang in Kiangsu province while Chin Shan or Metal Mountain is opposite to the northwest of Chenkiang.

b. There are many different versions of what the three rivers and five lakes refer to, but here Yang means all of the sources of the Yangtze's water.

c. The nine lands are the nine levels of the underworld.

d. This line and the one proceding it most likely refer to the sights and sounds of the famed Metal Mountain Monastery or Chin Shan Ssu, one of the major centers of Buddhist worship in Sung times.

e. A jade-boat cup is a large wine cup and would not necessarily be made of jade. Floating Jade is an old name for Metal Mountain.

f. This poem has two possible interpretations, and it is very possible the poet intended both. The more superficial of these interpretations is that Yang is merely describing the beauties of Metal Mountain, and since he does not drink any wine in the presence of the mountain, the mountain should feel "ashamed" of him and "sad" for him. However, we must keep in mind that Yang wrote this poem while he was ambassador to the Chin, and because many of his poems of this period are political satires, we should look for a deeper political message in this work. Metal Mountain was extremely important for the border defense of the southern Sung, and the Chin emperor Fei Ti had been murdered by his own troops near the mountain after he was defeated by the Sung navy while attempting a crossing. In the <u>Jung Chai Sui Pi</u> we read: "At the end of the Shao-hsing period, [Fei Ti] herded his horses and watered them at the River. Later, when

he died of himself [i.e., at the hands of his own troops], it was decreed that Ma-tang, Ts'ai-shih, and Metal Mountain should be invested as the three water strongholds . . . At the time when Wan-yen Liang occupied the Huai River, . . . prayers were said to the Great River that if it did not let the barbarians get across, a memorial would be sent up to invest it as a Ti ['god']." See Hung Mai 洪邁 Jung Chai Sui Pi 容齋隨筆, Commercial Press, Taipei, 1955, vol. 1, p. 93. Thus, it is quite likely that Yang is making fun of the imperial court's impotence in the face of the enemy and the stupidity of relying on the "spiritual power" of the Yangtze River and Metal Mountain to resist the Chin Tartars. The danger to the nation would be even a greater reason for Metal Mountain to be "ashamed" and "sad."

[116] Chang Tuan-yi 張端義, Kuei Erh Chi 貴耳集 in Ts'ung Shu Chi Ch'eng 叢書集成, Commercial Press, Shanghai, 1937, 45-a.

[117] CCC, 81-675b.

[118] See HTCTC, p. 4080. The problem of iron money is discussed in Robert Hartwell, "A Revolution in the Chinese Iron and Coal Industries During the Northern Sung," The Journal of Asian Studies, no. 21 (1961-62), pp. 153-162.

[119]CCC, 70-596.

[120]38-358b; 39-1a.

[121]HTCTC, 4107-4108.

[122]Ibid., 4109-4111.

[123]Ibid., 4125.

[124]Ibid., 4118

[125]Ibid., 4131.

[126]SS, 5595-b.

[127]42-402b; 42-8b; 241.

a. T'ao Yüan-ming or T'ao Ch'ien and Hsieh Ling-yün were the two most famous poets of the North-south Period. They especially appealed to Yang because they were largely responsible for the great interest in nature in later Chinese poetry.

[128]38-359b; 39-2b.

[129]42-400b; 42-6b. "Flowers" refer to blurred vision.

[130]42-400b; 42-6b.

[131]Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō (abbreviated Taisho) 大正新修大藏經 Wei Mo Chieh Suo Shuo Ching 維摩詰所說經, no. 475, vol. 14, p. 551-c.

[132]HTCTC, 2214.

[133]Ibid., 4216.

[134]Ibid., 4241.

[135]SS, 5595b.

[136]42-407b; 42-14a; 243.

[137]A photograph of the tomb is contained in YWLHC.

[138]HTCTC, 4269.

[139]Ibid., 4275.

[140]Luo Ta-ching 羅大經, Ho Lin Yü Lu 鶴林玉露 in Pi Chi Hsiao Shuo Ta Kuan Hsü Pien 筆記小說大觀續編 Hsin Hsing Shu Chü repr. 新興書局, Taipei, 1962, chüan 4, p. 5, p. 2294a.

[141]38-360a; 39-2b.

[142]Ho Lin Yü Lu, chüan 4, p. 5.

[143]Idem.

Yang Wan-li's Theory of Poetry

In our study of Yang Wan-li's political career and private life, we have already touched upon the extreme importance of Ch'an Buddhism to his spiritual and literary development. In the following discussion of Yang's theory of literature, we shall see that Ch'an Buddhism played an equally important role in forming his views on the writing of poetry. Buddhism was certainly one of the major philosophical forces which inspired earlier Chinese poets, but one encounters extreme difficulties in defining the relationship between Buddhism and poetry in much Chinese verse, because Chinese poets rarely limited themselves to any particular school of philosophy. The greatest confusion arises when we deal with what appears to be pure nature poetry and frequently is. Are we justified to interpret such an image as falling plum flowers as a symbol of the impermanence of samsāra, or are we reading too much into the poem when we make such an assertion? The Chinese poet rarely gives us an answer to such questions, and only in Sung times, when poets started composing "poetry talks" and literary critical poems in a fairly large quantity, can we get a very clear picture of the views of poetry which the principal Chinese poets held.

Although the founders of the various Ch'an Buddhist sects had lived in the T'ang dynasty, in many respects Ch'an Buddhism reached its high point in Sung times. One of our

most important sources of Ch'an history, The Record of the Transmission of the Lamp of the Ching Te Era (Ching Te Ch'uan Teng Lu)景德傳灯錄, was compiled about 1004, whereas the two most widely used kung-an 公案 collections, The Records of the Green Cliff (Pi Yen Lu)碧巖錄 and the Pass Without a Gate (Wu Men Kuan)無门関, were written in 1125 and 1228, respectively. Even the collected sayings (yü-lu)語錄 of the T'ang masters were frequently re-edited by Sung writers and quite often did not receive their final form until Sung times. Most important of all, it was in Sung times that Ch'an Buddhism deeply influenced the intellectual and artistic life of the Chinese educated classes and, thus, served as a stimulus to much of what was finest in Chinese culture.

Su Shih蘇軾 (1036-1101), the foremost poet of the northern Sung dynasty, was strongly influenced by Buddhist ideas. In a poem presented when sending off a Ch'an master, Su wrote of the intimate connection between the Buddhist mystical experience and the creation of poetry:

> If you want to make the words of your poetry miraculous,
> Don't despise emptiness and tranquility.
> When tranquil, you can comprehend the multitude of
> movements;
> Empty, you receive the myriad realms.
> Experiencing the world, you walk amidst men;
> Contemplating your body, you lie on a cloudy range.
> In salty and sour are mixed a host of preferences,

But in their middle there's a great flavor, everlasting
Poetry and the dharma don't obstruct one another,
So I should ask you about these words.[1]

Su Shih's emphasis on emptiness (śūnyatā) and tranquility and his notion that an ultimate unity lies behind the phenomena of the world are definitely of Buddhist inspiration but not specifically Ch'an. However, when he ways, "Good poems burst out of my mouth, who can choose them?"[2] one suspects that his theory of poetry has been influenced by the Ch'an notion of spontaneity.

Nevertheless, it was not until the generation of poets following Su Shih that the Ch'an Buddhist experience was closely linked to the poetic creative process. Su Shih showed definite signs of Ch'an influence, but one of his pupils Han Chü 韓駒 (d. 1135) seems to have been one of the earliest poets who definitely stated that the process of studying poetry was the same as Ch'an meditation:

Studying poetry, you should be like one starting to
study Ch'an:
Before you are enlightened, you must meditate on
various methods.
But one day when you are enlightened to the true
dharma eye,
Then trusting your hand, you draw it out and all the
stanzas are ready-made.[3]

Further, he is supposed to have said: "The Way of poetry is like the Buddha dharma, for it ought to be separated into great and small vehicles and a heterodox, demon external path. Only the knowing can speak of this."[4] In connection with Han Chü's Buddhist conception of poetry, it is interesting to note that Su Shih considered him to be close in style to the T'ang poet Ch'u Kuang-hsi 儲光羲, a Buddhist nature poet. Later, the critic Lü Pen-chung 呂本中 (ca. 1119) included Han Chü in the Kiangsi School of poets led by Huang T'ing-chien, but Han himself finally disagreed with Lü's classification, and the Ch'an element in his theory of poetry seems to justify Han's opinion that he differed from the Kiangsi poets.[5]

Another northern Sung poet Wu K'o 吳可 (ca. 1126) saw the poet's process of creation as similar to Ch'an enlightenment:

> Studying poetry is entirely like studying the practice of Ch'an:
> The bamboo bed, the meditation cushion, one can't count the years.
> Finally when you comprehend it all yourself,
> You easily draw it forth and are transcendant.[6]

Here again we see the concept that the creation of poetry is a natural act which becomes almost effortless after one has reached the level of enlightenment.

Yang Wan-li's own development as a poet bears a marked

resemblance to the spiritual progress of the great Ch'an masters of the T'ang and Sung periods. Although their final enlightenment is usually described as sudden, it was frequently preceded by rigorous discipline and study under a number of masters. For Yang, the path to the final enlightenment, which enabled him to rise above the mediocrity of his youthful verse and create a new style, was as painful as the Ch'an student's subjection to the master's bewildering paradoxes and irrational beatings:

> I first learned poetry from the gentlemen of Kiangsi, following which I studied the five character regulated poems of Ch'en Shih-tao 陳師道. Then I studied the seven character chüeh-chü of Wang An-shih 王安石 and finally, I studied chüeh-chü from the T'ang poets. But the more effort I made in studying, the less I wrote. Once I sighed about this to Lin Kuang-ch'ao 林光朝, and Lin said, "When you choose so carefully, it is difficult to obtain things, so how do you expect your works not to be few?" I sighed saying, "Poets probably have different 'diseases' from the same source, and surely I am not alone in this!" Thus, from the spring of ting-yu in the Ch'un-hsi period (1177) all the way back to the year jen-wu (1162), I had written only five hundred and eighty-two poems; so few they were! In the summer, I went to my position in Ching-ch'i and as soon as I reached my post, I read lawsuits and arranged the

local revenue, associating only with red and black ink. Ideas for poems went back and forth in my breast from time to time, but although I wanted to write, I didn't have any leisure. On New Year's Day of wu-hsü (1178), I was on vacation and lacking official business, I wrote poetry on this day. Suddenly, I was as if enlightened (wu), and at that moment, I took leave of the T'ang poets, Wang An-shih, Ch'en Shih-tao, and all the gentlemen of Kiangsi and didn't dare to study any of them. I was then very joyful. I tried having my son hold the writing brush while I orally composed several poems, and they came gushing forth without any of the previous grinding.[7]

Again and again, we read of similar experiences in the Ch'an literature. The monk Ling-yu 靈祐 (771-853), one of the founders of the Kuei-yang 溈仰 Sect left his family at the age of fifteen and spent eight years "studying the sūtras and vinaya (discipline) of the Great and Small Vehicle" before he was brought to sudden enlightenment by his master Pai-chang 百丈.[8] Similarly Wen-yen 文偃 (d.949), the founder of the Yün-men 雲門 Sect, made an exhaustive study of the vinaya under under his first teacher Chih-ch'eng 智成 before he reached sudden enlightenment under his later master Mu-chou 睦州.[9]

In two poems written in 1166, over ten years before his poetic enlightenment, Yang touches on a number of the ideas

that became important later in his poetry. Although these poems are of little literary value since they are still written in a style imitative of the Kiangsi poets, they can serve as a framework within which we can discuss the basic ideas of Yang's theory of poetry:

In Answer to Li T'ien-lin

In studying poetry one must be penetrating and free;
Then trusting his hand, one is lone and exalted.
The robe and begging bowl are timeless,
And a hill or mountain is just one hair.
In your own lines--"the pool has grass";[a]
Beyond words, your eyes are all in disorder.[b]
What then is the delicious like?
Frosty crab with a little wine dregs.

The dharma of poetry is hard for heaven to keep secret;
All you do is add your own labor.
When in meditation--a cedar tree;[c]
Finally enlightened, how is it still a peach flower?[d]
I want to share the east or west jade with you
[i.e., a wine cup],
But we are as far apart as the north and south shores.
Are you willing to come and talk this over with me?
We'll sit aside on a white seagull sandbank.[10]

In the first two lines of our first poem, Yang is saying that

once the poet is enlightened, i.e., "penetrating and free," he obtains his own independent style which comes to him as if by nature. We have already noted that Yang found writing more natural after he had been enlightened and was no longer dependent on his old masters. Now the writing of poetry is a natural act that the poet himself cannot control:

> From this time on, every afternoon when the officials had dispersed and the courtyard was empty, I carried a fan and paced in the back garden. Ascending the ancient city wall, I gathered lysium and chrysanthemum or pulled at flowers and bamboos. The myriad phenomena came to me and presented me with poetic material. Although I would wave them away, they wouldn't leave me. Before I had time to requite those in front, the ones from behind were already pressing me.[11]

The idea that, after a poet is enlightened, poetry comes to him of itself without any special effort is forcefully expressed in a later poem of Yang's written in 1190:

> Refining lines, how could one be without furnace and
> mallet?
> But a line is not completed entirely because of them.
> This old fellow doesn't hunt for the poetry;
> The poetry comes hunting for him![12]

Thus, the poet must go through a trying period of "refining," but once he has passed beyond the stage of learning, the writing of verse is an entirely natural act for him.

The third line of the first poem "In Answer to Li T'ien-lin" refers to the Ch'an Buddhist tradition of transmitting the master's teaching to a particularly enlightened pupil, symbolized by presenting the student with the master's begging bowl and robe. The most famous transmission of the robe is the secret transmission by Hung-jen 弘忍 to the sixth patriarch Hui-neng 慧能 (638-713), the first master of the Southern School of Ch'an. In line with what Yang writes about the impossibility of transmitting the method of poetry, we should mention that Hui-neng refused to transmit his robe to any of his disciples, claiming that "the robe may not be handed down . . . If you depend on the meaning of the verse of the First Patriarch, Bodhidharma, then there is no need to hand down the robe."[13] The transmission of the dharma from teacher to student was a mysterious process which could not adequately be represented by the gift of a robe or begging bowl.

According to later Ch'an tradition, Buddha first transmitted the Ch'an teaching to Mahākāśyapa merely by showing a flower to his disciples, upon which Mahākāśyapa proved his sole understanding of the teaching by being the only disciple to smile. Concerning this story, the Sung monk Hui-k'ai 慧開 (1184-1260), author of the Wu Men Kuan says:

> Yellow-faced Gautama, acting as if there were no one near him, forced good people into slavery, and hanging

> up a sheep's head, sold dog meat instead, thinking how extraordinary this was. But if at that time everybody had smiled, then how could he have transmitted the treasure of the true dharma eye, or if Mahākāśyapa had not smiled, how could he have transmitted the treasure of the true dharma eye? If he says there is a transmission of the true dharma eye, then that yellow-faced old geezer would be cheating country bumpkins. But if he says there is no transmission, then why did he approve of Mahākāśyapa alone?[14]

Hui-k'ai agrees with Hui-neng that the Ch'an student should not become attached to any particular method or teacher, for the secrets of Ch'an cannot be transmitted in such a way.

Yang uses these ideas developed by the Ch'an Buddhists as a device to attack the thoughtless imitation of earlier poets that was so popular in his own age. Yang has already told us how he struggled in his youth to rid himself of the influence of the Kiangsi poets, and at this time he was one of the few writers who was opposed to the imitation of the Kiangsi style represented most prominently by Huang T'ing-chien (1045-1105). Increasingly from the time of Su Shih onwards, the Sung poets had been moving away from the comparatively natural simplicity of the earlier northern Sung poets such as Ou-yang Hsiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) and Mei Yao-ch'en 梅堯臣 (1002-1060) to a more artificial poetry characterized by extensive use of literary allusion and careful polishing of the

poetic line, and the later poets set up the T'ang poet Tu Fu 杜甫 as a model for imitation. Huang T'ing-chien himself wrote:

> To create words oneself is most difficult. When Tu Fu wrote poetry or Han Yü wrote prose, not one character was without a source. It is probably because later men read few books that they said Han or Tu created these words themselves. Those men of ancient times who were skilled in literature were truly capable of refining and smelting the myriad manifestations. Although they took the ancients' old talk and made it enter their brush and ink, it was like a pill of the magic elixir which could touch iron and change it to gold.[15]

Thus, with the Kiangsi poets the writing of poetry became a matter of "making the old into the new."

To such a view of literature, Yang retorted:

> I am ashamed of those who transmit sects and schools,
> For each author has his own individual style.
> Don't rest your feet beneath Huang T'ing-chien's
> and Ch'en Shih-tao's fence;
> Stick your head out beyond the ranks of T'ao Yüan-ming
> and Hsieh Ling-yün![16]

This is not to say that Yang was opposed to all imitation of the ancients. We have already seen how he achieved his own enlightenment only after studying earlier poets. In the learning stage, it was quite permissible to set up a particular poet as one's model as long as one did not become "attached" to that model. After Yang Wan-li abandoned the Kiangsi poets, Huang T'ing-chien and Ch'en Shih-tao, he imitated Wang An-shih, and in later years he preferred Wang to other northern Sung poets:

> On the boat the only thing to keep me alive is poetry;
> After reading the T'ang poets, I read Wang An-shih.
> It's not that this old fellow doesn't eat in the morning,
> I take Wang's chüeh-chü for breakfast![17]

Nevertheless, since one cannot become attached to Wang An-shih if one wishes to reach full enlightenment, he has to pass from Wang to the T'ang poets:

> After Wang An-shih enables me to meditate and penetrate,
> There still are the T'ang poets--one more barrier![18]

One should even pass beyond the T'ang poets

> Upon first receiving instruction I meditated under
> Wang An-shih,
> But in the end, I entrusted myself to the late T'ang poets.
> From them the Kuo Feng is not far away;
> When you've grasped the mechanism it's simple.[19]

According to the Wu Men Kuan, "to realize Ch'an one must pass beyond the barriers of the patriarchs."[20] Thus, Yang uses the process of Ch'an illumination obtained by the study of the Ch'an masters as a metaphor for the similar process whereby the poet attains his own illumination by mastering the teaching of one poetic master after another. The study of masters is not the final goal, for as the Wu Men Kuan further teaches us:

> The great Way has no gates,
> Yet thousands of roads enter it.
> Once one has penetrated this barrier,
> He walks alone between heaven and earth.[21]

When the poet has passed beyond the barrier of his masters, he, too, frees himself of his earlier imitations and creates his own individual style. As Yang himself explains:

> You ask me what the dharma of good poetry is;
> There's no dharma, no bowl, and no robe![22]

The result of Yang's unwillingness to become attached to any earlier poetic style is that he came to view the writing of poetry as a continuous process of development, and as soon as he tired of one style, he longed to move on to newer ground. In the preface of his collection Nan Hai Chi Yang says:

All my life I have loved to write poetry. At first I loved it, but later I despised it. By the jen-wu year of the Shao-hsing period (1162) my poetry changed and I was delighted, but soon despised it again. By the keng-yin year of the Ch'ien-tao period (1170) my poetry changed again, and by the ting-yu year of the Ch'un-hsi period (1177), my poetry changed once more . . . When Liu Huan of Ch'ao-yang was governor of Ch'ing-yüan county, he requested from me a so-called Collection of the South Seas (Nan Hai Chi) of four hundred poems. By the time I saw him again in the capital, Liu requested it unflaggingly and I was able to give it to him. Alas! I am already old and I don't know, if I continue my present poetry, whether I can change or not. Yu Mou 尤袤 used to say to me, "Each time your poems change, they advance." My poems can change, but I don't know if they still can advance. Some other day when I see this collection, will I be delighted with it or will I despise it?[23]

When in 1190 he prefaced his collection Ch'ao T'ien Hsü Chi 朝天續集 Yang wrote:

My eldest son Chang-ju showed it to the two gentlemen Fan Ch'eng-ta 范成大 and Yu Mou who thought my poetry had changed again, although I wasn't aware of this myself.[24]

All throughout Yang's work we see a restless mind forever striving to change and never becoming attached to any particular master or style.

The last two lines of the first critical poem we have translated above ("In Answer to Li T'ien-lin") do not seem to make much sense until we realize that the comparison of the flavor of true poetry to "frosty crab" cooked in "wine dregs" refers to the famous doctrine of the "flavor beyond flavor" advanced by the late T'ang critic Ssu-k'ung T'u 司空圖 (837-908). This doctrine was of extreme importance to later poets and was held in high regard by Su Shih and other northern Sung poets. In his "Letter to Master Li Discussing Poetry" Ssu-k'ung T'u writes:

> Prose is difficult, but poetry is even more difficult. There have been many metaphors for this from ancient to modern times, but I think one must be discerning in "flavor" before one can discuss poetry. To the south of the rivers and mountains [South China] there are many things which will serve as sustenance. For example, in the case of pickles, it is not that these are not sour, but they are merely sour and nothing further. Or in the case of brine, it is not that it isn't salty, but it is merely salty and nothing further. That the men of Hua [northerners] use these to relieve their hunger but then immediately desist [eating them] is because they know that beyond their saltiness and sourness, they are deficient in what is

> pure and delicious. That the men of the rivers and mountains [the southerners] are used to them and cannot discriminate [them from other food] is understandable.[25]

Later in the same letter, Ssu-k'ung T'u praises Li's knowledge of poetry by saying he "knows the excellence beyond flavor."

Yang applied Ssu-k'ung T'u's concept to all scholarly study in general:

> In reading books, one must know of the flavor beyond flavor. One who does not know of the flavor beyond flavor and says, "I can read books," is wrong. A poem of the Kuo Feng states, "Who says that the thistle is bitter?/ It is sweet as the shepherd's purse." I take this as my method for reading books. When one eats the bitterest thing under heaven, he obtains the sweetest thing under heaven. The act of eating is the same in men, but what is obtained is not the same![26]

This idea can be specifically applied to poetry:

> As for the poems of the Kiangsi school, the poetry is Kiangsi [style], but not all of the poets [of this school] are from Kiangsi. What do I mean by "the poets are not all from Kiangsi, but the poems are

Kiangsi?" I am joining them all together. With what am I joining them together? With their flavor, not their form. Su Shih said, "The mussel is like the lichee," and "Tu Fu's poems are like Ssu-ma Ch'ien's 司馬遷 book." Not only were those who heard him at that time confused while pretending to answer him in agreement, but today, people still are confused. This is not the fault of those who are confused, for they reject the flavor of style and discuss similarity in form so they are naturally confused. If we speak of form and nothing more, Kao-Tzu-mien [Kao Ho]高荷 is not similar to the two Hsieh's [Hsieh Yi and Hsieh K'o]謝逸 謝邁 the two Hsieh's are not similar to the three Hung's [Hung P'eng, Hung Yen, and Hung Ch'u]洪朋 洪芻 洪芻 ; the three Hung's are not similar to Hsü Shih-ch'uan [Hsü Fu]徐俯 ; and Hsü Fu is not similar to Ch'en Hou-Shan [Ch'en Shih-tao]陳師道 and even less to Shan-ku [Huang T'ing-chien]. This is flavor and nothing else. Sour and salty are combined differently, while mountain and seafood are different delicacies, but the miracle of seasoning and cooking arises from the same hand. One can seek for the similarities and dissimilarities, but one can forget them too![27]

As is true with many of the concepts of Chinese literary criticism, it is quite difficult to define the exact meaning of

the idea "flavor beyond flavor" in the writings of Ssu-k'ung T'u and Yang Wan-li, and yet Yang's contrast of outward form with flavor gives us a hint as to what he meant. Generally speaking, Yang's idea of a flavor beyond form in poetry is closely akin to the Ch'an contention that ultimate truth is inexpressible in rational terms and can only be intuited. It might be objected that the poet is a prisoner of form and words, but Yang stresses that poetic form is only an external appearance and the actual "flavor" of the poem is something that can be intuited and yet cannot be precisely pinned down or rationally explained:

> Then what is poetry? [some say:] "It is the extolling of words and nothing else." I say that one who is good at poetry does away with words. "But then he extols the meaning and nothing else." I say that one who is good at poetry does away with the meaning. "But when one does away with words and meaning, then where is the poetry left?" I say that when one does away with words and meaning, the poetry still exists. But where is the poetry then? I say, "Have you ever tasted sweets or bitter tea? Who doesn't like sweets? At first they are sweet, but in the end, they taste sour. As for bitter tea, people all complain of its bitterness but before its bitterness is exhausted, its sweetness is incomparable. Poetry, too, is just like this." Formerly when Duke Pao slandered Duke Su, Duke Su satirized him, but today,

if we look at his poem, there are no words of satire, and we can't see the meaning of his satire. He wrote: "Two men follow each other/Who has made this disaster?" When he caused Duke Pao to hear of this [Duke Pao thought], "He has not even referred to me but if it isn't me, then who is it?" On the outside he didn't dare be angry, but inside, he was dying of shame.[28]

The second of the two early literary critical poems of Yang which we translated above, is not so rich in concepts as the first, but its first line, "The dharma of poetry is hard for Heaven to keep secret," is derived from one of the key concepts of Ch'an Buddhism. The Ch'an school stresses that there is nothing secret about the Buddhist teachings, for once a person has lifted the veil of illusion, there is no mystery left. With regard to the supposedly secret transmission of the dharma from Buddha to Mahākāśyapa, the T'ang Ch'an Master Tao-ying 道膺 (d.901) said: "If you don't understand, it remains a secret of the World Honored One, but if you do understand, it becomes the unkept secret of Mahākāśyapa."[29] Fo-kuo 佛果 (d.1135) commented, "The Tathāgata had a secret, but Mahākāśyapa did not keep it; that Mahākāśyapa did not keep the secret was the Buddha's real secret. What is not kept secret is a secret, but what is kept secret is not a secret."[30] When Yang Wan-li was awakened, he wrote:

Suddenly, I didn't feel the difficulty of writing poetry. It was probably because the poet's "disease"

was about to leave my body. At this time, not only did I not feel the difficulty of writing poetry, but also I did not feel the difficulty of being a magistrate. The next year on the last of the second month when my replacement came, I matched tallies to leave and tried to collect my manuscripts together. Within a total of fourteen months, I had written four hundred and ninety-two poems. I have not yet dared to show them to anyone, but this year when I filled a post as a public bureau official, my old friend Chung Chiang-chih sent a letter from the Huai River to me writing: "Recently Ching-ch'i changed its governor. Formerly, you had no difficulty in governing, but the present [replacement's] difficulties will be more than ten times greater. Why don't you publish your poems from Ching-ch'i?" With one laugh, I copied and sent them to him.[31]

When Yi-hsüan 義玄, the founder of the Lin-chi 臨濟 Sect of Ch'an Buddhism, was studying under the master Huang-po 黃檗, he was beaten three times, having asked the true meaning of the Buddha's teachings. But after he had been fully enlightened, he stated to Ta-yü 大愚, "There is nothing much to Buddha's teaching."[32] Similarly, to Yang Wan-li there was nothing mysterious or difficult about the writing of poetry.

One of the most striking proofs that Yang did not consider the creation of poetry to be difficult is the tremendous number of poems he wrote, over four thousand two hundred,

second only to his contemporary and friend Lu Yu 陸游 (1125-1210). When one compares this number to the several hundred poems, at most, preserved for individual authors in T'ang poetry collections, it is, indeed, a staggering figure, especially when we realize that Yang burned over a thousand of his poems written previous to 1162, when he was already thirty-five. We have seen that in 1177 Yang was greatly dismayed because he had written "only" five hundred eighty-two poems in the fifteen years preceding his poetic enlightenment. From that time onward, Yang was deeply concerned with the quantity of his poetic production, for after he had discarded his imitation of earlier poets, he wrote four hundred ninety-two poems in the short space of fourteen months. Yang's obsession with continual creativity remained with him throughout his life and in the preface to his fourth collection, Nan Hai Chi, he proudly writes: "From the year jen-wu (1162) to the present, my poems are altogether more than two thousand one hundred."[33] When he was in mourning for his mother's death from 1182 to 1184, he did not write any poetry, and his eldest son, Chang-ju, must have noticed his father's restlessness for Yang writes in his preface to the Ch'ao T'ien Chi 朝天集 (1188):

> Chang-ju begged me saying, "Father, you have not written any poetry for a long time, so now you can write some." Somewhat startled I said, "If for three years one does not practice ritual, then ritual will be ruined, and if for three years one does not compose poems, then poetry will decay. It would be best to follow your

advice." On that day I started to make a draft on the subject of the chin-shih examination. On the twenty-seventh I was presented a post and was called to my duty. Ten days later, I started on my journey to the capital and I only wrote some twenty odd poems, but I felt they were somewhat awkward and did not convey my meaning, because I probably had not forgotten my sorrow yet.[34]

Yang recovered quickly, for in a preface written in 1190 he informs us: "From the year jen-wu (1162) to now, there are close to three thousand poems in all of my seven collections."[35]

Apparently, many later critics did not agree with Yang's conception of poetry as something simple for the enlightened, for many of them attacked what they considered the excessive quantity of poetry which Yang preserved in his complete works. Typical of these critics is the Ch'ing poet Yeh Hsieh 葉燮 who wrote:

Collections of poetry and prose which emphasize quantity will necessarily be bad. The imperishable works worthy to be handed down from the ancients are not so because of quantity. The few poems of Su Wu 蘇武 and Li Ling 李陵 will last for a thousand ages. Men of later times gradually prized quantity, and Yüan Chen 元稹 and Po Chü-yi 白居易 with their Collection of the Ch'ang Ch'ing Period (Ch'ang Ch'ing Chi) were the first to

> "overflow the goblet." Within [this collection] that which is decadent and vulgar comprises sixty or seventy per cent. If they had done away with this sixty or seventy per cent, the twenty or thirty per cent left would all be outstanding and famous works. Of the Sung authors rich in poems, none exceeded Yang Wan-li and Chou Pi-ta. Of what these two wrote, there is hardly one poem or even one line that can be approved . . . If we view it this way, what use is there in quantity?[36]

Obviously, Yang's contemporaries did not agree with this view that only a poet's "masterpieces" are significant, for when Yang Wan-li showed the famous poet Yu Mou a few lines from the early poetry which he had burned, Yu Mou sighed and replied, "Why should poetry be of one form only? What a shame you burned them!"[37]

From the concept that Ch'an teaching is nothing difficult or mysterious, one can logically conclude that the activities of the enlightened man do not differ from those of the ordinary man. In the Wu Men Kuan we read: "Chao-chou asked Nan-ch'üan, 'What is the Way like?' Nan-ch'üan answered, 'The ordinary mind is the Way.'"[38] The T'ang layman P'ang Yün 龐蘊 wrote in a poem approved by his master: "Spirit penetration and miraculous function are like carrying water and moving firewood."[39] Similarly, the poet who has reached the highest stage need not search out his themes in unusual of abstruse

subjects, but finds his topics for poetry in ordinary objects. We have already seen that when Yang had awakened, he found poetry came to him naturally while merely walking in the back-yard during his spare time. One does not write poetry by locking himself in his study, and ordinary travel provides all of the themes required:

> Mountain thoughts and river feelings don't disappoint them;[a]
> For the rain's aspect and the clear weather's manner are always wonderful.
> To close your door and hunt for lines is not the method of poetry;
> Only when you're traveling do the lines come of themselves.[40]

Since poetry is not the result of intense effort and comes of itself through ordinary experiences, the ideal poem is artless and natural. How much the cult of the unadorned was the influence of Ch'an Buddhism or of even more ancient tendencies of the Chinese is difficult to say, but Yang himself had a strong appreciation for the simple and unadorned. Typical is Yang's description of a small rural inn he stopped at during one of his journeys:

> When I get off my palanquin I find a new inn;
> Opening its door, I arrive at a small side-room,
> Inside there's a single yew table,

And two rush mats facing each other,
The rafter bamboos are green with their joints
remaining;
The eaves' rushes white, still bearing their roots.
I have but one regret about the bright window--
Where the papers were joined, it still has a scar.[a] [41]

Everything in the small room is completely natural except for the scar left by gluing papers together to make a window pane.

Such an ordinary activity as sunning his clothes made Yang write:

At high noon I sun my clothes, in the afternoon fold
them up;
In a cloth-covered willow basket I carry them back home.
My wife and children laugh and ask one another.
"Who in the world is that bare-footed servant over there?" [42]

Few government officials of Yang's period would have liked to think of themselves as on the same level with common servants even in jest, but Yang's poem is completely in harmony with the idea that one can be a creative poet even while living in complete simplicity and naturalness.

However, many of Yang's contemporaries did not agree with his love of simplicity in poetry, and the entire Kiangsi group, against whom Yang had revolted in his youth, stood diametrically opposed to Yang's artlessness. In two poems written in praise

of the northern Sung poet Chang Lei張耒 (1052-1112), Yang both criticized the attitude of Huang T'ing-chien and also advanced his theory of the naturalness of good verse:

> In front of Huang T'ing-chien, [Chang Lei] dared to speak of poetry,
> And [Huang] highly praised his lines "rinsing the well," "sweeping flowers."
> If later, one had made [Huang] read his complete works,
> He would have found another natural treasure, but what did [Huang] know of that!

Yang's point is that Huang and his group only knew enough to praise a particularly clever turn of phrase or usage of words, but that they were incapable of grasping the "natural treasure" of Chang's poetry. That Yang meant Chang's artlessness by "natural treasure" is made even clearer in the first of the two poems:

> Lately I've come to love the Fat Immortal's poems for being so natural;
> He never embroidered or painted, much less carved or engraved.
> Spring flowers, autumn moon, the winter's ice and snow;
> I never hear stale words from him, I just hear nature![43]

In other words, Chang Lei chose his themes from the natural objects around him and did not engage in gathering stale words

from old books and stringing them together with rhymes.

Among the poets and critics inspired by Ch'an ideas after Yang Wan-li, the most significant was Yen Yü 嚴羽 (flourished around 1200), author of the highly influential Ts'ang Lang Shih Hua 滄浪詩話 Yen considered Yang Wan-li to be one of the most important poets of Chinese literature and honors him by including his poetry as one of the major styles (t'i) 体 of Chinese verse. Having given the name Ch'eng-chai t'i (after Yang's hao Ch'eng-chai) 誠齋 to Yang's poetry, Yen repeats what Yang has already told us about his process of enlightenment:

> At first he studied Wang An-shih and Ch'en Shih-tao and finally studied chüeh-chü from the T'ang poets. At last, he abandoned the forms of the various poets and produced his own "mechanism."[44]

Although Yen Yü does not acknowledge any debt to Yang Wan-li's views on literature, there is much in common between them and direct influence should not be ruled out. About the necessity of enlightenment, Yen says:

> In general, the way of Ch'an lies in miraculous enlightenment, and the way of poetry also lies in miraculous enlightenment. The power of Meng Hao-jan's scholarship was far below Han Yü, but that his poetry went beyond Han Yü's was entirely due to his miraculous enlightenment. Only enlightenment is the vocation and basic type.[45]

Yen also agreed with Yang in criticizing the artificiality and formalism of the Kiangsi poets:

> The poetry at the beginning of this dynasty still followed the T'ang poets . . . But when Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien first expressed their own opinions to make poems, the T'ang style was altered; Huang T'ing-chien was particularly forced in his labors. After that, their rules flourished and all within the seas called them the Kiangsi school.[46]

Another point on which Yang Wan-li and Yen Yü agreed is the necessity of studying the great poets of the past in order to arrive at the stage where sudden enlightenment can occur:

> Finally, one chooses widely from the famous poets of the Flourishing T'ang and "ferments" them in his breast, and after a long time he is naturally enlightened and enters . . . This is called "the sudden gate" or "entering straight with a single sword."[47]

Yen Yü was one of the first critics to put so much stress on the Flourishing T'ang, and here he differed from Yang Wan-li, for as we shall see, Yang was much more deeply indebted to the late T'ang poets than Yen Yü's masters Tu Fu and Li Po. The difference in poetic preferences between Yang and Yen is of fairly minor importance, but it is associated with a profound difference between their views as to the process by which

sudden enlightenment is to be obtained. Yang held that imitation is allowable and even necessary, but that the poet should view the object of his imitation to be merely a barrier (kuan) 関 which is to be passed when he reaches a certain degree of enlightenment. Yang certainly had preferences for individual poets, but he never attempted to fit the poetic creations of Chinese literature into a rigid hierarchy as Yen Yü does:

> In the Ch'an school, there are a Great and Small Vehicle, a north and south sect, and a heterodox and orthodox Path. Those who study must follow the highest Vehicle and realize the correct dharma eye and, thus, be enlightened to the Supreme Truth. The fruits of the śrāvaka and the pratyeka-buddha are not orthodox. Discussing poetry is like discussing Ch'an. The poetry of Han, Wei, Chin and Flourishing T'ang are the Supreme Truth. The poems from the Ta-li period [766-780] onward are Small Vehicle Ch'an and they have already fallen into the second truth. The poems of the Late T'ang are the fruit of the śrāvaka and pratyeka-buddha. Studying the poetry of Han, Wei, and Flourishing T'ang, one is in the Lin-chi sect; studying the poetry from after Ta-li, one is in the Ts'ao-tung sect.[48]

Yang Wan-li strongly emphasized that each author has his own style which sets him apart as an individual and, thus, he would have found a rigid division of poets into various sects ex-

tremely distasteful. As he had said: "I am ashamed for those who transmit sects and schools."

Yang Wan-li had first studied his near contemporaries, the Kiangsi school, and only then moved on to imitate the authors of T'ang times. There does not seem to have been any particular design in this progression from modern to more ancient authors, but Yen Yü set up a definite chronological order in which the aspiring poet should study the authors of the past:

> Studying poetry, one ought to make understanding the principal thing. In entering the gate, he must be correct, and in setting up his goals, he must be lofty . . . First one must read the Ch'u Tz'u thoroughly, reciting it morning and night as a basis; then read the Nineteen Ancient Poems, and the four Yüeh-fu poems. The five-character poems of Li Ling and Su Wu and of Han and Wei must all be thoroughly read. Then the two collected works of Li Po and Tu Fu are to be perused through and through just as modern men learn the classics. Later, choose widely from the famous masters of the Flourishing T'ang and ferment them in your breast and, after a long time, you naturally are enlightened and enter. Although you may not be successful in your study, at least you will not lose the correct path.[49]

In his Yüan Shih 原詩 Yeh Hsieh 葉燮 violently attacked this aspect of Yen Yü's literary criticism with arguments that

Yang would have seconded:

> When Yen Yü says that in studying poetry one should be understanding, he is correct. When one has understanding, he ought then to spread out in front of himself the poems of Han, Wei, and the Six Dynasties, along with the complete poems of T'ang and Sung. He will then certainly be able to know, himself, what should be chosen and on what he can rely, which is called "trusting the hand to pick out nothing that is not the Way." But if one speaks of the Han, Wei, and Flourishing T'ang, then even a five-foot boy or a village tutor of three families is used to hearing about this and has been skilled in teaching and learning it for a long time. This is like a great thoroughfare to which the masses throng in hordes, for even a blind man is able to follow them. Why does he need to wait for understanding before he can do that? I think that if one does not have understanding, then if he hastens step by step after the Han, Wei, and Flourishing T'ang, there is no place where there are no poetry demons. If one does have understanding, then even if he does not hurry in the footsteps of Han, Wei, and Flourishing T'ang, all poetry demons will turn into prajñā, and he will not do any harm to the Han, Wei, and Flourishing T'ang. How misleading and perverse was this talk of Yen Yü and how contradictory was his thought![50]

For Yang Wan-li, the major fault of Yen Yü would not lie in his selection of masters, but that he did not transcend his masters, remaining attached to them. In this respect, Yen Yü was "Hīnayāna" and Yang Wan-li "Mahāyāna."

[1]SPTK, Su Shih 蘇 軾, Chi Chu Fen Lei Tung P'o Hsien Sheng Shih (abbreviated TPHSS) 集注分類東坡先生詩, chüan 21, p. 391-a.

[2]Ibid., 18, 337-b.

[3]Han Chü 韓 駒, Ling Yang Hsien Sheng Shih 陵陽先生詩, Yao Tai Shen Shih edition, 1910, chüan 1, p. 8-b.

[4]Wei Ch'ing-chih 魏慶之, Shih Jen Yü Hsieh 詩人玉屑, Chung Hua Shu Chü 中華書局, Shanghai, 1959, chüan 5, p. 122.

[5]Kuo Shao-yü 郭紹虞, Chung Kuo Wen Hsüeh P'i P'ing Shih 中国文學批評史, p. 214.

[6]Shih Jen Yü Hsieh, 1, 8.

[7]CCC, 80-672.

[8]Taishō, Ching Te Ch'uan Teng Lu (abbreviated CTCTL) 景德傳灯錄, no. 2076, vol. 51, p. 264-b.

[9]Ibid., p. 356-b.

[10]4-34-b; 4-1b; 42.

a. "The pool has grass" is an allusion to Hsieh Ling-yün's famous line "The pool bears spring grasses" in his poem "Teng Ch'ih Shang Lou" 登池上樓. See Ting Fu-pao ed. 丁福保, Ch'üan Han San Kuo Chin Nan Pei Ch'ao Shih 全漢三國晉南北朝詩, Shih Chieh Shu Chü repr., Taipei, 1962, vol. 2, p. 638.

b. "Eyes all in disorder" is from Chuang-tzu, "P'ien Mu" 駢拇 : "The humane men of this age worry about the troubles of the world with eyes in disorder." See SPTK, Nan Hua Chen Ching, 南華眞經 , 4, 69-a. Kuo Hsiang glosses the word hao 蒿 as luan 亂 , and many later commentators follow him. However, Burton Watson followed the interpretation of Ma Hsü-lun and translates the passage: "Nowadays the benevolent men of the age lift up weary eyes, worrying over the ills of the world." See Burton Watson tr., The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu, Columbia University Press, 1968, p. 100. Although Watson's rendering of hao is probably more faithful to the original, Yang Wan-li most likely read Kuo Hsiang's commentary. On p. 42 of his Yang Wan-li Hsüan Chi, Chou Ju-ch'ang suggests that Yang's line means that the poet should concern himself with the practical problems of the world. However, I find Chou's interpretation of the line rather unlikely in light of the unmistakable mystical qualities of both poems, and so I suspect that Yang means that the poet is unconscious of anything beyond his own poetry.

c. "When a monk asked, 'What was the meaning of Bodhidharma coming from the West,' the master replied, 'A cedar in front of the courtyard.'" See Taishō, Wu Men Kuan 無門關 (abbreviated WMK), no. 2005, vol. 48, p. 297-b.

d. Reference to the Ch'an master Chih-ch'in 志勤, who was enlightened upon seeing a peach flower. According to Chou Ju-ch'ang's notes this story is from the Shen Hsien Chuan 神仙傳, but I have not been able to locate the story.

[11] CCC, 80-672b.

[12] 29-273a; 31-4a; 182.

[13] See P. B. Yampolsky, The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, Columbia U. Press, New York, p. 172. The text used in the translation is based on Tun-huang manuscripts and differs considerably from the common version used by modern readers.

[14] WMK, 293-b.

[15] SPTK, Yü Chang Huang Hsien Sheng Wen Chi (abbreviated YCHHSWC) 豫章黃先生文集, 19-204a. Note the metaphor borrowed from Taoist alchemy.

[16] 26-251b; 28-13a; 165.

[17] 31-291a; 33-1b; 187.

[18] 8-81-b; 9-7a.

[19] 35-328b; 36-5a.

[20] WMK, 292-c.

[21] Ibid., 292-b.

[22] 38-363a; 39-6a.

[23]CCC, 80-673a.

[24]Ibid., 81-675a.

[25]SPTK, Ssu-k'ung T'u 司空圖, Ssu K'ung Piao Sheng Wen Chi 司空表聖文集, 2, 9-a.

[26]CCC, 77-652a. Yang quotes from the Shih Ching, Kuo Feng, no. 35, "Ku Feng" 谷風 lines 13 and 14.

[27]Ibid., 79-666b.

[28]Ibid., 83-690ab. The lines Yang quotes are from Shih Ching, Hsiao Ya, no. 199, "Ho Jen Ssu" 何人斯, and, of course, Yang follows tradition in interpreting the poem as a political satire.

[29]CTCTL, 335-c.

[30]Taishō, Yüan Wu Fo Kuo Ch'an Shih Yü Lu 圓悟佛果禪師語錄, no. 1997, vol. 47, p. 782-a. It is interesting to note that Yang Wan-li's mentor, Chang Chün, wrote one of the prefaces to this work.

[31]CCC, 80-672b.

[32]CTCTL, 290-b.

[33]CCC, 80-673b.

[34]Ibid., 80-673b.

[35]Ibid., 81-675b.

[36]Yeh Hsieh 葉 燮 , Yüan Shih 原 詩 , in Ting Fu-pao ed. 丁 福 保 , Ch'ing Shih Hua 清 詩 話 , Chung Hua Shu Chü, Peking, 1963, vol. 2, p. 606.

[37]Lü Liu-liang 呂 留 良 et al. ed., Sung Shih Ch'ao 宋 詩 鈔 , Commercial Press, Shanghai, 1935, vol. 3, p. 1871.

[38]WMK, 295-a.

[39]CTCTL, 263-b.

[40]26-248b; 28-10b; 161.

a. The pronoun yi refers to the boatmen in the previous poem.

[41]25-242a; 28-4a; 158.

a. Literally, "The place joined, paper scar streak."

[42]40-382a; 41-2a; 232.

[43]40-382a; 41-2a; 233. The Fat Immortal was a hao of Chang Lei, who was noted for his rotundity.

[44]Yen Yü 嚴 羽 , Kuo Shao-yü 郭 紹 虞 ed. and comm., Ts'ang Lang Shih Hua Chiao Shih (abbreviated TLSHCS) 滄 浪 詩 話 校 釋 , Jen Min Wen Hsüeh Ch'u Pan She, Peking, 1962, p. 54. The entire Ts'ang Lang Shih Hua has been translated into German with exhaustive commentary and an excellent introduction in Günther Debon, Ts'ang Langs Gespräche über die Dichtung, Wiesbaden, 1962. The book was extensively reviewed by Prof. P. Demiéville in T'oung Pao, 49 (1962), pp. 463-71.

[45]Ibid., p. 10. See Debon, p. 57.

[46]Ibid., p. 24. See Debon, p. 62, where he translates the term shen-k'o 'einschneidend.'

[47]Ibid., p. 1.

[48]Ibid., p. 10. See Debon, p. 57. The word wu is translated as a noun ('die Erleuchtung'), which does not seem to correspond to the Chinese grammatical construction. Hence, Debon reads "Der lernende muss . . . die Erleuchtung als höchste Wahrheit [betrachten]."

[49]Ibid., p. 1. I have not been able to determine what Yen Yü means by the four Yüeh-fu poems. See Debon, p. 59.

[50]Yeh Hsieh 葉燮, Yüan Shih 原詩, chüan 3, p. 599.

The Live Method

1. Background

In the second of two chüeh-chü presented to Yang Wan-li in the year 1189, Yang's friend Chang Tzu 張鎡 (ca. 1195) wrote:

> There is no end to the spirit of your creativity;
> With leaps and strides, you race on as quickly as possible.
> I don't know how many words and lines are before my eyes,
> But poems with your "live method" are rare.[1]

At about the same time, another friend of Yang's, Chou Pi-ta 周必大 (1126-1204), wrote to him:

> In all things Ch'eng-chai [Yang Wan-li] has been enlightened to the "live method."[2]

Ever since Chang Tzu and Chou Pi-ta praised Yang Wan-li's mastery of the live method 活法, critics have considered it to be the basis of his claim to originality in the Chinese poetic tradition, and in his introduction to Yang Wan-li's poetry, the twentieth century scholar Chou Ju-ch'ang focuses

most of his attention on Yang's live method.[3] However, Yang's immediate contemporaries were not the first critics to speak of the live method, and by late northern Sung times, the critic of the Kiangsi school Lü Pen-chung stressed the importance of the live method:

> Studying poetry, one must understand the live method. What is meant by the live method is that all of the rules are observed but one is able to transcend the rules; that is to say, the changes and transformations [in the poetry] are unfathomable, yet one does not turn his back on the rules. This Path has a set method, yet it is without a set method. It lacks a set method, yet it possesses a set method. If someone understands this, then you can discuss the live method with him.[4]

Although Lü Pen-chung's use of the term "live method" may be slightly different from Yang's contemporaries, they would agree on the essential meaning, as we can see from Liu K'o-chuang's statement on this matter:

> Later Ch'eng-chai [Yang Wan-li] appeared, and he really obtained the so-called live method, that is to say rolling and perfect like a small pill. I regret that Tzu-wei Kung [Lü Pen-chung] was not able to see him.[5]

Liu K'o-chuang lived in the generation following Yang Wan-li and his friends Chang Tzu and Chou Pi-ta, so his comments concerning the live method help us to define what the commonly accepted meaning of the term "live method" was from the time of Lü Pen-chung down to the end of the Sung dynasty. The most important point in common between Lü Pen-chung's and Liu K'o-chuang's description of the "live method" is the reference to some form of constant, dynamic motion, for Lü refers to "changes and transformations" while Liu speaks of the poetry as "rolling and perfect like a small pill." We have already examined Yang's continuous obsession with transforming the style of his poetry, but we shall find the idea of change and particularly, unexpected change, to be a fundamental concept which underlies all of his verse.

Liu K'o-chuang's comments do not enlighten us much further about the meaning of the term "live method," but Lü Pen-chung tells us more, though not as much as we could wish. The most striking feature of Lü's description of the live method is the parodoxical language he utilizes. One observes the rules, while transcending them. There is a path for the live method, but there is no path. Although such pronouncements are quite vague, they immediately remind one of Yang's contention that one first studies poetry from various masters but in the end must transcend those masters. One is further reminded of Yang's theory of poetry as "the flavor beyond flavor" in which one abandons words and meanings, but poetry still remains behind.

Although it is impossible to state specifically the points of contact between Lü Pen-chung's description of the live method

and Yang Wan-li's theory of literature, the use of paradox in both cases makes clear the influence of Ch'an mysticism. The term "live method" or huo-fa 活法 itself suggests Buddhist influence, for in interpreting Sung literary critical terms, we should always be conscious of the ambiguity of the word fa, which can retain its common secular meanings of 'method,' 'law' or can be used to translate the Sanskrit term dharma with the wealth of associations which that word evokes. Sung critics constantlly played on the ambiguity of such words, and we have already found occasion to translate such technical terms as shih-fa 詩法 as the "dharma of poetry" when it was necessary to emphasize the Buddhist connotations of these words.

A friend of Yang Wan-li, Ko T'ien-min 葛天民 leaves no doubt about the connection between Yang's live method and Ch'an Buddhism in a poem he sent to Yang:

> Meditating on Ch'an and studying poetry are not two different dharmas (fa);
> He [Yang] understands how to make a dead snake leap with life.
> With spirit upright, mind empty, his eyes transcend by themselves;
> His fur-cutting sword, though not moving, can spare or kill.[a]
> His live mechanism does not eschew familiar language;
> In recent ages only Yang Wan-li is like this.[6]

A diligent search of Sung Ch'an texts has failed to turn up the term "live method" or huo-fa, so it probably was invented by Lü Pen-chung, yet such writers as Ko T'ien-min clearly saw the connection between Lü's live method and Ch'an Buddhism. What makes Ch'an Buddhism and the live method alive is that both reject all "grasping" at objects. Just as the Ch'an monk frees himself from the cycle of birth and death by his lack of attachment to objects, the practicioner of the live method of poetry is constantly "on the move." In the words of Lü Pen-chung his "changes and transformations are unfathomable," for "the Path has a set method, yet it is without a set method."

By now the reader may feel somewhat mystified as to the exact significance of the term "live method," and, indeed, we would find the Sung critics' explanation of live method nearly impossible to comprehend if it were not for the many concrete examples of the method to be found in Yang Wan-li's own poetry. Thus, we should now proceed to the poems themselves in order to understand what Yang's contemporaries found "live" about them. Although none of the ancient critics who dealt with Yang Wan-li enumerated the basic elements of Yang's live method, we have seen fit to treat the method under the following topics (1) unconventionality, (2) illusionistic and paradoxical language, (3) surprise and sudden enlightenment, (4) humor, and (5) colloquial language. We can never be sure that Sung critics would have included all of these elements under the rubric of live method, but we feel that these are the most important devices by which Yang Wan-li keeps his poetry from falling into a "dead method" but rather continuously "on the move."

[1]Chang Tzu 張鎡 , Nan Hu Chi 南湖集 , chüan 7, in Chih Pu Tsu Chai Ts'ung Shu 知不足齋叢書 , Shanghai, 1921, 22-a.

[2]Chou Pi-ta 周必大 , Chou Yi Kuo Wen Chung Kung Chi 周益國文忠公集 , 1848, "P'ing Yüan Hsü Kao" 平園續藁 , chüan 1, "Tz'u Yün Yang T'ing-hsiu Tai Chih Chi T'i Chu Shih Huan Jan Shu Yüan" 次韻楊廷秀待制寄題朱氏渙然書院.

[3]YWLHC, pp. 5-19. Although I have found Chou Ju-ch'ang's discussion of the live method useful, my treatment of the method is entirely different. It is quite likely that due to political pressures Chou was not able to explore the Buddhist elements of Yang's live method.

[4]SPTK, Liu K'o-chuang 劉克莊 , Hou Ts'un Hsien Sheng Ta Ch'üan Chi 後村先生大全集 , 95-826a.

[5]Ibid., 95-822b.

[6]Ko T'ien-min 葛天民 , Ko Wu Huai Hsiao Chi 葛無懷小集 , in Chi Ku Ko Ying Ch'ao Nan Sung Liu Shih Chia Chi 汲古閣影鈔南宋六十家集 , "Chi Yang Ch'eng Chai" 寄楊誠齋.

a. Ch'ui-mao refers to a sword so sharp that it will cut hairs when they are blown against it by the wind. Ko means that Yang's poetry achieves its effects without any visible effort.

2. Unconventionality

One of the most important elements of Yang Wan-li's live method is expressed in a short poem written soon after his poetical enlightenment:

Light Rain

Lonely, depressed, without speech I lean against the
door by myself;
Plum flowers, light rain; it's almost dusk.
What a shame the eave's raindrops aren't free-spirited;[a]
Drip, drip, when did they ever leave their old rut?

Yang felt that the majority of poets contemporary with him were in a "rut" just as raindrops dripping from eaves, and throughout his Poetry Talk 詩話 he constantly praises those poets who were able to overthrow the accepted traditions of their own ages:

> In T'ang regulated poetry there are seven characters for each of eight lines, and in one poem, each line is unusual, and in one line, each character is unusual. Authors from ancient to modern times have found this difficult . . . For example, Tu Fu in his poem on the Ninth Day writes . . .: "I am ashamed with my short hair to have my hat blown upon/ I laughingly ask someone next me to straighten my cap." He has taken one

thing and turned it upside down to make a couplet, and, moreover, Meng Chia 孟嘉 considered his hat falling off to be romantic, but Shao-ling [Tu Fu] considered it not falling off to be romantic. He has turned over all of the "public cases" of ancient men, which is the most miraculous method.[2]

What Yang Wan-li admires most in Tu Fu is his unconventional attitude toward the tradition of poetry which he had inherited in the T'ang dynasty. Even before he had fully rejected his earlier masters, Yang Wan-li relished deflating previously accepted stereotypes:

I Gaze at the Moon on a Frosty Night from Snow Angling Boat

I stand a while by the creekside, waiting impatiently
for the moon,
But the moon knows my intentions, and purposely comes
out late.
I go home and close my doors, so depressed I don't
look for her,
When suddenly she flies over the tips of a thousand
peaks.
So I climb to Snow Angling Boat and watch her a bit;
Her icy wheel just hangs there on a pine tree branch.
"Does the poet prefer the moon now or at the mid-autumn
festival?"[a]
Someone asks me, but I just shake my head.

All year long it's only in December that the color of the moon[b]
Is rubbed and polished in snow juice, washed in frosty water.
In all eight directions for ten thousand miles there's one blue sky
And her white jade platter floats out over this azure lake.
Moreover, she invites the plum flowers to become her companions;[c]
Doesn't the mid-autumn festival lack all of this?[3]

From early T'ang times, the mid-autumn festival was considered to be the most appropriate time for viewing the moon, but when someone expresses this traditional viewpoint, Yang merely shakes his head in disgust, and then proceeds to point out why the moon is a much more splendid sight in the twelfth month. Yang's poem is obviously no revolutionary break with Chinese literary tradition, but the unconventionality we see here in embryonic form would later give rise to Yang's rejection of many of the stereotypes of Chinese poetry, as we shall find in another chapter.

One of the most common forms of departure from convention found in Yang's verse is called fan-an 翻案 or "turning over the case." What this term means can be seen from a section in his Poetry Talk where Yang praises earlier poets who have used the same method:

> When Confucius and Lao-tzu saw one another they lowered the covers [of their chariots], so Tsou Yang said: "They lowered the covers as if they were old friends." Sun Mou and Tung-p'o [Su Shih] did not know one another, so when [Sun Mou] sent him a poem, Su Shih answered: "I don't need to lower my chariot cover to you." When Liu K'uan was an officer, he made a whip of reeds, because he was so lenient. Su Shih wrote: "I have a whip I don't use, so why do I need reeds?" Tu Fu wrote: "I suddenly recall the previous ruin of an autumn well/ The white bones of ancient men are covered with green moss/ How could a man not drink and make his heart sad?" Su Shih wrote: "Why must you wait for the ruin of an autumn well/ And hold a wine cup only when you see men's white bones?" These are all the method of "turning over the case."[4]

From Yang's discussion it should be clear that fan-an is a poetical device by which a poet turns the language and ideas of an earlier poet upside down.

In his famous poem "Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon" Li Po had written: "The moon doesn't know how to drink."[5] Yang Wan-li retorts: "'The moon doesn't know how to drink' is really reckless talk."[6] Li Po's moon is totally aloof from the poet, but Yang Wan-li writes: "I chant and the moon knows how to listen."[7] In his Proclamation of North Mountain K'ung Chih-kuei 孔稚珪 described the creatures of the wilderness

which are upset because a recluse has abandoned his mountain hermitage: "His orchid curtains empty, the night cranes complain/ The mountain man has gone, the morning apes are frightened."[8] When Yang Wan-li decides to return from his official career after having viewed some particularly magnificent scenery he writes: "I'm tired of wandering and ought to go home/ And not just because of the apes' and cranes' complaint!"[9] When he was drunk Li Po wrote: "Jade Mountain falls over by itself, without anyone pushing."[10] Under similar circumstances Yang Wan-li writes: "Who cares whether Jade Mountain falls over or not?"[11] In all such cases Yang Wan-li is gleefully turning the most famous lines of the most revered authors upside down.

In his discussion of Tu Fu's iconoclasm above, Yang Wan-li stated that Tu Fu had "turned over all of the 'public cases' of ancient men . . ." The term 'public cases' or kung-an (Japanese kō-an) is taken directly from Ch'an literature, and it is very likely that Yang's use of fan-an or 'turning over the case' was inspired by Sung Ch'an practices. Just as Tu Fu turned over the 'public cases' of earlier poetry masters, the Sung author of the Wu Men Kuan turned the 'public case' of the earlier T'ang Ch'an master Nan-ch'üan upside down:

> Nan-ch'üan said: "The mind is not the Buddha, and knowledge is not the Way." Wu Men says: "Nan-ch'üan can be said to not know shame because he was getting old, and opened his stinking mouth, exposing his family scandal to outsiders . . .[12]

The reason why Wu Men is so violent toward Nan-ch'üan is not because he is in disagreement with the T'ang master's doctrine, but because the Ch'an monk must overturn all of his masters in order to attain the freedom of enlightenment. Nan-ch'üan's kung-an can serve as an object of meditation in the beginning stages, but eventually even such concepts as "the mind is not the Buddha" must be discarded. Similarly, the practice of fan-an is one means by which Yang Wan-li can transcend the masters of T'ang and earlier poetry. For Yang iconoclasm was one more method by which he could attain the live method.

[1]12-112b; 13-4b; 100.

a. T'uo-sa is very much like modern Mandarin hsiao-sa 潇洒. Since sa means 'sprinkle' when used in isolation, t'uo-sa may be a pun with the additional meaning of 'leaving their sprinkling.'

[2]CCC, 114-988ab. Meng Chia was a scholar from the Tsin dynasty noted for his wild behavior. One day while he was at a banquet, the wind blew his hat off, but in accordance with his romantic nature he did not pay attention to this. See Tsin Shu 晋书, chüan 98, p. 1341b. For "public cases" see the following discussion.

[3]7-67a; 8-1a; 64.

a. The mid-autumn festival was held on the fifteenth of the eighth lunar month at full moon. It was customary to write poems describing the moon at this time, but Yang disagrees with the traditional sentiment that the moon is most beautiful on this day.

b. La is the twelfth month of the lunar calendar and would usually fall about in January of the Western calendar.

c. In north China plum trees bloom just before New Year in the twelfth lunar month while there is still snow on the ground.

[4]CCC, 114-989ab.

[5]SPTK, Li Po李白 , Fen Lei Pu Chu Li T'ai Po Shih (abbreviated LTPS)分類補注李太白詩 , 23-313a.

[6]36-345b; 37-8b.

[7]25-233a; 27-6b.

[8]Yen K'o-chün ed.嚴可均 , Ch'üan Shang Ku San Tai Ch'in Han San Kuo Liu Ch'ao Wen全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文 repr. Shih Chieh Shu Chü, Taipei, 1968, vol.6, Ch'üan Ch'i Wen全齊文 , chüan 19, p. 8.

[9]14-127b; 15-1a.

[10]LTPS, 7-134b.

[11]19-183b; 21-10b.

[12]WMK, 297b.

3. Illusionistic and Paradoxical Language

In another chapter we shall discuss Yang Wan-li's fascination with optical illusions as part of his Buddhist philosophical inspiration. Yet, the use of illusionistic language is also one of the most important elements in his live method. In the following poem we can observe how Yang creates a whole series of illusions through the use of such language:

Making Fire in the Boat on a Snowy Day
(First Poem of Two)

Raven silver [charcoal] catches fire and gives forth
green fog,
So I make believe its a thick stick of heavy aloes
incense.
Because it stops, then starts, it billows forth thickly;
Scattered into a fine mist, it warms my robe and trousers.
But in a moment the fog clears, spitting out red rays,
And blazes like the rising sun on the surface of the
clouds.
This bright spring and mild sun warm my whole room;
My pale face turns moist red; I think I'm in the Land
of Drunks!
Suddenly the fires goes cold, and the fog all disappears;
All I see is snowy [ash] piled up in my red stove.
Outside my window the snow is more than three feet deep,
But this snow inside my window is only one inch fragrant!

In the very first line of the poem Yang creates two illusions, for he does not simply state that the charcoal has caught fire and given forth smoke but rather that "raven silver" has ignited and produced green "fog." The illusion is continued in the second line, for now the silver/charcoal has been transformed into a stick of incense, but instead of billowing forth smoke, the "incense" proceeds to produce "mist" in the third and fourth lines. The fire born in the silver/charcoal/incense is not really fire but the rising sun, which gives rise to spring-like weather in Yang's boat cabin, despite the fact that the poem is being written on a snowy day. Even the poet himself is not free from illusory transformations, for when he feels the warmth of the sun/fire, his face turns red and he is intoxicated, although he has not drunken any wine. Suddenly the illusion disappears, when the fire goes out, but in the meantime the silver/charcoal/incense has further transformed itself into snow. Even measurements of length and depth do not have any meaning in Yang's world of illusion, for the one inch of "snow" in Yang's stove is equivalent to the three feet of snow outside his window. Finally, unlike ordinary snow, this "snow," a product of fire and heat, also possesses the property of fragrance.

The kinds of transformations produced by Yang's use of illusionistic language bear a strong resemblance to the contention of the <u>prajñā sūtras</u> that all phenomenal existence is like a "sleight of hand, a mirage, etc." In fact, Yang himself frequently compares the illusory transformation of physical objects to a magical trick played by some immortal:

Clearing Snow (First Poem of Two)

An immortal cuts water into flying flowers;
And when he changes them into jasper, it's already
miraculous.
But he changes the jasper back into water,
Which, dripping on the level ground is finally glass.[2]

In four short lines we see an immortal change water into flowers (snow flakes), then jasper (sleet), back into water (rain), and finally glass (standing pools of water). In short, Yang's use of illusionistic language is extremely similar to the way the Buddhas and gods create the illusion of māyā in Indian Buddhist texts.

Not only is the method by which the magical transformations are effected similar to what one finds in Indian Buddhist texts, but the very illusionistic language which Yang employs is practically identical to what one finds in these texts. If one examines the large body of poetry which Yang wrote on the theme of transformation, he will find that words for gems and precious metals such as 'jade 玉,' 'crystal 水精,' 'glass 琉璃,' 'silver 銀,' and 'pearl 珠,' occupy the first place in the magical changes he describes. Anyone who has read a reasonable quantity of Indian Buddhist literature will recognize the similarity between the bejewelled world of illusion in Yang Wan-li's poetry and the same world found in practically every Indian sūtra. The Saddharma Pundarīka Sūtra describes the Buddha field of a future Buddha in the following terms:

The ground will be made of glass with jewel trees in rows. There will be ropes of gold in order to mark the boundaries of roads. Jewel flowers will be scattered, covering everything in their purity.[4]

However, in many cases Yang Wan-li's use of such illusionistic language goes one step beyond the ornate illusory world of Indian Buddhist literature:

River Water

The water's color is originally pure white,
But when piled deep, it turns to green.
What kind of potion did the River Fairy use[a]
To soften this thousand miles of jade?[5]

Rather than comparing the river water to jade, Yang Wan-li surprises the reader by stating that the water only became water after the "jade" of the river was magically "softened" by an immortal.

Yang utilizes a similar method in a poem about the moon:

On the Night of the Twelfth of the Eighth Month I Gaze at the Moon from Sincere Study[a]

Nearing mid-autumn, the moon is already pure;
A circle of ice, it hangs on a raven black curtain.
Suddenly I discover that tonight the moon
Isn't really glued on the sky, but moves entirely on its own![6]

Yang's description of the moon as "a circle of ice" and the sky as a "raven black curtain" fits in with his more usual use of illusory language, but the last line of the poem is as unexpected as the transformation of jade into water in the preceding work. The poet obviously knows that the moon/ice is not "glued" on the sky/curtain, so when he tells the reader he is surprised by the moon moving "entirely on its own," the reader is taken off guard just as he was when he discovered that the water of the river was originally jade.

By now, it should be reasonably clear how Yang Wan-li's use of illusionistic language fits in with his live method. We have seen how Ko T'ien-min thought that anyone with a command of the live method "understands how to make a dead snake leap with life," and Yang's illusionistic language accomplishes exactly this goal. In reading Yang Wan-li's poetry, one can never precisely determine what is "real" and what is "illusory." Plain charcoal transforms itself into silver, incense, and snow, while water can take any form ranging from jasper to glass. Hence the reader is constantly finding himself taken aback as one illusion shifts to another, just as he would be if a dead snake suddenly woke up and leapt at him.

In addition to using illusionistic language, Buddhist sūtras make frequent use of paradoxical language. Thus in most Mahāyāna works one finds such expressions as "the hair of a tortoise" of "the child of a barren woman" in constant use. Such paradoxical language consists of elements which seem to be self-contradictory on the level of worldly truth and,

therefore, shock the mind from its normal thought processes to attain a higher level of consciousness where all such paradoxes are resolved.

Although paradoxical language is less common in Chinese poetry than in Buddhist philosophical discourse, one finds that Yang Wan-li occasionally uses language which is self-contradictory, hence, paradoxical. Thus, Yang Wan-li frequently writes such sentences as: "There is a dream, but there never was a dream;/ It seems like thought, but it is not thought either."[7] Although such lines sound as if they could have been quoted from some Buddhist text on logic, Yang Wan-li achieves considerable effect when he applies paradoxical language to a description of the landscape:

Written While on the Road to Wan-an (First Poem of Three)

Jade peak clouds, scraped, let slanting light through;
Flower paths' mud, dried, I can go out for an evening
walk.
Fine, fine, a constant breeze, warm in the midst of cold;
From time to time, a few drops, rain in clear weather.[8]

In Yang's paradoxical landscape, there is heat when it is cold and rain when the sky is clear.

However, we need not worry about the seeming contradictions in Yang Wan-li's landscape, for no such contradictions exist in the realm of absolute truth.

In most poems Yang resolves the contradictions which his use of paradoxical language seems to create:

Looking at the Snow on a Moon-lit Night
(Second Poem of Three)

The moon's light and the snow's color are both pure
and cold;
When I see the moon, I first suspect it's a circle
of snow.
Yet I see the snow's light is like a moon;
In the end the snow and moon are just the same![9]

At first the poet cannot decide whether the moon is snow or whether the snow is moon, but after musing about the seeming contradiction between the two, he realizes their identity.

A similar resolution of a contradictory situation occurs in a landscape poem:

On the Third Day of the First Month I Spend the Night
at the Fan Clan Village (First Poem of Four)

. . .
Where did these three mountain peaks come from?
They gallop over to me like neighing colts.
By my window, they can't stand to leave;
Hesitating, they stay just for me.
Facing them, we become four friends;
I call for wine, letting them help themselves.

I am drunk, but the mountains are awake;
We forget, yet seek, for one another.[10]

In his state of intoxication Yang Wan-li is separate from the mountains which remain sober, and, hence, Yang and the mountains should seem to forget about one another despite their initial friendship. Yet in a philosophical system such as Ch'an, where one attains enlightenment by not seeking it, there is no contradiction in Yang and the mountains forgetting about one another and seeking one another at the same time.

Yang Wan-li does not use paradoxical language in his poetry as commonly as he uses illusionistic language, but the effect is similar. Paradox keeps the mind off balance, and, hence, brings life to what might otherwise be dead.

[1]28-261a; 30-1a; 177.

SPPY has 晚 instead of 曉 of SPTK in the title and 生 instead of 昇 in the sixth line.

a. Raven silver is an allusion to Meng Chiao's poem: "He presents charcoal, its price greater than double raven silver." See SPPY, Meng Tung Ye Chi 孟東野集, 9-4b.

b. Aloes incense is also known as 沈水香 or 'water-sinking incense,' so called because it was so heavy that it would not float on water.

c. Fu-sang was the tree from which the sun was supposed to rise according to popular tradition.

d. Wo-tan is originally from the Shih Ching: "A face like moist cinnabar." See Shih Ching, Ch'in Feng 秦風 Chung Nan 終南. Yang is saying that his face which is pale from old age suddenly becomes moist and rosy like a drunk man due to the heat of the charcoal.

[2]21-201a; 23-6a.

[3]Refer to the following poems translated in the body of the thesis: bottom p. 199, bottom p. 222, bottom p. 224, pp. 283-284, pp. 312-314.

[4]Taishō, Miao Fa Lien Hua Ching 妙法蓮華経, no. 262, vol. 9, p. 20-c.

[5]26-247b; 28-9b; 161.

a. According to popular mythology the River Fairy was a beautiful female spirit who inhabited the Yangtze River.

[6]37-356b; 38-9b; 224.

SPPY leaves out the two words 誠齋 in the title and has 二 in place of 三 in the SPTK edition.

a. Sincere Study or Ch'eng-chai was the name of Yang's library after his hao.

[7]25-239b; 28-1b.

[8]15-138b; 16-2b; 116.

[9]11-108b; 12-9a.

[10]18-166a; 20-2b.

4. Surprise and Sudden Enlightenment

The problem of reality and illusion is one of the most important themes of Yang Wan-li's poetry, and we have seen how his live method utilizes illusionistic and paradoxical language to emphasize the illusory nature of sense perception. Yet, when we finally realize that our senses have been fooled into confusing illusion for reality, our minds are startled into awareness, a process akin to that of the man who attains sudden enlightenment after groping around in the darkness for many years. While looking at some flowers, Yang was startled to discover that some of the flowers were actually butterflies when the "flowers" flew away;

> As I look up toward the trellis, I can only see a few from afar,
> But after I go upstairs, I gaze down and they stand out beautifully,
> There's no way to distinguish the t'u mi flowers from butterflies;[a]
> Only when they fly away do you know they're not flowers![1]

A similar "awakening" occurred when Yang was watching clouds shaped like mountain peaks in the sky:

> A clear sky just before dawn, when it isn't light yet;
> My eyes are full of strange peaks, always attractive.
> But when one of the peaks suddenly grows,
> Only then do I know, not moving, it's a real mountain![2]

A common method used by Ch'an masters to enlighten their students was to shock their minds and bodies into awareness. This frequently took the form of shouting at the student or beating him on the body, and sometimes even more drastic methods were used when warranted:

> The monk Chü-chih only raised his finger whenever there was an inquiry. Later, his boy attendant was asked by an outsider, "What are the fundamentals of your master's dharma?" The boy, too, raised his finger. Chü-chih heard of this, and cut off his finger with a knife. In pain, the boy ran away screaming and crying, but Chü-chih called him back again and when the boy turned his head around, Chü-chih raised his finger. The boy was suddenly enlightened.[3]

We find a similar method employed in Yang Wan-li's poetry, which frequently startles us into sudden enlightenment with its unexpected changes. Up to Yang's time, most Chinese verse was written with careful attention to the logical order of the poem from first line to last. Even such an innovative critic and poet as Lü Pen-chung wrote:

> Whenever you write poetry, you must cause people to know there is a second line after reading the first line, and a third line after reading the second line. Only if this order is maintained to the end of the poem, can it be considered to be wonderful.[4]

Here again, Yang did not follow traditional practice, and unexpected shifts in his poems were noticed by the late Ch'ing critic Ch'en Yen 陳衍 (1856-1937):

> In other poems there is only one "fold," merely one twist or turn and no more. Yang Wan-li has at least two twists and turns. Other people fold first to the left and then fold further to the left. Yang Wan-li first folds to the left and then folds again to the left, but after three folds he finally goes to the right.[5]

In his Poetry Talk, Yang admired similar qualities in earlier poets:

> There are poems which express three ideas in one line of seven characters. Tu Fu wrote: "Facing my food, I eat for a while, but finally cannot continue." T'ui-chih [Han Yü] wrote: "I am going to go, but before I arrive, I think of returning."[6]

In Yang's own poetry, we frequently find ourselves whirling around with our ordinary sense of direction lost due to some surprise:

> The oarsmen just let the boat follow the current,
> And make no plans for water and rocks in the rapids ahead.
> A surprise torrent whirls us around three times.
> So our boat's tail becomes its head![7]

We would not be so surprised if the boat turned about merely once, but just when it seems to be returning to normal after the second revolution, we are startled by being swung around once more.

In his Poetry Talk Yang Wan-li praises earlier poets who succeeded in shocking the reader into a new awareness:

> Some poems have lines which startle one. In his "Landscape Screen" Tu Fu wrote: "There shouldn't be maple trees in the hall/ How strange, the rivers and mountains give rise to smoke and mist!" Also: "If you chop down the cassia tree on the moon,/ Her pure rays will be even more!" Po Le-t'ien [Chü-yi] wrote: "From afar I pity the moon's cassia flowers so lonely,/ So I ask if Huan-e is really there./ The moon has always had a lot of unused land,/ So why doesn't she plant two more trees in the middle?"[8]

However, Yang Wan-li's shock method is much more extreme than anything seen earlier in Chinese verse, for he delights in making us imagine that something is what it is not, and then in the final line of his poem, he shatters the illusion he has created:

> A young boy removes the morning ice from a metal bowl,
> And hanging it on a colored string makes it into a silver gong.

As he strikes it a jade chime resounds throughout the
woods,
When suddenly--the tinkle of glass shattering on the
ground![9]

As soon as Yang has made us believe that the piece of ice is a silver gong with the resonance of jade chimes, he smashes our dream against the ground, but even then the sound is that of breaking glass and not ice!

Just as Yang smashes our dream chimes, so he enjoys shocking us out of other dreams which he conjures up for us with his poetic imagination:

The Boatman Plays a Flute

The Long River has no wind, the water is level, green;
Neither shoe leather wrinkles, nor even gauze ripples.
As one gazes east and west, the light floats in the void,
Gleaming like a faultless jade for a thousand acres.
The boys in our boat can't stand being idle,
So they drunkenly pick up the flute and play midst
clouds and haze.
With one sound, pure and long, it resounds, piercing
the sky---
A mountain ape crying at the moon, a spring falling in
torrent.
Then they beat their small sheepskin hip drum,
Head erect like a green peak, hands falling like rain.

Suddenly, in mid-stream, one huge fish
Leaps and smashes the glass water for over a yard![10]

The first ten lines of the poem evoke a dream world of exquisite beauty. We are not sitting still on land but drifting at ease in a boat on the water midst fog and clouds, hence, with no sense of direction or time. As if the intoxication of wine were not enough, we are further intoxicated by the music of the flute, which does not sound like an ordinary flute but is "a mountain ape crying at the moon" or the waters of a torrential spring. Suddenly, this idyl is shattered by a huge fish coming from beneath the mysterious waters and we are shocked out of our dream into the world of reality.

Sometimes, rather than startle us into awareness by shattering a dream world he has created for us, Yang chooses the method of driving us back into a corner and just when we expect to be relieved, delivers a blow to us stronger than anything before:

Spending the Night at the River-Port Pool Rock

At the third watch, no moon, the sky's really black;
A flash of lightning is followed by the roar of thunder.
Rain pierces the sky, falling on my boat-hut's roof;
A driving wind blows across, crooked, then straight.
The loose matting leaks, soaking my bedding;
The sound of waves beats my pillow, a paper's width away.
In the middle of dreams, I am startled awake and can't
sleep;

Grabbing my clothes, I sit up straight and sigh again
and again.
There's no difficulty or hardship I've not experienced
in my travels,
But in my whole life there's been nothing like tonight!
Lord Heaven scares me with his nasty jokes;
He did not inform me, but gave me a surprise.
There's no way for him to suddenly gather the wind or
tidy the rain;
Yet can I now ask him for the east to get light?
I hang my head, draw in my legs, how narrow and confined!
When suddenly once more, on my head---drrippp!!![11]

After suffering from the cold and wet, we are huddled up awaiting a happy ending in the dawn or, perhaps, some apt philosophical comment about fate from the poet, when our already harassed nervous system is subjected to the shattering sensation of an ice cold drop of water hitting us squarely on the head!

The perceptive reader will notice a great similarity between Yang Wan-li's drop of ice cold water and the club and shout of the Lin-chi Ch'an masters, and it is not surprising that the southern Sung poet and critic Liu K'o-chuang, who intensely admired Yang Wan-li, wrote:

If we compare this to Ch'an Buddhism, Shan-ku [Huang T'ing-chien] was the first patriarch. Lü [Pen-chung] and Tseng [Chi] 幾 were the North and South Schools

> of Ch'an. Ch'eng-chai [Yang Wan-li] appeared somewhat later like Te-shan of Lin-chi [Yi-hsüan]. The first patriarch and those immediately following him only [used] "words," but when [Yang Wan-li's] clubbing and shouting appeared, things became considerably more active. . . Both Hsü Yüan-tzu [Ssu-tao似道] and Kao Hsü-ku [Ssu-sun似孫] meditated under Ch'eng-chai [Yang Wan-li], and their startling lines are frequently similar to his.[12]

Thus, we see that Liu K'o-chuang thought that Huang T'ing-chien was similar to early Ch'an masters, who were still attached to words and had not been enlightened to the basic doctrine of later Ch'an masters "not to set up words"不立文字. Yang Wan-li, on the other hand, was similar to the Lin-chi master Yi-hsüan, who either clubbed or shouted at students who remained attached to language and the discursive thought which accompanies it. By means of his clubbing and shouting, Yang Wan-li did not slip back into the cycle of "transmigration and death," but was able to escape the limitations of language with his live method.

[1]25-236a; 27-9b.

a. The t'u-mi is a member of the rose family.

[2]32-306a; 34-7a.

[3]WMK, 293b.

[4]Wei Ch'ing-chih 魏慶之, Shih Jen Yü Hsieh 詩人玉屑, Chung Hua Shu Chü, Shanghai, 1959, p. 121.

[5]Quoted on p. 6 of YWLHC. Chou Ju-ch'ang gives his source as p. 1 of Ch'en Yen's T'an Yi Lu 談藝錄, but this work has not been available to me.

[6]CCC, 114-987a.

[7]26-248b; 28-10b.

[8]CCC, 114-987a.

[9]11-108a; 12-8a; 97.

[10]18-169b; 20-6a; 127.

[11]13-123b; 14-5a; 105.

[12]SPTK, Liu K'o-chuang 劉克莊, Hou Ts'un Hsien Sheng Ta Ch'üan Chi 後村先生大全集, chüan 97, 844ab.

5. Humor

It is hoped that by now the reader has noticed the use of humor in the poems of Yang Wan-li already translated, and, in fact, humor is one of the most important elements of Yang's live method. Of course, it would be futile to ascribe Yang's humor completely to Ch'an Buddhism or the influence of any other school of thought, but we can certainly understand his humor better in the context of the undeniable influence Ch'an had on his literary theories and poetic creation.

As we have already seen, Yang uses the startling to produce the effect of "sudden enlightenment" in his verse. However, much good humorous literature uses the unexpected in a very similar manner to elicit laughter, and the act of laughter itself in its suddenness bears a definite affinity to enlightenment. Thus, we find that when we read Ch'an works written during T'ang and Sung times, we are often excited into laughter by their ability to shock us with their irrational humor:

> One day P'u-hua was eating raw vegetables in front of the monk's hall. The master [Yi-hsüan] upon seeing him said: "You look just like a donkey!" P'u-hua immediately brayed like a donkey. The master retorted: "You bandit!" P'u-hua shouted: "Bandits! Bandits!" and immediately ran away.[1]

Although very little of Yang Wan-li's early poetry is humorous, since he was still under the influence of the Kiangsi

poets, as early as 1168 we can already see a hint of what was to come later:

I Follow Behind Uncle Ch'ang-ing to Go out Visiting on Man Day at Dawn

Each of the four seasons has its good points,
But in the end, none are like the springtime.
What need have we of flowers and willows
To love the splendor of the spring season?
This morning I went out walking
Following behind uncle to the west of the south hill.
The mud is so soft my sandals are cozy,
The wind so tender, my face doesn't feel it.
The cold grasses move their warm sprouts;
Clear mountains retain the appearance of rain.
Water and sun flirt with one another;
In wrinkled ripples is born a shattered radiance.
How could the bird song be just for my sake?
Yet listening to it, I am delighted by chance.
When I went outdoors I first feared trouble,
But now on the road, I forget to go home.
As long as my mind is satisfied,
What matter if I go out or stay home?
A passerby sees me and bows
Just when I'm thinking about something.
I don't even see his face
And answer him with what comes to my mouth.

Only later I awaken and fear I've insulted him;
I want to beg forgiveness, but can't catch up to him.
Perhaps, my frankness will seem insolent,
But if he's angry, then what can I do?[2]

Of course, the humor of this poem is extremely subtle, but in it we see the germs of Yang Wan-li's later writing. In the first part of the poem, Yang shows himself totally in harmony with nature. Although he knows his importance to the natural world is negligible, he finds great delight in the mysterious processes whereby nature renews herself in the early spring, and as a result, he is lost in a sort of reverie in which he transcends social conventions. However, unnatural society soon intrudes into Yang's dream world, and when he finally awakens, he is worried by his neglect of the decorum of social life. In the end the natural side of Yang wins, and he concludes somewhat unsocially, that since there is nothing he can do to correct his mistake, he might as well forget it. The humor of this poem is more difficult for the modern Westerner to fathom, for we are not as easily shocked in social matters as the medieval Chinese, yet we can readily recognize an affinity between the humor of Yang's poem and the irreverent attitude of the Sung Ch'an masters such as Hui K'ai, who as we have seen, refers to the Buddha as "yellow-faced Gautama."

After Yang's poetic enlightenment his humor was no longer so restrained as in his earlier works, and he fully mastered the use of the unexpected or shocking to make the reader laugh.

In 1181 he wrote:

I Give Warning to the Wind God

Sheer cliffs, gaping, gaping, like tigers yawning their
jaws;
Terrifying rapids, rumble, rumble, like thunder roaring
forth.
As we sail against the current, there's a head wind, too;
It's like rowing an iron boat up to the Milky Way.
"Wind God! Let me treat you to a cup of wine;
Why do you play such bad jokes to scare this old poet?
Can't you just calm down your anger for me?"
But shore willows toss their heads and rushes wave
their fists!![3]

It is quite rare to find such natural forces as the wind personified in Chinese verse, but the violence with which the wind refuses the poet's request through the medium of the willows and rushes is a totally new element in Chinese poetry. It is precisely the shock of this violence which makes the poem so funny in the Chinese original.

In 1178, Yang had written another humorous poem about the wind:

On Hearing the Wind's Sound at Night

When he makes it hot or cold, there's nowhere for me to
escape;

He opens flowers and fells them, just suiting his own
fancy.
It's his sound at night that's especially despicable,
For he's set on distracting this sad man's midnight
sleep.
Since he has no form, how can he have a voice?
For no reason at all, the trees help him make noise.
I'm going to cut down all the old catalpas and
withered willows;
And then we'll just see what the hell he can do about
that![4]

In this poem, the poet takes the offensive against the wind and the unexpected violence of the author's assault upon the poor catalpas and willows surprises the reader into laughter. Thus, we can conclude that although much of Yang Wan-li's humorous verse has little to do with Ch'an Buddhism directly, the technique of his humor is similar to that of the more Buddhist poems and even Sung Ch'an texts themselves.

Yang Wan-li's humor was rarely appreciated by post-Sung critics, for many of the more conservative Ming and Ch'ing authors took such joking to be mere buffoonery. Nevertheless, not all later critics were hostile and the editors of the Sung Shih Ch'ao, who were so influential in reviving interest in Sung poetry in Ch'ing times, wrote:

Yang Wan-li's natural endowments were like Li Po. He
discarded all the skin and hair [i.e., the superficial]

and produced his own "mechanism." When those [poems of Yang] which the ancients said were similar to Li Po's, enter the vulgar eyes of moderns then they are all rustic and crude. After I first obtained the selection of the Huang Ch'un Bookshop and further those poems which were recorded by Mr. Kao of Tsui-li, I edited and copied them and everyone who saw them laughed heartily. Alas! That which does not make one laugh is not worthy of being Yang Wan-li's poetry![5]

[1] Taishō, Chen Chou Lin Chi Hui Chao Ch'an Shih Yü Lu 鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄, no. 1985, vol. 47, p. 503-b. The entire work has been translated into French in Paul Demiéville, Entretiens de Lin-tsi, Librarie Artheme Fayard, Paris, 1972, p. 180.

[2] 5-45b; 5-2a; 50.

The last line of the poem translates literally: "If he is angry, how can I avoid it?" Note the highly colloquial use of tu for 'how.' The implication of the line is that since the poet cannot avoid insulting the passerby, then that is the passerby's problem.

[3] 16-151b; 18-3a; 124.

[4] 10-100a; 11-10b; 92.

[5] Lü Liu-liang et al. ed. 呂留良, Sung Shih Ch'ao 宋詩鈔 Commercial Press, Shanghai, 1935, vol. 3, p. 1871.

6. Colloquial Language

In our discussion of Yang Wan-li's theory of poetry, we have already stated that he strongly advocated a simple, unadorned form of verse relatively free from erudite allusions. Yang's attempt to write such natural poetry led him to make poetry written in a highly colloquial style to be one of the bases of his live method. No scholar poet before him used colloquial so extensively, and possibly it is significant that the language of his verse displays a marked similarity to the colloquial of contemporary Ch'an writers, who like Yang did not place so much emphasis on polished refinement. However, we need not necessarily look to the Ch'an monks to find the source for Yang's use of the spoken tongue, for throughout his life, Yang was a great admirer of Po Chü-yi, the poet who was most instrumental in introducing colloquial into T'ang verse:

On the Fifth of the Fifth Month I Stop Drinking
Due to Illness

In my sickness I'm so bored I give up sweeping and
cleaning;
Not drinking during the holidays, makes me even sadder.
By chance I read the Works of Po Chü-yi;
Not only has my sadness gone, but my sickness has left,
too![1]

Yet Yang Wan-li went even farther than Po Chü-yi in the

writing of colloquial verse, as can be seen from the following poem:

Passing the Chen-yang Gorges (Sixth Poem of Six)

A hundred sandbanks a thousand inlets, with a few
breakers and waves;
Crowded together into the Chen-yang Gorges, they
really aren't too much.
If you used all the gorges' mountains to plug it up
tight,
I wonder if the river's waters would flow backwards![2]

Yang's poem is full of words which normally occur only in the spoken language, and although this particular poem is a bit extreme in its use of colloquial particles in particular, anyone who reads the footnotes to the poems translated throughout this work, will notice the frequency with which Yang utilizes the spoken language of his age.

Although Yang Wan-li's love of colloquial in a literary tradition noted for its obscurity is highly laudable, the pitfalls of his method are also visible in the work quoted above. Although this particular poem is very delightful to read in the original, there is always the danger that the use of too much colloquial language, and especially spoken particles such as <u>liao</u> 了 and <u>ma</u> 麼 , will destroy the very compactness that is one of the chief glories of the tradition of Chinese <u>shih</u> poetry. Yang Wan-li himself was fully aware of the problems

involved and according to his contemporary Lo Ta-ching 羅大經 (ca. 1224), Yang stressed the care with which one should use colloquial language in classical poetry:

> Yang Wan-li said: "Certainly there are poems which make the vulgar into the refined, but this must have passed through the smelting and transformation of previous generations before it can be followed. Li Po's [use of] nai-k'e, Tu Fu's che-mo, and li-hsü or jo-ke of the [Late] T'ang poets are of this category. In their Cold Food Festival poems, the T'ang poets did not dare to use the word t'ang [colloquial for a type of sweet cake eaten on this festival], and in their Double Nine Festival poems, they did not dare use the word kao ['cake']. Wang An-shih did not dare write poems about plum flowers; he did not dare lightly lead a village woman or peasant man to sit at the side of King P'ing's son and Marquis Wei's wife. I have observed that among Tu Fu's poetry there are entire poems which use ordinary and vulgar language without any harm to their superiority or subtlety [several examples quoted]." Yang Wan-li frequently imitated this style which is so satisfying and delightful.[3]

However, many later critics did not agree with Yang's attempts at artless colloquial poetry. Typical of these is the Ch'ing poet and critic Chu Yi-tsun 朱彝尊 (1629-1709):

> At the present, those who speak of poetry always despise and discard the sound of T'ang and enter into the currents and schools of the Sung. The highest take Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien as their masters, while the lowest imitate the style of Yang Wan-li. They think shouting and clamor to be marvelous and rusticity and crudeness to be correct.[4]

Further:

> Recently, poets all have abandoned T'ang and studied Sung. I suspect that Lu Yu was too cooked and Huang T'ing-chien too raw. The raw flowed and became Hsiao Tung-fu, while the cooked sank and became Yang Wan-li. Hsiao was not transmitted but Yang was. What difference is there between those who imitate him and one who searches for filth by the side of the sea?[5]

Chu Yi-tsun was attached to the "dead method" of imitation of the ancient, whereas Yang Wan-li preferred to meditate on the liveliness of the spoken language.

[1]42-408b; 42-14b.

[2]15-141b; 16-5b.

[3]Luo Ta-ching 羅大經, Ho Lin Yü Lu 鶴林玉露, in Pi Chi Hsiao Shuo Ta Kuan Hsü Pien 筆記小說大觀續編, Hsin Hsing Shu Chü, Taipei, 1962, chüan 3, p. 4a, p. 2290.

[4]SPTK, Chu Yi-tsun 朱彝尊, P'u Shu T'ing Chi 曝書亭集, 38-319a.

[5]Ibid., 52-412b.

Major Themes

1. Illusion and Reality

Not only did Yang use the Ch'an concept of enlightenment as a metaphor for the process whereby the poet creates poetry, but also many of the basic concepts of Buddhism had a profound influence on the poetry he wrote. One of the basic problems that occupied the Buddhist was the concept of reality versus illusion, and it was precisely in the realization of the non-duality of reality and illusion that enlightenment lay for the Ch'an Buddhists. Yang explores this question in one of his late poems (1201):

Playing with the Moon on a Summer Night

When I raise my head, the moon's in the sky,
But when it shines on me, my shadow's on the ground.
As I walk, my shadow walks, too;
When I stop, my shadow also stops.
I wonder if my shadow and I
Are one thing or maybe two.[a]
The moon can trace out my shadow,
But if it traced its own, I wonder what it'd be like.
By chance, I pace by the bank of a stream,
And now the moon is in the stream!
Above and below, altogether two moons;

Which of them is the real one?
Or is the water the sky?
Or the sky the water?[1]

The reflection of the moon in the water as a symbol of reality versus illusion is not originally Chinese and is already found in the prajñā literature, which shook Chinese thought when it was introduced at the end of the third century. In describing the characteristics of the bodhisattva, the Pañcaviṁśati-sāhasrikā-prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva states that the enlightened being "understands all dharmas to be like a sleight of hand, a mirage, the moon in the water (jala-candra), the void, an echo, a gandharva city, a dream, a shadow, the reflection in a mirror, a transformation."[2] The commentary in the Ta Chih Tu Lun 大智度論 on this passage reads:

As for being like the moon in the water, the moon is really in the sky, but its reflection appears in the water. The moon as the mark of the real dharma is as in the void of the reality of the true dharma nature. In the water of the mind of all gods and men there appear the marks of the ego and all that belongs to the ego, and for this reason it is said to be like the moon in the water. Moreover, if a small child sees the moon in the water, he is glad and wishes to grab it, but when an adult sees this, he laughs.[3]

As early as the Liang dynasty (502-557), the ten metaphors for illusion served as material for poetry, and the Buddhist emperors of the Liang dynasty, Wu Ti 武帝 (502-550) and Chien Wen Ti 簡文帝 (550-551) both wrote poems on each of these metaphors. In his poem "Water Moon" Chien Wen Ti writes:

> A round wheel, it shines on the water;
> New born, it also reflects on the current.
> Full, full, like a soaked jade ring;
> Clear, clear, like a sunken hook.
> Though not worried about its hare drowning,
> How can its cassia-tree branches float?
> Although it vainly causes people to appreciate this,
> It may still serve to delight a jumping monkey.
> A myriad troubles seem dissolved, washed away;
> What further marks are there to search for?[4]

Thus, by the time Yang wrote about the reflection of the moon in the water, it was already widely known as a metaphor for the illusion of the world. Nevertheless, Yang certainly was the first poet to substitute wine for the water, the result of which was probably his finest philosophical poem:

Two Days After Double Nine I Climb with Hsü K'e-chang
to Myriad Flower River Valley and Pass the Wine
Cup Beneath the Moon

This old fellow's really thirsty, but the moon's
thirstier still;
As soon as the wine falls into my cup, the moon's
already inside.
She brings in the blue sky along with her,
So both moon and sky are soaking wet.
"The sky loves wine" has been handed down from antiquity,
But "the moon doesn't know how to drink" is really
reckless talk.
I raise my cup and swallow the moon down with one gulp,
Yet when I raise my head I see the moon still in the sky.
This old fellow laughs and asks his guest,
"Is there just one moon or are there two?"
The wine enters my poet intestines--wind and fire
burst out;
The moon enters my poet intestines--ice and snow pour
forth.
Before I can down one cup, my poem is already finished;
I recite the poem to heaven and even heaven is startled.
How do I know that the myriad ages are just some dried-
up bones?
I pour out some wine and gulp down another moon![5]

Yang obviously regarded this poem as one of his most important

creations, for the poet Lo Ta-ching, who was a friend of Yang's eldest son and from the same village as the Yang family, wrote:

> Yang Wan-li's poem about passing the wine cup under the moon is as follows [poem quoted]. When I was about ten years old, I waited on my father, the Old Man of Bamboo Valley, to visit Yang Wan-li, and with my own ears heard Yang recite this poem, after which he said: "I will say myself that this work of mine is similar to Li Po's!"

The style of the poem is certainly influenced by Li Po, but the wine drinking in Yang's poem is Buddhist compared to the Taoist content of Li's works. The moon in the wine corresponds to the same moon in the creek water in our first poem, with the difference that the illusion and reality are so mixed that in the end, the reader is not even sure which moon is the real one. Through the elixir of Chinese poetry, namely wine, an Indian philosophical concept is expressed in a uniquely Chinese way.

When one reads the list of the ten metaphors for illusion from the Prajñāpāramitā literature, one notices that a number of them such as the "mirage" or "echo" are not only of an extremely illusory nature physically, but also of extremely short duration in the temporal sphere as well. Yang Wan-li had a particular interest in phenomena of short duration, and although he is not entirely alone in this interest among Sung poets, he was probably the most successful in describing such objects. Indeed, it is not improbable that he had the "mirage" of the prajñā literature in mind when he described what happens

as one looks at a lamp early in the morning before he has totally awakened to the realm of ordinary consciousness:

Getting Up Early on an Autumn Day

The cock's crowed but the bell hasn't rung yet,
So I don't know if it's dawn or not.
I get up, but I'm afraid I'll waken everybody,
And I don't dare open the windows.
The left-over lamp spits forth its pointed horn rays;
Above and below it, two silver broomsticks form.
I focus my eyes, trying to examine them closely,
But they scatter, racing away like a flash of lightning![7]

Yang's interest in phenomena of short duration enabled him to find beauty in occurrences which most earlier poets would not have even noticed. One winter night he left some newly picked plum branches in two vases filled with water. When the water froze and the vases broke, the flowering branches were still stuck in two vase-shaped pieces of ice which Yang Wan-li's poetic genius transformed into crystal vases sent from heaven:

Who has sent me these two crystal vases,
With several branches of plum growing from them?
Their slender branches still bear scars from picking;
Through the vases I see them reflected, clear to their bones.

The big branches have opened completely, their flowers
like snow;
The small branches, not yet opened, are purer by far.
They vie in bursting forth from the vases' mouths;
Alas! One can only look and not pick!

They say that when crystal has just appeared in the
myriad ravines,
About to harden, not yet hardened, it's like frozen lard.
Above was a river plum, its flowers at their peak;
Several branches were blown off, falling on these cold
mirrors.
A jade carver cut them out and brought them to this
world,
Polishing out these vases with the plums for us to see.
Even now there are places where they haven't hardened,
And in the vases pearls of water race back and forth.
All that bothers me is the spring sun reddening outside
my window,
For it will soon turn my vases into "Mister No-suches!"[8]

Through the medium of Yang's poetic fancy, two pieces of ice are magically changed into crystal vases sent by some mysterious jade carver from the land of the immortals. The only problem about the fantasy Yang has created is that in a few hours, it will have melted away into nothing.

For Yang Wan-li, the ordinary world of "common sense" is full of mysterious optical illusions. When he watches the sun

setting over a lake, it seems to enter directly into the water:

I sit and watch the west sun set over the lake shore;
It's not swallowed by mountains nor are there any clouds.
Inch by inch it comes lower and suddenly sinks completely;
Clearly it's entered the water, but there aren't any
traces left behind![9]

Or when Yang observes a fisherman floating away from him on a small boat, the fisherman in his grass raincoat seems to turn into a goose perched on a reed:

The fisherman and his boat enter the tortuous lake,
And my old eyes are very diligent in watching him.
I look back and forth, but something strange happens:
He changes into a lone goose perched on a horizontal
reed![10]

One of the most common symbols for the illusion and brevity of life in India and China is the bubble:

Bubbles

A pale sun, light clouds, the rain drops are sparse;
Water bubbles follow the rain and arise in the
pure ditch.
Jumping here, racing there, as on a jasper platter,
They create dragon palace pearls an inch in diameter.

The bubbles seem to be dragon palace pearls but in a second, they have burst and are no more:

> How can we ever get to know the greatest treasures completely?
> These black dragon pearls float, then disappear in an instant.[a]
> Just as the ornament on the forehead of the Golden Immortal,
> They only let ordinary folk see one half of themselves.[11]

The "Golden Immortal" is the Buddha and the ornament on his forehead is the pearl sunk into the forehead of a Buddhist statue to represent the Buddha's divine eye. Of course, only one half is visible to the observer just as one sees only one half of the "sphere" of a bubble. Thus, the bubble not only becomes a symbol of the brevity of temporal existence but also, somewhat ironically, a symbol for the secrets of the universe, denied to the ordinary eye and reserved only for the enlightened. By making the ephemeral into a symbol for the eternal, Yang comes close to transcending the dualism between illusion and reality.

[1]39-377b; 40-11a; 229.

a. The word ting 𠮶 is not used in its usual literary sense of 'certain' but is highly colloquial with the meaning of 'or' and a slightly interrogative tone.

[2]Taishō, Ta Chih Tu Lun 大智度論 , no. 1509, vol. 25, p. 101-c.

[3]Ibid., 102-b. This passage has been translated and annotated in E. Lamotte's monumental Le traité de la grande vertu de sagesse de Nāgārjuna, Louvain, 1944, vol. 1, p. 364. Lamotte translates the word fan as a noun with the meaning 'sots (bālacitta),' whereas I have taken it as an adjective modifying the two nouns following it.

[4]Ting Fu-pao ed. 丁福保 , Ch'üan Han San Kuo Chin Nan Pei Ch'ao Shih 全漢三國晉南北朝詩, Shih Chieh Shu Chü, Taipei, 1962, vol. 2, p. 907. According to Chinese mythology the moon contains a hare and a cassia tree.

[5]36-345b; 37-8b; 218.

In this poem there are two allusions to the four poems of Li Po entitled "Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon." See LTPS, 23-313ab. "The sky loves wine" is from the first two lines of the second poem: "If the sky did not love wine/ The Wine Star would not be in the sky." "The moon doesn't know how to drink" is a direct quote

from the fifth line of the first poem. This allusion is particularly interesting, because it is an example of fan-an. The second line from the last is somewhat puzzling, and an alternative translation would be: "How do I know that through the myriad ages there is only a single material body?" Although such an interpretation is possible, it does not seem to connect with the last line as well as the translation I have chosen.

[6]Luo Ta-ching 羅大經, Ho Lin Yü Lu 鶴林玉露, in Pi Chi Hsiao Shuo Ta Kuan Hsü Pien 筆記小說大觀續編, Hsin Hsing Shu Chü, Taipei, 1962, chüan 10, p. 10-b, p. 2313.

[7]40-379a; 40-12b; 230.

[8]12-110a; 13-1b; 98.

a. Mister No-such is one of the three characters in Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju's Tzu Hsü Fu 子虛賦. See the poet's biography and fu in Shih Chi 史記, chüan 117.

[9]27-256a; 29-4b.

[10]29-277a; 31-8a.

[11]32-303b; 34-4a; 192.

a. Allusion to Chuang-tzu: "On the river there was a family so poor they relied on weaving reeds for a living. When the son dove into the depths he obtained a pearl

worth a thousand pieces of gold. His father told the son, 'Take a stone and smash it, for a pearl worth a thousand pieces of gold must be from a nine-layered depth and from under the chin of a black dragon.'"
See SPTK, Nan Hua Chen Ching 南華真經 , 10-226a.

2. The World of Man

a. Family and Children

In our biography of Yang Wan-li, we have already translated most of his important political poems, and since they give us a very clear picture of his attitudes concerning the Sung government, we shall not pursue this aspect of his poetry any farther. One of the more unique traits of Yang's poetry is that he not only tells us a good deal about his political career but he also describes his personal life with a wealth of detail unequalled by earlier poets. We have already seen how Yang's concern with mundane affairs derives from his Ch'an inspired view of literature as a natural act, but let us now explore the daily life of the Sung scholar official as depicted in Yang's poetry.

The focus of daily life for the Chinese scholar official from most ancient times was the Chinese extended family. The intellectual's career in government was largely an expression of the family's desire for increasing its wealth and prestige, and although the Sung examination system held out great rewards for the ambitious individual, the family always benefitted from the accomplishments of its members. However, despite the overriding importance of the family system, it is quite strange that not until the eighth century do we find much mention of the family in classical poetry. T'ao Ch'ien's "Poem of Scolding his Sons" 責子 is a notable exception to this rule, but Tu Fu was really the first poet to write about his wife and children to any extent, and such a poem as "The Moon-lit Night" 月夜 [2]

is very innovative in the highly personal description of the relation between the poet and his wife. Tu Fu is one of the most important figures in the overthrow of the aristocratic conventions of literature, which had been formed during the North-south Period, and, hence, he was able to write about a subject which was considered "unpoetical" by earlier writers of a more refined age.

By northern Sung times the aristocrats and their literary pretensions had been totally eliminated, so Sung authors felt free to deal with subject matter which an aristocratic poet would have considered beneath his dignity. Therefore, it is no surprise that the Sung poets, as a whole, wrote about their parents, children, wives, and even concubines to a much greater degree than ever before. We have already seen how Yang Wan-li had written about his dead father with great tenderness, and a poem composed while both parents were still alive gives us an even clearer insight into his relationship with them:

> When my term as Governor at Ling ling has finished but no replacement comes, my father takes our old and young back home first. As I send them out of the city we meet up with mud and rain, so ten thousand feelings suddenly gather in me.
>
> My father has gone home first, but I can't go yet;
> My mother's already set off, but she still looks back at me.
> The children are happy to go home; they don't understand sorrow yet;[a]

I'm sad, for how could I be as foolish as a child?
People watching from the wall shouldn't feel envy,[b]
For how can a settled man understand the sighs of
wanderers?
Luckily, yesterday it was clear, but today there's
rain again;
When did the Lord of Heaven ever worry about travelers'
hardships?

My mother's lungs are ailing, and she greatly fears
the cold,[c]
So the evening wind hasn't cause to moan through my room.
People all raise their sons to become officials,
But <u>who</u> was it that caused my father's trip to be like
this?[3]

We have said that pressure from the family was one of the main forces which propelled men into official careers, and Yang himself tells us that "people all raise their sons to become officials." But Yang also suggests a strong tension between his filial piety toward his parents and his official duties, for he cites his absence from home on government duties as a major cause for his parents' discomfort. We have frequently noticed a strong contradiction between personal ethical standards and public official duties in Yang's government career, but it is extremely informative to find the same dichotomy existing in his family life.

Such a dichotomy suggests that either Yang's family was highly unusual or else great changes had occurred in the family structure during late T'ang and Sung times. Yang was certainly no ordinary individual, but the great warmth which pervades the poetry he wrote to his family proves that the stern Confucian father figure of the earlier aristocratic society was very distant from the present reality. In a poem composed while he was far away from his home on official business, Yang wrote:

On Cold Food Festival I Cook Breakfast at Chiang Family Grove, the Second Day After Setting Out on My Journey

It almost seems there isn't any Cold Food Festival at all;[a]
They should have let me off for holiday, but now I'm away from home.
In a myriad houses on Cold Food Day, the first swallows return,
But this single old man in his spring shirt rides on a lame mule.[b]
After an old willow's been tonsured, how does it grow back its hair;
Perhaps, baby catalpas, now clawed, can be used as rhino horn combs.[c]
My son's letters long ago asked when I'll be on the road back home,
But there's no use to get mad at him; I'll just laugh at him.[4]

The figure of Yang as a balding poet riding on a lame mule is highly pathetic and tends to bring the father down to a more human level. On another voyage Yang wrote to his sons:

> I receive a letter from my two sons Shou-jen and Shou-chün stating that they could not take their examinations due to illness and informing me of their date of arrival. (First Poem of Two)
>
> When will my two sons arrive?
> The three autumn months are almost ended.
> Receiving your half piece of paper,
> Washed away a year of my sadness.
> I have not strength in my fur chisel writing brush,
> But this is no reason for my ink to be ashamed.
> The sea and mountains are cold and even more azure;
> I put my carriage in order to await your companionship.[5]

Once again Yang displays his most personal feelings toward his children and in the end seems to accept them as equals in companionship. This spirit of friendship on equal terms is particularly strong in a poem Yang wrote after his retirement:

> When Tz'u-kung's period of service is completed, he returns home. By chance the Shang-ssu and Cold Food Festivals are on the same day, so father and son have a small drink together.
>
> Once again it's the time of the year for purification rituals,

But what need is there to float metal cups in the
twisting stream?[a]
I taste all the different kinds of wine, with a little
I'm drunk;
I sit until the third watch, when it's still not too
late to sleep.
By chance Shang-ssu is on the Day of Cold Food,
Yet the spring wind is too stingy to let the peonies
bloom.
White-haired father and son talk in front of the lamp,
Forgetting their long parting midst the rivers and lakes.[6]

Although the more informal family relations reflected in Yang's poetry were being written about by poets such as Mei Yao-ch'en over a hundred years before Yang's time,[7] Yang's attitude toward children is extremely original. Tu Fu wrote about his children with great affection, and even such a refined poet as Li Shang-yin wrote a poem "Bragging about my Son" 驕兒詩.[8] However, Yang was the first poet who attempted to enter into the child's own world, an interest which was also shared by southern Sung painters, who painted a number of works on the following theme:[9]

Watching a Children's Festival for Welcoming a God[a]

Their flower caps are about an ounce heavy,[b]
And their silk robes are like water in autumn.
They try hard to walk, but they end up dawdling;

When they attempt singing elegantly, they just get
bashful.
A parrot rests on a leek-like finger;[c]
While lotuses load a brocade boat.[d]
Don't watch the little children's festival
For it only makes an old man sadder.[10]

Adults do not enter into Yang's description of the children's festival just as they are excluded from contemporary paintings of children's celebrations. Only in the last two lines of the poem does the adult world intrude, and such nostalgia for lost youth is certainly one of the reasons behind the southern Sung interest in children as literary and artistic subjects. However, nostalgia is not the only reason for such interest, for the loss of youth is most likely a symbol of worldly corruption. In his "Poems on Returning to the Fields" 歸園田居 [11] T'ao Ch'ien states that originally he was free from corruption during his youth, but he became tainted by the dust of the world only after entering public service. Centuries before T'ao, the Tao-te Ching had compared the perfect ruler to a baby,[12] and on the Confucian side, the Mencian doctrine of man's originally good nature suggests the purity of children compared to adults.

Yang felt that children live in their own realm of "reality" quite apart from the humdrum existence of the adult intellectual:

Garden of Youth

When we were residing at Rush Bridge, there was a square rock in the garden which someone had dug out and filled with soil. My little grandson planted flowers and vegetables in it, and in jest I named it "Garden of Youth."[a]

The backyard in our residence is hardly half a pace long;
His garden is made from swallow's mud, the wall from pebbles.
One or two plants of lucky incense and day lily
And three or four clumps of leek leaves and nasturtium sprouts.[b]
The little boy opens up his small Golden Valley Villa,[c]
And a snail chooses the site to build another pearl palace.
I wish I could go every day and play with the boy there,
But I think only an ant could make it through the path![13]

In adult terms the child's garden is totally illusory, but for the child it has a reality which is as valid as the "reality" of adult life. Yang wishes that he could escape from the adult world of official responsabilities, but the gulf between child and adult cannot be bridged. In addition to the Confucian and Taoist elements present in the previous poem, the present work can be interpreted to include Ch'an concepts, too. To Yang, the child's world symbolizes a state in which such "rational" concepts as space and time are eliminated and one is free of

the discursive thought which is an impediment to casting off the realm of dust. The seventeenth century wildcat Ch'an thinker Li Chih 李贄 similarly insists that one must return to his "child mind" in order to gain freedom from the trammels of mundane life.[14] Although Li Chih was also deeply influenced by Taoist thought, such an idea is extremely similar to the Mahāyāna Buddhist contention that in all beings there exists an originally pure Buddha Nature 佛性 , which only becomes defiled through desire and thought.

Such an idea of original purity from such emotions as sadness is hinted at in the second line of a short poem Yang wrote while on a boat voyage:

I Make Fun of a Little Boy

On a boat in the rain we feel so cooped up;
Even a little boy without sadness becomes sad.
I've watched you sit there sleeping, not once did you wake up,
But when I tell you to go to bed, you just wag your head![15]

Although the poem lacks any of the philosophical pretensions of some of Yang's other verse on children, once again we observe Yang's subtle understanding of a child's psychology, and the gentle humor of the poem gives further proof of the change in relations between adult and child in late T'ang and Sung times. In conclusion, we should say that Yang's poetry on the

family displays the same interest in everyday life and consciousness of the seeming contradiction between the mundane and absolute that we find throughout all of his verse.

[1]SPTK, T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛, Chien Chu T'ao Yüan-ming Chi (abbreviated CCTYMC) 箋註陶淵明集, 3-37a. Translated in J. R. Hightower, The Poetry of T'ao Ch'ien, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1970, pp. 163-165.

[2]SPTK, Tu Fu 杜甫, Tu Kung Pu Shih (abbreviated TKPS) 杜工部詩, 1-53a.

[3]1-8b; 1-6a; 13.

a. Allusion to Tu Fu's poem; "From afar I pity my little sons and daughters/ For they do not yet know enough to think of Ch'ang-an." See TF 295/6/4. At the time Tu Fu was in Ch'ang-an.

b. Allusion to Tu Fu's poem: "Neighboring people cover the wall;/ They sigh and also sob." See TF 52/8a/9.

c. The word sheng is quite colloquial and the phrase sheng-ch'ieh very similar to modern Mandarin sheng-p'a 生怕.

[4]34-317b/ 35-6b; 203.

a. Literally, "the good festival of one hundred and five," so called because the Cold Food Festival fell on the one hundred and fifth day after the winter solstice. According to ancient custom, people were not supposed to use fire to cook food on this day. Hence the name Cold Food Festival. One of the major activities was to sweep the graves of deceased relatives,

b. Allusion to Tu Fu's poem: "I have been riding a mule for thirty years." See TF 2/1/19. In later times a lame mule almost became a symbol for poets.

c. 犀蔬, or 'rhinoceros vegetables' is probably an error for 犀梳 or 'rhinoceros comb.' Otherwise the reference to hair in the previous line would be difficult to explain. Note Tu Mu's poem: "He first presents heavenly horse brocade/ And then matches it with water rhinoceros comb." See SPTK, Tu Mu 杜牧, Fan Ch'uan Wen Chi 樊川文集, 1-21b.

[5]16-145b; 17-1b.

[6]40-385b; 41-12b.

a. Allusion to the Lan T'ing Chi Hsü 蘭亭集序 of Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 in which Wang and his friends floated wine cups in a small stream on the shang-ssu festival.

[7]SPTK, Mei Yao-ch'en 梅堯臣, Wan-ling Hsien-sheng Chi 宛陵先生集, 28-243b. Mei's poem "Drinking with my Wife at Night on the Boat" 舟中夜與家人飲 is the earliest Chinese poem which I know that suggests accompanying one's wife could be more stimulating than male companionship!

[8]SPTK, Li Shang-yin 李商隱, Li Yi-shan Shih Chi 李義山詩集, 1-1b.

[9]See Ku-kung Po-wu Yüan 故宮博物院, Sung Jen Hua Ts'e (abbreviated SJHT) 宋人畫冊, Peking, 1957. Plate no. 85 reproduces a children's festival similar to the one Yang Wan-li describes.

[10]25-238b; 27-12b; 156.

a. The festival Yang witnessed took place in Yün-chou 筠州 modern Kao-an 高安 of Kiangsi province, during the sixth month of the lunar calendar. There are frequent references to such children's festivals in early colloquial novels. For example, see chapter sixty-five of the Shui-hu Chuan. As in modern times, the festivals were usually held around the New Year or on the birthdays of local deities. They normally consisted of children's processions and performances of music and dancing.

b. The chu was an ancient weight, twenty-four of which were equivalent to one liang. Yang is merely describing the fineness with which the caps are made.

c. Leek fingers are delicate fingers, thin like the leek. The parrot is probably some decoration carried by the children and not a real parrot.

d. The boats are not real boats but floats in the procession with lotus flower decorations.

[11]CCTYMC, 2-15b-17a. Translated in Hightower, p. 50-56.

[12]SPTK, Lao-tzu Tao-te Ching 老子道德經 , 1-8b.

[13]20-189a; 22-4b; 141.

a. P'u Ch'iao or Rush Bridge was a bridge in the capital Hang-chou near to Yang's official residence. At Yang's time it no longer functioned as a bridge, because the stream under it had dried up.

b. Jui-hsiang or lucky incense is Daphne odora, hsüan-ts'ao Hemerocallis flava, han Nasturtium. All these plants were popular with Sung landscape gardeners.

c. Golden Valley Villa was the famous garden of the Chin dynasty multi-millionare, Shih Ch'ung 石崇 , who was noted for his extravagance and cruelty.

[14]See Li Chih 李贄 , Fen Shu 焚書 , Chung Hua Shu Chü, Peking, 1961, pp. 97-99.

[15]24-299a; 27-2b; 153.

b. The Scholar Poet's Place in Society

In addition to describing the intellectual's personal relationship with his family, Yang's poetry also supplies much information about the scholar official's day to day life. When the scholar was not occupied with official paperwork, he spent much of his time reading books, and Yang's attitude toward the activity of book learning is closely related to his theories of poetic creation, which we have already discussed. Book learning occupied an even higher position in China than it did in any other culture, and the worship of the written word was nothing new to Sung times. Yang himself felt that there was no activity more enjoyable than reading a book during the cold winter season:

Gazing at Evening from Lichee Hall (Second Poem of Three)

My sickly bones, emaciated by autumn, fear the evening, pure;
A cool wind stealthily brings the north wind, light.
To repel the cold the window frames are all pasted over double;[a]
And I only let in a few eyes of light next to my book.[1]

The widespread use of printing during the Sung dynasty allowed the Chinese to read even more than they had in T'ang times, and the cult of the bibliophile became increasingly popular by Sung times. Now the Chinese scholar became deeply involved in acquiring a large collection of books, paying parti-

cular attention to the quality of printing and rarity of the edition. Yang himself collected rare books during his youth and fully appreciated the differences between good and bad editions:

I Thank the Tea Secretary of Chien-chou Wu Te-hua[b] for Sending Me a New Edition of Su Tung-p'o

Yellow gold, white jade-rings, bright moon pearls,
Pure song, wonderful dances, and beauties who ruin cities,
Other houses have them but my house doesn't;
Like Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju all I have are four walls around me.[c]
Besides them, I have a shelf of books,
But they can't fill me up, they just fill the book-worms.
An old friend sends Su Tung-p'o's works from afar,
And my old books leave their seats and make way for them.[d]
While a boy I was never lazy about playing around,
But when anyone talked of reading books, I got up late on purpose.
My Dad got angry and scolded me for being such a lout,
So I forced my hungry intestines to devour worm-eaten pages.
As I got older all my business fell behind others,
And I casually used old books to screen my sick eyes.[e]
When my sick eyes met with a book they suddenly went fuzzy;
Under my writing brush fly-head characters turned to old ravens.[f]
With such bad eyes what could I do with old books?

As soon as I opened an old book, I merely sighed.
Although I already have the collected writings of Su Tung-p'o,
Before I could finish the last chapter, my hand had already stopped.
The printer's ink is blurred, and the paper bad;
It has neither fish-net paper nor tadpole-head characters.[g]
The words newly carved on Fu-sha date wood[h]
Were copied and cut, sparse and lean, just as the original.[i]
The paper is like snow cocoons from a jade bowl.
While the characters are frosty geese dotting the autumn clouds.
As I get older, both of my eyes seem lost in a fog;
When I come across willows or flowers, I don't even glance.[j]
Only when I meet with books, excellent and new
Do I play with them all day; how could I leave them?
Su Tung-p'o was even wilder than I;
He wouldn't have changed his serge for the three noblest posts.
He took his brush tip and hanged it on the ribs of the moon,[k]
And the common horses of all ages were hardly worth deflating.[l]
My old friend pities me, old and ever clumsier,
But he doesn't send a golden pill to prop up my sick bones.[m]
No, he sends this book along to vex me;
Snuffing out the drab lamp I scratch my white hair.[2]

In line with the bibliophile tradition, Yang praises the quality of paper and clarity of print, but in the last few lines of the poem it becomes apparent he is making fun of this same tradition, when he suggests that his friend would have been more considerate to send some medicine than a costly edition of Su Shih's poems.

However, Yang is attacking the bookish attitude of the Sung scholar even before the conclusion of the poem, for he states that excessive study was contrary to his natural inclinations as a child, and we have already seen how Yang considered children to be purer than adults. The philosophical background to Yang's ridicule of the bibliophile is even more strongly hinted at by Yang's allusion to using books as a screen for the eyes, an idea originating from the Ch'an work Ching Te Ch'uan Teng Lu. Just as the Ch'an masters felt sūtras were only of use for shading the eyes, Yang suggests that the "sūtras" of the classical poets, i.e., the "great" works of the past, were equally useless to one who truly wanted to obtain complete poetic enlightenment.

Yang describes the futility of scholarly activities in a poem which he wrote much earlier when he had just begun to reject Sung bookishness:

In Answer to Chung-liang's Extemporaneous Poem on the End of Spring[a] (Fourth Poem of Five)

When poor, it's hard to invite Uncle Joy over,[b]

Sick, how dare I ride a copper-string piebald.[c]
Even in my dreams can I go to the side of flowers?
For spring suddenly disappears in the rain.
Plow-deep rain makes for a harvest of five pecks;[d]
A hundred silk-worm racks await the third sleep.[e]
Only the scholar of books is foolish,
For all year long he plows on paper fields.[3]

The poverty and sickliness of the scholar form a vivid contrast with the creative activities of rice planting and sericulture, for the peasant plows real fields, while the scholar reaps no worthwhile harvests.

Yet the very style of Yang's poem proves that he was still under the influence of the "sūtras" of his Kiangsi masters, and it was not until after his enlightenment that he could reject the Sung cult of the book in its entirety:

Don't Read Books

Don't read books!
Don't chant poetry!
If you read books, your eyes become so withered you can see the bones.
If you chant poetry, each word must be vomited from your heart.
People say reading books is a joy;
They say chanting poems is good,
Your lips always buzz like an autumn bug,

And you only get scrawny and old!
If you get scrawny and old, it doesn't matter,
But when people hear you, they get annoyed.
It's better to close your eyes and sit in your study,
Lower the curtains, sweep the floor, and burn incense
by yourself.
There's a flavor in listening to the wind and the rain;
When you're strong, walk, when you're tired, sleep![4]

Yang had experienced his sudden enlightenment only a few months before he wrote this poem, and now he had taken leave of all his old masters and set out in a new direction.

Yang's attitude toward the principal activity of the scholar official suggests a strong alienation toward the entire range of activities in which the scholar official was supposed to engage. We have already noticed this revulsion that Yang felt toward the official career which occupied most of his life, but the poet felt an even more fundamental alienation toward the whole of society. Yang was by no means alone in this feeling, for his friend Chu Hsi voiced similar sentiments,[5] and, in fact, Yang's attitude was extremely prevalent in earlier times in China, too. Yang gave vent to his frustration in a despairing poem written during a return to his native village:

Returning Home Drunk the Next Day

As the day gets late, I really want to go home,
But my host takes pains to make me stay.
It's not that I'm unable to drink;
Old and sick, I fear the cups and counters.[a]
We cannot offend other people's feelings,
Though I want to go, I end up tarrying.
I'm drunk, so he finally gives in,
Drunk, but why should I worry about that?
On the road home, my mind is drowsy, drowsy;
The setting sun lies on the mountain range's edge.
In the bamboos there's somebody's house;
I wish to rest, so I drop in for a spell.
An old man is delighted that I've come
And addresses me "prince, lord."[b]
I tell him: "I'm no such thing,"
But he bows with a smile, just shaking his head.
My scheming ideas disappeared long ago,
But there still are seagulls that won't come down.[c]
Even this old peasant alienates himself from me;
I'm old, with whom can I play?[6]

Yang feels greatly restricted by his knowledge that while living in human society "we cannot offend other people's feelings." However, in his drunkenness Yang seems to momentarily transcend worldly matters, but he is eventually thwarted by the alienation between himself and the peasant, caused by the class dif-

ferences inherent in societies. Yang realizes that his freedom from "scheming ideas" cuts himself off from ordinary social intercourse, yet he still must live in the world of men.

As a poet, Yang felt that he was particularly out of joint with his own society, for the cares of government service continually disrupt the creative impulses of the writer:

On the Third Day of the First Month I Spend the Night at the Fan Clan Village (Second Poem of Four)

Tramping around outdoors I think of a subtle poem,[a]
And I don't spit it out right away but savor it a while.
The fleet-footed messenger suddenly gives a shout,[b]
Saying that a letter has arrived from afar.
I open the seal; just some trite talk of the weather;[c]
Other than this, no further matter.
My wonderful feelings have already perished;
As I try to recall, I can't remember them.
I was so happy, but suddenly I am depressed;
Vulgar things truly ruin ones thoughts.
A mountain magpie lands in the empty garden,
And he converses with me, brimming over with joy.
With a laugh, I get up and dust off my clothes;[d]
After all, <u>my</u> mind is without impediments.[7]

The "trite talk" which comes from the external world interrupts the process of creativity, an experience which Yang must have suffered continuously in the exhausting position of a public

servant. Nonetheless, the poem suggests the path to resolving the contradiction between the creative and worldly life; Yang is freed of his distress as soon as he realizes that his inner purity protects him from the corrupting influences of the outside world. The mountain magpie which cheers Yang reminds him of his original purity and the solace which the enlightened can find in nature, which is free of society's stain.

Despite the possibility of transcending the world, the lot of the literatus poet is far from happy, and his almost certain poverty is one of the most disturbing aspects of his life:

Written in Jest (First Poem of Two)

The wild chrysanthemum and barren moss each coins money;[a]
With golden yellow and copper green they compete in elegance.
The Lord of Heaven pays these to the impoverished poet,
But they only buy pure sorrow and not any fields![8]

The poet may be poor, but the immortality of a Li Po cannot be measured in monetary terms:

Gazing at Li Po's Grave on the Hsieh Family's Green Mountain[a] (First Poem of Two)

Hsieh T'iao had a whole village to himself on Green Mountain,[b]
And people of the region summoned his soul year after year.[c]

Where are all those imperial tombs of the Six Dynasties?[d]
Only the grave of the Immortal of Poetry remains beneath
the moon.[e] 9

Compared to Li Po, the aristocrats and royalty of past ages count for nothing. By the time Yang reached old age, he already had realized that he would belong among the immortals of Chinese literature, and he was conscious of his place in an undying stream of creativity where there is neither past nor present:

Chanting While Drunk

The ancients are gone, the ancients remain;
If they don't remain, then Heaven ought to change.
If they hadn't left behind their three and five line
poems,
How could they have earned the love of millions of men?
Men of today laugh at the ancients for being crazy,
But the ancients laugh at you; don't you know?
Morning comes, evening goes, how long will it last
for us?
Leaves fall and flowers bloom, never an end to that.
Ordinary people only seek official seals as big as
a ladle[a]
Never worrying about the metal club bashing in their
mouths.[b]
When alive, all they know is wrinkling their brows;

When dead, where can they ever get another cup of wine?
Oh! Li Po! Oh! Juan Chi![c]
In your days who didn't laugh at you two old men?
The wise and foolish of the past are now all white bones,
But you two old men are a pure wind between heaven and
earth![10]

Yang indulged in the poet's vanity that the poet's life is more meaningful and less subject to mortality than ordinary men who "seek official seals." The poets of the past live on in the hearts of present and future men, and their literary immortality mocks the human world, for they are "a pure wind between heaven and earth."

Yang's view that the poet endured forever through his poetry was nothing new in China, but he went one step further than earlier writers and even denied the importance of posterity to the creative poet:

On Leaving the River Mouth at Cross Mountain

A white jade badge mountain right by the river shore;[a]
A green flag--it must be an inn.[b]
Jagged cliffs encroach on the house, narrow;
A slender path enters the door, slanting.
The county seat is near, for I see a pair of pagodas;
An island lies horizontal cut off by a stretch of sand.
Why do I need to wait for strangers coming after me
Before I can believe that this poem is good?[11]

In this poem we find Yang mocking the modern reader in the same fashion he felt Li Po and Juan Chi were mocking himself and his contemporaries. The underlying belief in the transcendent nature of the poet's vocation has a long line of tradition before it, which starts with the "Prose-Poem on Literature" of Lu Chi 陸機 (261-303).[12] However, Yang's rejection of Chinese bookishness put him in a new relationship with his contemporaries and posterity, for now the writing of poetry is a totally personal act, and although Yang was obviously aware that men of later ages would read his works, he was writing entirely for himself.

[1]17-156a; 19-2a; 125.

a. Before glass was widespread in China, most windows were pasted over with paper as in many Japanese homes today.

[2]16-147a; 17-3a; 119.

In the eleventh line from the end, SPPY has 每逢柳花 ("Every time I meet with willows and flowers") instead of 逢柳逢花 of SPTK. It is probable that an editor changed the line because he found the repetition of the word 逢 "inelegant." In the line before last, SPPY has 我 instead of SPTK's 人 .

a. Chien-chou was in present Fukien province.

b. Wu Te-hua is the style of Wu Fei-Ying 吳飛英 , a friend of Yang's.

c. Reference to the famed Han poet Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju. According to his biography in the Shih Chi: "Living at home, only four walls stood around him." See Ssu-ma Ch'ien 司馬迁 , Shih Chi, K'ai Ming Shu Chü, 254-c.

d. It was a sign of respect to leave ones seat mat when an honored guest arrived.

e. Allusion to the Ching Te Ch'uan Teng Lu: "A monk asked Medicine Mountain, 'Why do you read sūtras?' The master replied, 'I just use them to screen my eyes!'" See CTCTL, p. 312-b. Yang means that he just puts books in front of his face but does not actually read them.

f. Fly heads are finely written k'ai-shu characters, whereas "old ravens" are sloppy writing.

g. "Fish net paper" means paper of high quality and is an allusion to the biography of Ts'ai Lun, the man traditionally credited with the invention of paper: "Lun invented the idea of using tree bark, hemp, worn out cloth, and fish nets to make paper." Tadpole head characters are those of the archaic seal style, but here Yang just means fine calligraphy. See Han Shu K'ai Ming Shu Chü, 873-c.

h. Fu-sha is another name for Chien-chou. Wang Yen-cheng, 王延政, the younger brother of the famous calligrapher Wang Hsi-chih, was once governor of Chien-chou and was later enfeoffed as prince of Fu-sha.

i. Sung editions were printed from hand-carved wooden blocks, which were frequently copies of the writing of famous calligraphers, "Sparse and lean" is a reference to the calligraphic style of the early T'ang artists Ou-yang Hsün and Liu Kung-ch'üan, which was imitated by most Sung book printers. The fidelity of the print to the original style was an important criterion for judging the quality of editions.

j. Yang may mean more than just ordinary flowers and willows here, for these two plants are symbols of the prostitutes frequented by the Sung literati.

k. The origin of this line is to found in Huang Fu-shih's 皇甫湜 preface to Ku K'uang's 顧況 complete works: "His free songs and long lines loftily burst forth and explode, frequently piercing to heaven's heart, going beyond the moon's ribs, and startling

people beyond their expectations; his language is not ordinary!" See SPTK, Huang-fu Shih 皇甫謐, Huang Fu Ch'ih Cheng Chi 皇甫持正集, 2-7b.

l. A reference to a poem by Tu Fu: "In a moment a nine-layer true dragon [horse] comes out/ And washes all the ordinary horses of the ages empty [deflates them]." See TF, 121/12/24.

m. Reference to the Taoist elixir of immortality, which could cure all diseases and eliminate old age.

[3]1-10b; 1-8a; 14.

a. Chung-liang is the style of Chang Ts'ai 張才 from Shantung, who was a fellow official with Yang at Ling-ling. While Yang was stationed there, they exchanged a number of poems.

b. Uncle Joy is another name for wine. The poor poet cannot afford to drink.

c. Literally, "joined coppers," which describes the color of the horse's fur.

d. This sentence is quite difficult and literally means, "One plow, related to five ping." Plow-deep rain refers to good spring rains that wet the fields as deeply as the farmer can plow. A ping is a rather large measure of grain, so here the five ping probably refer to a rich harvest.

e. Before they can spin their silk cocoons, silk worms must go through four dormant periods or "sleeps." The silk worms were arranged in platters piled on top of each other.

[4]12-114a; 13-6a.

[5]Li Ch'i, "Chu Hsi the Poet," T'oung Pao, vol. 58, 1972, pp. 56-119.

[6]5-46a; 5-2b; 51.

a. The word kuang originally refers to a wine cup made from a rhinoceros horn but here is most likely a plain cup. The counters were used for playing games while drinking.

b. Although in Chou times these titles referred to feudal vassals of the king, by Sung times they were merely a form of respect to high officials.

c. Allusion to a story from the Lieh-tzu: "By the sea there was a man who liked seagulls, and every morning he would go to the sea side and follow the seagulls around. All the seagulls who came, perched there and did not desist. His father said to him, 'I hear that the seagulls all follow you around. Bring me one so I can play with it.' The next day he went to the sea-side, but the seagulls soared around him and would not come down." See SPTK, Ch'ung Hsü Chih Te Chen Ching 沖虛至德真經, 2-8a. Yang is saying that

although he does not have any false schemes like the man in the story, the seagulls will not come down to him; i.e., there still are people like the peasant who are suspicious of him and keep their distance.

[7]18-166a; 20-2b; 126.

SPPY has instead of SPTK's in the seventh line from the end.

a. Yu-yung could mean that Yang has thought up a new poem or has had a poetic experience from viewing the natural scenery.

b. Chien-pu, literally 'strong pace,' is a messenger for postal delivery.

c. Hsüan-liang literally means 'hot and cold,' hence, polite talk about the weather.

d. Yang shakes the corrupting dust of the mortal world off his clothes.

[8]14-132b; 15-6a; 113.

a. Both chrysanthemum flowers and moss are round like coins, and their colors are like gold and copper, respectively. Therefore, Yang says that they "coin" money.

[9]32-312a; 35-1a; 197.

SPPY has for of SPTK in the first line, which makes no sense and must be a mistake due to similarity

in form of the two characters. The word 眺 in both SPPY and SPTK must be a mistake for 朓 . If we accept the reading of the SPPY edition, the first line could be translated: "I gaze around and Green Mountain is one village of itself." This translation would be acceptable but would lose the association of the mountain with the poet Hsieh T'iao and would create difficulties in interpretating the SPTK text. A further reason for emending the character is that in the first line of the second poem, there is again direct reference to the poet Hsieh T'iao.

a. Ch'ing Shan or Green Mountain is to the southeast of Tang-t'u 當塗 in modern Anhwei province.

b. Hsieh T'iao was a famous poet of the southern Ch'i dynasty who once built a house on Green Mountain so that later the name of the mountain was changed in the T'ang dynasty to Hsieh Kung Shan or the Mountain of Duke Hsieh. Li Po, who greatly admired Hsieh T'iao, wished to finish his life there, and so he was buried to the northwest of the mountain.

c. Summoning back Li Po's soul is a reference to the shamanistic practices which play such an important part in the Ch'u Tz'u. The soul was brought back to the world of the living to enjoy the sacrificial offerings and confer blessings on the sacrificers. According to the footnote which Yang appended to the poem, the local

people sacrificed to Li Po each year: "Next to the grave is a temple in which there is a shrine to Li Po. Every year the prefecture sends a professor to sacrifice to him."

d. In other words, the fame of Li Po's poetry has outlived the emperors of the North-south Period when Hsieh T'iao lived.

e. The Immortal of Poetry is a title commonly used for Li Po.

[10]10-95a; 11-5a; 86.

a. A large seal was the sign of high official position. The expression originally comes from the Chin Shu: "This year I have killed many bandit slaves, so I will get a golden seal as big as a ladle to tie on my waist. See Chin Shu, 1260-a.

b. From Chuang-tzu: "Confucians use a metal club to bash his chins." See SPTK, Nan Hua Chen Ching 南華真經, 9-193b. Yang is saying that ordinary people trouble themselves so much in the search for high office that they endanger their lives.

c. Juan Chi of the Chin dynasty and Li Po of the T'ang were both poets famous for their drinking and reckless actions.

[11]26-249a; 28-10b; 162.

a. Although the word mountain does not appear in the original, it is clear this is what Yang meant by a "white jade badge."

b. The green flag was commonly hung outside inns from at least T'ang times onwards. In the Jung Chai Sui Pi of the Sung author Hung Mai we read: "Today in the city or countryside, brewers and all shops which sell wine set up a big curtain outside, which is made from several pieces of green or white cloth. Their size varies according to the class and size of the bar. Village inns sometimes hang out a bottle gourd or set up a broom stick." See Hung Mai 洪邁, Jung Chai Sui Pi 容齋隨筆, Commercial Press, Taipei, 1955, vol. 2, p. 154.

[12]See SPTK, Lu Chi 陸機, Lu Shih-heng Wen Chi 陸士衡文集 1-2a-4b. The best translation is Ch'en Shih-hsiang, Lu Chi: Essay on Literature, Anthoesen Press, Portland, Me. 1953. The section immediately following the preface is particularly striking in its evocation of the transcendant nature of literature.

c. Social Criticism and Peasant Life

In his study of Sung poetry, Sōshi Gaisetsu 宋詩概説 Yoshikawa Kōjirō has advanced the theory that one of the most distinctive characteristics of Sung poetry is the deep sense of social commitment possessed by most of the poets, and Yang Wan-li was certainly no exception to Yoshikawa's idea, as can be seen from his defense of the common people throughout his official career.[1] However, one could easily object to Yoshikawa that many of the most famous T'ang poets were equally involved with the lower classes, and to a certain degree such an objection is perfectly valid. Nevertheless, although Yoshikawa does not explore this problem very thoroughly in his book, he is quite correct in maintaining that the attitudes of T'ang and Sung authors toward the peasants differed radically.

Such T'ang poets as Tu Fu and Po Chü-yi, who criticized oppression of the peasantry, were working in a tradition which ultimately dates back to Han and even Chou times. According to Han commentators on the Shih Ching, the folk songs of that classic were gathered together by royal officers, to determine the feelings of the people toward the government,[2] and we supposedly owe the preservation of Han and later yüeh-fu 樂府 or "music bureau" poems to a continuation of the same practice.[3] It is, thus, no coincidence that Po Chü-yi called his poems of social protest "New Music Bureau Poems" 新樂府, for he subscribed to the view that his descriptions of the peasant should serve as a warning to the government to correct abuses and forestall political upheaval.[4] The greater compassion which Tu Fu

and Po Chü-yi felt toward the peasant was a symptom of a genuine widening of the concept of humanity 仁 among T'ang intellectuals, yet one must keep in mind that T'ang writers were largely interested in the peasant as a political barometer which would warn of impending storms in the countryside. As long as the peasant was reasonably well fed and did not complain too loudly, the T'ang intellectual was satisfied to direct his attention to other subjects. To such men as Tu Fu and Po Chü-yi the peasant existed largely as an abstraction which was a convenient vehicle for the voicing of criticism against a corrupt and inept government.

In Sung times the peasant could serve a similar purpose, and much of Yang's social protest poetry is written in a vein similar to T'ang authors:

Passing White Sand, a Bamboo Branch Song[a]

(Third Poem of Six)

How I love these two or three homes in the mountain
depths;
They don't plant fragrant rice but only hemp.
After they plow all along the dike, they hoe the whole
mountain,
But what kind of living can they get from all this?[b] 5

Yang is specifically concerned with the acute land shortage which plagued China in southern Sung times as a result of the huge number of refugees who escaped south and the unprecedented growth in population.

Yang's poem is certainly a very effective criticism of the land shortage, but there is an unusual element in the work which makes it stand out from the more one dimensional social criticism found in Po Chü-yi's peasant poems.[6] Yang's pity for the peasants seems to grow out of a much more intimate knowledge of peasant life than that possessed by T'ang intellectuals, for Yang was fully acquainted with the austere setting in which the Chinese peasant attempted to eke out a livelihood. This first-hand experience of rural life evokes in Yang an intense admiration for the industrious farmers who "plow all along the dike" and "hoe the whole mountain." Yang does not just see the poor peasant as an abstract symbol for the inability of the government to resolve the land problem, but he truly respects the farmer because of his herculean labors in just keeping alive.

Another poem in which Yang shows his sympathies for the lower classes allows us to form an even clearer picture of how his protest poems differed from earlier works:

The Boat People[a]

The Lord of Heaven has ordered him a life on water;
From youth he is taught to tread the wave flowers.
He boils crabs for food, so how could he know rice?
He twists banana fibres for cloth, what need of gauze?
Last night the spring flood swallowed up a sand bank,
So he hurriedly sends his son to cut some reed sprouts.[b]
I laugh at myself for being on the road all my life,
But he floats his house about midst piles of silver
wave peaks.[c] [7]

Yang's choice of subject matter is quite unusual, for he does not describe the plight of the ordinary land peasant but writes of the Tanka minority instead. To earlier T'ang poets such as Li Po the life of the boat people was highly romantic, for their watery existence seemed to set them apart from the normal world of everyday existence.[8] Yang rejects this romanticized view of the boat people and describes the actual conditions under which they live. Yang attacks the imperial court's unfair policy toward the boat people by saying the "Lord of Heaven" condemns them to their life on water, but his work is more realistic than the typical Po Chü-yi protest poem, for Yang shows us a flesh and blood boatman who goes about his everyday activities in spite of his sad fate. The realism of Yang's work as opposed to earlier protest verse shows that he is no longer interested in the lower classes as an abstract symbol for the inequalities of society, but that he is willing to view the common people as human beings on the same level as himself.

In addition to using the peasant as a political barometer, the Chinese intellectual wrote about peasants, because by the fall of the Han dynasty they had become a symbol for the escape from the boring routine and personal hazards of the official career. Thus, T'ao Ch'ien retired to a peasant-like existence because he could not bear to "bend his waist for five pecks of rice."[9] Yang himself had similar feelings:

In Late Spring I Walk in the Fields at South Flats

In the west field day before yesterday, dust had turned
to clouds;[a]
But in the south village today, waves form on the road.[b]
Cloudy rice has always stayed distant from Kuang-wen
scholars,[c]
Yet why should I refuse the trouble of braving rain to
learn farming?[d]
The peasants say: "The rice seedlings are much better
than our wheat,
But they're still like green needles and not fit to eat."[e]
All my life I've never even stuck these ten fingers in
mud;
How can my fur-chisel writing brush be haughty to
peasant raincoats?
I just hope our frontiers won't have any more problems,
For my only ambition in life is to cultivate wheat clouds
with my hoe.
I won't worry if my official's horse is sent back to
the government,[f]
Because if I borrow an ox to ride home I won't even
need a saddle.[g] [10]

However, Yang's poem is different from the typical pre-Sung work which contrasts the idyllic surroundings of rural life with the tension and anxieties of an official career, for despite Yang's yearning for the simplicity of country living,

he expresses his guilt feelings toward the laboring masses who supported the whole intricate bureaucracy through their taxes. Such sentiments had already been voiced by Po Chü-yi in the ninth century,[11] but Yang's poem is distinguished again by a much greater realism, for although he claims he has never stuck his fingers in the mud, his intimate knowledge of the conditions of the rice harvest proves he had lived in close contact with the peasants. The older romantic view of the peasant as some sort of other-worldly creature had been altered by a closer acquaintance with the facts of peasant existence.

The greater realism with which the Sung poet described the plight of the lower classes was most likely a result of the weakening of class lines and increase of social mobility brought about by the disappearance of the T'ang aristocracy and more thorough implementation of the examination system. Many of the high officials and famous literary figures of Sung China were of middle class and even rich peasant origins, so during their youths they had opportunities to observe rural conditions at first hand and in many cases take part directly in the tilling of the fields.[12] In the realm of philosophy this broadening of society led to a much wider extension of such basic Confucian terms as "humanity" 仁 . In earlier Confucian thought, human love was supposed to be graded, but the eleventh century thinker Chang Tsai 張載 could write: "Heaven is my father and earth is my mother . . . All people are from the same womb as I, and all things are my companions."[13] Chang Tsai was probably influenced by the Buddhist doctrine of the infinitely compassionate <u>bodhisattva</u> in such a passage,

and this feeling of compassion toward all human beings allowed a poet such as Yang Wan-li to identify with the joys and sorrows of the common man:

Watching the Planting

How can we bear hearing of drought two years out of three?
As soon as everything's ripe, all the villages will celebrate.
Day after day, this old fellow plays with the field water,
While his eyes watch the blue waves turn to yellow clouds of grain.[14]

In such a poem Yang is not using the peasant as a vehicle for political protest nor is he attempting to escape into a make-believe world of rustic simplicity. His identification with the whole range of humanity inspires the intense joy he feels in watching the rice harvest come to a successful conclusion.

The expanded view of humanity which permeated Sung society enabled a great poet such as Yang to realize that the accomplishments of the common man were as valid as the refined arts of the scholar officials:

Inns by the Side of the Road

There are two or three country inns by the side of
the road;
So early in the morning they don't have hot water,
much less tea.[a]
Some say these people don't appreciate "art,"[b]
But in a blue porcelain vase they've arranged purple
myrtle flowers![15]

We have already seen how Yang's friend Yu Mou doubted the validity of a rigid distinction between great and minor poetry, and in this poem Yang demonstrates that he can appreciate the artistic impulse in anyone regardless of his class background.

The more realistic tone of his social protest poetry and his more personal involvement in peasant life are highly attractive aspects of Yang's rural poetry, but the most delightful innovation he and his contemporaries made was the description of everyday life in the Chinese countryside. Historians have bemoaned the supposed lack of material on peasant life in Chinese historical sources, but if they would turn to Sung poets such as Fan Ch'eng-ta, Lu Yu, and Yang Wan-li, they would find an abundance of reliable material for the southern Sung period. Yang Wan-li was fascinated by the various festivals which broke the monotony of peasant life:

Watching a Small Boy Play at Beating the Spring Ox[a]

The little boy lashes his whip and whips the clay ox;
He imitates father "beating spring," hitting its head
first.
The brown ox has brown hooves and a pair of white horns;
The herding lad a green raincoat with a rainhat of
blue bamboo.[b]
This year the soil should be fertile from the rain;
Last year wasn't as happy as this year will be.
When the boy hears of a good harvest, he's happy he
won't starve;
But when the ox hears of a good harvest, he's sad he
won't get fat.
Soon they will see wheat tassles turn to clouds of
brooms;[c]
The paddy rice, too, will fill gallons with its pearls.
When the big fields are all plowed, they'll plow the
hills;
When will the yellow ox get any rest from now on?[16]

The new realism we have noted in Yang's protest poetry is now used in a totally apolitical fashion, and it is obvious that Yang sees the peasant as something more than a political weather vane.

The highly realistic vignettes of peasant life which Yang gives us could only be the result of extremely detailed personal observation:

Planting Rice Song

The peasant man throws the seedlings and his wife
catches;
The little son pulls up the seedlings while the eldest
plants.
The bamboo hat is his helmet, the raincoat his armor,
But the rain soaks him from his head to his shoulders.
She calls him for breakfast and to rest for half a
minute;
He lowers his head, bends his waist, and doesn't pay
attention;[a]
"The seedling roots aren't firm, and the bundles aren't
wrapped,[b]
So hold back those goslings and baby ducks!"[17]

Although Yang may be idealizing the peasant slightly by referring to his "helmet" and "armor," he is not painting a picture of "titans of the soil" but of real people whom he had actually observed at work.

We have already noticed Yang's interest in the world of children, and this interest extended to peasant children, too:

Herding Boys at An-le Fang

The boy in front pulls an ox across the stream water,
While the boy in back rides his ox, turning around to
ask something.
One boy plays a flute, flowers pinned on his rain hat;

Another ox carries a boy, as she leads her calf along.
The tender water in the spring stream is pure without
silt;
Pine grasses on spring islets, azure jade without
blemish.
Five oxen wander far off, but the children don't
bother them,
For the boys' home lies there, just across the stream.
Suddenly a few drops of rain fall on their heads,
And three rainhats and four raincoats go scurrying off.[a] [18]

Yang's highly realistic description of the activities of the peasant boys is typical of the other peasant poems translated so far, but this particular poem is particularly intriguing because it demonstrates the extremely thin line between everyday life and the absolute which was a basic doctrine of the Ch'an Buddhists and one reason for Yang's fascination with the ordinary world.

One could probably justify taking Yang's work as another example of his rural poetry, just as no Western art critics have found any special symbolism in the numerous paintings of children riding on water buffaloes or of peasants leading water buffaloes through their fields.[19] However, any Sung intellectual familiar with Ch'an Buddhist literature would immediately associate Yang's poem and the paintings with one of the most widely known Ch'an parables of Sung times. During the Sung dynasty a Ch'an master painted a series of ten paintings in which he compared the Ch'an monk's search for enlightenment to

a young boy's search for a lost water buffalo. Eventually the boy finds the water buffalo's tracks, catches the animal, and rides it back home. After arriving home, the boy forgets about the buffalo and next both boy and buffalo are forgotten, just as the Ch'an monk must eventually forget both his goal of nirvāna and himself in order to become enlightened. Most significant of all, in the final picture of the series, the subject enters the world of everyday life, and the poem written to accompany the painting says:

> Breast exposed, feet bare, I enter the market place;
> Smeared with dirt and ashes, a smile covers my face.[20]

A comment to the poem reads: "I turn aside from the tracks of previous sages. Carrying a gourd as I enter the market or returning to my hut with my staff, I cause all in the bars and fish shops to attain Buddha-hood."[21] On one level Yang's poem is a highly realistic description of herding boys bringing their oxen back home, but on another level the poem can be seen as an allegory for the ultimate truths of Ch'an.[22] Yet for the Ch'an Buddhists and Yang, there is no need to speak of two levels, for to them, the two levels are identical.

[1]Yoshikawa Kōjirō 吉川幸次郎, Sōshi Gaisetsu 宋詩概說, Chūgoku Shijin Senshū 中国詩人選集, Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店, Tokyo, 1962, pp. 27-29. Translated by Burton Watson in An Introduction to Sung Poetry, Harvard U. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1967, pp. 19-21.

[2]Burton Watson, Early Chinese Literature, Columbia U. Press, New York, 1962, pp. 202-203.

[3]Ibid., pp. 289-290.

[4]See the poet's preface to his Hsin Yüeh-fu 新樂府 in SPTK, Po Chü-yi 白居易, Po Shih Ch'ang Ch'ing Chi (abbreviated PSCCC), 白氏長慶集, 3-17a.

[5]26-249b; 28-11b; 164.

a. A bamboo branch song was a form of folk song which originated in Szechwan and later became popular among upper class poets in T'ang times after Liu Yü-hsi composed imitations.

b. Tu-lai is a colloquial expression, which in addition to the expected meaning of 'all' has an additional connotation of 'only'.

[6]Po Chü-yi's collection is filled by this type of poem, but the most famous are those in the Hsin Yüeh-fu. For sake of comparison, one could read Po's "Old Man of Tu-ling" 杜陵叟 in which the poet criticizes excess taxation. Although

Po obviously pities the poor peasants, he utilizes the overworked stereotype of the rapacious tax collector, and his interest in the peasant is dominantly political. See PSCCC, 4-22c.

[7]16-149b; 18-1a; 123.

a. The Tan-hu or boat people are the present day Tanka, who are found along the sea in south China and are quite common in modern Hong Kong. They were formerly despised as a non-Chinese minority race and were prohibited to live on dry land. Although their language is a dialect of Chinese, it is very different from the surrounding peoples and their customs are quite unique.

b. The father is in a hurry, because he knows that his family is prohibited to set foot on land. The reeds, which he needs for fuel, are only temporarily flooded, so they do not really belong to his water domain.

c. The silver peaks are the river waves.

[8]As one would expect, Li Po was particularly fascinated by boat women, an interest possibly aroused more by their dealings in prostitution due to their poverty rather than any spiritual concerns. See particularly the second, third, and fourth poems of Li's "Songs on the Women of Yüeh" 越女詞 in LTPS, 25-348b.

[9]CCTYMC, 10-92b.

[10]2-19b; 2-6b; 33.

a. Reference to T'ao Ch'ien's "Kuei Ch'ü Lai Tz'u": "The peasant reports to me spring has arrived/ So there will be work in the west field." See CCTYMC, 5-55a.

b. There are waves because much rain has fallen after a long drought.

c. Yün-tzu or 'cloud seed' is a metaphor for rice grains. In this line Yang is comparing himself to a friend of the poet Tu Fu, Cheng Ch'ien 鄭虔, who held the post of Doctor of the Kuang-wen College. Tu Fu presented Cheng Ch'ien a poem in which Tu described Cheng's poverty saying: "Master Kuang-wen's rice is not sufficient." Yang feels he is in a similar position. See TF, 14/18/4.

d. Allusion to the Lun Yü; "Fan Ch'ih begged to learn farming." See SPTK, Lun Yü 論語, 7-57a.

e. These two lines mean that the autumn harvest of rice will be much better than the wheat, which has already been totally ruined by the drought. However, since the rice is newly planted and the seedlings are still tough as needles and inedible, the peasants do not have any food to eat.

f. In the Sung dynasty officials such as Yang were issued government horses which were to be returned upon completion of service.

[11]See Po's poem "Watching the Planting" 觀稼 in PSCCC, 6-32c.

[12]Ou-yang Hsiu was so poor in his youth that he could not afford to buy books. Su Shih's ancestors were merchants from Szechwan province.

[13]SPPY, Chang Tsai 張載, Chang Tzu Ch'üan Shu 張子全書, 1-1a and 1-3a.

[14]6-62b; 7-5a; 61.

[15]32-306b; 34-7b; 195.

a. In Sung times the word t'ang still normally meant 'hot water' rather than its modern meaning of 'soup.'

b. Literally, "they don't like affairs." The words hao-shih were used to describe individuals interested in curious affairs and even the arts.

[16]12-113b; 13-5a; 101.

a. "Beating the spring ox" was a widespread custom in the Sung dynasty. On the first day of spring a mud ox was made, ceremonially beaten, and then broken into pieces to insure a rich harvest. In the Meng Liang Lu we read: "At Lin-an Fu a spring ox is presented in the forbidden courtyard. On the day before the first day of spring, they use regiment drums, cymbals, wind

instruments, and the music of singing girls to welcome the spring ox into the Hall for Welcoming Spring in front of the prefectual yamen. On the morning of the first day of spring, the prefect leads his assistants and 'beats spring' with a colored staff. The street markets also sell small spring oxen." See Wu Tzu-mu 吳子牧, Meng Liang Lu 夢梁錄, in Chih Pu Tsu Chai Ts'ung Shu 知不足齋叢書, 1814, 1-3a. Also, according to the Chi Lo Pien: "People of Ho-tung say that the 'meat' of the clay ox is good for silk worms and drives away plagues. When they get a little, they hang it on their curtains and mix it with water to make children drink." See Chi Lo Pien 雞肋編, Commercial Press, Shanghai, 1936, chüan 上, p. 20.

b. In the ceremony witnessed by Yang there obviously was a clay statue of a herding boy, too.

c. Yang is comparing the ripe wheat fields to clouds in the sky. The wheat tassels are so large that they look like broom heads.

[17] 13-124b; 14-6a; 107.

a. This use of ta is a bit unusual, because usually the word refers to a spoken answer. Here ta means that the peasant doesn't "answer" his wife's words with action.

b. When planting rice seedlings, the seedlings are first tied together into small bundles, which are called shih. Evidently the work of binding them together has not been completed yet.

[18]34-323a; 35-12a; 207.

a. This use of the word chiang in a resultative verbal construction has no exact parallel in modern Mandarin, but it is frequently found in Ming dynasty novels.

[19]For examples from the southern Sung contemporary with Yang Wan-li see SJHT, plate no. 29 and Slides of Chinese Painting in the National Palace Museum (abbreviated NPM) E List, Slide no. 2.

[20]Dai Nippon Zoku Zōkyō 大日本續藏経, Shih Niu T'u Sung 十牛圖頌, 二編壹輯, t'ao 18, vol. 5, p. 461. The series of poems and comments has been poorly translated in Paul Reps compiled, Zen Flesh, Zen Bones, Garden City, New York, pp. 136-155.

[21]Idem.

[22]There is a study of the relation between the ox or water buffalo and Ch'an Buddhism in Dōtane Ken'yū 堂谷憲勇, "Ushi to Zensō" 牛と禅僧, Zen Bunka 禅文化, no. 67, Dec., 1972, pp. 14-20. The article is

divided into three parts (1) "The Ox," (2) "Riding the Ox," (3) "Herding Boys." In the first part the author traces pre-Buddhist Chinese references to the ox, particularly stressing the ox's nature of being "hard on the inside, soft on the outside." The second part gives an account of different stories concerning the riding of the ox, suggesting that the Ch'an interest in oxen derives from the legend of Lao-tzu riding away from China on an ox. The third section quotes poems about children riding on or leading oxen, found in the poetry of such leading Sung Ch'an masters as Hsüeh-tou 雪竇 (980-1052). The author suggests that the paintings of oxen by such southern Sung artists as Li Ti 李迪 are intimately connected with Ch'an concepts. Note that in his poem "In Late Spring I Walk in the Fields at South Flats," Yang Wan-li has stated that he intends to give up his official horse and ride home to retirement on an ox. Yang's good friend Lu Yu also made use of the herding theme, for in a poem to Hsin Ch'i-chi he wrote: "You have meditated on and penetrated the Southern Patriarch's talk about herding oxen." See LFWCC, 57-4b.

3. The World of Nature

a. Nature in General

Without doubt, the most important theme of Sung poetry, and possibly of Chinese poetry in general, is nature. Nature has played a more important role in Chinese civilization than in any other culture, and even in the earliest poems of the Shih Ching, one discovers a constant awe for the huge variety of plants and animals and the mysterious processes of birth and death. A few centuries after the Shih Ching, the love of nature became one of the fundamental bases of Chou Taoist thought, which emphasized the total harmony between man and his environment. Under the influence of neo-Taoism, such fourth century writers as T'ao Ch'ien and Hsieh Ling-yün abandoned the courtly topics of Han authors and wrote the first pure nature poetry China had known. In India Buddhism had not been particularly associated with any cult of nature, but when the religion reached China, it picked up the Chinese love of natural objects, and as a result, many of the most famous monasteries were built in such beauty spots as Mount Lu 廬山 or the T'ien-t'ai Mountains 天台山. Buddhist themes gradually filtered into Chinese nature poetry, and by the seventh century, a nature poet such as Wang Wei took his hao Mo-chieh 摩詰 from the Indian layman Vimalakīrti (Wei-mo-chieh 維摩詰).

Although the world of man still held a very important place in Yang's poetry, he followed current interest in natural topics. The reasons for Yang's love of nature were many, for in

addition to the pure sensuous delight he felt in surveying a grand landscape, there were compelling intellectual and spiritual factors, too. In fact, we frequently find that Yang seems to enter a trance at times when he views a particularly outstanding stretch of scenery. When crossing the famed Po-yang Lake he wrote:

On the Thirteenth of the Fourth Month I Cross Lake Po-yang[a]

In the middle of the lake there is a mountain called
Mount K'ang-lang, and its shape is like a leach
floating on the water.

I anchor the boat at Prince Po's Lake,[b]
For there is wind and rain until midnight.
Though I desire to cross, can I dare be self-confident?
Idle safety is all that I wish.
I know there's no use in lone sadness;
So I endure for a while, continuously sighing.
The night is long, and suddenly I fall asleep;
I'm so exhausted I don't even know it's dawn.
The boatmen call me to get up;
There's a favorable wind and no room for delay.
With half an oar-stroke we're already at mid-lake;
Just like a single leaf on a mirror's surface.
I look up and see the clouds' robe open;[c]
I glance sideways as the sail's belly fills.
The sky is like a glazed bell,
Which covers over this crystal cup below.

The waves' reflection--golden juice squirting forth;
The sun's rays--silver pillars penetrating.
Mount K'ang is a leach in a cup;
Mount Lu a curtain in front of our sail.[d]
Suddenly the earth has no support;
Everything's hazy like a sea without shores.
My body seems to become void and empty;
Riding the air, I wander far and wide.
At first I worried we'd crash against perilous waves;
I didn't expect to take in this marvelous scene.
During the last six changes of the year from summer
to winter,[e]
I have passed this water to and fro three times.
Before fording, my mind is never at ease;
But while I cross, I always enjoy it.
I'm tired of wandering and ought to go home,
And not just because of the apes' and cranes' complaint![f 1]

The poem starts out ordinarily enough, and one suspects he is about to hear a lamentation about the tribulations of the scholar official who is forever on the road. Yet as soon as the boat reaches mid-lake, Yang seems to enter a realm separate from the ordinary world of perception. The boat is dwarfed by the immensity of the lake and appears to be a small leaf gliding on the surface of a mirror. Suddenly the entire world is magically transformed, the sky turning into a "glazed bell" and the lake into a "crystal cup," while ordinary water and sunlight are transmuted into gold and silver. Yang then leaves

the support of the earth behind and ascends into a world of mist and haze which is completely without directions or limits. His body like a void, he rides on the winds, totally free from any connection with mundane existence. The element of flying in Yang's description of his trance-like state sounds suspiciously Taoist, but when he tells us his body has changed to a void, he is obviously referring to the Buddhist doctrine of śunyatā or emptiness. In any case, the distinction between Taoism and Buddhism in such a poem is extremely nebulous, because a Sung poet would not have recognized sharp differences between the mystical experiences of both philosophies.

Whether we care to emphasize the Buddhist or Taoist elements in Yang's poem, his description of a mystical experience in natural surroundings bears a strong resemblance to many of the scenes one sees in the landscape painting of Yang's contemporaries. Although landscape painting had started in the North-south Period and continued to develop in the T'ang dynasty, it was generally ranked as a lower form of art and did not become the dominant form of painting in China until the Five Dynasties and Sung times.[2] Whereas the world of man had dominated T'ang and earlier art, in southern Sung paintings we find the scholar official lost in the contemplation of mountain peaks or other natural objects. Frequently the facial expressions of these men are hidden from our view, but when we can see their faces, we usually notice that they seem to be in a tranquil trance-like state. A particularly magnificent painting by the thirteenth century painter Ma Lin 馬麟 depicts two old men staring vacantly at a thundering waterfall in front of them.[3] Although

the two men stand together, there is no communication between them, for they are totally absorbed in their meditation on the mountain cataract. One reason they watch the ever changing water is that it is a symbol of the constant flux of the universe, the impermanent samsāra of the Buddhists. But even more important, complete identification with the natural objects around them enables the men to be freed of the ego (atman 我), the grasping of which is the major obstacle to enlightenment. We have seen how Yang's body became "void" when he was lost in the beauties of Lake Po-yang, and similarly the painters of his age lost their egos in the vastness of mountains and water. The reason for the Sung artists reduction of the size of man in relation to his natural surroundings was not necessarily to remind him of how insignificant he is alongside nature, but rather to free him from the egotistical attachment to the self.

What sort of nature was it in which the Chinese poet and painter wished to lose himself? The Confucian believed that there was an ethical order behind nature which expressed itself in the successive changes of the mandate of heaven in past political history. This view of nature could be twisted to justify superstitious belief in portents and omens from heaven, but it could also lead to the neo-Confucian doctrine of the investigation of things 格物 , through which one explored the ethical structure of nature by carefully examining natural and human phenomena. The major alternative to the moralistic Confucian view of nature in early Chinese thought was the Taoist, which is typified by Lao-tzu's affirmation that "heaven and earth are not humane."[4] Such a doctrine does not mean that

nature is necessarily harmful to mankind, but that the Confucian view of an ethically structured universe is a delusion, and nature is totally impartial to human activities.

Despite the more usual Confucian and Taoist views of nature, there have been times when Chinese poets firmly believed in the complete hostility of nature to man. In the late Chou "Summoning of the Soul" 招魂, the description of the terrible monsters which surround the soul makes one suspect that the men of Ch'u felt that nature was something to be feared, although the terrors of the universe were obviously magnified to make the soul hurry back to its original abode.[5] In late T'ang times, however, there is no doubt that such poets as Li Ho 李賀 (791-817), Han Yü 韓愈 (768-824),[6] and Lu T'ung 盧仝 (died 835)[7] considered nature to be totally malevolent in its attitude toward mankind. In his well known poem "Don't Go Out the Door" 公無出门 Li Ho wrote:

> Heaven is deceptive; the earth, secretive.
> The bear viper devours men's soul's;
> Snow and frost snap our bones.[8]

In a poem by Yang Wan-li we see a universe which is not as violent as Li Ho's but almost equally hostile:

Chanting Bitterly

The ants have no autumn clothes, while the geese have
fur coats;
Yet hunting for food under a frosty heaven, each of
them is sad.
The goose calls as it dies of the cold, honking without
rest;
The ant's knees, frozen stiff, move, then stop.
The master chants bitterly as the day gets late,
And an old servant comes pressing him to eat breakfast.[a]
My little boy is reciting his books; I call, but he
doesn't come;
While on the table our yellow leek noodles grow cold.[9]

Nature does not provide any protection for its creatures and lets the geese and ants die without any compassion for their suffering. The poet, who is deeply depressed by the inhumanity of nature, is nonetheless helpless in the face of its hostility.

A much later poem on a similar theme gives us another glimpse at this more pessimistic side of Yang Wan-li:

A Later Song of Suffering from the Cold

The white gull stands in the snow, his ankles pierced
by cold;
The pelicans avoid the wind, because they can't fly
straight.
A pair of wild ducks makes a fool of the evening cold;

They rise and sink in the icy river--who can figure
that out?[a]
But most of all I love our red boat with its yellow
hatted lads;[b]
Green raincoats, purple bamboo caps, they haul the
fanged mast.
I'm getting worried my fingers will fall off or my
ears peal away;
Even the rushes' flowers don't have any place to hide.
I send riders ahead to buy some dry firewood,
And soon I'm warming at a blazing fire, giving myself
a roast.
It's so cold even the three-footed raven sun won't
come out;[c]
I gaze at the clouds, complaining to heaven, but
heaven doesn't cry.[10]

Once again nature's creatures are deserted to fend for themselves, and when in the last line Yang states "heaven doesn't cry" he is echoing Lao-tzu's assertion of nature's inhumanity. Yet there are many elements in this second poem which suggest that Yang's view of nature had changed radically since he had written the first work. Nature is not completely hostile as in Li Ho's works, for the ducks seem to resist the cold with little difficulty, and despite the somewhat chilly ride in a boat, Yang is entertained by the picturesque clothing of the boatmen. Most important of all, Yang allows himself to reminisce about the hardships of the journey while roasting himself at a

blazing fire.

Another poem of the same title further emphasizes the feeling of cosiness which Yang allows us even during the most hostile winter weather;

Suffering from the Cold (First Poem of Three)

When I dread the heat, I always think of snow whirling
about me;
Suffering from the cold, I wish the willows would
bring back spring.
As evening comes, the setting sun doesn't have much
warmth,
So even its reflection on my west window is nice![a 11]

In this poem we feel that our suffering is only relative, for during the hot summer season we yearn for the cold which winter brings us. No matter how cold the weather is, we can always escape into comfortable domestic surroundings to avoid the wind's blast and enjoy what little heat the sun gives us. The late T'ang poets were extreme in their pessimistic view of nature, but their attitude toward life and the world around them was only an intensification of the generally melancholy mood which prevailed among Chinese intellectuals from at least the fourth century to roughly the tenth century. The Sung poets almost totally rejected the view that nature is hostile to man, and Chinese literature was never the same again.

[1]14-127b; 15-1a; 110.

SPPY has 鄱 陽 for 鄱 君 in the first line.

a. Lake Po-yang is one of the great lakes of China, situated in northern Kiangsi to the south of the Yangtze River.

b. In the Han dynasty Wu Jui 吳芮 was the commandant of Po-yang County on Lake Po-yang, and because the people loved him so much, he was enfeoffed as Prince of Po-yang. The original name of Lake Po-yang was Lake P'eng-li or P'eng-tze, but later the name of the county became attached to the lake, too.

c. Allusion to Li Po's poem: "The clouds make one think of her robes/ The flowers make one think of her complexion." See LP, 156, 01.

d. Mount Lu was one of the most important mountains in Chinese lore, a center of Buddhist monasteries and within view of T'ao Ch'ien's native village. It is located to the south of Chiu-chiang in Kiangsi province.

e. Hsüan-liang refers to the alteration between hot and cold during the year, hence, a period of one year.

f. In this line, Yang is alluding to K'ung Chih-kuei's well-known piece of parallel prose, Pei Shan Yi Wen 北山移文 : "The orchid curtains are empty, the night cranes complain/ The mountain man has gone, the morning apes are startled." See Yen K'o-chün 嚴可均

Ch'üan Shang Ku San Tai Ch'in Han San Kuo Liu Ch'ao Wen 全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文 Ch'üan Ch'i Wen 全齊文, Shih Chieh Shu Chü, Taipei, 1968, 19-7a. The sense of the original is to make fun of a recluse who has compromised his principles and taken up public office. However, Yang uses K'ung Chih-kuei's original in an opposite sense, saying that he doesn't want to return to a life of seclusion in the country just because of the "apes' and cranes' complaint." He wants to leave society for his own sake.

[2]James Cahill, Chinese Painting, Skira, Switzerland, 1960, p. 25.

[3]Reproduced in color in Francois Fourcade, Art Treasures of the Peking Museum, Abrams, New York, 1965, p. 29, plate 1.

[4]SPTK, Lao-tzu Tao-te Ching 老子道德經, 1-5a.

[5]SPTK, Ch'u Tz'u Pu Chu 楚辭補注, 9-105b-114b. Translated in David Hawkes, Songs of the South, Oxford U. Press. London, 1959, pp. 101-109.

[6]Many of Han Yü's ku-shih 古詩 display the malevolence of nature; his "Meng Chiao's Son Died" 孟東野失子 is an excellent example. See SPTK, Han Yü 韓愈, Chu Wen Kung Chiao Han Ch'ang Li Hsien Sheng Chi (abbreviated HCLHSC) 朱文公校韓昌黎先生集, 4-43b.

[7]The most famous example is Lu T'ung's "Poem on a Lunar Eclipse" 月蝕詩 . See SPTK, Yü Ch'uan Tzu Shih Chi 玉川子詩集 , 1-2a-3b.

[8]SPTK, Li Ho 李賀 , Li Ho Ko Shih Pien 李賀歌詩編 , 4-25b. Translated in A. C. Graham, Poems of the Late T'ang, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, England, 1965, p. 117.

[9]10-97a; 11-7a; 90.

a. Literally, "old bell," an attendant in the yamen.

[10]27-260a; 29-8b; 176.

a. Literally, 'what mind-nature.' The phrase is Sung slang.

b. In ancient times oarsmen wore yellow hats. The phrase "yellow-hatted lads" is merely another way of saying oarsmen, for in the next line Yang informs us that they do not actually wear yellow hats.

c. Allusion to the raven, which was supposed to inhabit the sun.

[11]11-104a; 12-4b; 94.

a. K'o-jen originally comes from the Li Chi, Tsa Chi 禮記雜記, and means people who are of suitable conduct. later its meaning shifted to 'something suitable to people,' hence, 'nice.' See SPTK, Li Chi 禮記, 12-127b.

b. Landscape

Now that we have discussed Yang's attitude to nature in general, let us explore his treatment of the most important aspect of nature described by Chinese poets, namely, the landscape. Here again we shall find a knowledge of contemporary painting useful, so we must first say something about the evolution of landscape painting in China before and during the twelfth century. The Five Dynasties and northern Sung artists considered the landscape to be the highest form of painting, and as a result it took precedence over the interest in court and Buddhist religious pictures which had dominated earlier T'ang painting. The great northern Sung masters Fan K'uan 范寬 [1] and Kuo Hsi 郭熙 [2] developed a highly original monochrome ink style in which huge, towering mountain peaks completely dwarf human beings and their activities.[3] Particularly in Kuo Hsi's masterpieces the wildly undulating mountain peaks take on a life of their own which seems to render the human world totally superfluous in the scheme of the universe.[4] It is hardly surprising that much of the landscape poetry of the northern Sung bears a strong resemblance to such painting, and Kuo Hsi's near contemporary Su Shih writes:

> I only see the two cliffs, green, green, obscured in
> precipitous gorges;
> In their middle, springs soar forth from a hundred paths.
> Threading woods, tying rocks, they are hidden yet
> appear again,

Racing down to valley mouths, where they become swift streams.[5]

Despite the undeniable grandeur of the northern Sung paintings, one can hardly avoid feeling that these landscapes are too cold and remote to allow the ordinary mortal to linger long in the wild and untamed nature which they depict. In fact, Chinese artists soon tired of these super-human landscapes, and the generation in which Yang lived saw a complete revolution in the art of landscape painting. The end result of this upheavel was the creation of the Ma-Hsia 馬、夏 style which dominated Chinese art for the rest of the twelfth century until it was eventually overturned by the Yüan masters.

A brief description of the Ma-Hsia style would be of great use, because it will aid us in understanding the innovations which Yang Wan-li made in the field of landscape poetry. Although the two principal members of the school Ma Yüan 馬遠[6] and Hsia Kuei 夏珪[7] lived in the generation immediately following Yang, the changeover to a new style was well under way during Yang's lifetime,[8] so we shall take the liberty of referring directly to the works of the two great masters themselves. In the typical landscape of the Ma-Hsia school one is immediately impressed by the great simplification of forms by the use of sharp, angular brush strokes, which impart a calligraphic quality to much of the painting. This more abstract quality is in great contrast to the more luxuriant detail and "realism" in the painting of rocks and trees in northern Sung landscape. Although there is little direct literary proof, it is very tempting

to suggest that the greater abstraction in the southern Sung landscape painters is influenced by northern and southern Sung Ch'an painters who attempted to convey the immediacy of sudden enlightenment through the simplicity of their painting.[9]

However, the stylistic characteristics of the Ma-Hsia landscape are of less interest to us than the actual content of the paintings. The typical Ma-Hsia landscape consists of gently sloping mountains bathed partially in a sea of white mist and clouds. Human habitations are usually present and human beings are to be seen strolling through the mountain scenery. The most striking feature of such paintings is that for the first time in the Sung dynasty the landscape is reduced to human terms, for the overpowering crags of Kuo Hsi and Li Ch'eng are completely eliminated, and nothing is allowed to interrupt the smooth contours of distant mountains. One feels that he could comfortably walk about in a Ma-Hsia landscape, and, in fact, their works are much more heavily populated than the northern Sung paintings. The mist and clouds never suggest the possibility of a violent storm and merely heighten the effect of tranquility by smoothing out any rough contours which might still exist. In many of Ma Yüan's paintings there is an undeniable "sweetness," which has appealed greatly to Western critics but was violently rejected by the Yüan masters.[10] In summary, the Ma-Hsia landscape is at least on the surface a friendly sort of place meant precisely for scholar officials such as Yang Wan-li.

This friendly quality of the Ma-Hsia landscape can be seen in a poem in which Yang describes a mountain which could

easily be an inhabitant of their paintings:

As My Boat Passes Goose Walk Mouth, I Gaze at Chicken Coop Mountain in Ho-chou

For two months the green mountains haven't left me even for a while;
But when I enter the city I don't ever see mountains at all.
A myriad peaks have already gone back after sending me off;
Only Chicken Coop Mountain isn't willing to leave.[11]

It would be difficult for a painting to express the human qualities of nature as explicitly as a poem, and Yang emphasizes these human qualities by personifying the landscape to an extent never seen before in Chinese verse:

As I Cook Breakfast at New Grove, I Gaze on Bell Mountain[a]

I took leave of Bell Mountain a month before,
So how does he recognize my carriage returning north?
We don't know each other's names, but he's very polite,[b]
For he suddenly arrives at the side of New Grove's inn![12]

If we compare this poem with a famous verse of Li Po, Yang's striking originality in the Chinese literary tradition comes into sharper focus:

Sitting Alone by Ching-t'ing Mountain

Flocks of birds, flying high, have all disappeared;
A solitary cloud drifts by leisurely, on its own.
Looking at each other, we never grow tired;
There is only Ching-t'ing Mountain.[13]

Although Li Po speaks of a kind of companionship with Ching-t'ing Mountain, his poem is actually a study in his own solitude, which is heightened by eliminating all of the birds and allowing only a solitary cloud to drift by. Li's relation to the mountain is quite different from Yang's, for Li seems to delight more in his own solitary splendor than any companionship with the mountain, and although the mountain and he continue to eye one another, their friendship is as cold and aloof as Li Po's relations with his contemporaries. On the other hand, Yang's mountain is endowed with all of the human qualities of the Sung scholar, for although he does not know Yang's name or social position, he still has a genuine interest in forming a close friendship. Yang's mountain is not one of the craggy peaks of Kuo Hsi described by northern Sung poets but rather one of the subdued slopes of the southern Sung Ma-Hsia school.

Yang's feeling of a close personal relationship with the natural objects around him is equally apparent in a most remarkable work about the sunrise:

The Ballad of Hsi-E

In the middle of autumn I spent the night at Pi-hsieh city. When I got up early in the morning, the dawn star had already risen, the sun was about to come up, but the moon had not set yet. The scenery went through a myriad changes. Since this probably is the most spectacular sight in the world, I wrote "The Ballad of Hsi-E" to record it.

Hsi Ho wakes from his dreams and wants to get up and go,[a]
So his purple gold raven lets out one croak.[b]
It's cry falls from heaven into the world of men,
And in a thousand villages, a myriad hamlets, all cocks compete in crowing.
The White Moon-beauty hurries west, but she hasn't gone home yet;[c]
She shakes her silver platter, scouring it in the wind and dew.
Then a jade pellet comes flying from the east,[d]
And knocks down her cassia groves and snowy-furred hare.[e]
Who has curtained off half the sky with a red brocade?[f]
Red light and vermillion vapor permeate mountains and rivers.
In a moment he drives on his cinnabar-sand colored wheels,[g]
Pushing them up into the cold void, crushing the azure jade sky.

This old poet has already walked over ten miles,
So who says that the sun god is the first guy up?[14]

Such a lengthy description of the rising sun is extremely unusual in the Chinese literary tradition, but the most original feature of the poem is the way in which Yang personifies the heavenly bodies. In the previous poem ("As I Cook Breakfast at New Grove, I Gaze on Bell Mountain") Yang personified a mountain by describing it as a friendly Sung scholar, but in this poem Yang uses a totally different device. Through the medium of Chinese popular mythology the sun becomes the sun god Hsi Ho and the moon the White Moon Beauty, Su E. The use of popular mythology to give human qualities to the heavenly bodies, brings the mysteries of the celestial transformations down to a level more comprehensible to the human mind. But most significant of all, Yang shows himself to be just one more human being among the anthropomorphic sun, moon, and stars, and the human qualities of seemingly inaccessible bodies allows him to joke with them and suggest that he is even more industrious than the sun god himself.

Yang was justly delighted by his new treatment of the sunrise, for he wrote another poem on the subject of the moon in the early morning hours, which utilizes many of the same devices of the previous poem:

I Enter the East Ministry Early When the Waning Moon Has Just Risen[a]

Candle in hand, I rush to the Library's office;[b]
On both sides of the streets the doors are still shut.
The White Moon-beauty alone has risen early;
Her black dish is washed in an azure pool.
Like a precious button scraped so you see its lacquer,
On only half an edge is her silver left.
Suddenly her eyes turn from black to white;[c]
She opens her eyes wide and gives me a cross stare.
A black mist penetrates her pupils;
She sneaks a glance, for she dares not be open.
Glistening white, a single jade plum[d]
Moves before her, guiding her whirling wheel.
Twinkling bright, a few golden grains[e]
Follow her chariot's dust as an escort.
The morning cock crows three times,
And the capital's riders contend in their race.[f]
The stars' rays have almost totally vanished,
While the moon's shadow is pale, with hardly a trace.
Then the Gold Raven Sun flies up into the heavens
And spits out his red dragon scales![g] 15

Once again Yang uses popular mythology to personify the heavenly bodies, but in this poem the moon is even more human than in the previous work, and she could easily pass for some Chinese coquette of the Sung period. The great originality of Yang's

description of the moon can be seen if we compare it to a standard anthology piece of Li Po:

Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon

Amidst the flowers with a jug of wine,
I drink alone without any friends.
Raising my cup, I invite the moon,
So with my shadow and me, there are three of us.
The moon does not know how to drink,
And my shadow merely follows my body in vain.
For a while I accompany moon and shadow;
Enjoying yourself, you should keep pace with spring.
When I sing, the moon hesitates;
I dance and my shadow scatters.
When sober, let's share our joy;
Drunk, we will go our own ways.
We will bind ourselves in passionless wanderings,
And meet again far off in the Milky Way.[16]

Once again the solitude of the T'ang intellectual is the predominant theme in Li's verse. Although Li, his shadow, and the moon seem to be three companions, they are actually totally isolated from one another, with the moon aloof from Li's drinking and his shadow dispersing whenever he moves. The three can only engage in "passionless wanderings" and their future meeting is delayed to the remote Milky Way. In contrast, Yang's moon is a real goddess who flirts with him like some Sung

beauty. For Li the natural phenomena are aloof and cold, but for Yang the surrounding landscape is endowed with all human qualities and he has no need to feel solitude or fear when in the presence of nature.

We have already referred to the "sweetness" of many of the landscapes of the Ma-Hsia school, and the seductive coyness of the moon in Yang's previous poem is quite similar to the velvety softness with which a painter such as Ma Yüan seems to lure the observer into his pictures. Yang's mountains, too, are equally capable of teasing the poet as was the moon goddess:

The Boat Passes An-jen[a]
(Second Poem of Five)

At first I loved you distant mountains for presenting
me this painting,
But suddenly you rolled it up, dim, as if it no longer
existed.
Don't try to cheat my old eyes, for they're still clear;
Even with all your fog and smoke, I still can count you![17]

Just as the moon beauty plays hard to get, the mountains attempt to hide themselves in a bank of cloud and mist. The same coy behavior can be observed in another group of mountains:

Crossing Flower Bridge at Dawn, I Enter the Boundary of Hsüan-chou (First Poem of Four)

As the road enters Hsüan-ch'eng, the mountains get even stranger;
Like blue dragons they race furiously; green phoenixes, they fly.
This poet's eyes are pretty sharp, and I've already got a peek at them,[a]
But they still rush to pull up their clouds into a kingfisher-colored curtain.[18]

Yang's mountains are as seductive as some coquette who allows her lover a small peek of her beauty and then hastily covers herself behind a "kingfisher-colored curtain."

In addition to resembling the southern Sung landscape paintings in their seductive sweetness, Yang's mountain vistas follow the Ma-Hsia school in creating the coy effect through the use of heavy cloud cover through which the mountains are alternately hidden and revealed. Of course, clouds and fog occur frequently in earlier Chinese painting, but the southern Sung artists went to the extreme of commonly covering up more of the painting in mist than is visible to the observer's eye. As a result of so much cloud cover, we find that the southern Sung landscape is almost as inaccessible to the viewer as the towering crags of the northern Sung artists. Thus, we have a seemingly unresolvable paradox in which the coy mountains of the Ma-Hsia school seem to invite exploration but actually

keep far away when one attempts to approach them.[19]

That the seemingly friendly mountain peaks are ultimately inaccessible to the scholar official is made clear in the following landscape poem:

Passing Hsieh Family Bay

Having walked all the cow trails and rabbit paths,
I suddenly meet a flat waste, joining the sky on
all sides.
My thoughts follow white herons, flying off in a pair;
My eyes pass the green mountains with their millions
of folds.
I've already seen the near ranges, so I look at the
far ones;
I don't love the interlocking peaks; I love only the
solitary ones.
One hill, then a gorge, I wonder what they mean by <u>that</u>;
For they keep all us officials away and welcome only
herding boys![a] [20]

In this work Yang is rambling about in one of the friendly domesticated landscapes of the Ma-Hsia artists, rather than straining to scale one of the forbidding peaks of Kuo Hsi. As his eyes follow the flight of the herons, his line of vision leaves the human world behind and contemplates the myriad transformations of the mountain ranges, yet despite the fact that these mountains seem to beckon him on, he knows that they are in-

accessible to him. It is highly significant that the only people who can reach the mountain peaks are the herding boys, for as we have already mentioned such rural characters as farmers, woodsmen, and fishermen were considered by earlier Chinese poets to be beyond the ordinary world of dust. The meaning of Yang's poem is that the mountains are only accessible to rural people who have divested themselves of the worldly preoccupations of the official life and rejected the rational intellectualism of the Confucian scholar.

Not only does nature remain aloof from human beings, despite the external deception of friendliness, but it also seems to take a perverse delight in causing difficulties for no reason at all:

Spring Cold

Wind and sun, clear weather and heat, all come together;
Peach flowers report to me that the plums are blossoming.
Just as soon as you've discarded all your robes and furs,
In the middle of night, the spring cold will come back
on purpose![21]

Although Yang has put his winter clothes away, the spring cold insists on troubling him to put them back on again.

In the previous poem Yang is able to protect himself from nature's delight in causing him trouble, but in the next he is not so able to escape from his problems:

On the Road to Wan-ling

This creek twists like a pair of robe belts;
The bridge bushy as a centipede.[a]
Sound on the umbrella--rain in the pine path;
Shadow of nests--wind over a willow pond.
A dog follows this traveler by mistake;
And an ox insists I'm his herding boy.[b]
I'm in a rush and don't want to go slow,
But just try hurrying along a road when its slippery![22]

The road is a quagmire due to the rain, making travel extremely difficult, but the country animals compound Yang's troubles by insisting on following him around. Their pursuit of him might even take on elements of the surrealistic if it were not for the good humor with which Yang faces nature's love of making mischief.

Although the perverseness of nature is directed against all human beings, the most sensitive of humans, the poet, is exasperated the most:

Setting Off at Silver Tree Grove

Don't cross the stream's bridge at Silver Tree Grove,
For the creek is not nearly so deep as the mud on the road.
A gust of pure wind steals across my face,
While fair weather color, half revealed, worries my traveler's heart.

Far ranges provoke the clouds into snowing in autumn,
And the pale sky brushes its ink, darkening at dawn.
So many good poems struggle to throw themselves at me;
But willows snatch and flowers steal; where can I
search them out?[23]

Once again Yang is impeded by mud on the rain-soaked road and mountain ranges "provoke" the clouds into snowing. Good poems want to burst out of the poet in line with Yang's Ch'an spontaneity, but the willows and flowers conspire against him and steal the poems before he can write them down.

In the last three poems we have seen that although nature seems to be approachable on the surface, it is actually engaged in a giant "conspiracy" against mankind. We must not confuse this "conspiracy of nature," one of the most common themes in Yang's poetry, with the late T'ang view found in Han Yü and Li Ho that nature is basically malevolent toward mankind. Although nature delights in exasperating mankind, it goes about its activities in a reasonably good-humored manner. This combination of gentleness and aloofness is admirably summarized in a couplet written on a painting by Ma Yüan entitled Walking on a Mountain Path in Spring:

Brushing against his sleeves, wild flowers dance of
themselves;
Avoiding the man, secluded birds do not sing.[24]

The scholar official who walks through this landscape is charmed

by the flowers which seem to embrace him in friendship, yet the birds fly away from him and the line of his vision is lost in the emptiness of fog-enshrouded mountains.

Other than attempting to vex poets such as Yang Wan-li why does nature engage in the "conspiracy" against mankind? Specifically, what is nature trying to hide from human view? The Tao Te Ching hints at an answer when it describes the Tao or basic principle underlying nature in the following terms:

> It is the Mystery of mysteries,
> The gate of the multitude of marvels.[25]

The Saddhardma-pundarīka Sūtra describes the mysteries of the absolute truth of the Buddha in similar terms. "The knowledge of the Buddhas is extremely profound without limit. The gate of their knowledge is difficult to comprehend or enter. No śrāvakas and pratyeka-buddhas can know it."[26] The spiritual ancestor of all nature poets in China, T'ao Yüan-ming, wrote:

> In all of this there is a fundamental truth;
> I want to explain it but have already forgotten the words.[27]

Yang Wan-li develops T'ao Yüan-ming's theme of the ineffable mystery hiding behind the outward appearances of nature in the following poem:

After a Rain, I Get Up at Dawn to Look At the Mountains

At morning, when I go out of my bramble door,
The peak across the river seems to have changed.
But I look at it closely, and it's still the same old mountain;
Only its color is different from yesterday.
Although it passed through last night's rain,
This shouldn't necessarily have such an effect.
The Cloud Master grabs all of the mountains[a]
And puts them in the middle of blue water.
Their sand and soil all become green and float;
Their grass and trees increase in luxuriance.
Yet, they are approaching the decay of autumn,
So how could they get back their spring looks?
The meaning in this is certainly not shallow,
And they use this to make fun of this old poet.
This could all be resolved with one word,
But unfortunately my words are not skilled.
Even if my words were skilled,
They wouldn't be as deep as the mountain's colors.[28]

The transformations which Yang witnesses cannot be described in mere human language.

For Yang the creations of nature continually expound the mysteries behind the Buddhist doctrine:

A Pair of Pagodas at Orchid Creek

The tall pagoda isn't pointed, but the small pagoda is;
One wears a brocade cassock, the other a silver robe.
I question them why they don't ever talk,
But they ask the rapids to speak for the Buddha.[29]

Another poem on the transformations of mountain peaks midst clouds and mist gives us a further clue concerning the philosophical background in which Yang viewed natural phenomena:

I Break Out in Song While Spending the Night at East Bank
(Third Poem of Three)

The Lord of Heaven wants to fill up my poet's eyes,[a]
But he's worried lest the autumn mountains are too withered and tasteless.
So he suddenly tailors Shu brocade and spreads out crimson clouds of Wu;[b]
Low, low, he rubs them on the autumn mountains half way up.
In a second he turns the red brocade into kingfisher gauze,
And his loom weaves out ravens returning home at evening.[c]
Suddenly, the evening ravens and kingfisher gauze disappear,
And all I see is the clear river pure as silk.[d] [30]

Yang compares the changes in the scenery to magical weaving done by the major deity of Chinese folk religion, thus bringing the transformations down to a more "human" level for men to understand. The deity creates an exquisite tapestry from the evening sunset, but suddenly this heavenly handiwork vanishes and, in a flash of enlightenment, Yang perceives "the clear river pure as silk." Yang's sudden enlightenment is not only spiritual but it is on the poetic plane, too, for the last line of the poem is a direct quotation from Hsieh T'iao and one of the most famous lines of Chinese poetry, considered the height of poetic achievement by T'ang and Sung poets. Meditation on the miraculous transformations of the landscape has wiped aside the illusory creations of the Lord of Heaven and brought about a sudden enlightenment in a vision of a "clear river pure as silk," which embodies both the spiritual and the poetic.

One could object that such an interpretation of Yang's poem is too forced if he had not left us a work in which he leaves no doubt about the Buddhist symbolism he discovered in the mountain landscape:

> In morning it was bright and clear but suddenly fog arose.
> When it had stopped and the sun came out, the scenery became strange and unusual.
>
> Setting out at morning, I gazed at the far-off mountains;
> One by one, they were so clear, you could count them.
> But as the desire to gaze springs up in this recluse,
> He incurs the jealousy of the mountain spirits.

Retreating, they display their spiritual powers,[a]
Their transformations are startling, frightening.
At first they use tūla tree cotton[b]
And split it open into fluffy white gauze.
Surrounding everything, it wraps around the world;
Looking up, I lose sight of the heaven's vault.
On high is hung a red crystal platter,[c]
Which doesn't measure more than a yard across.
It shines down midst the empty mist,
Its red rays piercing the light silk.
In the middle are shadows of men and animals;
Confused and disorderly, they race back and forth.
Each of them seems to be grasping something,
But I can't distinguish what thing it is.
As if I didn't think it strange enough,
Even weirder things happen now.
Along the road pennants stand like pearls;
In surrounding mountains trees are ranked like jasper.
Across the sky stretches a golden bridge;
A jade stūpa looms from the ground.[d]
My startled eyes have just gotten a close look,
When it's rolled up from the ground and hidden away.
Dazed and in doubt I rub my eyes,
And still in front I see the old mountain road.
How can I know whether it is illusion or reality?
I can't determine whether I'm dreaming or awake.
The spirits wander on Mount E-mei,
Cheating the vulgar and laughing at old man Buddha.[e]

You who cheat and laugh are laughed at, too,
For old man Buddha is laughing at you.[31]

The description that Yang gives of the mountain landscape is very similar to the earlier poems we have read, but his explicit references to Buddhist terms and ideas help us to understand the relationship between the landscape and Yang's Ch'an beliefs. As is usual, the mountain peaks start out being perfectly visible to the poet, and as he counts them one by one, he forms a personal acquaintance with them as if they were good friends. In this sense, the mystery of the landscape seems to be fairly accessible to the human intellect, and the mountains fit into the Ma-Hsia mould of a friendly, human landscape. However, just as in the Ma-Hsia landscapes, nature conspires against the observer and soon the mountains are shrouded in mist. This perverse humor of the mountain spirit hides the processes of transformation from the poet, for the god displays his magical powers much as Māra, Śakra, or other Indian deities do in Buddhist sūtras. Yang's reference to men racing about in fog grasping at phantom objects suggests that he viewed the fog and mist as an allegory for the insubstantial world of illusion in which men delude themselves by grasping (upādāna) 取 for sensual objects.

Although the fog of illusion has transformed the mountain road beyond recognition, even stranger things happen as the sunlight begins to filter back into the fog, for suddenly a miraculous stūpa appears, crowned by a golden bridge and surrounded by pearl banners and jasper trees. Here Yang is alluding to one of the most famous sections of the Saddharma-

pundarīka Sūtra, the "Stūpa-samdarśa-parivartaḥ" 見宝塔品 or the "Apparition of the Stūpa," which describes the appearance of a miraculous stūpa during a sermon of Śakyamūni Buddha:

> Then from the earth in front of the Buddha, gushed forth a stūpa, consisting of the seven gems, five hundred yojanas high and two hundred fifty yojanas in breadth. It stood in the sky and was decorated by all kinds of precious things: five thousands railings and ten million shrines. Adorned by innumerable banners and flags, jewelled garlands were hung on it, with billions of jewelled bells suspended from its top. In all four directions it emitted the fragrance of tamāla leaves and sandalwood, which filled all the world.[32]

When the disciples of the Buddha saw this phenomenon, they were greatly overjoyed and asked what it portended. The Buddha explained the stūpa contained essential being (atma-bhāva 全身) of the Buddha and that the apparition was to appear whenever the true dharma was taught:

> Whenever there is a place in the nations of the ten directions where the Sūtra of the Lotus of the Law is preached, my stūpa will gush forth in front for the sake of those listening to this sūtra, and in order to be a witness to them, it will make praise, saying: "Excellent!"[33]

Buddha affirms that before his own enlightenment, the apparition of the stūpa appeared to him and applauded his final awakening. Thus, in both the Saddharma-pundarīka Sūtra and Yang Wan-li's poem, the stūpa is a symbol for complete enlightenment.

In view of Mahayānist doctrine, it is quite appropriate that in the Sūtra and Yang's poem, this enlightenment is symbolized by an apparition, for to Buddhists there is utterly no duality between illusion and reality. This is the precise reason why Yang states that he does not know the difference between illusion and reality or whether he is dreaming or waking, for fundamentally the optical illusion he has just witnessed is no more an illusion than the world of "common sense" to which he awakes after the fog has dispersed. The laugh of the Buddha is directed toward those men who continue to delude themselves in their ignorance of the basic truth spoken by the Ch'an master Huang Po:

> The Buddhas and all the sentient beings are just one Mind, and there are no other dharmas . . . This one Mind is simply the Buddha, and there is absolutely no distinction between the Buddha and the sentient beings.[34]

An understanding of the Buddhist symbolism in Yang's poem is of great use in explaining his general view of the natural landscape, and further research would probably show that many

of the concepts which Yang develops could be extended to a general interpretation of southern Sung landscape painting and poetry. One of the most basic concepts we have discussed in Yang's poetry is the mystery behind the numerous transformations to be witnessed in a mountain landscape. In view of the preceding poem, we can conclude that the mystery of the landscape is for Yang a symbol for the ineffable mystery of Buddhist enlightenment. Just as the mountains seem to be friendly at first, enlightenment seems easy to obtain to the uninitiated, but upon further reflection it seems to be impossibly difficult, just as the mountain appears to be totally inaccessible to the ordinary intellectual.

And yet the friendliness of the mountain landscape is not totally illusory, for although enlightenment seems to be difficult to obtain, it is actually a simple matter to the enlightened:

> The practice of Ch'an is to be described as the gold and shit method. Before it is understood, it is all gold, but after it is understood, it is all like shit.[35]

The coyness of the mountains symbolizes the paradox in this saying of a Sung Ch'an master, namely, enlightenment is both difficult and easy to obtain. On one hand the mountain will come down and greet the poet, while on the other, the mountain will hide himself behind a bank of clouds with a devilish relish for thwarting the enjoyment of human beings. The "conspiracy of nature" is similar to the "conspiracy" of enlighten-

ment, which is both obtainable and unobtainable at any one moment. In the Asta-sahāsrikā-prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra we read:

> I say that the Buddha's dharma is also like an illusion, like a dream. I say that nirvāna, too, is like an illusion, like a dream.[36]

Such an interpretation of Yang's poetry can be directly applied to the paintings of the Ma-Hsia school, and very likely to many other Chinese landscape paintings. The mountain peaks which human figures contemplate in a state of mystical ecstasy symbolize the truth of enlightenment, i.e., the sole substantial reality behind the world of illusion. Although such mountains as Sumeru have played a very important place in Indian religion, a mountain cult was developed independently in China at least by late Chou times. Literary references to sacrifices for the holy mountains in the Shih Chi[37] and artistic remains such as Po-shan-lu 博山爐 or incense burners in the shape of mountains populated by fantastic animals prove that in Han times the mountain was already a symbol for other-worldly truth.[38] By the end of Han times, the importance of rites associated with entering mountains in such works as the Pao-p'u-tzu 抱朴子 shows that the Han cult of mountains had become connected with the search for immortality of the Taoist alchemists.[39] By the time that Buddhism became firmly intrenched in Chinese thought, the mountain was already a symbol for ultimate truth, so it is no wonder that Buddho-Taoist nature poets such as Hsieh Ling-yün would write of the enlight-

enment they had attained midst wild and craggy mountain peaks:

> Looking at all this, I forget my concern for objects;
> Suddenly enlightened, I can cast off everything.[40]

By the time that the Ma-Hsia painters created their landscapes, mountains were already a symbol for the truth that one realized upon enlightenment.

However, the mountains of reality and substance in the Ma-Hsia paintings are bathed in clouds and mist, and, hence, nearly invisible to us, much as our perception is clouded in the world of illusion. Even in the Lun-yü of Confucius, clouds are already a symbol for inconsequential things of an illusory nature: "Riches and honors are to me as floating clouds."[41] When Buddhist nature poetry was written in China, the clouds were seen as a symbol for the insubstantial world of illusion, and in the T'ang dynasty Wang Wei wrote:

> I did not know Fragrant Pile Temple
> And entered several miles into the cloud peaks.
> Ancient trees, no paths of men;
> In the deep mountains, whence a bell's sound . . .[42]

Wang Wei did not know where the temple was located and to compound his confusion he is lost in trackless cloud-covered mountains, when suddenly the bell of Buddhist truth awakens him to where he is. Yet there is no need to despair about the clouds of insubstantial illusion, for in the end they are just

as real as the mountains of substantial reality behind them. When one views a painting by the Ma-Hsia artists, he soon realizes that the unfilled areas that represent mist are just as full as the areas covered by ink.[43] For Yang and all Ch'an Buddhists, reality is identical to illusion and illusion to reality.

[1]For Fan K'uan see Cahill, Chinese Painting, pp. 32-34. Also Osvald Siren, Chinese Painting, Leading Masters and Principles, Lund Humphries, London, 1956-1958, vol. 1, pp. 201-207.

[2]For Kuo Hsi see Cahill, Chinese Painting, pp. 35-38. Also Osvald Siren, Chinese Painting, vol. 1, pp. 196-201.

[3]One of the most magnificent surviving examples of this kind of northern Sung landscape painting is Fan K'uan's Traveling Among Streams and Mountains, reproduced in Cahill, Chinese Painting, p. 33.

[4]See Early Spring, reproduced in Ibid., p. 36.

[5]TPHSS, 12-230b.

[6]For Ma Yüan see Cahill, Chinese Painting, pp. 80-82, and Siren, Chinese Painting, vol. 2, pp. 113-119.

[7]See Cahill, pp. 82-84 and Siren, vol. 2, pp. 119-124. Neither Ma Yüan nor Hsia Kuei has a biography in the official histories, and consequently very little is known about their lives.

[8]See Cahill, p. 38.

[9]Ibid., p. 84. Although Cahill does not openly explain the possible relationship between the Ma-Hsia school and Ch'an painters, his reference to the "impression of instantaneous disclosure" in Hsia Kuei's paintings sounds remarkably Ch'an.

[10]Typical examples of the kind of paintings described can be seen in two paintings by Ma Yüan reproduced in Cahill, p. 82 and 83. See also NPM, P List, no. 3, Facing the Moon by Ma Yüan.

[11]35-336a; 36-12b.

[12]33-313a; 35-2a; 201.

a. New Grove or Hsin Lin is to the southwest of modern Nanking. Bell Mountain or Chung Shan is to the northeast of the city.

b. Allusion to a line by Tu Fu: "He doesn't know people's names and is extremely crude and uncouth." See TF, 366/39/3.

[13]LTPS, 23-318a.

[14]25-241b; 28-3b; 158.
In SPPY the word 烏 replaces 浦 in the second line, an obvious case of commentary replacing the original text.

a. Hsi Ho was the charioteer of the sun in popular Chinese mythology.

b. Pi-pu is another name for raven. The sunspots were thought to be a raven living on the sun.

c. Su-e or the White Moon-beauty is Ch'ang-e, the immortal woman who lives on the moon. Here the words merely mean 'moon.'

d. The jade pellet is the morning star or Venus.

e. The moon was said to have a cassia tree and a hare who pounded the elixir of immortality.

f. The red brocade is the glow of the dawn sky.

g. The poet is comparing the red disk of the early morning sun to red-colored hub caps on a chariot wheel.

[15]23-218b; 25-6a; 146.

a. The East Ministry is the Mi-shu Sheng or Imperial Library, where Yang was serving at this time.

b. It is likely that the "candle" Yang is carrying is actually an official lamp used in early morning.

c. Allusion to the Chin poet Juan Chi, who would make his eyes black if he liked someone and white if he disliked the person. See Chin Shu, K'ai Ming Shu Chü, 1214-b. In this line and those following, Yang is describing the changes in the color of the moon as it grows dimmer in the morning light and is covered with clouds.

d. The jade plum is Venus or the morning star.

e. The golden grains are morning stars, which have not been blotted out yet by the sunlight.

f. The word tsai does not mean 'carry' here, but is a relatively meaningless particle added for poetic effect. It was originally used as a particle in the Shih Ching.

g. According to ancient Chinese tradition, the sunspots were a raven living on the sun, so the sun is called a golden raven. Yang compares the rays of sunlight to red dragon scales.

[16]LTPS, 23-313a.

[17]35-330b; 36-6b; 212.

a. An-jen is in modern Kiangsi province.

[18]32-307a; 34-8a; 196.

a. The phrase yen-tu is very colloquial and literally means 'eyes poisonous.' The word tu is used in a sense very close to modern Mandarin li-hai 利害.

[19]An excellent example of this kind of painting in addition to those cited above in note 10 is a landscape by Hsia Kuei reproduced in SJHT, plate no. 50. Although the men in the painting are completely at ease in a friendly landscape, almost half of the scene is totally obscured in clouds.

[20]32-304b; 34-5a; 193.

a. Here the word chao is used in a primary verbal sense of 'settle, put to rest.'

[21]40-384a; 41-4a.

[22]34-319b; 35-8b; 205.

a. Yang is describing a bridge made from wooden beams joined together so that the ends of the beams stick out from the sides of the bridge like the legs of a centipede.

b. Literally, "An ox recognizes me as his herding boy." In other words the ox insists on following Yang around, although the poet is in a great hurry.

[23]32-304a; 34-5a; 193.

[24]Reproduced in Cahill, Chinese Painting, p. 82. Cahill renders the couplet: "Brushed by his sleeves, wild flowers dance in the wind; fleeing from him, the hidden birds cut short their songs." Cahill's rendering of the first line misses the main point of the poem, namely, the friendliness of the landscape in which the flowers seem to welcome the scholar by brushing against his sleeves.

[25]SPTK, Lao-tzu Tao-te Ching 老子道德經, 1-4a.

[26]Taishō, Miao Fa Lien Hua Ching (abbreviated MFLHC) 妙法蓮華経, no. 262, vol. 9, p. 5-b.

[27]CCTYMC, 3-30a.

[28]42-401a; 42-7a.

[29]26-249a; 28-11a.

[30]26-250b; 28-12b; 164.

a. This use of 生 is highly colloquial and still found in modern spoken Mandarin.

b. The Shu area of Szechwan and the Wu area of Kiangsu were both famous in antiquity for their high quality textiles. Yang is comparing the evening colors to these fine cloths.

c. It is highly probable that Yang is describing a real raven seen against the background of the mountains so that it appears to be woven into their brocade and gauze. Another possibility is that the word raven refers to the setting sun, since in popular lore the sun was inhabited by a raven.

d. A direct quotation of the southern Ch'i poet Hsieh T'iao's most famous line. See Ting Fu-pao Ch'üan Han San Kuo Chin Nan Pei Ch'ao Shih 全漢三國晉南北朝詩, Shih Chieh Shu Chü,

Taipei, 1961, p. 811. Li Po also regarded this line very highly: "Knowing to say 'the clear river is as pure as silk'/ Makes one always remember Hsieh T'iao." See LP, 233, 07.

[31]34-320b; 35-9b.

a. The words shen-t'ung are commonly used to translate the Sanskrit rddhi-pāda or 'spiritual power.'

b. Tou-luo transliterates Sanskrit tūla or 'cotton.'

c. The sun is so obscured by the mist that it seems to be a red platter hanging in the sky.

d. Su-tu transliterates Sanskrit stūpa. Frequently the character 波 is added at the end.

e. Mount E-mei in Szechwan was a common goal for pilgrims with its many famous Buddhist temples.

[32]MFLHC, p. 32-b.

[33]Ibid., p. 32-c.

[34]CTCTL, p. 270-b.

[35]Dai Nippon Zoku Zōkyō 大日本續藏經, Ku Tsun Su Yü Lu 古尊宿語錄第二編第壹輯, t'ao 23, vol. 3, chüan 32, p. 228.

[36]Taishō, Hsiao P'in Mo Ho Pan Juo Po Luo Mi Ching 小品摩訶般若波羅蜜经, no. 227, vol. 8, p. 540c.

[37]See Ssu-ma Ch'ien 司馬迁, Shih Chi 史記, K'ai Ming Shu Chü. The Feng-shan Shu 封禪書 in pp. 114-118, contains much information about the imperial mountain cult. This treatise has been translated entirely in Burton Watson, Records of the Grand Historian of China, Columbia U. Press, New York, 1961, vol. 2, pp. 13-69.

[38]A color reproduction of a particularly outstanding Po-shan-lu found recently in China appears in Wen Hua Ta Ko Ming Ch'i Chien Ch'u T'u Wen Wu 文化大革命期间出土文物, Wen Wu Ch'u Pan She 文物出版社, Peking, 1972.

[39]See the chapter "Charms for Entering Mountains" 入山符 in SPTK, Pao P'u Tzu 抱朴子, 17-99b-106b. This chapter is translated without the charms in J. R. Ware, Alchemy, Medicine, and Religion, in the China of A. D. 320, M. I. T. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1966.

[40]"Following the Chin-chu Torrent, I Cross the Mountain Range, and Walk Beside a Stream" 從斤竹澗越嶺溪行 in Hsieh Ling-yün 謝靈運, Hsieh K'ang-le Shih Chu 謝康樂詩註, Yi-wen Yin Shu Kuan 藝文印書館, Taipei.

[41]SPTK, Lun Yü 論語 , 4-29a.

[42]SPTK, Wang Wei 王維 , Wang You Ch'eng Chi 王右丞集 , 4-37b. The use of yün-feng 雲峯 heightens the sense of illusion, for it can either mean 'cloud-covered peaks' of 'clouds shaped like mountain peaks.'

[43]Refer to the paintings already cited in notes 10 and 19. Ma Yüan was particularly noted for his balancing of solid landscape against empty mist and received the nickname "Side-corner Ma" 邊角馬 from this type of composition.

c. Animals

Most later critics considered landscape to be the pinnicle of Sung painting, but the modern observer cannot help being strongly attracted to the incredible vitality of animal painting during this period. We have already discussed the intimate relation between landscape painting and poetry, so we will find it useful to discuss animal painting in China briefly before we explore Yang's animal poetry. Although no paintings have been found so far from the Shang and early Chou period, we can form a rough idea about the painting from the designs of the world famous bronze art of China. It is highly significant that even in this remote period of Chinese history, the artist was much more interested in the representation of animal forms than human. Some of the most recent archeological finds in China prove that the brilliance of Chinese animal art remained unabated into Han times,[1] but from about the fifth century B.C. the human being increasingly dominated Chinese painting and sculpture and remained the center of interest until about the tenth century in both secular and religious art. The great revolution in the tenth and eleventh centuries, which led to the complete domination of landscape painting, affected the painting of animals, too, because although the Sung painter was extremely adept at realistic portraits of human beings, paintings of animals outnumber those of men by a very great margin. Although Five Dynasty artists such as Huang Ch'üan 黃荃 had already brought the art of animal painting to a high level, the southern Sung period in which Yang lived was

the golden age of realistic animal painting. The technical skill and psychological insight of these painters was never equalled again in China or any other part of the world.

No Western art critic has sufficiently studied the reason why the Chinese were so much more interested in animals than men. During the Shang and early Chou period, the interest may have been dictated by the various religious cults of bronze age Chinese culture, and the rise of the human as the center of art in late Chou and Han times was most likely a result of the increasing influence of Confucian humanism, an idea which is reinforced by the didactic intent of much Han and Six Dynasties painting.[2]

In late Chou philosophy only the Taoists seem to have much sensitivity toward animals, and Chuang-tzu displays his delight for even lowly animals in his famous debate with Hui Shih 惠施 when he says: "The minnows come out and wander about completely at ease. This is the pleasure of fish."[3] Although Chuang-tzu uses his statement as the occasion for a debate with Hui Shih concerning problems of epistemology, the passage still shows a love of the animal world which the Taoists retained until much later times. Although the reverence for nature and her creatures of the Taoists had the greatest impact on the Chinese view of animal life, it is very likely that the Buddhist notion of transmigration played a very significant role. When this doctrine was first introduced to the Chinese in Han times, they found it quite difficult to comprehend,[4] but after a few centuries it was totally absorbed into the stream of Chinese beliefs and still plays an extremely

important part in popular religion. If a bird was another human being in his past life, possibly even one's ancestor, it was much easier to see the animal as something quite different from a pet, item of food, or zoological specimen as is usually the case in European art and literature.

However, in the earliest monument of Chinese poetry, the Shih Ching, animals largely serve as actors in the background of human life. The very first stanza of the first poem of the Kuo Feng displays this tendency clearly:

> Kuan, kuan cries the osprey
> On an island in the river.
> Lovely is the pure lady,
>
> A good match for a prince.[5]

Many of the animals of the Shih Ching are used in an obviously allegorical way, although the exact significance of the allegory is frequently lost to the modern reader. In fact, from the earliest times the allegorical use of animals in Chinese poetry has been very popular, and Tu Fu was working in a long established tradition when he wrote his well-known "Ballad of the Thin Horse":

> A thin horse in the eastern suburbs makes me sad,
> For his bones are as hard and tough as a stone wall.
> If, hobbled, he tried to move, he would fall over flat;
> He certainly has no thought of prancing anymore.

After further description of the horse's pitiful condition, Tu Fu writes:

> Seeing men, you are dejected and seem to complain;
> Your master lost, you are depressed and lusterless.
> Weather, cold, you are let roam far, geese your sole companions;
> In the evening, not taken in, crows peck at your sores.
> Who will care for you, so you can repay his favor?
> Then you can try again next year, when the spring grass is tall.[6]

Although Tu Fu displays a great compassion for the unfortunate horse, there is no doubt that his poem is a political allegory in which the horse represents the poet himself, who has been rejected by the court but would like to be given one more chance to prove himself despite his old age. It is important to note that the greatest horse painters of the T'ang dynasty such as Han Kan 韓幹 were contemporaries of Tu Fu, and much of their horse painting, which was done in the imperial court, can be interpreted in a similar allegorical fashion.[7]

As we shall see, the allegorical emphasis of earlier animal painting and poetry changed in Sung times, but many of the Sung animal paintings can be given an allegorical interpretation despite the almost total silence of Western critics of Chinese art on this question. It is quite possible that the numerous paintings of birds intently staring at a single insect

may represent the delusion of men who are attached to material objects.[8] We are on even safer ground when we apply an allegorical interpretation to a painting such as the famous triptych of Mu Ch'i 牧溪, now in the Ch'an temple Daitokuji 大徳寺 in Kyoto. The central painting of Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva or Kuan-yin 觀音 leaves no doubt about the religious nature of the paintings, so it is highly plausible to interpret the storks and monkeys of the two side paintings as symbolic of men who are slaves to their passions.[9] Paintings of monkeys grasping for spider webs[10] or playing with the reflection of the moon in water[11] are clearly references to the ideas concerning the illusory nature of the everyday world which we have already encountered in the Prajñā Sūtra.

Yang, too, sometimes uses animals in an allegorical fashion similar to earlier poets and painters:

The Song of the Water Mantis[a]

In early morning when I wash my face, I open the mat door,
But a huge mantis races about on the water there.
In front he sticks out two legs--like autumn bamboo poles;
Behind he drags his belly--a spring fishing boat.
By chance he picks up a broken spider's web;
He grabs its four corners and sinks it in the deep abyss.[b]
The mantis on the willow is good at catching locusts,

While the mantis on the water is good at catching
sturgeon.[c]
If he catches locusts, he can get one to eat every meal,
But if he catches sturgeon, when can he ever get a
sturgeon to eat?[12]

Although Yang's work shows an unusual degree of detailed observation of the water insect, the mantis is largely a vehicle for teaching a moral lesson. Yang is telling us that one should not attempt to be what he is not, and if he attempts to go beyond his natural limits, he will suffer the same fate as the starving mantis.

In another poem Yang moves one step away from the allegorical treatment of animals:

I Set off at Morning from Rush Field and am
Moved When I See an Egret

I sigh because my whole life has been spent on the
road;
I can't stand the mud and rain or driving my carriage on.
The egret is supposed to be the purest and loftiest of
of us all,[a]
But he's in the creek at the crack of dawn--so what's
<u>his</u> line?[b] [13]

In earlier Chinese painting and poetry, egrets and cranes were symbols for purity and longevity, as Yang himself informs us.

However, Yang's poem turns the old symbolism of the egret upside down, for he denies the total purity of the bird, since it must hunt for a living just like a worldly scholar official such as Yang.

Yang's poem has gone a long way in stripping away the human imposed mythology surrounding the egret, yet he is still projecting human values onto the animal world. In all cultures men have attempted to see animals organized in a pattern similar to human society, and Yang himself delighted in the same practice:

Watching Ants (First Poem of Two)

When by chance they meet one another, they carefully
ask the way;
I wonder what the reason is that they move home so
many times.
How much do their tiny bodies need to feast upon?
One hunt, they return home, rear-guard chariots filled![14]

Although Yang has described the ants as being subject to a society similar to that of human beings, he does not attempt to draw any moral about "industrious ants" from his observations as European authors would. His reference to "rear-guard chariots" is a piece of human fancy, but his close observation of the way in which ants actually communicate with each other while hunting for food is totally new.

Yang sees animals in a completely different way from

T'ang authors, and, as one would expect, his view of animals has much in common with his treatment of the landscape. The animals in Yang's poetry are frequently as friendly as the mountains:

At Morning I Set Out From Dharma Enlightenment Monastery at Prayer Gate and Follow a Stream through a Dangerous Inaccessible Area (Third Poem of Six)

The mountains have no people or smoke, the water no bridges;
The stream's vast, vast, the rain so desolate.
What good is it for this pair of egrets to comfort me?[a]
As soon as they've passed by, it will make me even lonelier![15]

Just as mountains come down to welcome the weary traveler, egrets attempt to comfort Yang on his perilous voyage.

Yet by suggesting the futility of his friendship with the egrets, Yang hints that animals, too, are ultimately as unapproachable as the mountains which hide themselves behind mist and clouds:

Cooking Breakfast at Jade Field, I Hear an Oriole and See a Stork (First Poem of Two)

In the morning cold, he watches his reflection,
admiring his golden robe;
He isn't willing to sing while I listen to him intently.

He flies into the willow shade where there are many
hiding places;
A few notes--he only lets the falling blossoms know.[16]

The oriole may delight us with his bright colors, but he is just as inaccessible as distant mountain peaks. Like the crags that hide in fog, he is engaging in the same "conspiracy of nature" against the human intellect.

We have already touched on the novelty of Yang's careful observation of ant life, but in the next poem we find such observation totally stripped of any of the earlier allegorical treatment of animals:

The Raven

The children look at each other and just laugh at it;
Even this old fellow manages to grin a little.[a]
A single raven flies and perches on the crooked railing's
corner:[b]
If you look at it carefully, it really does have a beard![17b]

Before the Sung dynasty, no Chinese poet would have looked at a raven so closely as to notice its whiskers, for he would probably be more interested in the raven as an inauspicious bird. This interest in small detail is quite consistent with Ch'an Buddhism, which, as we have already seen, teaches the identity of everyday life and enlightenment. Yet, Yang's close observation of natural objects is closely related to non-Buddhist

intellectual forces, which reached their peak during Yang's lifetime in the philosophy of Chu Hsi. One of the most important doctrines of Chu Hsi's philosophy was ko-wu 格物 or the "investigation of things," and although Chu normally directed his investigations to the ethical and political sphere, he also had a deep interest in natural phenomena.[18] Since Yang was a close friend of Chu Hsi, it would not be rash to speak of neo-Confucian influence on his animal poetry at least, but there is no need to prove direct influence, for Chu Hsi's doctrine of ko-wu was an outgrowth of even wider tendencies in Chinese culture during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Sung love of detailed analysis gave rise to the golden age of Chinese science and mathematics just as it influenced the direction taken by Sung thinkers such as Chang Tsai, the Ch'eng 程 brothers, and finally Chu Hsi himself. The analytical nature of Sung culture led to a similar love of detailed observation of landscape and animals in the painting of the period, for in painting we have the highly realistic animal paintings of the southern Sung academy and in literature the animal poetry of Yang Wan-li and his contemporaries.

No one has seriously studied the effect of Ch'an Buddhism on these developments of Sung culture, but in an extremely perceptive passage Feng Yu-lan writes;

> Thus the Ch'an school took a further step in synthesizing the sublime with the common. Yet if carrying water and chopping wood are really the nature of the mysterious Tao, why should it still be necessary

> for the man engaged in spiritual cultivation to abandon his family and become a monk? Why should not the mysterious Tao equally consist in performing the duties of father and sovereign? Here there was need for a further word, and it became the mission of the Neo-Confucianists . . . to say that word.[19]

Consistent with the general tendencies of Sung culture, Yang displays his powers of observation of even the smallest creatures:

The Freezing Fly

> Through the window, by chance, I see a fly sunning himself;
> Rubbing two legs together, he plays in the morning sunlight.
> He knows beforehand the sun's rays are about to move;[a]
> Suddenly he flies off, drops on another window--bzzzz.[b] [20]

In contrast to earlier animal poems, the fly is now independent of the world of man, and Yang, the poet, is only an inactive bystander. Yang's description of the fly rubbing its legs and his knowledge of the fly's search for sunlight prove that he had spent many long hours observing his subject just as the neo-Confucian studied political history or the southern Sung academic painter, birds.

Through his close observations of animals Yang achieved

a comprehension of animals' feelings as profound as any human mind could possess, and rather than projecting human emotions on fish as earlier poets would have, he writes of fish as they exist in nature:

Watching Fish

This old fellow can't stand the heat,
So I sit barefooted on a tile drum.[a]
Near a pool, I watch the swimming fish;
Focusing my eyes, I count them over and over.
The minnows are especially afraid of people;
They want to cross over but they don't dare cross.
One fish tries going on ahead
To report to them there are no special dangers.
The school of fish at first wants to follow,
But, wavering, they finally turn back.
From time to time I pass the wine cup,
But suddenly the day turns to dusk.[21]

Yang tells us how he carefully focuses his eyes to count the fish over and over again. His habits of observation have much in common with modern scientific methods, but he is no cold statistician, for one can easily sense the joy in his description of the emotions of the timid minnows.

Yang Wan-li was not just a master in the description of a single type of animal, but, like the Sung animal painters, he was able to catch the interreactions between animals:

I Write What I Saw in Jest

The peasants do not send their children to herd pigs,
For the old ravens play the pig-herder for them.
Unashamed of this low, useless post, they are really
elated;
Using stalks of grass, they play games with the pigs.
One raven drives the pigs like a cow herded to
slaughter,
While another rides a pig like the Queen Mother's steed.[a]
When their ride isn't steady or they can't drive them on,
They sit and watch the stubborn pigs, for no whip's
at hand.
Though men are different from horses or cows,
All of us spend our whole lives in Raven Robe Alley.[b]
Scolding the pigs, the ravens caw till their beaks are
parched,
But in the end the pigs don't understand a word of the
ravens' talk.
The raven riding doesn't follow, so the herder raven
fights him;
They fight over cows, argue about horses, no bystanders
to help.
The pigs merely continue eating and walking on their
own;
Letting the two ravens fight it out themselves.
Unexpectedly, a young boy drives the ravens away,
And within a second, they are fighting to the death![22]

Although no painting on exactly the same subject as Yang's poem survives from the Sung dynasty, the Sung painters similarly enjoyed showing the play of emotions between animals. In one well-known painting attributed to Ts'ui Po 崔白 in the Taiwan Palace Museum, two jays scold a hare which has wandered into their territory, while the hare looks back at them with an expression of puzzled amusement.[23] Just as in most of Yang's animal poems, the animals of the painting live separate from the human world, as they could be observed in their natural habitat.

[1]An outstanding example is the eastern Han bronze horse discovered in Kan-su in 1969. See the color inset in Wen Wu 文物, no. 2, 1972.

[2]See, for example, the recently discovered lacquer painting of paragons of filial piety from the northern Wei reproduced in Wen Wu 文物, no. 3, 1972, plate no. 11. Ku K'ai-chih's 顧愷之 renowned Admonitions to the Court Ladies, presently in the British Museum and supposedly painted in the fourth century is also didactic in purpose.

[3]SPTK, Nan Hua Chen Ching 南華真經, 6-128a. Translated in Burton Watson, The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu, pp. 188-189.

[4]See Kenneth Ch'en, Buddhism in China, Princeton U. Press, Princeton, 1964, p. 39.

[5]Shih Ching 詩經, Kuo Feng 国風, "Kuan Chü" 関雎.

[6]TKPS, 23-402b.

[7]It is interesting to note that Tu Fu's most famous poem about painting, "The Ballad of Painting" 丹青引, is concerned with a horse painter Ts'ao Pa 曹霸, who was the teacher of Han Kan, also mentioned in the poem. See TKPS, 16-287a.

[8]See SJHT, plate no. 24.

[9]The painting of the monkeys is reproduced in Cahill, Chinese Painting, p. 97.

[10]Refer to a southern Sung painting on this subject in SJHT, plate no. 7.

[11]I have not been able to find a Chinese painting on this subject, but a Japanese painting from the eighteenth century is reproduced in Hsio-yen Shih, Nanga and Zenga Paintings in the Finlayson Collection, Windsor, Ontario, 1973, no. 18. Since the painting is accompanied by a Chinese poem and done in the Japanese scholar style, it undoubtedly is derived from a Chinese original.

[12]35-334b; 36-11a; 213.

a. The zoology of this poem is quite confusing. It is not very clear whether the water mantis is a separate species of insect or rather a praying mantis that has somehow managed to land on the surface of the water.

b. The insect seems to be using the spider web in the water as a fishing net.

c. If Yang meant sturgeon by the word chan as the dictionaries suggest, it seems rather unlikely that any insect would be able to catch such fish. However, the

point of the poem is clear enough, namely that one should not attempt to do something he is not able to do.

[13]34-324b; 36-1b; 207.

a. The highly colloquial 底 is equivalent to the modern Mandarin 的 .

b. Yu kan wu seems to be quite close to the modern Mandarin kan ma 幹 麻 . Yang's point is that although the egret is supposed to be very pure in his conduct, he must make a living just as every other creature. Yang is comparing his own predicament of having to work as a government official to the plight of the egret.

[14]10-94a; 11-4a; 85.

[15]34-325a; 36-2a; 308.

a. Literally, "to warm one another."

[16]13-126b; 14-8a; 109.

[17]11-103b; 12-3b; 93.

a. Lu-hu, 'smile,' is from the Hou Han Shu, Ing Shao Chuan: "He covered his mouth and grinned." See Hou Han Shu 後漢書 , K'ai Ming Shu Chü, 806-a.

b. The raven's beard is the feathers on his chin.

[18]See the discussion of the scientific elements in Chu Hsi's thought in Joseph Needham, Science and Civilization in China, Cambridge, 1961- , vol. 2, pp. 493-496. Chu Hsi's extremely scientific cosmology is outlined on pp. 373-374.

[19]Quoted from Fung Yu-lan, Derk Bodde tr., A History of Chinese Philosophy, Princeton U. Press, Princeton, 1953, vol. 2, p. 406. This passage does not appear in the Chinese edition generally available and must be a result of the revisions Fung Yu-lan did for the English translation.

[20]11-103a; 12-3a; 93.

a. Hui is used in the sense of 'know, perceive.'

b. Some liberty has been taken with the word sheng, which Chou Ju-ch'ang interprets as a verb. See YWLHC, p. 93.

[21]36-345a; 37-8a; 218.

a. The tile drum is a chair made of porcelain which is used on summer days because it is cool. The chair is now known as 瓷墩 .

[22]12-112a; 13-3b.

In the third line SPPY has 頰 for 頰 of SPTK. I have followed the SPPY reading.

a. The ch'i-chi were heavenly horses driven by Hsi Wang Mu or the Queen Mother.

b. Raven Robe Valley is a place in modern Kiangsu province, where the ancient aristocrats of the Wang and Hsieh families lived during the Tsin dynasty. By Yang's time all of the former glory had passed away.

[23]Reproduced in Cahill, Chinese Painting, p. 72.

d. Plants

Plants have played a role in Chinese art and literature as important as animals, and, as one would expect from our discussion of animals, the realistic portrayal of plants in paintings and their detailed description in poetry reached a height in southern Sung times. The precise significance of plant imagery in the Shih Ching has baffled modern critics, but in the Ch'u Tz'u there is no doubt about the allegorical use of plants. There are "good" plants and "bad" plants, and the "Ode to an Orange Tree" 橘頌 [1] is the earliest example of pure plant allegory sustained through an entire poem. Similar to animals, plants continued as symbols for virtues and vices down into modern times, but by the North-South period, the poets of the Palace School had set aside the older tradition and wrote detailed descriptions of plants without any reference to their supposed moral qualities. The Liang emperor Chien Wen Ti, whom we have already met in connection with the image of the water moon, wrote many poems in this new style:

Ode on a Rose

When a swallow perches, it becomes even softer;
Fluttering in the wind, its flowers turn more radiant.
Its perfumed mists, are not willing to depart;
When they continue to come, the stairs are made fragrant.[2]

Chien Wen Ti's rose is no symbolic rose, but simply a flower he observed in the palace gardens.

Yang usually avoids earlier plant symbolism in his plant poetry, but he cannot escape the associations with Chinese literary tradition, which the king of plants, the bamboo, evokes in him:

I Sing of a Bamboo Grove in Front of the Water Pavilion by Ch'iang-t'ien at Ten Mile Pool

As soon as I see this gentleman's face,[a]
The barren village is no longer a village.
Under slanting sunlight, he's a Wen T'ung original;[b]
The sparrow roosting on him must be Wang Hui-chih's soul.[c]
Alas! I can do nothing about my wanderer's longings,
But at least we can talk together about my poetic sorrow.
I ask him: "Would you like a drink?"
And pour some wine on his frosty roots.[3]

In this poem past and present reverence for the bamboo are suffused together, for Wang Hui-chih was a man of the third century while Wen T'ung 文同 was a typical Sung intellectual who combined painting and poetry and lived only a short two generations before Yang Wan-li. Yang is very conscious of past traditions associated with the bamboo, but his poem is very different from Chien Wen Ti's, as one would expect after the passage of so many centuries. The emperor describes his rose in a highly ornate style under strong influence from the

short fu of the North-South period. Although he obviously derives considerable pleasure from contemplating the flower, he adopts a typically aristocratic aloofness in his description, which contrasts vividly with Yang's hearty friendliness to the bamboo, which he invites to share a drink.

One can see the same sort of close personal relationship between poet and plant that we noticed between poet and mountain landscape:

Written on the Wang Family Inn at Green Mountain Market

The small building overlooks a short wall;
Half a trellis of long spring flowers pulses with florid fragrance.
The sunny flowers know that I am lonely,
For they fly to me on purpose, entering my bamboo window.[4]

Although Yang is on a journey from home, he cannot feel lonely in the presence of nature, because even the flowers will come to comfort him as if they were his old friends.

Yang's identity with the creatures of nature allows him to sympathize with the flowers even after they have fallen from their trees:

The Day After Shang-ssu I Stroll In the East Garden
Again With Tzu-wen, Po-chuang, and Yung-nien
(Second Poem of Three)

One by one we penetrate the nine paths full of shade;
Talking and laughing, each of us is delighted.
We walk slowly, but not because we lack strength;
We can't bear advancing on the fallen blossoms covering
the ground.[5]

Yang's sympathy for plants is a trait he held in common with even earlier Sung poets, and Huang T'ing-chien, Yang's model during his youth, wrote:

On the Subject of Herding Oxen in My Bamboo and Rocks

In my fields is a little knoll,
On it, a dark bamboo grove, luxuriantly green.
A herding boy with a three foot whip
Drives along his old trembling oxen.
I love my rocks very much
So don't let your oxen sharpen horns on them.
If they sharpen their horns, it's no too bad,
But if the oxen fight, they'll break my bamboos![6]

Huang T'ing-chien feels strongly about his bamboos, but one wonders if he is more concerned for his private property rather than the fragile plants. In any case, he does not consider the bamboos to exist on a plane similar to human life.

In contrast, Yang's sympathy for plants enables him to understand the "emotions" of the vegetable world and ascribe human feelings to its denizens:

In the Evening Heat I Roam by a Lotus Pond
(Third Poem of Five)

The fine grasses shake their heads and announce him
to me,
So I open my robe and stop the whole west wind.[a]
The lotuses enter evening, yet they still worry about
heat,
So they lower their faces, hiding themselves deep in
their azure umbrellas.[7]

Yang interprets the natural movement of the grasses in the wind as an announcement to him that the west wind of autumn is coming to relieve him from the summer heat. Since the poet himself is suffering from the torrid weather, he imagines that the lotuses are hiding in fear of the heat.

Since plants have human emotions, Yang can write about his favorite flower, the plum, as if it were a real human being:

Picking a Plum with Snow under Candlelight

Brother Plum dashes through the snow to visit me;
Snow flakes cover his beard along with his face.[a]
All his life Plum's been skinny but now he's fat;

Because I can't tell the difference between Plum
and the snow.
I call him in and look at him carefully by lamplight,
And I really don't know if there's any snow or not.
All I see is his jade countenance wet with beads of
sweat;
The sweat covers his face and drips down to his beard![8]

The detailed description of the plum flower is worthy of painters who specialized in plum flower painting during Sung and later times, but the most striking feature of the poem is Yang's extremely original use of personification of plant life, a device which was not very common even by northern Sung times. We have noticed the personification of mountains already, and there is little precedent for this practice in earlier poetry, but a major source for Yang's description of the plum flowers, may have been a poem by Han Yü 韓愈 to which Yang refers a number of times in his own verse:

The Plum Blossoms (Second of Two poems)

In spring, heaven and earth compete in wealth and glory,
And this struggle is especially strong in Lo-yang Garden.
Who took these myriad piles of snow from the level
ground
And cut them to make these flowers reaching the sky?
The sun's rays' red color shining on them, they're not
at their best,

But when the bright moon disappears momentarily,
they're at the prime.
At night I took Chang Chi to visit our friend Lu T'ung
And we rode on these clouds to the Jade Emperor's
palace.
On four sides tall maidens stood in ranks, bestowing
their fragrance;
All identical, they wore white silk dresses, with caps
of gauze.
Their tranquil purity and bright makeup seemed to hint
to us,
But though they stared at us, we paid them no attention.
Clear and cold, their jade bones wakened my inner being,
Yet for my whole life, my thoughts can't turn to evil![9]

A number of commentators have taken Han's poem as an allegory about his ability to resist worldly temptation, but such interpretations do not affect the tremendous originality of his description of the plum trees as beautiful maidens. The influence of Han's poem on Yang's plant poetry is very probable, but Yang's plums are infinitely more human than the cool and aloof maidens of Han's creation.

But by personifying plant life, Yang runs up against the same "conspiracy of nature" which we have noticed in his dealings with the landscape and animal world:

Two blossoms, three branches, the plums are just new;
Not thin, not thick, they are at their most pleasant.
Flowering branches line the path and scold me as I pass;
They catch and take my cap off my old man's head![10]

The flowers may put on a beautiful show for men, but they still delight in snatching Yang's cap from his head as he is enjoying their bright colors. Plants may be friendly, but they can play tricks on men, too.

The Western reader may find it quite difficult to comprehend how the Chinese poet managed to conceive of plants in human terms, but even today Chinese ascribe different personalities to plants and may even use plants to describe the personalities of humans. Thus, the peony is flamboyant and sensuous while the plum is refined and chaste, and the two flowers could be used to describe two corresponding types of women. The Taoist idea of living in harmony with nature must have been a major factor in such a view of plants, but just as the Buddhist doctrine of transmigration played a large role in allowing the Chinese to see animals in terms of equality with humans, so it must have functioned with respect to plants. Although the Indian Buddhists do not mention reincarnation in plants, the concept of an underlying Buddha nature behind all creation, animate and inanimate, became so well developed in China, that the common folk believed in a host of flower fairies, and one late Ch'ing novel, Ching Hua Yüan 鏡花緣 (literally, Karmic Affinities of Flowers in the Mirror) is

concerned with the transmigration of flower spirits.[11] This belief in a "soul" in plants explains the different personalities one senses in Sung flower paintings and the personification of plants in Yang Wan-li's poetry.

[1]SPTK, Ch'u Tz'u Pu Chu 楚辭補注, 4-82b-86a. Translated in David Hawkes, The Songs of the South, pp. 76-77.

[2]Ting Fu-pao ed. 丁福保, Ch'üan Han San Kuo Chin Nan Pei Ch'ao Shih 全漢三國晉南北朝詩, p. 935.

[3]26-243a; 28-4b; 159.

a. "This gentleman" is an allusion to Wang Hui-chih's 王徽之 biography in the Chin Shu: "Once when he was living in an empty house, he had bamboos planted. Someone asked him the reason for this, but he only chanted back, 'How could I be even one day without this gentleman?'" See Chin Shu, K'ai Ming Shu Chü, 12, 91-d.

b. Yü-k'o is the style of Wen T'ung, a northern Sung poet who imitated Han Yü's poetry and was famous for his paintings of bamboos.

c. Tzu-yu is the style of the Wang Hui-chih mentioned above. Yang is suggesting that the sparrow is the soul of this lover of bamboos.

[4]34-318b; 35-7b.

[5]37-355b; 38-8b.

[6]YCHSWC, 3-30b.

[7]9-89b; 10-7b; 83.

a. Allusion to Sung Yü's well-known "Fu on the Wind": "When a wind comes moaning, the king opens his robe and faces it saying, 'How wonderful is this wind!'" See Yen K'o-chün 嚴可均, Ch'üan Shang Ku San Tai Ch'in Han San Kuo Liu Ch'ao Wen 全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文, Ch'üan Shang Ku San Tai Wen 全上古三代文, Shih Chieh Shu Chü, Taipei, 1968, 10-1a.

[8]12-114b; 13-6b; 102.

In the first line SPPY has 梅花 for 梅兒 of the SPTK edition. This is most likely the result of unimaginative "correction" of the text.

a. The "whiskers" of the plum are the stamens of its flower, narrow filaments which look remarkably like a beard.

[9]HCLHSC, 5-50a.

[10]39-375b; 40-8b.

[11]Translated for the greater part in Li Ju-chen, Lin Tai-yi tr., Flowers in the Mirror, U. of California Press, Berkeley, 1965.

4. The Transcendance of Sorrow

Yoshikawa Kōjirō wrote that one of the most distinctive characteristics of Sung poetry lies in the poets' "transcendance of sorrow."[1] With few exceptions Chinese poetry before the Sung dynasty was dominated by a feeling of intense melancholy, which was relieved slightly in only a few exceptional writers such as Han Yü or Po Chü-yi. Early Sung poets such as Ou-yang Hsiu and Mei Yao-ch'en, who broke away from older poetic traditions, were among the first Chinese poets to reject this pessimistic mood, and, in general, the northern Sung authors wrote poetry distinguished by an optimism unparalleled in earlier Chinese literature. This optimism reached its height in the works of the greatest northern Sung poet, Su Shih.

However, toward the end of the northern Sung period, the Kiangsi poets, and Huang T'ing-chien in particular, revived T'ang "seriousness" to a certain degree, and in his earlier works, Yang Wan-li was influenced by their example:

Night Rain

This secluded man sleeps so soundly
That he doesn't know the river rains have come.
A frightful wind rises with a moan;
It sounds like mountain peaks splitting.
I sit up, no longer able to sleep
And a myriad feelings gather in my old breast.
I recall that when I was fourteen or fifteen

I read books in our study under the pines.
In the cold night, distressed, I await the dawn;[a]
Chanting alone, still, without companions.
Insects chatter, my single lamp silent;
Ghosts shriek, the myriad mountains mourn.
The sound of rain has always been thus;
Though it drips on my stout heart, I'll not despair.[b]
Now I've passed the age of fifty;[c]
Ten years earlier I was already in decay.
I don't know what will come afterwards;
Will my stout heart ever come back?
My old studies become more distant and fruitless daily;
My books turned to dust long ago.
The state of sagehood seems far off as heaven,
And my old age oppresses me sorely.
As I sit thinking, my melancholy is without end,
Yet at my east window, the dawn's light unfolds.[2]

There are many elements in Yang's poem which remind us of T'ang and earlier verse, such as references to the moaning wind, chirping insects, and approaching old age and death. When he adds shrieking ghosts to the list, we might even feel that we are reading one of Li Ho's milder works, although Yang's ghosts are not real and only serve to describe the melancholy sound of the wind.

Yang may mourn that his studies are falling behind and he is far from the state of sagehood, but he sounds a more

positive note than most T'ang writers when he says: "Though it drips on my stout heart, I'll not despair." The typical T'ang poem on old age would end with apes crying mournfully in the distant forest, or the poet rinsing his handkerchief with hot tears, but Yang chooses to end on the more optimistic note of the approaching sunrise. It is quite likely that the conclusion to his poem was influenced by the ending Su Shih gave to the first part of his famous fu "Red Cliff." After discussing the sadness of the passing of time and the impermanence of human life, Su Shih manages to transcend these sorrows which had troubled generations of Chinese scholars, concluding his poem as follows:

> The meats and fruits finished, the cups and bowls in confusion, we lay down, leaning against each other in the bottom of the boat, not knowing that the east was already growing light.[3]

As with Yang, the sunrise is a symbol for the renewed hope of life.

Even before his poetical enlightenment, Yang had begun transcending the youthful pessimism still remaining in the previous poem:

Watching the Rain

Clouds rise from the top of Grace Mountain
And hurl their rain at the foot of the Great Lake.[a]
At first I worried as I watched them from afar;
Now suddenly rain is falling on top my head.
White feathers veil my raven cloth cap;
And my robe sleeves are already soaking wet.
I come home and see the eaves' torrents
As if they were draining ten thousand yard chasms.
The thunder cracks, like a huge jade pot,
And the lightning flashes, a wet silver rope.
In a moment the water is level with my stairs;
And the flowered bank loses half of its corner.
I know for sure that the rice fields are full;
I can clearly imagine the old peasants' joy.
Recently whenever the spring changes to summer,
The drought weather has been much too cruel.
Though they have raced all over mountains and rivers,
The clouds now are scattered and desolate.
My two temples had gone white with worry,
And my knees were bruised from kneeling in prayer.[b]
All along I knew it was going to rain today,
So my old breast was bothering me for nothing![4]

We constantly find Yang Wan-li chiding himself for worrying too much about problems for which he can offer no solution such as the drought which confronts him in the poem. It must be

stressed that Yang's attitude is not similar to the fatalism of such poets as T'ao Ch'ien or Li Po, but that Yang possessed a genuine optimistic outlook on life, which enabled him to encounter any sorrow with good humor. As a result, Yang rarely engages in self-pity in his later verse, reserving his sense of compassion for others less fortunate than himself. Thus, he does not worry that he has just been drenched by the rainstorm or that water is flooding his land, for he is overjoyed that the peasants have been spared from a devastating drought. Yang has been deeply concerned by the possibility of drought, but his basic optimism has told him that rain would soon be on its way.

One of the most irritating features of some pre-Sung Chinese poets is the tendency to complain about the most trivial of difficulties. Su Shih himself greatly disliked this weakness of Chinese literati, and reserves some of his strongest invective for poets such as Meng Chiao 孟郊, who could find nothing good to say about life.[5] Weakness was not restricted to pre-Sung scholars, however, and one day when Su was walking outside with some friends, it started to rain. When his friends scurried to find a hiding place, Su walked merrily on, and chided them with the following tz'u:

To "Settling the Wind and Waves"

Don't listen to the rain's sound piercing groves
and beating leaves;
What's the matter with walking slowly and singing?

A bamboo staff and grass shoes are lighter than a
horse.
Who's afraid?
We pass our whole life in a downpour of mist and rain![6]

Like Su, Yang refused to become worried by all of the little problems of life:

In the morning I leave the prefectural city to go to
Chih-hsia and visit Hu Tuan-ming, riding a
boat back at night[a]

From the prefectural city to Chih-hsia
Is not an easy journey in even two days.
I do not desire to race about this way,
But an imperial order compels me to southern travels.[b]
When I leave the city, the stars have not yet set,
But when I return, the moon is already out.
I ask them how deep the water is,
But the boatmen chatter on without reply.
Soon the rocks in the water answer for them:
Whoosh! The roar of tumbling rapids.
Perilous peaks loom in the evening blue;
Hidden pools arise in the night pure.
The river turns, and the wind comes moaning;
It's hard to conceal the nobs of my sickly shoulders.[d]
At first I'm too lazy to hunt for more clothes to put on,
But finally I just can't stand the cold.

As we come within one or two miles of the city,
On the far shore--three or four lamps.
I gaze toward the gate, afraid they've closed up early;
Though I urge the boat on, we move only slowly.
How kind is the half ring moon!
For a long time she's been inclining toward the west.
About to set, she waits a little longer,
For she knows I want to enter the city.
The moon is delicate and her rays are not many,
So the big stars help her with their light.
I have reached home, but my heart's not settled yet,
From the watchtower, it's only eight o'clock![e 7]

Yang is in a hurry because of pressing official business, but he is delayed by adverse traveling conditions and suffers from hunger and cold. Still, the world is basically kind to him, for the moon helps him in his journey home so that he arrives back earlier than he had expected. All of his earlier worries were needless.

Despite the many political setbacks he suffered, we find that Yang Wan-li believed that most things turn out well in the end and that the pessimism of earlier poets was baseless:

Entering the Boundary of Floating Beam

The wet sun pales midst the clouds;
Clear peaks freshen after a rain.
Water swallows the dike willow's knees;
Wheat reaches the country boy's shoulders.

Whirlpools play with floating leaves;
While cooking smoke enters our boat backwards.[a]
The current is with us and so is the wind,
Though people say you can't get <u>two</u> good things at once![b] 8

Although Yang is making fun of pessimists of his own age, he obviously has the pessimists of earlier times in mind, too. The popular saying which he quotes in the last line of the poem was ancient by Yang's time and reflected the gloomy mood of T'ang and earlier periods.

Only a detailed study of Sung society would tell us the reasons for the Sung scholar's optimism, but it would be proper to hazard a few guesses here. First of all, the Sung period was probably the most politically enlightened age which China had yet seen. Although the political situation regarding the barbarians was no cause for optimism, even in northern Sung times, the internal political climate was not as full of violence and terror as in earlier periods, for the Sung emperors rarely engaged in the brutal executions of officials who lost favor as in earlier times. Even during the heated debate between the conservatives and reformers in the time of Wang An-shih, the defeated party was not summarily executed but merely removed from office, and at the worst, exiled to south China. Men in opposite political camps such as Wang An-shih and Su Shih could remain on good terms throughout their lives.

One further political reason for the optimism of the Sung scholar was the much greater social mobility achieved

through the civil service examinations. Although the examinations had become effective already in the T'ang dynasty, the majority of men passing the examinations came from families of an aristocratic background in which they were exposed to the kind of education necessary for success. But with the widespread use of printing by the eleventh century, literacy became much commoner and education was available to many more people than before. Such men of humble backgrounds as Yang Wan-li had a better chance of succeeding in the political system of the Sung.

Greater social mobility is closely tied to an improvement in economic conditions, and the economic expansion of Sung China was probably a major impetus to a more optimistic outlook on life. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries China went through a tremendous economic growth which greatly improved the living standard and created a larger middle class than had existed before. There was an unprecedented expansion of domestic and foreign trade, which led to the growth of a large urban population separated from the conservatism of the countryside and less dependent on the whims of nature for a livelihood.[9] This increase of prosperity was accompanied by a lengthening of the life span, which was certainly helped by better sanitation through the drinking of tea, widespread use of porcelain dishes, and improved medical knowledge. Most of the great Sung poets lived to be old men, and Yang Wan-li himself died at eighty.[10] There is no question that the Sung intellectual had more to be optimistic about than earlier intellectuals, and the effect of their optimism can be seen in all

aspects of Sung culture, including poetry.

As a result of his own optimism, Yang Wan-li treated many of the older themes of Chinese poetry in a very different way from T'ang authors. One of the greatest causes of anguish to the T'ang poet was the hardship of travel. Tu Fu wrote the following during one of his interminable voyages:

Ballad at the Edge of the World

An old man at the edge of the world, I can't go home yet;
As evening comes I face the great river to the east,
crying.
In Lung-yu, at the source of the River, they don't
till fields;[a]
Hu cavalry and Ch'iang soldiers enter Pa and Shu.[b]
Huge waves swamp the heavens, the wind tears up trees;
In front flies a bald crane, followed by a yellow goose.
Nine times I have sent my letters to Lo-yang,
But for ten years I've had no news of my family.[11]

Yang Wan-li himself traveled as much or even more than Tu Fu, but Yang's attitude toward this activity is much closer to the modern globe-trotting tourist:

Riding a River Boat Outside Heaven Gate[a]

(First Poem of Five)

A new boat near the river village tests the water for
the first time,[b]
So they start advertising for passengers and just
happen on me.[c]
Its single beam board hut has just passed through the
rain,
And oiled windows on both sides are good for reading
books.
They've bought up all the peony flowers under the
spring wind
And stuck them carelessly in the yew table and bamboo
mats.
Midst these fragrant heaps it seems we're riding on
a pine pavilion;
To enjoy all the thousands of mountains who needs a
donkey?[12]

Similar to the modern tourist, Yang pays more attention to details than Tu Fu, and the reader senses that Yang's journey is more concrete than Tu's rather abstract voyage, which is also a symbol for the voyage of his troubled life. But the most startling difference between the two poets is that Yang takes a positive delight in his travels, reading books and enjoying scenery, while Tu uses the occasion to mourn the sadness of his fate. Su Shih summarized the new attitude in two short lines:

I was originally without a home, so where else can
I go?
My native village doesn't have such beautiful scenery![13]

Although the Sung poet was still deeply attached to his native village, he was now willing to travel about in the larger world around him without the constant fear and anxiety that troubled earlier Chinese poets.

Another theme which earlier poets commonly used to express their pessimism was the description of the melancholy time of autumn. Autumn was the season in which plants die and animals migrate away from their summer homes, and earlier Chinese poets felt that autumn symbolized the constant change of the world and brevity of human existence. Meng Chiao's attitude toward the season is typical:

Autumn Thoughts (Second Poem of Fifteen)

The face of the autumn moon freezes;
An old traveler, my will is exhausted.
The chill dew drips my dreams to pieces;
The harsh wind combs my bones, cold.
On my mat, the print of a sickly visage;
In my intestines twisting sorrows writhe.
My thoughts in doubt, nothing to rely on;
I listen emptily, completely without reason.
The wu-t'ung, wilted, looms above me;
It sounds and resounds like a sadly plucked string.[14]

Yang Wan-li agrees with Meng that the season is depressing, but he refuses to be overwhelmed in sorrow:

Moved by Autumn (Third Poem of Six)

The failing light hurries on the night's gloom,
While my solitary lamp opens some evening brightness.
This old fellow is tired and would like to sleep;
I seem drunk and yet wide awake, too.
My inch-long heart hasn't even an inch of regret,
For it is as level as a river or the sea, so pure.
Then what are these autumn crickets doing
With their cry of resentment on all four sides?
Miserable, pitiful, it doesn't stop;
Rising, then falling, never at peace.
Whisper, whisper, a hundred thousand voices;
On and on, to the third and fourth watches.
I circle the steps but I can't find them;
I sit still, but they resume their chirping contest.
You have mouths, so complain to yourselves,
But I am drunk, so I won't listen to you![15]

Yang clearly contrasts his unfailing optimism, which does not feel "even an inch of regret," with the mournful surroundings of the autumn season. The autumn cricket which arouses sad feelings was a cliché already by T'ang times, and Yang displays a wicked relish in demolishing the stale imagery associated with the insect in earlier times. Despite the attempt of

these crickets to make him sad, his optimism protects him from their sad cry.

Autumn was a symbol for old age and death among the Chinese, and the fear of old age is one of the most over-worked themes of Chinese poetry, appearing already in the Shih Ching. Since most Chinese intellectuals were skeptical about the chances of an after-life, death was particularly frightening to them, and at the first appearance of white hairs, they were usually plunged into deep sorrow. Such an attitude could lead to the carpe diem philosophy of Li Po or to quiet resignation to ones fate expressed in much of T'ao Ch'ien's verse. We have already seen that Yang became increasingly tranquil as he approached old age, but his tranquility did not arise from any fatalism but from a genuine joy for life in all its aspects:

Riding a River Boat Outside Heaven Gate
(Second Poem of Five)

As soon as I get on the boat I happen to face a
mountain,
And in one moment the mountain changes in so many ways.
At first it piles up its kingfisher covers into
thousands of folds;
But suddenly it unsheathes it blue jade into two or
three canes.
The children on both shores seem to be standing in
heaven;

Towers and pavilions of several villages are seen in
a flash.
In all my life whenever did I dream of so much fun--
Shooting the rapids at Heaven Gate when I'm old![16]

Yang was already into his seventies when he wrote this poem, an age when most T'ang poets were long dead. Yet instead of indulging in whining self-pity, Yang expresses an unbounded joy in the experiences of each moment.

All of Yang's later poetry is suffused with an ecstasy for man's life unmatched by even the northern Sung poets:

I Wash My Face, a Short Poem

On both shores the Che Mountains send off my returning
boat;[a]
Freshly beaten spring indigo dyes them a light blue.[b]
I draw up the river's waves to wash and rinse my mouth;
In the pure morning my face is fragrant as falling
blossoms![17]

Yang can celebrate the simple joy of washing his face in the morning.

Although social conditions played an important role in forming his personality, Yang's training in Ch'an Buddhism with its emphasis on everyday life obviously was very important in allowing him to transcend sorrow and find pleasure in the commonest occurences. Yet the most important solace for Yang

and other Sung poets was the contemplation of the beauties of that nature which was the source of all the mysteries which the Ch'an monk or Taoist recluse strove to understand:

Moved by Autumn (Fifth Poem of Six)

On fall mornings one can still stand the cold,
But the fall nights are so hard to pass.
The dark lamp shines on my volumes of books,
And both my eyes seem to be in a fog.[a]
I close the books and sit up alone;
All by myself, with whom can I talk?
I try to lie down, but I can't stay lying;
I get up to walk, but there's no place to go.
Suddenly there's a light in the corner of my room;
The mountain moon has come to my garden door.
She seems to pity this secluded, old man;
In the deep night she engages me in pure conversation.
I chant and the moon knows how to listen;[b]
The moon turns, and I follow her along.
Why do I have to read any more books;
I'll just write verses together with the moon![c] 18

In the end, books are of no use to Yang, for they merely becloud the eyes and the intellect. Friendship with other men is also of limited value, for Yang is alone with no one to talk to him. Eventually it is the moon which brings comfort to Yang, and he feels a unity with her that transcends the

normal relationships between friends. When he writes "I chant and the moon knows how to listen," he is purposely ridiculing the feeling of isolation which Li Po and other earlier poets felt in the presence of nature. Yang had been enlightened to the unity behind all the universe.

[1]Yoshikawa Kōjirō 吉川幸次郎, Sōshi Gaisetsu 宋詩概説 pp. 34-39. Translated in Burton Watson tr., An Introduction to Sung Poetry, pp. 24-28.

[2]10-96b; 11-6b; 89.

a. Allusion to the Ch'u Tz'u: "The night, distressed, distressed, I cannot sleep." See SPTK, Ch'u Tz'u Pu Chu 楚辭補注, 5-86b.

b. From Chuang-tzu: "And can the heart really be made like dead ashes? See SPTK, Nan Hua Chen Ching 南華真經, 1-11b.

c. Literally, "know commands," which is an allusion to the Lun Yü: "At fifty I knew heaven's command." See SPTK, Lun Yü 論語 1-5b. Later to know heaven's command simply became another way of saying one is fifty years old.

[3]SPTK, Ching Chin Tung P'o Wen Chi Shih Lüeh 經進東坡文集事略, 1-13a.

[4]9-87b; 10-5a; 80.

a. Hui Shan or Grace Mountain and T'ai Hu or Great Lake are both in southern Kiangsu province.

b. Yang is referring to the folk custom of praying for rain to the rain gods whenever there is a drought.

[5]The first line of the second of two poems by Su Shih entitled "Reading Meng Chiao's Poetry" 讀孟郊詩 states: "I despise Meng Chiao's poetry!" TPHSS, 25-465b.

[6]T'ang Kuei-chang ed. 唐圭璋 Ch'üan Sung Tz'u 全宋詞, Chung Hua Shu Chü, Peking, 1965, p. 288.

[7]15-137a; 16-1b; 115.

In the title, SPPY replaces 晚 of SPTK with 曉 'morning,' and 夜 of SPTK with 西, 'west.' Since Yang's description of the stars as not having set corresponds with the conditions of early morning, I accept SPPY's reading of 曉. In the third line from the end, SPPY has 火 in place of SPTK's 大, which is most likely a misprint due to the two characters' similarity in shape.

a. Chih-hsia lay to the east of modern Chi-an.

b. This refers to the author's recent appointment to a post in Kuang-tung.

c. Allusion to Sung Yü's "Feng Fu" or "Prose-poem to the Wind": "A wind arrives, moaning."

d. Yang is so emaciated from sickness that his bones stick out.

e. Literally, "the first watch," which lasted roughly from eight to nine o'clock. Despite all of his worries, Yang has found that he has arrived home early.

[8]35-326b; 36-3a; 210.

a. The boat's kitchen is at the rear of the boat, so the favorable wind blows the smoke toward the front.

b. Reference to an old Chinese saying: "The affairs of the world are difficult to get in perfect pairs."

[9]For the growth in the rural economy see Ho Ping-ti, "Early Ripening Rice in Chinese History," Economic History Review, 9, 1956-1957, pp. 200-216. The growth of foreign trade is discussed in Lo Jung-pang, "The Emergence of China as a Sea Power during the Late Sung and Early Yüan Periods," Far Eastern Quarterly, 14, 1954-1955, pp. 489-503. The growth of towns and cities is touched upon in Etienne Balazs, Chinese Civilization and Bureaucracy, Yale U. Press, New Haven, 1964, pp. 68-78.

[10]No systematic studies have been done on changing life expectancy in China during ancient and medieval times. Although poets may not be representative of the general population, a comparison of the age at death of T'ang and Sung poets is very interesting. T'ang: Wang Wei, 60; Li Po, 61; Tu Fu, 58; Po Chü-yi, 74; Han Yü, 56; Li Ho, 26; Li Shang-yin, 45; Tu Mu, 48. Sung: Ou-yang Hsiu, 65; Wang An-shih, 65; Su Shih, 64; Huang T'ing-chien, 60; Lu Yu, 74; Yang Wan-li, 80; Fan Ch'eng-ta, 67; Hsin Ch'i-chi, 67.
It should be kept in mind that some of the figures are approximate, but the average life span for the T'ang poets is 53; for the Sung poets it is 68.

[11]TKPS, 261b.

a. Lung-yu is in the general area of modern Kan-su province. The district had been devastated by the An Lu-shan rebellion.

b. Pa and Shu are modern Szechwan. Tu is referring to recent invasions by Tibetan and other non-Chinese tribes.

[12]34-325b; 36-2a; 209.
SPPY has 園 'garden' for 風 'wind' of SPTK in the fifth line of the first poem.

a. Ch'ang Men or Heaven Gate is located in the south of Anhwei province near the border with Kiangsi.

b. The word pu, which normally means 'step' is equivalent to the modern 埠 or river 'port.'

c. Ta-t'ou is a very colloquial expression meaning 'to start' and is close to modern Mandarin 開頭. Lan-tsai literally means 'to gather a load' and is also colloquial.

[13]Last two lines of last poem of five entitled "Written While Drunk on the Twenty-seventh of the Sixth Month at the Tower for Watching the Lake" 六月二十七日望湖樓醉書 TPHSS, 9-184b.

[14]SPPY, Meng Chiao 孟郊, Meng Tung Ye Chi 孟東野集, 4-1a.

[15]25-233a; 27-6b; 153.

[16]34-325b; 36-2a; 209.

a. The mountain peaks tower into the sky as if they were canes of jade.

[17]24-228a; 27-1b; 153.

a. The Che Mountains of Chekiang province.

b. Yang is referring to the indigo plant, which was used to make dye. Of course, he is describing the change of colors in the mountains at springtime.

[18]25-233a; 27-6b; 153.

a. Perhaps, Yang's eyes are failing from reading too many books. In a poem by Tu Fu we read: "In my old age I seem to see flowers in a fog." See TF, 562/20/4.

b. Reference to a famous line by Li Po: "The moon doesn't know how to drink." Yang obviously does not agree with Li's opinion of the moon. See LP, 796, 05.

c. Lien-chü literally means 'linked verse.' This was a form of poetry in which two or more poets would take turns writing lines to a poem. This practice was very popular during mid-T'ang times, and quite a few of these pieces are found in the collected works of such masters as Han Yü and Po Chü-yi. Although the practice had not completely died out by Sung times, such works were no longer taken seriously by critics.

Influences

1. Yang's Masters

Determining all of the various influences which formed Yang Wan-li's poetry is obviously an extremely difficult task, for he was well read in the huge mass of Chinese literature which preceded him and the poetry of many of his contemporaries is now completely lost. We have already mentioned the influence which such T'ang poets as Po Chü-yi and Li Po had on particular aspects of his work, but it would be difficult to find even one major T'ang or pre-T'ang poet to whom Yang Wan-li or any Sung poet does not owe some literary debt. Thus, rather than attempting to guess the sources of Yang Wan-li's inspiration, we shall limit our investigation only to those poets whom Yang himself felt exerted the greatest influence upon his verse.

In our discussion of Yang's theory of poetry we have noted that Yang believed the creation of an original style of poetry to be akin to the process by which a Ch'an monk attains enlightenment through meditating under various Ch'an masters. Just as the Ch'an monk never failed to inform his students which masters he had followed, Yang tells us:

> I first learned poetry from the gentlemen of Kiangsi, following which I studied the five character regulated poems of Ch'en Shih-tao. Then I studied the

seven character chüeh-chü of Wang An-shih and finally I studied chüeh-chü from the T'ang poets.[1]

Thus, only after a long and involved apprenticeship did Yang finally become poetically enlightened in the year 1178.

It is highly significant that Yang Wan-li informs us of the various stages through which his poetry passed in the prefaces to his nine remaining collections of poetry, for we need not engage in pure speculation to study the evolution of Yang's poetic style. Most later critics have maintained that each new collection of Yang's verse heralds a new style of poetry, thus, if we wish to study the influences which shaped Yang Wan-li's verse, we must first study the different collections which he wrote, and see how they fit into the line of succession of poetic masters with which Yang himself supplies us.

The first poet to refer to Yang's habit of commencing a new collection whenever he felt he had undergone some major change was Lou Yüeh 樓 鑰 (1137-1213), a friend of Yang and minor poet, who wrote:

> For each office, you arrange a collection;
> Almost a thousand chüan are handed down.[2]

However, Lou Yüeh does not seem to see any particular relationship between the individual collections and the stages in the evolution of Yang's verse, and it was not until the Yüan dynasty that the critic Fang Hui 方 回 (1227-1306) said the final word on this relationship:

> In Yang Wan-li's poetry there is one collection for each office, and there is always a change in each collection.[3]

Although Fang Hui's assertion that there is a major change with each of Yang's collections is extremely dubious, his opinion has generally been accepted by Chinese critics who studied Yang Wan-li until the present century.

Since Fang Hui felt that each collection of Yang's signalled a new stage in his poetic development and even Yang himself hints at such an idea, we should first list the collections of Yang's poetry and see what the prefaces to the collections tell us about the connection between the collections and the evolution of Yang's style:

1) Lost poems. Unfortunately for the literary historian Yang Wan-li burnt over one thousand of his youthful works, and other than a few isolated lines which are preserved in Yang's preface to his first surviving collection, all we know about these earlier poems is that they were largely written in imitation of the Kiangsi school.[4]

2) Chiang-hu Chi 江湖集 or Collection of the Rivers and Lakes. In the preface to these seven hundred twenty poems written between 1162 and 1177, Yang tells us about the poems he had burned earlier and that the present collection consists of poems written in "imitation of Ch'en Shih-tao, Wang An-shih, and the [late] T'ang poets."[5]

3) Ching-ch'i Chi 荊溪集 or Collection of Ching-ch'i. Composed between 1178 and 1179, these four hundred ninety-two poems are the first fruits of Yang's literary enlightenment of 1178, when he rejected his earlier masters and created his own style.[6]

4) Hsi-kuei Chi 西歸集 or Collection of the Westward Return. In the preface to this collection of two hundred poems (1179-1180), Yang tells us that the works were written on the voyage he made from Kuang-tung back to his native village in Kiangsi.[7]

5) Nan-hai Chi 南海集 or Collection of the South Seas. These four hundred poems were written between 1180 and 1182, while Yang was serving in Kuang-tung province. In his preface Yang tells us that his friend Yu Mou felt the poems "have the flavor of Liu Meng-te" but that Yang was not confident of this assertion. At the end of the preface Yang Wan-li tells us: "Yu Mou used to say to me, 'Each time your poems change, they advance.' My poems can change, but I don't know if they still can advance."[8]

6) Ch'ao-t'ien Chi 朝天集 or Collection of Paying Court to Heaven. This group of four hundred poems (1184-1187) was written while Yang was serving in the imperial court.[9]

7) Chiang-hsi Tao-yüan Chi 江西道院集 or Collection of the Kiangsi Hermitage. This collection consists of two hundred fifty poems written between 1188 and 1189 after Yang was removed from the court and appointed to a local post in Kiangsi.[10]

8) Ch'ao-t'ien Hsü-chi 朝天續集 or Continued Collection of Paying Court to Heaven. In his preface to this group of three hundred fifty poems composed in 1190 during his second period of court service, Yang tells us: "My eldest son Chang-ju showed them to the two gentlemen Fan Ch'eng-ta and Yu Mou who thought my poetry had changed again, although I wasn't aware of this myself."[11]

9) Chiang-tung Chi 江東集 or Collection of East of the River. These five hundred poems were completed (1190-1192) while Yang Wan-li was serving as a local official in Chiang-tung after his second demotion from the court.[12]

10) T'ui Hsiu Chi 退休集 or Collection of Retirement. This collection of over eight hundred works was written after Yang's retirement from public service in 1192 and ends with his death in 1206. Since it was compiled by Yang's heirs after his demise, it is the only collection without a preface written by the author.

Our summary of the contents of the prefaces to the collections of Yang's poetry allows us to draw certain conclusions vital to the study of the evolution of Yang Wan-li's poetry. First of all, the only material of direct use to us in exploring the sources of Yang's style is contained in the now lost poems of Yang's youth and the Chiang-hu Chi. Although we will find many traces of influence from Yang's masters in his later poetry, the lost poems and the Chiang-hu Chi are the only works which Yang admitted to be under the

influence of other poets, for we have already noticed how he claims that in the year 1178 of his poetic enlightenment he "took leave of the T'ang poets, Wang An-shih, Ch'en Shih-tao, and all the gentlemen of Kiangsi and didn't dare to study any of them."[13]

Secondly, Fang Hui's assertion that each collection of Yang Wan-li indicated a profound change of style is patently absurd, for after Yang's enlightenment in 1178, none of Yang's prefaces speaks of any great changes in his poetry. In fact, only the prefaces to the Nan-hai Chi and the Ch'ao-t'ien Hsü-chi speak of any changes at all, and in the second preface Yang states that he was not particularly aware of any great transformation himself. Although Yang Wan-li's poetry could hardly help changing during the long period from 1178 to his death, the evolution was gradual and did not occur whenever he decided to print a new collection of poetry. Lou Yüeh was merely stating a fact when he said that Yang Wan-li printed a new poetry collection with almost every change in political office, but Fang Hui's claim that each change in Yang's political fortunes produced a new collection of poetry and new style has no basis in what Yang himself tells us about his verse or in the verse itself.

The most well-known scholar of Sung poetry in China today, Hu Yün-yi 胡雲翼, was extremely dubious about Fang Hui's discussion of the evolution of Yang Wan-li's poetry:

> If we analyze them in detail, perhaps one could say that each of Yang Wan-li's poetry collections possesses its distinctive style, but if one examines them as a whole, it does no harm to divide Yang Wan-li's poetry into two periods. The first period is that of imitation, the second period that of creativity.[14]

Therefore, we can conclude that for the purpose of tracing the evolution of Yang's verse we can restrict ourselves to the poems written during his period of imitation and that after Yang's poetic enlightenment there were no profound changes, and we need not look for significant new outside influences during his period of creativity.

According to the evidence in Yang's prefaces, his period of imitation, when his unique poetic style was in the process of formation, can be divided into a number of stages. The first stage in Yang's development as a poet was when he "studied poetry from the gentlemen of Kiangsi," but our study of this period is greatly encumbered by Yang having burned all of the poems which were supposed to belong to this time. However, the mark of the Kiangsi school is visible in much of Yang's later verse, and his abandonment of his Kiangsi masters was not so sudden as his prefaces would lead us to believe. The following poem by Huang T'ing-chien is typical of the Kiangsi style and will enable us to evaluate the impact of the school on Yang's poetry:

I Am Moved After Eating Lotus Seeds at Kan-shang[a]

The lotus seeds are as big as a finger;
Sharing their sweetness, we recollect mother love.
In the same "house,"[b] their heads, bristly, bristly;
They deepen further our brotherly thoughts.
In the middle of the seeds are baby lotuses,
Their tight fists like little children's hands.
They make me think of a group of children,
Coming to the door in search of pears and dates.
The lotus' heart is truly bitter by nature;
If you eat something bitter, how can it be sweet?
Eating sweet things, I fear dry meat poison;[c]
Eating in ease, I feel ashamed.[d]
The lotus grows from the midst of the mud,
Yet it is of a different tune from the mud.
Who doesn't find eating lotuses sweet,
Yet those who know flavor are surely few.
My house is at Double Well Pool;[e]
For ten miles is the fragrance of autumn wind.
How can I find a friend to share my gown
And go home to make robes of lotus?[f] 15

Although it does not translate well into English, Huang's poem is quite delightful in the Chinese original, for the detailed description of the lotus seeds is fully in the Sung tradition of close observation of natural objects, which Yang Wan-li developed to its highest point. Yet the average reader of the

poem would find it almost impossible to understand without a detailed commentary, and it was precisely the Kiangsi School's fondness for elaborate allusion to which Yang objected in his later life.

In spite of Yang's gradual rejection of the Kiangsi poets, in much of his earlier verse he imitated their worse faults without any of their redeeming virtues:

Written on the Hsiang River Hall
(Second Poem of Two)

The River wants to float autumn away;
The mountain can cross over the river.
Chü-yü, barbarous tongues confused;[a]
Ai-nai, the Ch'u sound is sad.[b]
The cold is early, must be from the leap month;[c]
Poem complete, my talent is not yet spent.
Melancholy, nothing for me to do;
Uncle Joy makes things open up.[d] 16

In this early poem Yang's style is even more opaque than Huang T'ing-chien's, but where Huang uses allusions with deft skill, Yang's poem is so muddled that one doubts the author himself knew what he was attempting to write. In general, one can conclude that Yang's works in imitation of Huang T'ing-chien are excellent examples of the pitfalls of thoughtless imitation of a great master, and it is little wonder that Yang burnt his earliest works. Nevertheless, although Yang soon rejected

Huang T'ing-chien's erudite opacity in favor of fresh colloquial, his continuing love of pushing the classical language to its uttermost limits betrays an undying debt to the Kiangsi School.

Yang's reaction against the Kiangsi poets was quite violent, for in the preface to his Chiang-hu Chi, Yang writes:

> In my youth I had written more than a thousand poems, but in the seventh month of the jen-wu year of the Shao-hsing period, I burned all of them. The great majority were of the Kiangsi style.[17]

Thus, Yang Wan-li entered into the second phase of his period of imitation, and it is at this point that the first surviving collection of Yang Wan-li, the Chiang-hu Chi, commences in the year 1162. We have already seen how Yang took Ch'en Shih-tao, Wang An-shih, and then finally the late T'ang poets as his masters while writing the Chiang-hu Chi, and the language he uses in his preface to the Ching-ch'i Chi, which was his next collection, suggests strongly that he imitated these poets in chronological order, rejecting Ch'en Shih-tao before passing on to Wang An-shih and then to the late T'ang poets. Everything seems to fit into a neat chronological framework when we read in the preface to the Nan-hai Chi:

> By the jen-wu year of the Shao-hsing period (1162) my poetry changed . . . By the keng-yin year of the

> Ch'ien-tao period (1170) my poetry changed again, and by the ting-yu year of the Ch'un-hsi period (1177) my poetry changed once more.[18]

The change of 1162 is no doubt a reference to Yang's rejection of the Kiangsi School and the commencement of his imitation of Ch'en Shih-tao. By the same logic the changes of 1170 and 1177 should correspond to Yang's periods of study under Wang An-shih and the late T'ang poets, respectively.

Although Yang's prefaces seem to present us a clear chronological order for his period of imitation, a careful study of the seven hundred twenty poems of the Chiang-hu Chi reveals that no such order actually exists. First of all, we have already noticed poems clearly written in imitation of Huang T'ing-chien in a collection which was supposed to have been written after Yang's complete rejection of the Kiangsi School, but even more puzzling is the simple fact that the first poet whom Yang imitated in the Chiang-hu Chi was Ch'en Shih-tao, a poet who is admittedly different from Huang T'ing-chien but who, nevertheless, is still one of the foremost authors of the Kiangsi School. If this contradiction is not enough to disturb our belief in the reliability of the chronology Yang has provided us, the date 1177 which Yang gives for his imitation of the late T'ang poets creates an even greater impasse. In his preface to the Ching-ch'i Chi, Yang has already told us that he was poetically enlightened on New Year's Day of the year 1178. The first poem which can be definitely dated to 1177 in the Chiang-hu Chi is entitled "In Early Spring of the

Ting-yu Year I Match Chang Ch'in-fu's Five Character Poem on Banyan Creek Pavilion."[19] Although this poem may not be the first work Yang wrote in 1177, the reference to "early spring" proves it was written soon after New Year's Day of 1177. The last poem which Yang Wan-li wrote in 1177 is probably one entitled "Ascending Pure Far Arbor," which is printed in the Ching-ch'i Chi just before a pair of poems named "Snow on the Second Day of the First Month of the Wu-hsü Year (1178)."[20] The main problem with the chronology Yang has provided us is that from the first poem in 1177 to the last there are less than forty poems, of which only fourteen are contained in the Chiang-hu Chi. If one takes into consideration the stress which Yang puts on the importance of the late T'ang poets to the formation of his style, it is totally inconceivable that he only wrote fourteen poems in imitation of their verse among the seven hundred twenty poems of the Chiang-hu Chi.

The artificial nature of the chronology for Yang's period of imitation is even more convincingly demonstrated when we examine the kinds of poems written during any one period of imitation. We have already seen that Yang claimed to have been imitating Ch'en Shih-tao from 1160 until 1172, and there is a very sizeable body of poetry from these years in the Chiang-hu Chi. Ch'en Shih-tao did not slavishly imitate his master Huang T'ing-chien, but both poets shared a love for complex and allusive poetry which necessitated prodigious labors while engaged in creating new poems. Ch'en was particularly famed for his forced efforts:

> Whenever he was on an outing with his students and thought of a line of poetry, he would hastily return home and lie on a bed, covering his head with a blanket, for he despised hearing people's voices. He called this his "poetry chanting bed." When the members of his family knew about it, they would carry all the babies and young children away and deposit them at neighbors' homes.[21]

There are certainly poems written by Yang Wan-li between 1160 and 1172 which would suggest a similar degree of forced labor, and the poem we quoted to demonstrate Huang T'ing-chien's influence on Yang is a prime example dating from early 1160. But what are we to make of a work such as the following, which was probably written only a few days afterward?

Meeting with Rain at Mount Heng

> I was somewhat happy I'm almost half way on my return trip,
> Yet I'm sad over the mud puddles and don't know when it will clear.
> When the rain comes, it doesn't pity the traveling stranger,
> As the wind passes, what need to make such a clamor?[22]

One could hardly imagine Yang rushing to a "poetry chanting bed" to write such a simple and delightfully spontaneous poem!

The chronological difficulties and the lack of any consistency of style in the various phases of Yang's period of imitation force us to conclude that we should disregard the order in which Yang said he imitated various masters between 1160 and his poetic enlightenment of 1178. In addition, the stylistic similarities between Huang T'ing-chien and Ch'en Shih-tao enable us to largely ignore any rigid distinction between Yang Wan-li's imitation of the two poets. Rather than attempting to divide up the Chiang-hu Chi into separate sections under the influence of different masters, it would be much more productive to examine the overall impact which Yang's masters had on the formation of his own individual style.

Yang had rejected most of the elements of Huang T'ing-chien's and Ch'en Shih-tao's verse by the crucial year 1178, but Yang's third master, Wang An-shih, left an indelible mark on all of his poetry. Yang was particularly impressed by Wang An-shih's chüeh-chü, and later critics have agreed with Yang that these are the most successful works of Wang:

Chiang-ning Chia-k'ou

We lower sails at the river's mouth, the moon at dusk;
The small inn has no lamp, about to close its doors.
The maple leaning out from the shore is half dead;
It ought to still have last year's marks from tying
our boat.[23]

The appeal which such poems had to Yang can be seen by the following critic's estimate of Wang An-shih's accomplish-

ment in old age, when his chüeh-chü reached their high point:

> In his late years Wang Ching-kung's [An-shih] poetry became especially subtle. His creation of language and use of words "would not admit even a hair's breadth." For his meanings corresponded to his words and his words followed the motion of his meanings. Everything came into being naturally, and one could barely perceive any places where he "pulls" or "arranges."[24]

In other words, the poetry of Wang An-shih would provide a more natural alternative to the forced artificiality of the Kiangsi poets.

Like Yang Wan-li, Wang An-shih had arrived at his more natural style through an intense study of Ch'an Buddhism. His "Twenty Poems in Imitation of Han-shan and Shih-te"[25] are well-known examples of his love for the two T'ang Ch'an poets, who wrote in plain colloquial, but the following work is also proof for Wang An-shih's understanding of one of the most basic doctrines of Ch'an Buddhists:

Written on the Wall of Half Mountain Monastery
(Second Poem of Two)

When it's cold I sit in a warm place,
When it's hot, I walk where it's cool.
The sentient beings are no different from Buddha,
And the Buddha is simply the sentient beings.[26]

Wang's reference to the everyday activities of sitting and walking and his assertion that Buddha and sentient beings are identical confirm that in his old age he, too, was convinced of the non-duality of the mundane and the absolute. The same as Yang, Wang felt that everyday life is enlightenment, and, hence, he did not have to engage in the strenuous labors of the Kiangsi poets.

Wang An-shih's love of simplicity was not the only influence he exerted on Yang, for Wang's unorthodox political opinions were reflected in a similar iconoclastic spirit in his verse:

Shang Yang

Since antiquity, controlling people has depended on
trust,
For when words carry weight, a hundred gold pieces
turn light.
The men of the present cannot criticize Shang Yang,
For at least Shang Yang made the laws work![a] 27

Of course, the legalist statesman Shang Yang was despised by practically all Sung scholars, yet it is precisely the same sort of irreverence for widely accepted opinions which we find to be one of the basic elements in Yang Wan-li's poetry.

Another chüeh-chü by Wang An-shih demonstrates that his influence on Yang was not just limited to his simplicity or iconoclasm:

Written on Master Hu-yin's Wall

(First Poem of Two)

Thatch eaves are continuously swept, peaceful, no moss;
Flowers and trees arranged in plots, planted by hand.
A single stream protects the field, surrounding its verdure;
While two mountains open our door and send their green color in![28]

In such poems by Wang An-shih we already see Yang Wan-li's "live method" in formation. Previous poets did not speak of mountains "opening" doors, and this startling use of language by Wang contributed much to the development of Yang's mature style. Even more important, Wang is already moving to the personification of natural objects, which is one of the most significant elements in Yang's view of a friendly nature in his landscape poetry.

After mastering the style of Wang An-shih, Yang tells us that he moved on to study "chüeh-chü from the T'ang poets."[29] In reality, when Yang speaks of the T'ang poets, he generally means the late T'ang poets and specifically those poets who came after the so-called late T'ang poets Li Shang-yin 李商隱 (813-858) and Tu Mu 杜牧 (803-852), a group which consisted of such neglected authors as Tu Hsün-ho 杜荀鶴 (846-904), P'i Jih-hsiu 皮日休 (ca. 834-883), and Lu Kuei-meng 陸龜蒙 (d. ca. 881). Yang's choice of these authors as models for imitation is somewhat puzzling at first, particularly in

light of the distaste most of Yang's contemporaries evinced for them. Yang's good friend Lu Yu wrote:

> Heaven had not yet lost this culture,
> So old Tu Fu appeared alone.
> It lingered until Yüan Chen and Po Chü-yi,
> Yet they can already make you sick with anger.
> But when one views the works of the late T'ang,
> It makes a man want to burn his writing brush![30]

Yang disagreed violently with his friend, and in a discussion of the "flavor beyond flavor" of poetry, Yang says:

> After the three hundred poems [of the Shih Ching],
> this "flavor" was cut off, and only the various
> authors of the late T'ang come close to it.[31]

In a set of three poems written upon reading a work of Lu Kuei-meng, Yang made his preference for these poets even clearer:

> Fingering the T'ang poems, I forget about dinner;
> Companions laugh at me for getting poetry madness.
> When people speak of excellence, it's always Hsi Shih,
> But when was she ever worth a cent!

That Yang was saddened by the disdain for the late T'ang poets expressed by his contemporaries can be seen in another poem from the same series:

The poetic fame of Lu Kuei-meng is fragrant for a
thousand ages;
And each time one reads him, his intestines are rent
asunder.
With whom can I share my appreciation of late T'ang's
unusual flavor?
Poets of modern times make light of the late T'ang.[32]

One of the most common charges made against the late T'ang poets is that their verse is too flowery and ornamental, but nothing could be farther from the truth, and possibly this unfair criticism is due to confusion of the late T'ang authors with the admittedly florid creations of Tu Mu and especially Li Shang-yin. The artless simplicity of most of their work is easily apparent in the following poem of Lu Kuei-meng:

Eating

At noon my empty study bears traces of sleep,
Water vegetables, mountain herbs, ranged on a platter
to eat.
The forest birds trust that I no longer have any
"schemes,"
For they come always and perch today on my stone bowl.[33]

In line with the simplicity of the late T'ang poets, which delighted Yang so much, these same authors also used a large amount of colloquial language in their works:

Written Casually

The wine is really clever at spinning the threads of
my sickness;
The flowers' sound is always playing go-between with
melancholy.
I know that melancholy and sickness are to be avoided,
What to do? The oriole starts to sing![34]

Both the expression cheng-na 爭奈 and ch'i-lai 起來 are typical of T'ang colloquial, and Yang no doubt derived much of his preference for plain, unadorned common speech from authors such as Lu Kuei-meng.

However, a chüeh-chü by P'i Jih-hsiu will show that the artlessness of the late T'ang poets was not their only characteristic which appealed to Yang:

Thinking of the Past at Pien River[a]

Everyone says the Sui fell because of this river;
Yet to this day transport relies on its waves for a
thousand miles.[b]
If it hadn't been for the nonsense of water palaces
and dragon boats,[c]
Yang-ti's merit would have equalled Yü![c] [35]

P'i Jih-hsiu is engaging in a practice dear to Yang's heart, namely, turning the verdicts of accepted history upside down.

P'i's ability to demolish a traditional attitude in the highly compressed form of the chüeh-chü is manifested again and again in Yang Wan-li's own poetry.

In 1178 Yang reached his final enlightenment, and although he "took leave of the T'ang poets, Wang An-shih, Ch'en Shih-tao, and all the gentlemen of Kiangsi," his past masters had a continuing influence on everything he wrote. As we have seen from the prefaces to his collections, Yang suggests further changes in his style after his enlightenment, but by 1178 he had formed the style which he would continue to develop throughout his life. He had learned well from his masters and now could set up his own "monastery."

[1]CCC, 80-672a.

[2]SPTK, Lou Yüeh 樓鑰 , Kung K'uei Chi 攻媿集 2-32b.

[3]Fang Hui 方回 , Chi P'i Ying K'uei Lü Sui K'an Wu 紀批瀛奎律髓刊誤 , P'ei Wen Shu She 佩文書社 , Taipei, 1959, vol. 1, chüan 1, p. 15-a (p. 2-a).

[4]CCC, 80-672a.

[5]Ibid., 80-672a.

[6]Ibid., 80-672ab.

[7]Ibid., 80-673a.

[8]Ibid., 80-673ab.

[9]Ibid., 80-673b.

[10]Ibid., 80-674a.

[11]Ibid., 80-675a.

[12]Ibid., 80-675b.

[13]Ibid., 80-672b.

[14]Hu Yün-yi 胡雲翼 , Sung Shih Yen Chiu 宋詩研究 Commercial Press, Peking, 1959, p. 169.

[15]YCHHSWC, 3-21b.

a. Kan-shang is in modern Kiangsi province.

b. The house is the lotus seed pod.

c. Allusion to the I Ching: "If you eat dried meat, you will meet with poison." See hexagram chen 震 .

d. Allusion to Shih Ching, Wei Feng 魏風 "Fa T'an" 伐檀 .

e. Located in Kiangsi province near Huang T'ing-chien's home.

f. Allusion to Ch'ü Yüan in the Li Sao, who dressed himself in lotus robes to symbolize his purity.

[16]1-4b; 1-1b.

a. Chü-yü was the barbarian name for fish according to a story in Shih Shuo Hsin Yü. See SPTK, Shih Shuo Hsin Yü 世說新語 , 130-b.

b. Ai-nai is the sound of an oar in the water. Allusion to Liu Tsung-yüan's poem: "Ai-nai, the mountains and water are green." See SPTK, Chu Shih Yin Pien T'ang Liu Hsien Sheng Chi 註釋音辯唐柳先生集 , 433-222a.

c. In 1162 the second month was a leap month, so that autumn weather seemed to come a month earlier.

d. Uncle Joy is another name for wine.

[17]CCC, 80-672a.

[18]Ibid., 80-673a.

[19]7-73b; 8-7b.

[20]77-8a; 9-2b.

[21]Chang T'ai-lai 張泰来, Chiang Hsi Shih She Tsung P'ai T'u Lu 江西詩社宗派圖錄, in Kuo Shao-yü ed. 郭紹虞, Ch'ing Shih Hua 清詩話, Chung Hua Shu Chü, Peking, 1963, p. 50.

[22]1-5a; 1-2a.

[23]SPTK, Wang An-shih 王安石, Lin Ch'uan Hsien Sheng Wen Chi (abbreviated LCHSWC) 臨川先生文集, 31-206b.

[24]Yeh Meng-te 葉夢得, Shih Lin Shih Hua 石林詩話 in Ho Wen-huan ed. 何文煥, Li Tai Shih Hua 歷代詩話, Yi Wen Yin Shu Kuan 藝文印書館, Taipei, 1970, p. 240b.

[25]See LCHSWC, 3-72a-73b.

[26]Ibid., 3-71b.

[27]Ibid., 32-213b.

a. Shang Yang was a legalist thinker and, thus, enforced all laws according to an unvarying system of rewards and punishments.

[28]Ibid., 29-195b.

[29]CCC, 30-672a.

[30]LFWCC, 79-3b.

[31]CCC, 83-690b.

[32]27-252b; 29-1b.

[33]SPTK, Lu Kuei-meng 陸龜蒙, T'ang Fu Li Hsien Sheng Wen Chi 唐甫里先生文集, 12-102b.

[34]Ibid., 104b.

[35]Ch'üan T'ang Shih 全唐詩, Fu Hsing Shu Chü 復興書局, Taipei, p. 3704.

a. The Pien River is in southern Honan province and was dredged by the Sui emperor Yang-ti while constructing a canal connecting the capital with south China.

b. According to traditional historical accounts, Sui Yang-ti's obsession for building canals was one of the causes of the downfall of the Sui dynasty. However, P'i realized the importance of the emperor's canal building activities to the T'ang economy.

c. Sui Yang-ti made frequent trips to south China by way of the canal, accompanied by a vast retinue of richly decorated boats.

d. Yü is one of the three ancient sage emperors, who is supposed to have rescued the Chinese from the flood by digging canals.

2. Yang and His Contemporaries

When we attempt to determine in what ways earlier T'ang and Sung poets influenced Yang Wan-li's verse, we are on relatively safe ground, for Yang himself gives us abundant clues in his own writings, but when we wish to clarify the relationship between Yang's style and his contemporaries, we encounter much greater difficulties. First of all, it is practically impossible to determine whether Yang was influenced by or influenced a particular southern Sung poet, because most of the southern Sung poetry collections are not arranged in chronological order like Yang's, and, hence, one cannot prove which poet first introduced a particular stylistic element. In addition, even if we can prove that a certain poet was the first to utilize some new device in his works, we cannot be sure that he directly influenced other poets, because it is always highly possible that stylistic similarities are the result of a common literary climate of the period. Last of all, we are greatly hampered in our research by the lamentable fact that the works of many of the major southern Sung poets such as Hsiao Te-tsao and Yu Mou are now completely lost.

However, numerous literary references from contemporary writers leave no doubt about the exalted position Yang Wan-li occupied in the literary scene during his own life time. In a poem entitled "Thanking Yang Wan-li for his Gift of a Long Poem," the author Chiang T'e-li 姜特立 (died ca. 1192) wrote:

Today who is the master of the altar of poetry?
Ch'eng-chai's poetic laws are now in force![1]

Chou Pi-ta 周必大 , poet and critic of Yang's generation wrote:

Han Chü (Tzu-ts'ang) wrote the following in his poem presented to Chao Po-lu:

Studying poetry, you should be like one starting to study Ch'an:
Before you are enlightened, you must meditate on various methods.
But one day when you are enlightened to the true dharma eye,
Then trusting your hand, you draw it out and all the stanzas are ready-made.

He probably wished to use this Path to purify everyone. Among scholars of the present age we see Yang Wan-li with his great verse and huge poems, completed in seven paces, without changing a single character, consisting of words which sweep away a thousand armies, turn over the three gorges, penetrate the heart of heaven, and pierce the lunar cave. As for depicting the manner of things or expressing the emotions of men, his descriptions are delicate and detailed, his songs exhaust all miracles. Thus, it is

> no wonder that they say he has a natural talent for argument or he has obtained the great supernatural power. However, I did not yet know that he had arrived at freedom of mind after determined study. First he took the song "keng-tsai" [of the Shu Ching] as his model, then he labored with the decades of the Feng, Ya, and Sung [of the Shih Ching] and finally he pursued the Tso Chuan, Chuang-tzu, Ch'u Tz'u, and poetry of the Ch'in, Han, Wei, Tsin, North-south Dynasties, Sui, T'ang, and the present dynasty. Of all the great works of famous men there was not one of which he did not investigate the spring of its words, or select and use its mode of expression. Within fifty years, after yearly forging and monthly refining, after morning concentration and evening meditation, he was greatly enlightened, greatly comprehending. The tip of his writing brush was possessed of a mouth; the lines of his poetry had eyes! How could all this have been the result of but one day's labor? . . . For he has entered the gate of enlightenment and given proof of Han Chü's words of wisdom.[2]

Although we may find it extremely difficult to prove the precise nature of Yang Wan-li's influence on his contemporaries, Chiang T'e-li's and Chou Pi-ta's testimony shows the high esteem which the poets of Yang's generation had for him.

In fact, critics of the southern Sung and Yüan period considered Yang one of the three or four greatest poets of the

thirteenth century. The famous tz'u author Chiang K'uei 姜夔 (ca. 1155-1235) wrote:

> My teacher Yu Mou said to me, "Men of recent times delight in exalting Kiangsi, but are there [any poets in that school] as mild and smooth as Fan Ch'eng-ta [Chih-neng]? Or are there any as stimulating as Yang Wan-li [T'ing-hsiu], as lofty and ancient as Hsiao Te-tsao [Tung-fu], or as brave and reckless as Lu Yu [Wu-kuan]? Each of them has created his own "mechanism" and is worthy of esteem. What do we have to do with Kiangsi?"[3]

The Yüan critic Fang Hui was responsible for placing Yang firmly in his now accepted position as one of the four great masters of the southern Sung:

> Since the revival of the Sung dynasty, . . . talking of poetry one must speak of Yu Mou, Yang Wan-li, Fan Ch'eng-ta, and Lu Yu. Previously, some spoke of both Yu Mou and Hsiao Te-tsao, but Hsiao died early and did not become well-known. Also the edition of his poems was left in the Hsiang region, and few copies have been transmitted. Yu, Yang, Fan, and Lu are especially renowned in the world.[4]

Lu Yu is probably the most widely read poet of the three surviving authors among Fang Hui's four masters of the southern

Sung, and his relationship with Yang Wan-li typifies the predicament in which we find ourselves when attempting to relate Yang's poetry to that of his contemporaries. Although Yang and Lu were on extremely good terms throughout most of their lives, specific references to Yang's poetry in Lu's works are not very common. However, the following shows the high opinion Lu Yu had of Yang Wan-li:

> Literary works have a fixed value;
> And their criticism is extremely fair.
> That I am not equal to Yang Wan-li
> Is an opinion shared by all men under heaven.[5]

When he was sent a copy of Yang's Collection of the South Seas, Lu wrote:

> Only after spending the night reading Master Yang's
> South Sea poems,
> Did I know there is an exalted style under heaven.[6]

We should not confuse polite praise for imitation of an author, and yet there are certain similarities in style between Lu and Yang. Like Yang, Lu had started writing poetry by imitating the Kiangsi masters, but he soon rejected their erudite artificiality for a colloquial style relatively free from difficult allusions:

Traveling to a near village on a small boat, I abandon the boat and return home on foot (Third Poem of Four)

I just don't know what people mean by sadness;
I wander idly from east to west paddy paths.
The children all say that the Master is drunk,
For I've picked yellow flowers and stuck them all over my head.[7]

In line with the simplicity of most of Lu Yu's verse, Lu excells in describing the events of everyday life in a manner similar to Yang Wan-li:

The Little Garden (First Poem of Four)

A small garden with misty grasses joins my neighbor's house;
Mulberries, shady, shady, a single path curves.
I lie reading T'ao Ch'ien's verse, but before I finish the book,
I take advantage of the fine rain to go and hoe my melons.[8]

Lu Yu's treatment of natural objects also is linked to Yang Wan-li's verse:

Falling Plums (First Poem of Two)

The snow is cruel, the wind, gluttonous, so they become
even more forlorn;
Among flowers, their moral courage is most exalted and
powerful.
When their time is past and it's best for them to
flutter away,
They are ashamed to beg the Spring God for mercy any
more![9]

Lu Yu ascribes human qualities such as "moral courage" to the plum flowers, but his personification of the plants does not approach Yang Wan-li's. Although Lu's plums are more human than most pre-Sung poets', it is highly probable that Lu sees the flower's condition as an allegory for his own predicament. The flowers, which have been buffeted by snow and wind, symbolize Lu Yu himself, who has passed through the harrowing experiences of a refugee life and is about to "flutter away" from the world of the living. Just as the plums are ashamed to ask the Spring God for mercy, Lu accepts his fate, not requiring pity from the emperor whom he has served so faithfully. Lu Yu's political consciousness has brought him to treat natural objects in a manner more akin to T'ang allegory.

Lu Yu's concern for serious matters of state was also responsible for a more traditional approach to the common theme of autumn:

Autumn Thoughts (First Poem of Six)

Twenty frosts have passed since I came from Nan-cheng;[a]
Months and years turn their backs on me, racing away
disdainfully.
My tattered coat is not repaired, so I feel the cold
early;
My pillow of fatigue is without cheer, so I despise
long nights.
How can young people criticize an old scholar?
A wild, young man, I once debated with the Exalted
Emperor.[b]
How regretful are my dreams of river and lake this
evening.
For I still circle the ancient battlefields of the
Heavenly Mountains.[c] 10

In Lu Yu autumn awakens the same melancholy thoughts which the season had aroused in generations of earlier poets, and we find the poet mourning the swift passage of youth and sadly recollecting the disappointments of his official career, in particular the failure of the Sung dynasty to regain the lost northern territories.

It is precisely Lu Yu's deep political involvement, which makes his verse so different from the poetry of Yang Wan-li. We have seen that some of Yang's poetry was concerned with the political dilemmas of the age, but the overwhelming mass of Yang's verse is totally apolitical. In contrast, such works as

the following show why Lu Yu is famous as China's "patriot poet"愛国詩人 :

No More Barbarians

Beard sticking out like a hedge hog's fur,
Face as severe as purple jade,
A hero, who leaves home, doesn't worry about ten thousand miles,
The meeting of wind and clouds must be quickly grasped.[a]
Pursuing a retreating army, he sleeps outside beneath the Kokonor moon;
Seizing cities, he treads on the Yellow River's ice by night.
In iron armor, he fords deserts, the rain, moaning, moaning;
War drums beating, he scales banks, thunder, booming, booming!
At the third watch the weakened enemy sends articles of surrender;
By the break of day they pile their armor as high as mountains.
China knows of blood-sweating horses for the first time,
And the Eastern Barbarians send frost-feathered eagles repeatedly.[b]
The forces of dark have submitted,
And the sun now rises.
No more barbarians;
The Sung has revived!

A hero should repay his ruler in such a way,
The lamp in the mat window laughs at this man with white hair.[11]

Even Yang's most vocal poetry protesting Sung defeats at the hands of the Chin was not written with such powerful language, and it is very likely that what little political poetry Yang wrote was under Lu Yu's influence after the two authors renewed their friendship in Hang-chou.

That Lu Yu's concern for the fate of the Sung dynasty remained the chief topic of his poetry for his entire life can be seen from a famous poem he is supposed to have written only a few days before his death:

Shown to My Son

I've always known that after death all things are empty,
But I am still sad I haven't seen the nine districts united.[a]
When the emperor's armies go north and pacify the Middle Plain,
Don't forget to tell your Dad in the family sacrifices![12]

All political poetry ceased after Yang Wan-li's retirement from public service, but Lu Yu was worried about the Sung government to his last day.

Lu Yu may have thought highly of Yang Wan-li's poetry, but the two authors were radically different in style. The

poet and critic Liu K'o-chuang underscored the distance between the two writers when he said:

> Lu Yu's power of study resembles Tu Fu, while Yang Wan-li's natural endowments are similar to Li Po.[13]

Although Liu is largely stressing the stylistic differences between the two poets, his comparison of Yang Wan-li and Lu Yu to Li Po and Tu Fu respectively, hints at the extremely wide divergence of personality between both men. Lu Yu was never able to achieve the untroubled serenity and transcendence of sorrow which characterizes so much of the verse Yang Wan-li wrote after his poetic enlightenment. Lu Yu's youth as a refugee was certainly an important factor in his continual restlessness, but his typically Confucian devotion to political causes and lack of interest in Buddhism and other transcendent philosophies caused him to worry about the fate of the dynasty to his last days, just as the basically Confucian poet Tu Fu had. As one would expect, poems about Ch'an Buddhism or Taoism are quite rare in Lu Yu's works, but a large number of works survive which show the marks of the neo-Confucianism which Lu's contemporary Chu Hsi was promoting so successfully:

Shown to Tzu-yü After Reading Books During the Winter
(Third Poem of Eight)

The ancients were never neglectful of their studies,
For the efforts of youth only ripen with old age.

Obtaining this from books, I still feel it's too
shallow,
Because I fully know these things must be done by
oneself.[14]

Or:

Reading the Classic of Changes

My emaciated body embraces illnesses becoming serious
from time to time;
My white hair takes advantage of old age to increase
day by day.
I sweep clean my east window and read the Changes of
Chou;
I laugh at people, who reaching old age, want to rely
on Buddhism![15]

In such verses one can almost hear Chu Hsi exhorting us to the "investigation of things" through the study of the words and actions of ancient sages preserved in the Confucian classics. Such an attitude is far removed, indeed, from Yang's Ch'an Buddhist admonition: "Don't read books!"

The second famous poet of the three surviving masters of the southern Sung, Fan Ch'eng-ta, developed his own highly original style by first imitation and finally rejection of the Kiangsi poets just as Lu Yu and Yang Wan-li had. However, Fan Ch'eng-ta did not express the Confucian concern for the govern-

ment in his poetry as Lu Yu had, and his distaste for political involvement and use of Ch'an Buddhism to transcend worldly problems are very close to Yang Wan-li:

In the Same Rhyme as the Poem to Inscribe at Stone Lake
Sent to Me by My Classmate, Ambassador Yang Wan-li
(Second Poem of Two)

For half my life, I have lightly followed the clouds
leaving their caverns,[a]
But today I have come home to be a man lying in the
clouds.
The little mountain has a poem and beckons the wanderer;
The Great Clod is without prejudice,[b] but indulges my
body.
In dreams on the meditation board, a thousand crags
dawn;
Midst wind blowing through my white hairs, myriad
flowers turn to spring.
The New Year's wine jar is full of goose down yellow;[c]
I remain drunk in the field with my purple collar and cap.[d] 16

In line with Fan Ch'eng-ta's interest in Ch'an meditation, most of his poetry is concerned with the joys of everyday life:

At day they go out to hoe the fields, at night spin hemp;
The boys and girls in the village each does his own job.
The little grandsons still don't know how to help at
plowing and weaving,

So they learn how to plant melons in the shadow of the mulberries.[17]

Fan's reference to the mountain beckoning the traveler in the first poem and the quiet harmony of the rural village in the second poem remind one instantly of the friendly and benign nature pictured in Yang Wan-li's landscape poetry. As one might expect, Fan also engaged in the personification of natural objects, too:

Just before the end of night I arrive at the top of the mountain peak; a piece of moon hung on the high mountain range as I walked all the way to the summit.

A piece of moon hangs on the high mountain range,
As I walk all the way to the summit.
I raise my hand, wishing to seize or grasp her,
But I fear scaring her phoenix-riding immortals.[a]
Misty, misty, her cassia incense throbs;[b]
Severe, severe, the dew's feet are cold.
The Northern Dipper has already reached the ground;
The Southern Dipper is still awry.
I hear only the sound of the empyrean
Coming from the Primeval Blue Heaven.
The great stars accompany it,
And the dawn's colors are a bright banner.
The white mist obscures the vast land;
In the middle is the world men inhabit.

I imagine I can see my friends on the ground;
At the crack of dawn their lamp fires blaze.[c]
Stars set and the jade firmament turns white;
The sun rises and variegated clouds redden.
The icy orb of the moon doesn't wish to leave me,
And as we look at each other, she is still round.[18]

Just as in Yang's two poems on the moon seen at sunrise, Fan uses Chinese popular mythology to render the moon more human. Again, the realm of misty mountain peaks over which the moon reigns symbolizes the world of absolute truth and purity, contrasted with the world of illusion and dust, which Fan sees beneath himself through the veil of clouds and fog. Yet, despite the temporary state of ecstasy which the poet enjoys in contemplation of the miracles of nature, the moon must soon leave him and he must descend the mountain and return to the everyday world.

Fan's description of the moon suggests the parodox of the absolute being both accessible and inaccessible, which is one of the major themes of Yang Wan-li's nature poetry, so we should not be surprised that Fan, too, sometimes uses the "conspiracy of nature" theme:

Planting gardens, we get a harvest only by exhausting
ourselves in labor;
Yet, alas, little boys and sparrows add to our troubles.
We've already set up thorn spikes and fenced off the
bamboo shoot path,

But we still must spread out fish nets to cover the
cherry trees.[19]

Fan's "conspiracy of nature" against man is usually expressed in terms of the peasant's fight against perverse nature, so it is difficult to say whether Fan saw the theme in exactly the same light as Yang did. Nonetheless, Fan agreed with Yang in seeing nature as both friendly and withdrawing at the same time.

No matter what the philosophical background to Fan Ch'eng-ta's rural poetry was, Fan's treatment of the creatures of nature equals Yang in its detailed observation:

I quietly watch the eave spider spinning his net low;
For no reason at all, he obstructs the flight of little
bugs.
A dragonfly hangs upside down and a bee is in trouble,
So I command a mountain lad to lift the siege![20]

Fan's description of the spider web is worthy of the best Sung insect painter, but unlike Yang Wan-li, Fan allows a greater intrusion of human activities into such poetry, for human beings interfere in the natural process of the spider catching his prey.

Not only does Fan's view of nature resemble Yan Wan-li's but even Yang's "live method" appears occasionally in Fan's verse:

The soil is about to thaw and the rain presses steadily;
A myriad grasses and thousands of flowers open in a moment.
The desolate plot behind my hut is green and blooming again,
And whip bamboo sprouts from the neighbor's house leap over my fence![21]

Admittedly, the image of the bamboo sprouts "leaping" over the fence is not as startling as Yang's practice of the "live method," but Fan's mild personality easily accounts for his less dramatic use of this device. In fact, such poems are much less common in Fan's complete works than in Yang's, and it is extremely likely that whenever Fan uses the "live method" he is directly under Yang's influence.

Nevertheless, influence between the two poets was definitely mutual, and Yang Wan-li paid tribute to the greatness of Fan Ch'eng-ta in the preface he wrote for Fan's complete works:

His admonitions and enjoinders possess the refinement of the Western Han. His prose-poems have the incisiveness of Tu Mu (Mu-chih). His sao style poems attain the reserve of the men of Ch'u. His prefaces on landscapes equal Liu Tsung-yüan, and his biographies of knights errant are the same as Ssu-ma Ch'ien. His long poems, like torrents bursting forth, and his short verses, like the glint of a sword, are elegant yet not

over-done, reserved, yet not cramped. Pure, fresh, fascinating, and beauteous, they hold sway over Pao Chao and Hsieh Ling-yün. Racing, reckless, outstanding, and extraordinary, they pursue Li Po. If one looks for one character which is stale or one song which sobs, it cannot be found. Today within the four seas, there are no more than three or four poets, and he surpasses them all without equal.[22]

[1]Chiang T'e-li 姜特立 , Mei Shan Hsü Kao 梅山續稿 , n.d., chüan 1, 謝楊誠齋惠長句。

[2]Chou Pi-ta 周必大 , Chou Yi Kuo Wen Chung Kung Chi 周益国文忠公集 , P'ing Yüan Hsü Kao 平園續稿 , 1848 (?), chüan 9, 跋楊廷秀石人峯長篇.
The poem Chou quotes has already been translated.

[3]SPTK, Chiang K'uei 姜夔 , Po Shih Tao Jen Shih Chi 白石道人詩集 , 11a.

[4]Fang Hui 方回 , T'ung Chiang Chi 桐江集 , Kuo Li Chung Yang T'u Shu Kuan 国立中央図書館, Taipei, 1969, p. 193.

[5]LFWCC, vol. 3, 53-1b.

[6]Ibid., vol. 2, 19-11b.

[7]Ibid., vol. 2, 33-6b.

[8]Ibid., vol. 1, 13-6b.

[9]Ibid., vol. 2, 26-9b.

[10]Ibid., vol. 2, 23-3b.

a. Nan-cheng is Han-chung 漢中 in southern Shensi province.

b. The emperor Kao-tsung, first emperor of the southern Sung dynasty (1127-1163).

c. The T'ien-shan are a long range of mountains stretching from Sinkiang to the Gobi Desert and were the scene of many battles between the Sung armies and barbarian tribes before the fall of the northern Sung.

[11]Ibid., vol. 1, 4-13a.

a. According to Chinese folklore, the dragon rose into the sky when clouds were available. Here Lu Yu is talking about an unusual opportunity to reconquer north China.

b. These two lines refer to the tribute sent by foreign countries to China. The blood-sweating horses were first sent during the Han dynasty from Ferghana. The Eastern Barbarians are probably the inhabitants of the early Korean state Silla.

[12]Ibid., vol. 4, 85-6b.

a. Lu Yu wishes to see the Chin driven from north China and the country "united."

[13]SPTK, Liu K'e-chuang 劉克莊 , Hou Ts'un Hsien Sheng Ta Ch'üan Chi 後村先生大全集 , 174-1556b.

[14]LFWCC, 42-4a.

[15]Ibid., 33-7a.

[16]SPTK, Fan Ch'eng-ta 范成大, Shih Hu Chü Shih Shih Chi (abbreviated SHCSSC) 石湖居士詩集, 20-114a.

a. That is, Fan has engaged in worldly activities such as serving in the government.

b. The Great Clod is the earth. Allusion to Chuang-tzu: "When the Great Clod belches air, it is called the wind." See SPTK, Nan Hua Chen Ching 南華真經, 1-12a.

c. Goose down is another word for wine, because of the similarity in color.

d. Lu Yu is wearing the costume of a recluse, who has renounced the world.

[17]Ibid., 27-149a.

[18]Ibid., 16-91a.

a. According to folk custom the immortals Mei Fu 梅福 and Hung Ya 洪崖 had both ridden phoenixes to the moon.

b. In Chinese mythology the moon was said to have a cassia tree.

c. Fan means that everyone in the world is engaged in material pursuits.

[19]Ibid., 27-148a.

[20]Ibid., 27-149a.

[21]Ibid., 27-147b.

[22]Ibid., 1b.

3. Posterity

With the beginning of the Ming dynasty, Yang Wan-li's poetry and Sung poetry in general gradually fell into disrepute. Whatever comments we do find about Yang are usually negative, for Chinese poetry fell under the thrall of the Former Seven Masters (Ch'ien Ch'i Tzu) 前七子 and Latter Seven Masters (Hou Ch'i Tzu) 後七子 who considered imitation of the Flourishing T'ang poets to be the highest form of poetic writing. When the attack against the conservatives came, it was led by Yüan Hung-tao 袁宏道 (1568-1610) of the Kung-an 公安 school, who had been strongly influenced by the thought of the more radical members of Wang Shou-jen's 王守仁 neo-Confucian School of the Mind, especially the notorious Li Chih 李贄 (1529-1602). We have already noticed how Ch'an ideas led Yang to oppose literary conservatism, and in this connection we should mention that the more radical disciples of Wang Shou-jen learned so much from Ch'an Buddhism that orthodox Confucians derisively called them Wildcat Ch'an (Yeh Hu Ch'an) 野狐禪.[1]

Although Yüan Hung-tao does not discuss Yang Wan-li's verse as far as can be ascertained, his opposition to imitation and sterile conventions is very similar to Yang's position:

> Upon reaching the modern age, poetry and prose have become extremely inferior. As for prose, [they say] one must take the Ch'in and Han as the standard and for poetry, one must take the Flourishing T'ang as the

> standard. Pilfering and plagiarizing, imitating and copying, they follow along like shadow and echo. If people see someone who has one word that is not in imitation, they band together and accuse him of belonging to the wildcat heterodox path. People did not formerly know that prose should make the Ch'in and Han its standard, for when did Ch'in and Han ever imitate the Six Classics character by character? As for poetry taking the Flourishing T'ang as its standard, when did the poets of Flourishing T'ang ever imitate the Han and Wei character by character? If the Ch'in and Han had imitated the Six classics, then how would there ever have been the prose of the Ch'in and Han? If the Flourishing T'ang had imitated Han and Wei, how would there ever have been the poetry of the Flourishing T'ang?[2]

Although it is difficult to prove any direct influence of Yang Wan-li on Yüan Hung-tao, there is no doubt that they were both members of a common stream of Chinese thought which was deeply indebted to the Ch'an stress upon individualism and spontaneity.

In fact, it was precisely Yang Wan-li's opposition to formalism and his advocation of self-expression that had the greatest influence on later poetic criticism. This can be most clearly seen in the case of Yüan Mei 袁枚 (1716-1797), one of the most original poets of the eighteenth century in China.

In Ch'ing times, Sung poetry was rehabilitated and by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the more anti-traditional writers were able to appreciate Yang Wan-li's individualistic qualities better. In his Sui Yüan Shih Hua, Yüan Mei ascribes the following saying to Yang Wan-li:

> Yang Wan-li said: "Why is it that people of low natural abilities love to speak of meter and tone-pattern and do not understand style and interest? Meter and tone-pattern are an empty scaffolding with a tune one can easily imitate. Whereas, style and interest alone express the natural genius (hsing-ling) and only one with talent can do this." I deeply love his words.[3]

Although the quotation does not survive in Yang Wan-li's works, it certainly conforms to his basic ideas on literature. Anyone who reads the poetry of Yüan Mei can see definite signs of Yang Wan-li's influence in Yüan's individualism and extensive use of humor. These similarities must have struck one of Yüan's students, for Yüan writes:

> Wang Ta-shen said that my poems are similar to Yang Wan-li's, but Fan Shou-sheng disagreed greatly and came to tell me. I was startled and replied: "Yang Wan-li was the master of one age, so how could it be easy to be like him? Later people disliked him for carving and engraving and frequently made light of

> him, for they did not know that his natural talent was pure and miraculous and extremely similar to Li Po. His faults cannot obscure his virtues, and this was precisely his sincerest point. As for his moral courage and his writings, this is all preserved in his biography and even if you wanted me to imitate him, I would be too shy!"[4]

Despite Yüan Mei's modesty in thinking himself unworthy to imitate Yang Wan-li, we can see Yang's influence in many of his poems and Yüan's theory of hsing-ling or 'natural genius' bears a marked resemblance to Yang's conception of enlightenment as the key to writing original poetry.

[1]For an excellent treatment of Li Chih and late Ming thought in general see William Theodore de Bary, Self and Society in Ming Thought, "Individualism and Humanitarianism," Columbia U. Press, 1970, pp. 188-222 in particular.

[2]Yüan Hung-tao 袁宏道, Yüan Chung Lang Ch'üan Chi 袁中郎全集, Shih Chieh Shu Chü, Shanghai, 1935, chüan 1, pp. 5-6.

[3]Yüan Mei 袁枚, Sui Yüan Shih Hua 隨園詩話 Jen Min Wen Hsüeh Ch'u Pan She, Peking, 1960, chüan 1, p. 2.

[4]Ibid., chüan 8, p. 272.

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The first part of this bibliography contains only works cited in the main text of the dissertation. Books which were used solely to identify allusions are not included. The second part consists of works which were not cited in the main text but which contain important material concerning Yang Wan-li. No attempt has been made to include items which were consulted but contained only brief, insignificant passages about the poet. Throughout, the three following abbreviations have been used: SPTK for Ssu Pu Ts'ung K'an 四部叢刊, SPPY for Ssu Pu Pei Yao 四部備要, and TS for Taishō Daizōkyō 大正大藏経.

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Abbreviations

CCC-Ch'eng Chai Chi 誠齋集
CCTYMC-Chien Chu T'ao Yüan-ming Chi 箋註陶淵明集
CTCTL-Ching Te Ch'uan Teng Lu 景德傳灯錄
HCLHSC-Chu Wen Kung Chiao Han Ch'ang-li Hsien Sheng Chi 朱文公校韓昌黎先生集
HTCTC-Hsü Tzu Chih T'ung Chien 續資治通鑑
LCHSWC-Lin Ch'uan Hsien Sheng Wen Chi 臨川先生文集
LFWCC-Lu Fang-weng Chüan Chi 陸放翁全集
LP-Ri Hyaku Kashi Sakuin 李白歌詩索引
LTPS-Fen Lei Pu Chu Li T'ai Po Shih 分類補註李太白詩
MFLHC-Miao Fa Lien Hua Ching 妙法蓮華經
NPM-Slides of Chinese Painting in the National Palace Museum
PSCCC-Po Shih Ch'ang Ch'ing Chi 白氏長慶集
SHCSSC-Shih Hu Chü Shih Shih Chi 石湖居士詩集
SJHT-Sung Jen Hua Ts'e 宋人畫冊
SPPY-Ssu Pu Pei Yao 四部備要
SPTK-Ssu Pu Ts'ung K'an 四部叢刊
SS-Sung Shih 宋史
Taishō-Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō 大正新修大藏经
TKPS-Tu Kung Pu Shih 杜工部詩
TPHSS-Chi Chu Fen Lei Tung P'o Hsien Sheng Shih 集註分類東坡先生詩
TF-A Concordance to the Poems of Tu Fu
WMK-Wu Men Kuan 無门関
YCHHSWC-Yü Chang Huang Hsien Sheng Wen Chi 豫章黃先生文集
YWLHC-Yang Wan-li Hsüan Chi 楊萬里選集