

WU WENYING AND THE ART OF SOUTHERN SONG CI POETRY

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Abstract

The thesis studies the ci poetry of Wu Wenying (c.1200-c.1260) in the context of Southern Song ci poetics and aims to establish its significance in contemporary developments and in the tradition of ci criticism.

Chapter One explores the moral and aesthetic implications of Wu's life as a "guest-poet" patronized by officials and aristocrats, and profiles two relationships in Wu's life, the loss of which generated a unique corpus of love poetry.

To define the art of Southern Song ci, Chapter Two elucidates current stylistic trends, poetics, and aesthetics of ci, examining critical concepts in two late Song treatises, the Yuefu zhimi and Ciyuan. The Yuefu zhimi's critical canons embody Wu's poetics of indirection, which favours allusive and connotative language and produces imagistic and semantic density in the poetic structure. In opposition to Wu's poetics of density, an aspect of indirection, the Ciyuan proposes a poetics of transparency. Finally, the chapter analyzes Wu's poetics of density to illuminate the salient characteristics of his art.

Chapter Three provides stylistic, thematic, and structural exegeses of Wu's poems within a literary-historical perspective. The dichotomy between verbal artifice and poetic metaphor in his yongwu ci (poems on objects) and between self and other in his occasional poems is found to rest on the fundamental differentiation between poetry as social art and poetry as self-expression. Significantly, the metaphoric dimension of his yongwu poems illustrates evolutionary possibilities of the

subgenre in ci. Wu's love poetry originates in an idée fixe, a persistent longing for the beloved, which is translated into recurrent images and motifs embedded in his most elegant diction, representing a superb union of language and emotion.

The thesis concludes with an overview of Wu Wenying criticism, which shows a dominant focus on the stylistic art of Southern Song ci. Wu's poetry has won both critical acclaim and disapprobation for its surface elegance and verbal density. Only in the nineteenth century did the Changzhou School of ci criticism, with its emphasis on interpretation of meaning as the criterion, achieve an integral appreciation of Wu Wenying's poetry.

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I. BIOGRAPHY

I. EARLY LIFE

Wu Wenying 吴文英 (zi Junte 君特, hao Mengchuang 梦窗) was born circa A.D. 1200 in the Siming 四明 district of Zhedong circuit 浙东路 (present day Yin County in Zhejiang province).¹ During the Song, the Southeast circuits were steadily becoming the leading economic and cultural nexus in the empire. When the north was captured by the Jurchens in 1126, the subsequent political turmoil forced the Southern Song court to eventually relocate the capital to Hangzhou in 1138. Ironically, the shameful loss of half an empire and the resultant geographical dislocation only consolidated an on-going fundamental southward shift that began several centuries ago.² In the triennial civil service examinations that furnished the state bureaucracy with potential new recruits, the Southeast, in particular the two most populous and urbanized circuits-Zhedong and Fujian, came to supply most of the candidates for the competition.³ In Wu Wenying's own time, a significant share of successful jinshi graduates came from his native district Yin County.⁴ Not surprisingly his elder brother was on the list of graduates for the year 1217.⁵ Although Wu Wenying himself never attained this distinction, whether due to lack of participation or to failure in the examinations, the very locale in which he grew up bespeaks a cultured and sophisticated milieu.

Of Wu Wenying's relations, only two brothers bearing the different surname Weng 翁 are known. No recorded source

accounts for the disparity in the surnames, the most plausible explanation being that Wu Wenying, né Weng, was adopted into a Wu family.⁶ Wu's elder brother Weng Fenglong 翁逢龍 (z. Jike 際可, h. Shigui 石龜) attained his jinshi degree in 1217, and is known to have held the position of Vice-administrator of Pingjiang 平江通判 (present day Suzhou) for a period between 1237 and 1240.⁷ Not only did Weng Fenglong distinguish himself by passing the civil service examination and thereby entering a career in officialdom, he also acquired some recognition as a shi 詩 poet.⁸ He was mentioned by Dai Fugu 戴復古 (1167-after 1246), an important poet of the "Rivers and Lakes" School of the Southern Song,⁹ in a poem entitled "On reading the manuscripts of the four poets Weng Jike, Xue Yishu, Sun Jifan and Gao Jiuwan."¹⁰ There are two extant poems addressed to Weng Fenglong in Wu Wenying's collection. Judging from their tone and content, it appears that the brothers had a rather congenial relationship with some contact maintained throughout their lives. One poem, to the tune pattern Liushao qing (Quan Song ci [hereafter QSC] 2928/5),¹¹ dated post 1243 from the preface, was composed on the occasion of viewing snow with Weng Fenglong from a tower named Yanyi 研意.¹² The other poem (QSC 2928/4), written at a later date and poignantly subtitled, "Ascending Yanyi after Guiweng (Weng Fenglong) had passed away," reminisces with sadness about the irretrievable times when they had been together, revealing through the imagery and allusions a measure of brotherly intimacy that had existed between them.

The younger brother, Weng Yuanlong 翁元龍 (z. Shike

時可, h. Chujing 處靜), seems to have followed in Wu Wenying's footsteps. Not having passed the examination and entered officialdom, he also made a name among his contemporaries as a ci 詞 poet, though one whose reputation, to judge by the late Song poet and writer Zhou Mi's 周密 (1232-1308) observation, may have been somewhat eclipsed by Wu's own.¹³ Nevertheless to all appearances he lived by his talent as a ci poet and enjoyed the patronage of certain high officials. A metaphorically phrased, highly complimentary postscript to his ci poetry is preserved in the collected writings of the chief councillor Du Fan 杜範 (d.1245), who is known to have been Weng Yuanlong's patron.¹⁴ There are also two extant poems by Wu to his younger brother (QSC 2881/3, 2931/6).

In spite of the paucity of information, the few details we have of the brothers suggest a literati family background and an education that perhaps cultivated in them a love of literature and helped shape their shared poetic talent.

Very little is known about Wu Wenying's early life. When Weng Fenglong became a jinshi holder in 1217, Wu was in his late adolescence. It is possible that Wu was brought into contact with a broader literary society that had connections with the government bureaucracy around this time as a consequence of his brother's success and subsequent debut in official life.

From references made in some late poems, it can be inferred that as a youth Wu Wenying had made some travels away from his native district and had also sojourned in the capital Hangzhou periodically for a period of ten years, where he had his first

love affair with a singing girl.¹⁵

Wu's earliest poem is dated to 1224.¹⁶ It was composed in Deqing County 德清縣 in Zhexi circuit 浙西路 (northern Zhejiang) which, according to lines 11-15, he evidently had already visited sometime prior to this date. To the tune He xinlang and prefaced "A lyric on Small Rainbow Bridge written for Magistrate Zhao of Deqing," this youthful and rather artful attempt reads:

- 1 Waves reflect wrinkling tortoise shell patterns.
Dipped in mist, half moistened are the red and green
Of windows pillowed on the stream.
Lazily reclining on the water, a thousand feet of
 roseate cloud-
- 5 Myriad folds of silk screens thronging its beauty.
Again and again, the boats to Wu turn their bows,
And wild geese returning north would not reach Lake
 Tai:
I ask the man fishing through snow in the vastness if
 he knows-
A woodman's song, remote,
10 Traverses the deep verdure.

Coming here again I arrived in time for the blossoms.
I recall lingering among these empty hills in the night
 rain,
Then spring wine at the pavilion of parting.

Under newly planted peach and plum trees where a
 footpath forms,

15 All this after the wanderer left.

Still the noble prunus at the East Lodge is delicately
 thin.

A splash of oars-the landscape deepens its green.

During the day the swallows are silent, the wind
 stills, curtains hang motionless.

In the hushed chill,

20 With sleeves dangling I chant.

(QSC 2898/4)

This poem serves to illuminate several aspects of Wu Wenying's life. First, it demonstrates the minimum extent of Wu's travels to date, involving a route that could easily have taken him through the metropolis Shaoxing and the capital Hangzhou.¹⁷ Secondly, since this poem was written for a magistrate (upon his request?), Wu Wenying may already have enjoyed some fame as a young poet, and Magistrate Zhao only inaugurates a long list of government officials and high dignitaries with whom he associated and for whom he composed many poems throughout his life. Stylistically, this poem already exhibits certain salient characteristics of Wu's verse as a whole: the penchant for unusual words and novel images (1.1), metonymic language (1.2-3), an implied rather than explicit logic in the structure, and frequent use of allusions.

Thus far we can picture Wu Wenying as a young man, not

terribly ambitious, in all likelihood devoting much of his time and energy to learning the art of writing ci poetry and growing proficient in it. He ranks among the few Southern Song ci poets with an expert knowledge of music; there are a number of much admired tune patterns created by him.¹⁸ Wu's sole fame as a ci poet and his apparent lack of success in public life have occasioned one writer's remark that, though no doubt intelligent, Wu might have been of the type that was "addicted to poetry and dull in the Classics."¹⁹ Instead of treading the traditional time-honoured path to worldly success, Wu traveled, cultivated the friendship of officials—those who had already made the mark, and perhaps tried to find in their employ or patronage some means of support. In fact, the next known period in Wu's life, the early 1230's, finds him in the staff of the Grain Transport Office in Suzhou.

II. THE SUZHOU PERIOD (C.1232-C.1244)

The exact dates of Wu Wenying's move to Suzhou and of his entry into the Grain Transport Office 倉幕 remain obscure.²⁰ The preface to a poem dated 1232 (QSC 2920/3) provides some basis for assuming that Wu had already been working at the Grain Transport Office for a time: "In the company of colleagues from the Granary I attended a farewell banquet held for Sun Wuhuai at the garden residence of Guo Xidao on the day before the leap Double Ninth."²¹ He was then in his thirties. Beginning from around this time and lasting until about 1244, his sojourn in Suzhou continued for roughly twelve years. For a number of these years, Wu was employed on the clerical staff of the Grain

Transport Office.²² With the exception of some possible official assignments, which took him to a few locales within the general confines of Zhexi circuit (Jiangsu and Zhejiang), and some trips to Hangzhou, Wu's activities, for the most part, were centred in the vicinity of Suzhou.²³

Prefaces that can be dated to this period provide the only substantive and specific record of Wu Wenying's activities. From them it can be gathered that he circulated among the staff of the Grain Transport Office, officials in the district, "career" poets,²⁴ and a group of friends of apparently wealthy gentry background.²⁵ Together these members of the educated elite cultivated a style of living which was imbued with the elegance and refinement afforded by the material prosperity of the Southern Song.²⁶ The more affluent among them had estates on which were constructed luxuriously landscaped gardens and villas where frequent social gatherings were conducted. The ways and manner of entertainment and literary diversion were considerable and often lavish; we come across occasions such as the banquet aboard a large decorated boat where potted peonies provided the theme of attraction (QSC 2890/1), or the morning garden party at which the guests engaged in games of chess and lute-playing-the polite arts of a scholar-gentleman (QSC 2919/4), or the simple celebration of the completion of a new house (QSC 2925/4). The occasions for social affairs seemed endless and all called for verse-making. Wu Wenying consequently left a large volume of occasional and commemorative ci poems, written at birthday and farewell banquets, flower-viewing and other parties, and during

excursions to scenic and historic sites. Given the popularity of ci poems for such occasions in the Southern Song and Wu's fame as a ci poet, we may infer that Wu was commissioned to write some of these poems, and in fact it is quite likely that many of these were impromptu lyrics, each written within a time limit and performed on the very occasion which the lyric celebrates.²⁷ Much is jotted down that is merely technically skillful, floating, or suggested by the exigencies of rhyme or the demand for appropriate allusions. As poetry, many in this category lack intrinsic literary merit but are valuable for the vignettes of literary society they offer. Wu Wenying seems to have delighted in the company of high society and, with his poetic talent, must have fulfilled his role with consummate ease. The preface to the poem dated 1236, which he wrote on the night of the Lantern Festival (15th day of the first month) reveals a youthful exuberance soon to be clouded by age and personal tragedies:

This year the Lantern Festival in Suzhou was more spectacular than usual. While lodging in a quiet and secluded ward, I met many eminent people of the time. A banquet with wine was thrown, followed by the joys of polite company. It was indeed a grand affair. I received the rhyme word jing.
(QSC 2919/2)

During this relatively long and stable period in Suzhou, Wu Wenying established lasting associations with certain high functionaries, which may have permitted him to later adopt a mode of life whose economic basis rested on an artist-patron affiliation. Most notable among these associations were those

with Wu Qian 吳潛 (1196-1262), the top candidate among the jinshi graduates of 1217, and Shi Zhaizhi 史宅之 (1205-1249), from both of whom Wu enjoyed some form of patronage in certain periods after he left Suzhou. Although there is no direct evidence, a third figure, Yin Huan 尹煥 (jinshi 1217), who together with Shi Zhaizhi commands the largest extant number of poems addressed to him by Wu Wenying, could also be included in this category. Not much is known about Yin Huan other than that he also obtained his jinshi in 1217, the same year as Weng Fenglong and Wu Qian; was promoted to the position of Left Division Chief 左司郎官 in the Department of Ministries 尚書省 in 1247; and is known to have composed ci poetry.²⁸ Most importantly in relation to Wu Wenying, Yin Huan wrote a surviving preface to a no longer extant collection of Wu's ci poetry. One may recall the Councillor Du Fan's postscript to Weng Yuanlong's ci poetry; it was not an uncommon practice for patrons to write a preface or postscript to their protégés' work.

One may well ask at this point how Wu Wenying managed the logistics of cultivating these relationships, and if there was not more factual proof for patronage than inferences and inductions? Two factors should clarify the first question: Wu Wenying's growing renown as a ci poet and personal connections through his elder brother Weng Fenglong enabled him to meet and be noticed by the official class in Suzhou. Take for example his friendship with Yin Huan and Wu Qian; one cannot overlook the possibility of their fellow jinshi connection with Weng

Fenglong being the occasion of Wu Wenying's initial introduction to them.

Towards the end of this period in Suzhou, Wu Wenying was demonstrably an accomplished, mature poet of substantial reputation. His poems were being included in contemporary anthologies of ci poetry.²⁹ His "canon" of ci composition was recorded in the Yuefu zhimi 樂府指迷 by the poet and critic Shen Yifu 沈義父 (?-after 1297), who first met Wu in 1243 toward the end of the Suzhou period.³⁰ Although no dates can be associated with their appearances, sources indicate that Wu Wenying's poems were printed during the Song in an edition of poetry entitled Liushi jia ci [Ci by Sixty Poets],³¹ and that a manuscript of his poetry in his own handwriting entitled Shuanghua yu 霜花腴 was in circulation.³² The no longer extant collection to which Yin Huan had composed a preface must have been compiled at the end of this period or shortly afterwards, since this preface was partly quoted, along with a selection of Wu Wenying's poems, in the anthology of ci poetry compiled by Huang Sheng 黃昇 (fl.1240-49) in 1249. In this preface, Yin accords Wu highest honours among his contemporaries: "If one were to seek models of ci poetry in our age of the Song, there was Zhou Bangyan 周邦彥 in the past and now there is Wu Wenying. These are not only my words, but the unanimous opinion within the four seas."³³

While Weng Fenglong was Vice-administrator of Suzhou from 1237 to 1240, the record of Administrators 知府 in the Suzhou gazetteer Wuxian zhi shows three names for this period which,

significantly, are also found in Wu Wenying's collection of poetry.³⁴ From 1237 to 1238 the post was held by Wu Qian, to whom we shall return at a later stage in Wu's life, and from 1239-1241, by Zhao Yuchou 趙與愚 (fl.1240s), whose direct relevance to Wu's life is attenuated by reason of there being only one surviving poem addressed to him (QSC 2907/3). The administrator of Suzhou in these years whose relationship with Wu Wenying offers tangible areas for speculation is Shi Zhaizhi.

Also a native of Siming, and son of the notorious chief councillor Shi Miyuan 史彌遠 (1164-1233),³⁵ Shi Zhaizhi began his official career with the emperor's bestowal of a jinshi degree in 1233.³⁶ Shi had two terms of office in Suzhou; succeeding Wu Qian in 1238, he left for the capital in 1239 when Zhao Yuchou assumed the post and returned in 1241 for a second term, which lasted till the beginning of 1243. During his first term as Administrator of Suzhou, Shi renovated the historical public building Qiyun Tower.³⁷ There is a poem by Wu Wenying with this building as subject (QSC 2884/2). Both the poem and Wu's acquaintance with Shi are thought to date from about this time.³⁸ As mentioned earlier, among the circle of people to whom Wu addressed poems, Shi Zhaizhi and Yin Huan top the list in receiving the largest number. Though Shi was a few years Wu's junior, the deferential terms, xiansheng 先生 and weng 翁, with which he is invariably addressed by Wu suggest more than might be warranted simply by the former's seniority in rank. Furthermore, all the poems in question were either congratulatory or written at banquet gatherings-on just those

occasions when an easily accessible talent was called for. The above factors would tend to support the possibility of a patron-artist relationship. Of the six poems whose place of composition can be determined, one was written at a banquet on a boat in Suzhou (QSC 2801/1), three were congratulatory lyrics written in Hangzhou (QSC 2875/5, 2919/5, 2935/4), another was from a night banquet held at Shi's garden residence, probably located in his native district Siming (QSC 2914/1), and the last one was composed during an excursion to view snow at Feiyi Tower in Shaoxing (QSC 2916/1). Of the remaining five poems, three were written at Shi's residence, though at which one of his residences is not clear. Looking at these varying locales where Wu had composed poems for Shi, it is fairly safe to say that Wu had formed part of Shi's entourage at times. Considering Shi Zhaizhi's purported interest in poetry,³⁹ it seems likely that he may have invited Wu Wenying to act as a kind of poet-in-residence periodically during the period from 1241 when he assumed his second term of office in Suzhou until his death in Hangzhou in 1249. When Wu's movements between Suzhou and Hangzhou became discernible in 1243 and 1244, leading to his eventual move from Suzhou in 1244, their relationship to Shi Zhaizhi's departure from Suzhou in 1243 may be seen to be more than merely coincidental.

The two years 1243 and 1244 brought sudden changes and uncertainties. Concerning Wu's life in Suzhou at this time, we no longer know whether he was still employed at the Grain Transport Office. The likelihood is that he was not. The

possibility looms large that he had already changed his mode of life to that of a guest poet dependent on the patronage of wealthy notables. Shi Zhaizhi, as we have seen, may have been an important patron whose departure from Suzhou in 1243 could have signalled a serious loss.

Owing to the independent preservation of a group of sixteen poems, together with several others dated to these two years, we are able to discern a vague outline of Wu's movements and posit some of his concerns at this time. The Ming work Tiewang shanhu contains a manuscript of sixteen poems by Wu Wenying titled "Draft of New ci Poems," and signed "From Wenying with one hundred obeisances in fear and anxiety."⁴⁰ Originally in Wu's own handwriting, the manuscript was included in the section Shupin 書品 as a calligraphic specimen. Though it is impossible now to trace the transmission of this draft from its provenance to its preservation in the Tiewang shanhu, the late Qing scholar Zheng Wenzhuo 鄭文焯 (1856-1918) has argued from circumstantial and textual evidence that these sixteen poems were all composed in the course of the year guimao, that is between January 1243 and February 1244 in the Western calendar.⁴¹

An examination of the poems yields no special order of arrangement, except for the placement of the first piece which was addressed to Fang Wanli 方萬里 (jinshi 1211), the recipient of the manuscript who held the office of Registrar at one of the Imperial Courts 寺簿 in Hangzhou at the time.⁴² To the tune Ruihe xian, the poem is subtitled "For celebrating your

venerable birthday in the year guimao." ⁴³ The poem begins with the lines:

Like a pulley turning, autumn comes again.
 I remember swiftly jotting down new lyrics,
 Entrusting them to the wild geese by the river.
 (QSC 2876/1)

Wu Wenying was sending this birthday poem along with a small collection of his recent compositions to the official Fang Wanli. Not only is the deferential phrasing of the signature revealing of Wu's humble status in relation to the addressee, but he also signed the manuscript with his personal name, which is used when an inferior person is addressing a high personage; these signs leave little doubt regarding this manuscript as an instrument of patronage-seeking. ⁴⁴ In modern parlance, Wu was attempting to 'market his talent' by presenting a manuscript of poems to an official in the capital on a suitable occasion. The number of poems included (sixteen) would also constitute an appropriately sized scroll for presentation. The target may have been Fang Wanli personally, or more broadly, the official coterie by virtue of connections. Of interest is the fact that three poems in this group are written to tunes that Wu himself had composed this year, indicating a marked period of creativity. ⁴⁵ The term "new lyrics" 新詞 in the title of the draft and also in the text of two poems then takes on a double meaning, denoting not simply newly written poems but also

incorporating the idea of newly composed tunes.⁴⁶

A degree of unrest in Wu's life can be discerned from the prefatory contents of some of these poems. They show, for example, that Wu made at least three trips to Hangzhou this year: once in spring, once in autumn, and then again in winter when he stayed through the lunar New Year.⁴⁷ His elder brother Weng Fenglong had also been in Hangzhou this winter.⁴⁸ Was Wu Wenying approaching some personal or financial crisis and seeking his brother's help as well? There is no way of telling. Definite answers cannot be provided for many questions concerning concrete details in Wu's life; an evolutionary movement, as it were, is all that can be mapped out.

One thing definite that can be repeated at this point about Wu Wenying is his obvious lack of personal interest in contemporary politics and government, evidenced by a near absence of poems expressing such concerns. This trait is of course a logical extension of that temperament which earlier eschewed the pursuit of a career among the official elite, and which the diverse and more permissive society of the Southern Song could comfortably accommodate. Xia Chengtao observes that, in the beginning years of the 1240s, while the Mongols were beginning to press southward across the border into Song territories, Wu was singing about a life that was completely divorced from political realities.⁴⁹ A poem written on the fifteenth of the first month in 1243 contains these lines:

I still remember when I first came to Wu Park,

No frost then, now it has flown
 To startle the hair at my temples.
 Sporting I have passed my time here
 Where the scenery is infinite
 With bright songs and pretty dances.
 Now stale marks on the traveler's robe,
 An old face in the ornate mirror,
 All my happiness is ended.
 Under the fading lamp my dream is brief,
 The morning horn plays "Plum Blossom"-
 For whom does it chant its lament?
 (QSC 2880/4)

These lines typically bespeak Wu's aesthetically oriented life of wine and song, his nostalgia for youth, and the absence of reference to the Southern Song's political realities. However, it may do well to remember that the expression of didacticism and realism is not typical of the ci genre, and in the case of Wu Wenying, that he was after all shaped by his role as a literary dependent, rather than as a concerned government official.

III. EMERGENCE OF VANISHED LOVE

After a winter, and perhaps spring as well, in Hangzhou, we find Wu Wenying temporarily lodging in the area outside Suzhou's Pan Gate in the early summer of 1244, as is stated in his preface to Manjiang hong (QSC 2877/1), written on the occasion of the Double Fifth Festival. The poem reveals a dissolved

relationship. Xia Chengtao has observed that all four poems dated to this year contain references to the same tragic event.⁵⁰ The significance of this event cannot be undermined by virtue of its profound influence on the thematic development of Wu Wenying's poetry; nearly one quarter of the total corpus of his poetry is devoted to various explorations on the theme of lost love.⁵¹

What is known of the actual circumstances surrounding the relationship remains vague and shadowy, nevertheless, a few details can be gleaned from some poems. During his early years in Suzhou, Wu took on a concubine with whom he domiciled for roughly a decade, and by whom he had more than one child.⁵² In the spring of 1244 they separated for reasons unknown. It seems that the concubine was dismissed, but at the same time, a feeling of helplessness can be sensed in the situation, and her departure left a deep wound in Wu's heart from which many poems of sorrow flowed. As speculated above, Wu's livelihood may have been particularly insecure at this time, and the concubine was sent away out of some unavoidable necessity. Toward the end of the year, even their children were left at a temple in Guajing 瓜涇, a little south of Suzhou, while Wu went to Zhejiang.⁵³

Xia Chengtao suggests that Wu's concubine subsequently became a prostitute in Hangzhou. A poem he quotes by Muoqi Shaozhi 万俟紹之 does lend support to this view.⁵⁴ To the tune Jiangshenzi and subtitled "Presented to a singing girl and sent to Mengchuang," the poem is thought by Xia to have been written for Wu's Suzhou concubine.⁵⁵ It is set in her voice and

sums up her plight:

- 1 Ten years-my heart's concern rises to my brows,
 Startled that a dream has faded,
 By the cold latticed window.
 Like cloud and catkin I follow the wind,
 5 For thousands of miles crossing mountains and passes.
 Nowhere can I find
 The soulmate who knew my lute's sound.
 Pale my powdered face,
 Loose the gold bracelet.
- 10 His poem scrolls in the jade casket
 I am loath to read.
 Remembering our former joy,
 I shed secret tears.
 I am already crossing over
 15 To Chang'an in a flying skiff.
 Please say for me that I am ravaged by grief,
 And seek from him
 A brocade missive in return.
 (QSC 2948/4)

From the content of the poem, it seems that Muoqi Shaozhi had encountered the woman who was Wu's concubine on her journey to Hangzhou after their separation. She spoke grievously of the broken affair and her present fate, and requested Muoqi to be

the messenger of her affliction. The only probable sequel, however, was a chance encounter between Wu and his former concubine a year or two later at West Lake in Hangzhou; the separation was to be permanent.⁵⁶

At this point, attention should be drawn to another equally affective relationship in Wu's life, of which a brief mention was made in the section on his early life. In past studies, the existence of this relationship is unanimously acknowledged, but concrete details concerning it are almost entirely lacking and its chronology has never been established. Xia Chengtao, after considerable examination of Wu's poems for clues, was able to determine that Wu Wenying met this concubine in Hangzhou, that she died sometime after he left, and that he discovered her death when he returned to Hangzhou some years later.⁵⁷

The poem Yingtí xù (QSC 2907/4) frames the Hangzhou love affair in a clear narrative sequence. Since the poem itself is not dated, it is not possible to fit the biographical elements it contains--the meeting, love affair, parting, her death, and his return--into any time slot in Wu's life. In the absence of any dated poems on the subject, I can only hazard the guess, based on the youthful feeling of this romance and the evidence that Wu had spent time in Hangzhou as a young man, that this affair took place before he took up residence in Suzhou as a cleric at the Grain Transport office.

The information apropos of these two relationships, however meagre, furnishes a meaningful context in which to understand the source for an important body of Wu Wenying's poetry.

IV. LATE YEARS: INTEGRITY VERSUS IMPROBITY OR A MAN WITHOUT PRINCIPLES

Evidence for Wu's last sojourn in Suzhou is provided by a poem he wrote in the autumn of 1245 (QSC 2921/4) celebrating the birthday of Wei Jun 魏峻, who was then Administrator of Suzhou.⁵⁸ For the next few years, he seemed to have stayed mainly in and around Hangzhou. There are poems from 1246 and 1247 indicating his presence in the area.⁵⁹ He continued much in the style of life he had established in Suzhou, playing the poet laureate for the officialdom at their social functions. Compared with the large number of lower grade officials and clerics, and private citizens of wealth that made up the composition of his circle of social interaction in his early years in Suzhou, his associations in this period belong more to the established high ranking bureaucracy. In prefaces to poems, we now find names such as Wei Jun, whose wife was no less than Emperor Lizong's sister, and who was recalled to the capital from Suzhou in the spring of 1246 for the promotion to Executive of the Ministry of Justice 刑部侍郎;⁶⁰ Li Boyu 李伯玉, the righteous Professor of the National University 太學博士 whose fame rose with his memorial in defense of two censors against the accusations of the power-monopolizing chief councillor Shi Songzhi 史嵩之;⁶¹ and an old friend and patron, Yin Huan, whose promotion in 1247 from the Grain Transport in the suburbs of the capital to that of Left Division Chief in the central government in Hangzhou was celebrated by Wu in two poems (QSC 2889/1, 2902/2).

At the same time, scattered through Wu's collection of poetry are a number of poems addressed to courtesans, Buddhist and Taoist nuns, a palace ritual attendant, a brush-maker, and the book-dealer Chen Qi 陳起,⁶² showing his contact with a spectrum of people who, like himself, are on the periphery of the elite status and yet dependent on this high society for patronage and support.⁶³ The existence of these poems point to the complex social fabric of urban centres such as Hangzhou of which Wu formed a part.

During the winter of 1249, Wu Wenying appears to have joined Wu Qian's staff in Shaoxing. Sources indicate that Wu Qian had held the offices of Administrator of Shaoxing 知紹興府 and Pacificator of Zhedong 浙東安撫使 from the eighth month of 1249 until the beginning of 1250.⁶⁴ The poem Jiangdu chun coincides with the circumstances; its preface states, "Inscribed on the lantern screen at Penglai Pavilion-Lüweng (Wu Qian) is commanding Yue" (QSC 2911/3). Shaoxing prefecture, referred to as Yue, was where Penglai Pavilion was located.⁶⁵ Wu Qian we have met many years ago, in 1217, when he and Weng Fenglong both became jinshi. The sociality between Wu Qian and Wu Wenying goes back at least to 1237 and 1238, when he was Administrator of Suzhou.

It was also during these years after he left Suzhou that Wu Wenying made the acquaintance of Jia Sidao 賈似道 (1213-1275), the "bad last minister" who became the incontrovertible arch villain in Southern Song history.⁶⁶ Because of the animosity which later arose between Wu Qian and Jia Sidao, and

of Wu Qian's subsequent demotion, banishment, and supposed murder by the foul machinations of Jia Sidao, much ink has been spilled over the existence of eight poems in Wu Wenying's collection, four each addressed to Wu Qian and Jia Sidao, and the possible moral implications of Wu Wenying's involvement with the two political antagonists.⁶⁷ The origin of this concern stems from the critical judgment passed on Wu Wenying the man by the editors of the Siku quanshu 四庫全書 in the eighteenth century when they remarked that "...there are several pieces celebrating the birthday of Jia Sidao. This shows that he (Wu Wenying) probably lost his principles late in life, like Zhu Dunru 朱敦儒 and Lu You 陸游."⁶⁸ Subsequent attempts to salvage or condemn Wu Wenying's moral character or lack of it have hinged on the dating of one particular poem to Jia Sidao (QSC 2909/3), on whether or not it was written prior to the final enmity between the two men which led to Wu Qian's exile in 1260. In her definitive study of this aspect of Wu Wenying's life, Yeh Chia-ying has proven beyond doubt that this poem was written precisely at the time when Wu Qian was being demoted from the rank of Left Grand Councillor 左丞相 and banished, while Jia Sidao, in his position as Right Grand Councillor 右丞相, was being recalled to court in the summer of 1260.⁶⁹

The case in point is not simply that Wu Wenying had compromised his relationship with Wu Qian specifically, as has often been the emphasis in the past, but that more fundamentally Wu Wenying, as his lifestyle and actions demonstrate, did not follow a rational code of Confucian principles and ideals.

Furthermore, in examining the "friendship" between Wu Wenying and Wu Qian which dates back to Wu Wenying's Suzhou days, it is not at all clear what the real nature of their relationship was. From the poems they exchanged, it can be seen that Wu Wenying accompanied Wu Qian on a number of social occasions, such as outings and banquets, and there is a suggestion of a degree of serious reflection and communication between them, as that conveyed in the poem Jinlǔ ge, subtitled "Viewing plum blossoms at Canglang Garden in the company of Mr. Lǔzhai." (QSC 2939/5). Unfortunately, the extant poems they exchanged are too few—seven in total—to provide a firm basis for speculation, much less a conclusive statement on their relationship.⁷⁰ Taking into account the positive factors of a plausible initial connection through Weng Fenglong and the length of time they have known each other, it is still not certain that, as far as Wu Qian was concerned, Wu Wenying was ever more than a literary guest-friend whose talented and sensitive presence provided occasional desirable company and diversion from the routine of official duties. In other words, there was nothing really indispensable about Wu Wenying; he played a role which could be adequately replaced by any number of people in his class. Wu Wenying's younger brother Weng Yuanlong, for example, also enjoyed some form of patronage from Wu Qian during the latter's administratorship of Qingyuan prefecture 慶元府 (i.e., Siming) from 1255 to 1258.⁷¹ In neither case was there any sign of mutual commitment. Officials with their frequent transfers from one posting to another did not as a rule take along their

literary entourage. The general practice seems to have been for drifting scholar-artists to seek out aristocrats and high officials as short-term patrons, earning cash and other rewards for a living from their visits to these households. The late Song and early Yuan writer Fang Hui 方回 (1227-1307) gives a vivid account of the situation in Wu Wenying's lifetime:

After the Qingyuan and Jiading reigns (1195-1201, 1210-1225), there began to appear poets acting as visiting guests (of prominent officials). People like Liu Guo of Longzhou were many, and Stone Screen (Dai Fugu) was one of them. These people followed one another to form a fashion to the extent that they would not study for the civil service examination. They sought the letters of one or two people in important positions as a reference, which they called the 'broad tablet,' to be supplemented with their own poems, and often in one visit obtained several thousand, or even ten thousand cash. For instance, Song Qianfu of Hushan, in one visit paid to Jia Sidao, obtained 200,000 cash, which he used to build a luxurious house. The lakes and hills of Qiantang (i.e., Hangzhou) were full of such people forming groups of tens and hundreds.⁷²

The nature of the association between Wu Wenying and Jia Sidao is even more tenuous and completely lacking in concrete details. The only evidence to go on are four poems addressed to Jia by Wu Wenying, two written on the occasion of Jia's birthday and two describing Jia's residences in Hangzhou. Were these poems aimed at gaining some favour from Jia, immediate or otherwise? Jia was known to have been a notorious megalomaniac who relished ci poems celebrating his birthday to the extent that he conducted poetry competitions on these yearly occasions. Winners were lavishly rewarded.⁷³ It is quite conceivable that Wu would have participated, if not in the actual competitions,

then in presenting lyrics as a means to obtain material reward and patronage, or an influential introduction or recommendation from Jia to other prospective patrons. The circumstances of the last years of Wu Wenying's life could suggest just such an intermediary function that Jia Sidao may have fulfilled.

Wu Qian's fall and Jia Sidao's simultaneous rise to the monopoly of power were tied to the question of succession to the heirless Lizong. When Lizong sought Wu Qian's advice concerning his intention to designate his brother Prince Sirong's 嗣榮王 son (the future Duzong) heir apparent, Wu Qian not only refrained from giving any advice, but did so in such a blunt manner as to imply Lizong's own questionable succession to the throne so that he incurred the emperor's great displeasure. Jia Sidao, on learning of the incident, acted opportunistically by memorializing for the naming of the heir apparent, thereby gaining Lizong's confidence.⁷⁴

In the fourth month of 1260, while Jia Sidao was being summoned to the capital, Wu Qian was stripped of his office as chief councillor and demoted. Once back in court, Jia swiftly manipulated Wu Qian's exile to Jianchang Commandery 建昌軍 in Jiangxi in the seventh month of 1260. Meanwhile, the heir apparent had entered the Eastern Palace and Jia Sidao had been given the additional title of Lesser Preceptor of the Heir Apparent 太子少師. In the tenth month, Wu Qian was further exiled to Chaozhou 潮州 in the far south.

Where was Wu Wenying around this time? From all appearances, he was gravitating towards Jia Sidao and his

circle. In the autumn of 1259, Wu wrote a farewell poem (QSC 2906/1) to Weng Mengyin 翁孟寅 who was on his way to Jia Sidao's retinue in Hubei. Belonging to the class of "visiting poets" which Fang Hui described, Weng Mengyin was no stranger to Jia Sidao's company and extravagant generosity. Zhou Mi tells of how well Weng Mengyin was received by Jia Sidao in Yangzhou when the latter was administrator there in 1250. Jia was reportedly so pleased with Weng's parting poem that he showered Weng with "tens of thousands" of precious drinking vessels used at the banquet.⁷⁵ Now in 1259, while Jia was in Hubei as Special Great Commissioner for Jinghubei circuits 荆湖南北宣撫大使, Weng Mengyin was perhaps journeying there to seek his fortune again from Jia. Wu Wenying took the opportunity to eulogize Jia Sidao in the poem to Weng by likening him to the talented Han official Jia Yi 賈誼, playing on the same surname. Wu wrote the poem Jinzhanzi (QSC 2909/3) in the summer of 1260, singing about Jia Sidao's sumptuous lifestyle and residence by West Lake, shortly after Jia's triumphant recall to Hangzhou and during the months when misfortunes befell Wu Qian. By the eighth month, Wu Wenying seems to have been securely ensconced as resident poet at the royal estate in Shaoxing of the heir apparent's natural parents, Prince Sirong and his wife. One can only take a guess at the connections through which he managed to enter into the protection of this aristocratic household.

There are altogether eight poems in Wu Wenying's collection to Prince Sirong and his wife. In view of the unmistakable allusions to the crown prince, five of these poems are dated to

after the sixth month of 1260, that is, after Prince Sirong's son had been designated heir apparent.⁷⁶ That Wu Wenying probably enjoyed at this time the most secure and extended patronage in his life is indicated by his references to Prince Sirong in these poems by alluding to Liang Xiaowang 梁孝王 of the Han, who was famous for being a patron to many scholars, and also by the four birthday poems to Prince Sirong and his wife, which can safely be assumed to have been composed on more than one birthday.

Wu Wenying died in the early 1260's.⁷⁷ His last years, probably until his death, were spent at the royal residence of Prince Sirong. In retrospect, it can be seen that Wu Wenying had lived for the greater part of his life as a "guest-poet" supported by the patronage of officials and aristocrats. The class of career poets was a growing phenomenon in the second half of the Southern Song, and, to all appearances, was well accepted by contemporary upper-class society. Some well-known figures of the Lakes and Rivers School lived this mode of life. Among ci poets, the most exalted "guest" is undoubtedly Jiang Kui 姜夔 (c.1155-c.1221), whose celebrated literary association with his one-time patron, the poet-statesman Fan Chengda 范成大 (1120-93), was almost a legend in its own time.⁷⁸ The nature and extent of these artist-patron relationships varied widely: there are ones between fellow pleasure-seekers at parties, ones between bureaucrat and secretary-cum-literary advisor, and in some cases, between close friends and long-term companions. Ironically, of all patrons,

Jia Sidao can claim pride for having had a rare friend in a literary retainer who remained faithful to him even after he fell from power, and who eventually chose suicide rather than humiliation for his association with Jia.⁷⁹ But the question of loyalty is circumstantial and seldom arises out of context.

Apparently Wu Wenying did not feel that his relationship with Wu Qian warranted absolute loyalty. Therefore we find an extant poem addressed to Jia Sidao written after Wu Qian had been demoted and sent into exile. There is no indication that Wu Wenying was criticized for this by his contemporaries. Zhou Mi, who recorded countless gossips and opinions current in the late Song, certainly made no mention of it and only thought the best of Wu Wenying as a ci poet. This breach of integrity was first commented on by the editors in the Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao, which was written in a period when the issue of loyalty was a sensitive one.⁸⁰ Still no literary critic during the Qing paid any heed to this moral blemish in Wu Wenying's life. Only with the growing repute of Wu Wenying's ci in the late Qing did this biographical detail make its appearance in prefaces written to several editions of his ci printed in the period.⁸¹

Although Wu Wenying's uncertain affiliation with both Jia Sidao and Wu Qian may be a point of biographical interest, in itself, it does not bear relevance to the study of his poetry. It is rather the lifestyle he adopted as poet in the late Song period which is of significance. This mode of life is often reflected in the subject and occasion of his composition. As a period phenomenon, it fostered particular concerns in the

writing of ci. Wu Wenying's ci stands in the fore of developments in Southern Song ci poetry which mirror the aesthetic tendencies in the late Song zeitgeist. These are areas which will be explored in the following chapters.

1 In writing a biography of Wu Wenying, the lack of official documentation on his life necessitates the reliance on various contemporary 13th century sources--such as, the works of other poets and scholar-officials, informal essay-type records of people and events, anthologies of ci poetry, and local gazetteers--for furnishing information significant in shedding light on both the life and personality of the principal and on the society in which he was active. Data, either in the official history or in informal writings, on the people he associated with have proved helpful in reconstructing certain periods in his life. But Wu Wenying's own prefaces (subtitles) to his poems, in the general absence of material, are no less important as a source of information, for they often contain circumstantial factors--date, place, and occasion of composition, and the person to whom the poem is addressed. In fact, they provide the starting point of any search for his obscure life. This biographical sketch follows basically the chronology established by Xia Chengtao in "Wu Mengchuang xinian," in Tang Song ciren nianpu (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1979), pp.455-491. Yang Tiefu's "Mengchuang shiji kao," in Mengchuang ci quanji jianshi (Taipei: Haixue chubanshe, 1975), pp.359-378, is also consulted. In places where they differ, I have generally favoured Xia's more solid scholarship. A recent article by Chen Bangyan proposes 1212 to post-1272 for Wu Wenying's dates. I find his evidence insufficient and his argument unconvincing. See Chen

Bangyan, "Wu Mengchuang shengzu nian guanjian," Wenxue yichan, 1 (1983), 64-67.

- ² For a summary of the southward shift of the demographic, economic, and cultural centres of gravity in Song times, see Ho Ping-ti, Ladder of Success in Imperial China (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1964), pp.226-230. The fundamental shift took place after the An Lushan Rebellion when the Tang court began to rely chiefly on the south for financial support. See Denis Twitchett, ed., Cambridge History of China, Vol.3:1 (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1979), pp.22-24.

- ³ See E. A. Kracke, Jr., "Region, Family and Individual in the Examination System," in Chinese Thought and Institutions, ed. John K. Fairbank (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1957), pp.255-57.

- ⁴ Between the years 1214-1232 approximately 15% of the successful candidates from Zhejiang province hailed from Yin County. This information is based on figures in juan 127 of Zhejiang tongzhi, comp. Shen Yiji et al. (1736; rpt. Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1934).

- ⁵ Baoqing Siming zhi, comp. Luo Jun and Fang Wanli, in Song Yuan difangzhi congshu (Taipei: Zhongguo dizhi yanjiuhui, 1978)), Vol.8, j.10/13b

- ⁶ Both Xia Chengtao and Yang Tiefu agree on this as the most common and natural explanation for the discrepancy. See Tang Song ciren nianpu, p.456 and Wu Mengchuang ci quanji jianshi, p.361. An alternative suggested by Liu Yusong (quoted by Xia Chengtao in Tang Song ciren nianpu, p.456), that Wu Wenying's mother may have had a lowly position in the Weng household, i.e. a maid/concubine, and that after giving birth to Wu Wenying may have remarried into a Wu household, is discredited by Xia and Yang on the basis that since Wu Wenying is the second-born of the three brothers, his mother could not have returned to the Wengs to have the third son. My position is that, without further evidence, no conclusive statement can be made on this issue. However, Liu's theory is tenable if we do not exclude the possibility of Wu Wenying and the two Wengs being half brothers, in other words, Weng Fenglong and Weng Yuanlong's mother would be the principal wife or concubine, and Wu's mother, a secondary concubine who, when remarried, took him along to her new family.
- ⁷ Li E, Songshi jishi (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1937), vol.10, 1671. For Song official titles I follow E. A. Kracke Jr., Translation of Sung Civil Service Titles (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1957).
- ⁸ Weng Fenglong's collected poetry is not extant. The Songshi jishi records two poems by him, ibid.

- ⁹ This school was composed of poets who did not take official service and lived in retirement; its members were active towards the end of the 12th century and the first quarter of the 13th century. On Dai Fugu and this school, cf. Yoshikawa Kojiro, An Introduction to Sung Poetry (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1967), pp.175-179.
- ¹⁰ Shiping shiji (Sibu congkan xubian ed.), j.6/46b.
- ¹¹ The edition of Wu Wenying's ci used is in Quan Song ci (hereafter QSC), comp. Tang Guizhang (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), Vol.4, 2873-942. References are to the page number, and after the slant, to the numerical order on the page of the poem cited. In subsequent chapters, only volume and page reference will be cited.
- ¹² The preface reads, "I ascended Yanyi with Guiweng to view the snow, and reminisced about our excursion on horse to Broken Bridge one morning in the 12th month of the year guimao (1243)." Thus it dates the present poem post 1243.
- ¹³ Zhou Mi, Haoranzhai yatan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 170. There are twenty ci poems by Weng Yuanlong extant, see QSC, Vol.4, 2942-46.
- ¹⁴ The postscript is in Du Qingxian ji, Siku quanshu zhenben erji (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1971), j.17/13a-14b.

¹⁵ The preface to an undated poem (QSC 2903/1) reads, "It has already been thirty-five years since I went with Jiang Shizhou to travel along the rivers Tiao and Xia. Returning now I am grieved by the present and memories of the past, so I wrote this poem to sing my feelings." The Tiao and Xia are two rivers in Zhejiang; the Tiao passes through Hangzhou and Deqing, and when it reaches Wuxing it becomes the Xia River. The time indicated in this preface may coincide with Wu's first or second trip to Deqing (see text following). In any case, it shows that Wu had traveled in his youth. For visits to Hangzhou, see QSC 2930/5 (lines 10-14), 2891/1, 2935/1 (lines 23-28); Chang'an in these poems stand for Hangzhou. On the love affair, see Section 3.

¹⁶ See Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, pp.459-60.

¹⁷ As Deqing lies north of Hangzhou, in order to travel from the coastal district Siming which lies southeast of it, the normal course would be to go west through Shaoxing fu, the provincial capital of Zhedong circuit, then north through Hangzhou.

¹⁸ As ci became a literary genre in the hands of scholar-officials not so well versed in music, "filling in words" 填詞 came to be the standard practice. On this practice, see Glen Baxter, "Metrical Origins of the Tz'u," in Studies in Chinese Literature, ed. John L. Bishop (Cambridge: Harvard

Univ. Press, 1966), pp.187-88. Although it was the vogue among late Southern Song ci poets to pay much attention to the musical aspect of ci, Wu Wenying was among the few ci poets who actually composed some of their own tunes.

¹⁹ Yang Tiefu, Wu Mengchuang ci quanji jianshi, p.361.

²⁰ Suzhou (i.e., Pingjiang fu) was one of the three main centres of grain transport and storage in the Southern Song. Rice, as regular tax grain and special requisitions, was transported by canal to Suzhou. See Caoyun (Grain Transport) section in Song shi, comp. Tuo Tuo (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), Vol.13, 4250-61. During the Song, the circuit fiscal intendant had charge of grain transport and storage. To be employed at the granary or grain transport office probably meant being on the clerical staff under the fiscal intendant. See Zheng Qian, Cixuan (Taipei:Huaguan chubanshe, 1972)), p.131. Also cf. entry on zhuanyunshi in Songshi, Vol.12, 3964-65.

²¹ For the dating of this poem, see Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, p.460-461.

²² That Wu Wenying was with the Grain Transport Office for some time is suggested by the following: (a) There are four poems with prefaces that make direct mention of the Grain Transport Office and of the names of certain colleagues (QSC 2899/4,

2916/3, 2920/3, 2926/2). It is reasonable to assume that these were written over an extended period. The only dated poem, as stated in the text, is from 1232; (b) The preface to Mulanhua man, "An excursion to Tiger Hill with colleagues from the Grain Transport. At this time Wei Yizhai has already been selected for transfer, and Chen Fenku and Li Fang'an will soon finish their terms" (QSC 2916/3), implies that he had seen the arrival and departure of colleagues at the Grain Transport Office in relation to their terms of service.

²³ Poems which suggest travel on assignment are: Jinzhanzi (QSC 2909/4), Yan qingdu (QSC 2883/3), Xi qian ying (QSC 2918/3). Some poems with references to Hangzhou during this period are Tan fang xin (QSC 2919/1) and Liu shao qing (QSC 2928/5).

²⁴ This is a class of wandering poets, including some of the poets of the "Lakes and Rivers" School such as Dai Fugu, who did not study for the civil service examination but tried to live on their poetic talents by seeking out prominent officials as patrons. Two poems from this period were written to Sun Weixin (1179-1243), one of the well-known eccentrics of this group (QSC 2904/2, 2923/2). On Sun Weixin, see Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978), pp.34, 56-57, and 197.

²⁵ Ding Yu (QSC 2888/2 and 4, 2899/3, 2901/1, 2918/1, 2921/1), Mao Hetang (2892/2, 2896/5, 2904/3, 2905/3, 2914/3, 2922/4, 2924/2, 2934/1), Guo Xidao (2893/2, 2899/2, 2911/1, 2912/1, 2918/1, 2920/3, 2925/4) and Li Fang'an (2904/2, 2916/3, 2919/1, 2927/2) all appear to have belonged to the same coterie. Moreover, they all seem to have owned rather extensive properties with gardens and villas where incessant banquets and gatherings were held. Though Suzhou was a prosperous textile and trading centre in the Song, I hesitate to suggest that any of these people could have been wealthy merchants. First of all, the traditional scorn held toward the mercantile class would have discouraged interaction. If, however, some of these people were indeed nouveaux riches of merchant background, the information would have been discreetly suppressed in a literary record such as a preface to a poem.

²⁶ For a concise account of the relationship between the economic prosperity of the Southern Song and the upper classes' style of living, cf. Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition, pp.13-16.

²⁷ On such occasions Wu would not be alone as the versifier. Often there would be other poets and participants, making a kind of poetry contest. One custom referred to involved carving a notch in the side of a candle. The duration of the contest would be the time it took for the candle to burn down

to the notch. See Yan qing du, 1.14 (QSC 2883/3) and Jiang du chun, 1.4 (QSC 2911/2).

²⁸ It is recorded in the Xianchun Lin'an zhi, a Song Hangzhou gazetteer, that Yin Huan was a supervisory official in 1246, and in 1247 he was promoted to the Left Division 左司. See j.50/11b, in Song Yuan difangzhi congshu, Vol.7. Wu Wenying, however, refers to Yin being promoted to the position of Right Division Chief 右司 in the preface to Fengchi yin (QSC 2902/2). This discrepancy may be an instance of textual corruption in the transmission of Wu's collection of poetry. Yin Huan's collection of poetry, entitled Meijin ji 梅津集, is not extant. QSC records three ci poems by him, see Vol.4, 2708.

²⁹ Thirteen selections are found scattered in Yangchun baixue, compiled by Zhao Wenli circa 1244, Yueyatang congshu ed. Huang Sheng included nine in juan 10 of Zhongxing yilai juemiao cixuan, in his anthology Hua'an cixuan (Preface 1249; rpt. Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), pp.354-57.

³⁰ Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 229.

³¹ See Zhang Yan (1248-1320?), Ciyuan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 201. From Zhang Yan's phrasing, it seems that this work was already lost or hard to come by even in his day.

- ³² Zhou Mi and Zhang Yan, two of Wu's younger contemporaries, both wrote ci poems as colophons to this manuscript. Zhou Mi's poem Yulou chi (QSC 3288/3) is subtitled "Inscribed on Wu Mengchuang's Shuanghua yu Ci Collection. Zhang Yan's collection contains two poems on this subject. Sheng sheng man (QSC 3481/4) has two subtitle versions: "On a remaining calligraphy by Wu Mengchuang," and "Inscribed at the end of Mengchuang's manuscript with his own tune composition Shuanghua yu;" Zui luopo (QSC 3496/4) is subtitled "Inscribed on the ci manuscript in Wu Mengchuang's own handwriting in the collection of Zhao Xiagu."
- ³³ Zhongxing yilai juemiao cixuan, in Hua'an cixuan, p.354. It is difficult to say absolutely whether this collection is the same as the handwritten manuscript Shuanghua yu as the latter's date of compilation is not established. Since the poem to the tune Shuanghua yu (QSC 2901/2) is about an excursion to Stone Lake in the Suzhou environ, Xia Chengtao speculates that Shuanghua yu could either be the manuscript collection of his poetry made in the Suzhou period, or it could be a collection that was made in his old age. See Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, p.482. Judging from internal evidence (1.6 and 8), this poem seems to be a work dating from after his sojourn in Suzhou. This being the case, the handwritten manuscript that bears the same title would necessarily be from a later period.

- ³⁴ In Wuxian zhi, comp. Wu Xiuzhi et al. (1933; rpt. Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1970), Vol.1, 100. juan 7.
- ³⁵ Shi Miyuan's biography is in Song shi, Vol.35, 12415-19. A powerful chief councillor during Ningzong's reign (1195-1224), Shi engineered the murder of his predecessor, the infamous Han Tuo Zhou 韓侂胄. His other notorious act was the arbitrary deposition of the designated heir apparent and the installment of Lizong as the next emperor after Ningzong's death. Indebted to Shi Miyuan, Lizong showered favours on his descendants, among them Shi Zhaizhi.
- ³⁶ Basic Annals of Lizong, Song shi, Vol.1, 799.
- ³⁷ Lu Xiong, Suzhou fuzhi (1379; Seikado Bunko), j.8/5a.
- ³⁸ Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, p.463. The poem, written to the tune Qi tian yue, is discussed in Ch.3, Sec.3.
- ³⁹ See Shidao pitai 詩道否泰 entry in Zhou Mi's Qidong yeyu (Xuejin taoyuan ed.), j.16/8a-9a. Zhou states that after the incident over the publication of subversive poetry in the Rivers and Lakes Collection, the writing of shi poetry was suppressed by Shi Miyuan from 1225-1227, and that it was due to Shi's son, Shi Zhaizhi, and son-in-law, Zhao Rumei's 趙汝謀 interest in poetry that the ban was lifted two years later.

⁴⁰ Tiewang shanhu, comp. Zhu Cunli (Rpt. Taipei: Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, 1966), Vol.2, 463-70. Also in Siming congshu, comp. Zhang Shouyong (1936; rpt. Taipei: Guofang yanjiuyuan, 1966), Vol.1, pt.2. The QSC page references to these sixteen poems are, in the order found in the manuscript: Ruihe xian 2876/1, Qin yuan chun 2905/5, Yulou chi 2909/2, Gu xiang man 2941/4, Qi tian yue 2884/4, Si jiake 2933/1, Su wu man 2887/4, Basheng Ganzhou 2926/3, Tan fang xin 2902/1, Jiangnan chun 2900/3, Shuילong yin 2879/1, Bai xingyue man 2818/4, Xi ping yue 2891/1, Ding xiang jie 2889/2, Hua fan 2893/2, Huan jing le 2888/3.

⁴¹ Zheng Wenzhuo, Mengchuang ci jiaoyi, in Siming congshu, comp. Zhang Shouyong, Vol.1, pt.2; partially quoted in Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, p.466.

⁴² Fang was co-author of the gazetteer Baoqing Siming zhi, preface dated 1227, see A Sung Bibliography, ed. Yves Hervouet (Hong Kong: The Chinese Univ. Press, 1978), pp.143-44.

⁴³ The QSC version of the subtitle follows that found in Mao Jin's Jiguge 汲古閣 edition, which reads: "In guimao (1243) celebrating the birthday of the Court Registrar Fang Huiyan." The Tiewang shanhu version, based on Wu Wenying's own handwritten manuscript, is more reliably the original and therefore given here. For a similar reason and for

contextual sense, in the first line of the poem, the Tiewang shanhu variant 'autumn' rather than the QSC 'spring,' is adopted.

⁴⁴ See n.32 on the various handwritten manuscripts by Wu Wenying appreciated by Zhou Mi and Zhang Yan, which were either in circulation or in private collections in the late Song and early Yuan. Their existence corroborates the function of certain manuscripts postulated here.

⁴⁵ Gu xiang man, Tan fang xin, and Jiangnan chun. See n.40 for page references.

⁴⁶ In the same sense as that immortalized by Jiang Kui's usage of the term in his shi poem about his two most famous tunes which he had just composed. The relevant lines read: "The rhymes of my newly composed tunes are most charming, while Xiao Hong sings quietly I play the flute." See Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition, p.53. Wu Wenying's line, in a poem written on New Year's eve in 1243, reads, "Singing my new tunes I see the year off." (QSC 2934/6)

⁴⁷ The poems which indicate his respective presence in Hangzhou are Xi ping le (spring), QSC 2891/1, and Qin yuan chun (autumn), QSC 2905/5, both in the Tiewang shanhu manuscript, and Liu shao qing (QSC 2928/5) and Si jiake (QSC 2934/6).

⁴⁸ See preface to Liu shao qing (QSC 2928/5).

⁴⁹ Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, p.465.

⁵⁰ The four poems are, in the order in which they were composed: Manjiang hong (QSC 2877/1), Feng qi wu (2937/5), Wei fan (2928/1), and Xi qian ying (2918/4). See Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, pp.467-68.

⁵¹ Termed huairen ci 懷人詞 in Chinese. Yang Tiefu (Yu Wu Mengchuang ci quanji jianshi, pp.364-67) cites 102 titles pertaining to this category. See also the ones cited in Xia Chengtao, ibid., pp.467-70.

⁵² The preface to Xi qian ying (QSC 2918/4) reads, "In 1244, on the winter solstice I went to live in Yue (Zhejiang), while my sons were left at Xiao Temple in Guajing." Also, line 15 in Yu zhu xin (QSC 2881/1), "I remember it was when you were tired of embroidery and desired sour things," seems to refer to the concubine's pregnancy, the desire for sour things and fatigue being common symptoms of pregnancy.

⁵³ See n.52. Nothing more is heard about the children.

⁵⁴ No information exists concerning Wu's acquaintance with Muoqi Shaozhi, whose great-grandfather, Muoqi Xue 万俟卨 was one of the officials who plotted Yue Fei's death with Qin Kui.

⁵⁵ Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, pp.468-69.

⁵⁶ The second stanza of Sao hua you (QSC 2886/1) describes what seems to be a chance meeting with his former concubine during the Cold Food Festival. Yang Tiefu dates this poem to 1245, see Yang Tiefu, Wu Mengchuang ci quanji jianshi, pp.54-55.

⁵⁷ Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, p.469.

⁵⁸ For the dating of this poem, see ibid., p.470.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp.471-72.

⁶⁰ QSC 2904/1 and ibid., p.471.

⁶¹ QSC 2911/2 and ibid., p.471.

⁶² QSC 2885/4. Chen Qi was the Hangzhou bookdealer who compiled and published the poetic works of his contemporaries in an anthology called the Rivers and Lakes Collection from which the "Rivers and Lakes" school derived its name. On the incident over certain subversive political comments in the collection, see Yoshikawa Kojiro, An Introduction to Sung Poetry, pp.175-77. When Wu Wenying became acquainted with Chen Qi in the late 1240s and early 1250s, the affair lay at least twenty years in the past. Wu's poem alludes to the reclusive life Chen was leading now.

- ⁶³ The term guirenjia 貴人家 (noble or wealthy household) which Wu used a few times leads one to suspect that he keenly felt the distinction between his own commoner status and the elite status of the wealthy and prestigious. See QSC 2938/4, and 2920/4, and 2906/2.
- ⁶⁴ Basic Annals of Lizong, Song shi, Vol.1, 841.
- ⁶⁵ Wang Xiangzhi, Yudi jisheng (preface 1221; rpt. Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1960), Vol.1, 103.
- ⁶⁶ Biography in Song shi, Vol.39, 13779-87. Cf. the modern reappraisal by Herbert Franke, "Chia Ssu-tao (1213-1275): A 'bad last minister'?", in Confucian Personalities, ed. Arthur Wright (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1962), pp.215-34.
- ⁶⁷ Cf. (a) Liu Yusong's long preface in defense of Wu's character in "Mengchuang cigao zhuke xuba" in Siming congshu, comp. Zhang Shouyong, Vol.1, pt.2, (b) Hu Yunyi's disparaging remarks in Songci yanjiu (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1926), p.179, (c) Xia Chengtao's special essay on the subject, "Mengchuang wannian yu Jia Sidao jujiao bian," in Tang Song ciren nianpu, pp.484-86, and (d) Yeh Chia-ying's detailed examination of this problem in "Chaisui qibaoloutai: tan Mengchuang ci zhi xiandaiguan," in Jialing tanci (Taipei: Chunwenxue congshu, 1970), pp.188-97.

- ⁶⁸ Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1933), Vol.4, 4447.
- ⁶⁹ See Yeh Jialing, Jialing tanci, pp.231-36.
- ⁷⁰ There are four poems to Wu Qian in Wu Wenying's collection (QSC 2893/5, 2905/2, 2911/3, 2939/5), and three to Wu Wenying in Wu Qian's collection (QSC 2730/2, 2735/1, 2741/8).
- ⁷¹ The gazetteer Baoqing Siming xuzhi (preface 1259, in Song Yuan difangzhi congshu, Vol.8) covers the period from 1255-1258 when Wu Qian was Administrator of Qingyuan fu. It contains three juan of shi poetry by Wu Qian written in that period. There are two shi poems addressed to Weng Yuanlong in j.10 and four ci poems in j.11 and 12. Page references for the ci poems in the QSC are: 2746/4, 2747/1 and 2, 2762/3.
- ⁷² Fang Hui, Yingkui lusui (Siku quanshu zhenben baji), j.20/73b-74a; trans. Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition, p.34. I have changed the romanization to pinyin.
- ⁷³ See entry Jiaxiang shouci 賈相壽詞 in Zhou Mi, Qidong yeyu (Xuejin taoyuan ed), j.12/10b-12b.
- ⁷⁴ On Lizong's enthronement, see n.35. The information for the

conflict between Wu Qian and Jia Sidao are found in their respective biographies and the Basic Annals of Lizong in the Song shi.

⁷⁵ Haoranzhai yatan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 174.

⁷⁶ QSC 2879/4, 2882/5, 2885/2, 2886/5, 2915/2.

⁷⁷ The generally accepted date of Wu Wenying's death as suggested by Xia Chengtao is between 1260 and 1262. See Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren Nianpu, p.480. The reason he gives to support the choice is that important events in the next few years which might have been reflected in Wu's poetry, such as the completion in the first month of 1262 of Jia Sidao's imperially bestowed residence, the Houleyuan 後樂園, by West Lake, Wu Qian's death in the sixth month of 1262, Duzong's enthronement in the tenth month of 1264, and Prince Sirong's investiture as Regional Commandant of Wukang and Ningjiang 武康寧江節度使 in the eleventh month of 1264, are completely absent.

⁷⁸ See Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition, pp.53-54.

⁷⁹ A scholar by the name of Liao Yingzhong. See biographical note and two ci by him (one is a birthday poem to Jia Sidao) in QSC 5/3318. See also Herbert Franke, "Chia Ssu-tao,"

pp.232-33.

⁸⁰ For the historical background of the Siku quanshu, see L. C. Goodrich, The Literary Inquisition of Ch'ien-lung (Baltimore: Waverly Press, 1935).

⁸¹ These prefaces are collected in Siming congshu, comp. Zhang Shouyong, vol.1, pt.1.

II. THE ART OF SOUTHERN SONG CI

I. INTRODUCTION

By the time Wu Wenying wrote his ci poems in the mid thirteenth century, the ci genre had evolved from its origins in popular lyrics in the late Tang and Five Dynasties period to a highly refined and sophisticated art form toward the end of the Southern Song. The process of transformation in the hands of innovative ci poets who brought new stylistic and thematic dimensions to the genre through their practice has been delineated in several modern studies. Most studies, however, focus on the germinal period in the development of the ci, that is, from the late Tang through the Northern Song period. Therefore only works by significant poets of that time period of generic watersheds are dealt with.¹ The transition from Northern Song to Southern Song in the development of the ci is often regarded by modern Chinese literary historians, albeit implicitly, as a transition from maturity to decadence, from creativity to stagnation and artificiality, or at best, to a mannered and overwrought sophistication. The account given by Liu Dajie 刘大杰 in his standard, oft-quoted History of the Development of Chinese Literature, after drawing on various views of past critics, concludes with the judgment that:

The Southern Song produced many musicians, therefore its ci poetry has beauty of musical rhythm and of diction, formalistic elegance and antiquarian flavour. But it lacks life and character.²

Lu Kuanru 陸侃如 and Feng Yuanjun 馮沅君 in their work, History of Chinese Poetry, describe the state of ci poetry in the Southern Song as having gone from its zenith to its decline.³ Hu Shi 胡適 calls it disparagingly the ci of craftsmen⁴ and Wang Guowei is well known for his extreme negative bias against Southern Song ci.⁵

This adverse view is by no means the only view. Southern Song ci poetry has enjoyed its share of enthusiasts and defenders as well. The Qing scholar and poet Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊 opined that "only in the Southern Song did the ci attain perfection, and only at the end of the Song did it exhaust its transformations."⁶ Wang Guowei complains that ci poets who came after Zhu Yizun too often succumbed to his opinion.⁷

Literary history indicates that the evaluation of a genre, a period style, a particular school or poet is never absolute. Aesthetic standards are often a matter of changing taste, and change implies a relativity of values. What is appreciated and praised by one group or one age may be condemned by others. Often neglected authors are resurrected after long eclipse and given places of prominence in the literary pantheon. A given literary phenomenon, be it a particular genre, style, or school, may pass out of fashion, indeed become obsolete, before circumstances bring about its revival. A case in point is the ci genre. After the Mongols conquered the Song, ci gradually grew out of fashion as an effective poetic medium. Through the Yuan and Ming dynasties, few poets wrote ci and scarcely any

critical work on ci was produced during these centuries. Interestingly enough, in the Qing revival of ci, the Southern Song style as seen in the works of several representative poets came to be dominant. The poets and critics of major schools upheld its several representatives as unquestioned models for emulation in the writing of ci poetry.

What then characterizes this Southern Song style which is at once decadent and seminal? What were the concerns of ci poets at that time? Who were the influential figures and in what manner were they influential? How did Wu Wenying come to be regarded as a representative of this style? How does his poetry stand in relation to the poetics current in his time? And what stylistic characteristics constitute outstanding features of his poetry? Even if the ci had indeed ended with the Song dynasty these questions would still have relevance in an examination of generic demise, but in the light of the renaissance of ci in the Qing dynasty, their literary-historical significance is all the more crucial.

To answer some of the questions posed above, there are at least two areas that need some detailed investigation. One is the broader issue of period style, an issue which entails an elucidation of trends in Southern Song poetics. To do this, in addition to surveying developments in the Southern Song poetic scene, I will examine two important late Song treatises on ci poetry, the Yuefu zhimi 樂府指迷 and the Ciyuan 詞源. The other is of course the examination of the specifics of Wu Wenying's style which, from his own time down to the present

day, has elicited many controversial and diametrically opposed assessments. I believe the controversy surrounding Wu's style, especially among late Qing and modern critics, is a reflection of the larger split between partisans and detractors of the Southern Song style versus the Northern Song style; an examination of it will elucidate some of the broader issues involved. The final chapter discusses critical views on Wu Wenying's poetry.

Before a proper discussion of the Southern Song style of ci poetry is undertaken, some delimitation of the term "Southern Song" as a designation of a literary style is in order. Political history defines the Southern Song as the period which begins in 1127 with the fall of the Northern Song capital, Kaifeng, and the loss of the entire half of North China to the Jurchens, and ends in 1279 when the Mongols took over the rule of the whole of China. Literary history, however, does not necessarily parallel political history. As defined by Wellek and Warren, "a period" in literary history "is a time section dominated by a system of literary norms, standards, and conventions, whose introduction, spread, diversification, integration, and disappearance can be traced."⁸ Developments in the ci genre did not occur overnight with the political changeover. Ci poets such as Li Qingzhao 李清照 (1084-1147) and Zhu Dunru 朱敦儒 (c.1084-c.1175), who lived through the traumatic political transition, continued to write in a style that is relatively straightforward and allusion-free and generally associated with the overall Northern Song style,

though their themes and tone may have changed. Conversely, the roots of what is now commonly denoted as the Southern Song style are recognized as being traceable to the works of the Northern Song master, Zhou Bangyan. The Southern Song style should properly be called the late Southern Song style as its normative poetics did not crystallize until the generation of poets who wrote after the turn of the century, in the 1200s. Even when the prefix is not applied, in speaking of a Southern Song style, literary critics and historians are usually referring to the "late" style.

II. TRENDS IN SOUTHERN SONG CI POETRY-LATE 12TH CENTURY

The political situation in the first half of the Southern Song period produced ci poets with a distinct voice; these were the "patriotic poets" 愛國詞人, thus designated during the new dawn of Chinese nationalistic consciousness in the twentieth century. These poets often wrote in a grand and heroic manner (haofang 豪放) lamenting the fall of the Northern Song and expressing their pain and frustration at the Southern Song government's failings in revanche. Although the thematic and linguistic scope of the haofang style was developed and established in the Northern Song, notably by the versatile genius Su Shi 蘇軾 (1036-1101),⁹ as a period style, Southern Song patriotic-heroic poetry is constituted by the expressive voice of the poets which reveals a common concern and emotion. Shuen-fu Lin observes that "during the beginning decades of the Southern Song period, song-writers tended to adopt a strong rhythm and an intensely propositional language."¹⁰ He cites the

prolific Xin Qiji 辛弃疾 (1140-1207) as the prime example of this discursive trend. In my view, what I call the "expressive voice" and Lin's "strong rhythm and propositional language" are two sides of the same coin. Ci poems in this "expressive" mode tend to be written with hypotactic syntax-the necessary linguistic medium for propositional language, the incorporation of many prose elements such as pronouns and particles, a "masculine" vocabulary with an abundance of historical allusions, and hyperbolic diction. The following anthology piece by Xin Qiji exhibits almost all the characteristics enumerated above:

To the tune Yong yu le

Remembering the Past at Beigu Pavilion in Jingkou
(date of composition: 1205)

- 1 In these hills and rivers of a thousand ages
The hero cannot be found
In the domain of Sun Quan.
Dance halls and song-filled pavilions,
- 5 All romance and charm, have been
Beaten by rain, blown by the winds.
Setting sunlight on scrubby trees,
Ordinary lanes and pathways,
Where people say the royal Jinu once lived.
- 10 Remembering those days
When golden lances and ironclad horses
With spirit swallowed ten thousand miles like tigers.

The carelessness of the Yuanjia reign-
 To sacrifice on Mount Langjuxu
 15 Only earned the emperor fearful glances to the north.
 Forty-three years since,
 Gazing at the scene I still recall
 The road to Yangzhou dotted by beacon-fires.
 How can I bear to look back?
 20 Beneath the shrine of Bili the tartar king,
 A chorus of temple crows and ritual drums.
 Who shall be sent to ask,
 "General Lian Po is indeed old,
 Can he still eat a peck of rice?"¹¹
 (QSC 3/1954)

This poem is replete with historical allusions, in particular those with reference to military-political figures or events associated with Jingkou (present day Zhenjiang in Jiangsu province) from the Six Dynasties period.¹² Xin Qiji, while reflecting on the political situation in the divided China of the Six Dynasties, implied the uncanny parallel he saw to that of his own day. The diction is masculine—we find hyperbole, references to heroes and villains, and images of martial fanfare. What it expresses are the intense feelings of a frustrated heroic temperament. The emotional content of the poem is reinforced by the syntactic rhythm. To see this, we should be aware of the common practice for poets writing in the tune pattern Yongyu le to begin the first strophe, which

consists of three lines of four characters each, with two parallel lines (4//4/4), such as in all three poems Wu Wenying wrote to this tune pattern.¹³ Moreover, these parallel lines would be end-stopped sentences. The structure of the strophic unit is balanced, with rhetorical/semantic pauses coinciding with the syntactic/metrical breaks. The slow movement thus created allows the reader to concentrate on the images presented line by line, as in Su Shi's beautiful opening to his Yongyu le:

The bright moon is like frost,
The fine wind like water-
Infinite is this pure scene.
(QSC 1/302)

Or in Wu Wenying's lines:

Storing snow, the clouds are low,
Sweeping sand, the wind is gusty;
Startled wild geese loose their formation.
(QSC 4/2910)

In contrast, Xin Qiji opens his poem with three run-on lines which must be read in full to arrive at semantic completeness. Therefore in Xin's case, the syntactic rhythm has instead a forceful, sweeping movement which accords well with the intense emotional undertone. The second strophe with a 4/4/5 metrical division again provides two structural choices-4//4/5 or 4/4/5-

and Xin rushes on with his continuous rhythm. In Xin's poems of the man 慢 type (long tunes),¹⁴ he very often employs this discursive syntax in which strophic units are enjambed until the rhyme word.

These characteristics as exemplified by Xin Qiji became the stock-in-trade of the haofang mode of ci poetry. With the conventionalization of the original stylistic impulse, which was directed towards expression of masculine, heroic sentiments, be it anger or grief, there was a tendency among future practitioners and imitators of this style toward further amplification, often resulting in a gratuitous gruffness.¹⁵ Liu Kezhuang 劉克莊 (1187-1269), Wu Wenying's slightly older contemporary, was an indefatigable heir of this school whose work clearly shows the limits of the style; his collection of ci poetry is replete with examples written in the heroic mode. Liu Kezhuang was himself a great admirer of Xin Qiji, and by that yardstick he is judged by later critics to be inferior.¹⁶ Among his own contemporaries, Liu Kezhuang was more an anomaly than the norm in his consistent practice of this style. For the next wave of the heroic style only arose at the fall of the Song when the voice of patriotism was again heard in the ci poetry of Confucian-minded men like Liu Chenweng 劉辰翁 (1232-1297) and Wen Tianxiang 文天祥 (1236-1283). Even then the heroic mode was far from being the mainstream of ci practice at the time.¹⁷

Towards the last years of the twelfth century, among such ageing luminaries of the scholar-official circle of poets as Xin Qiji and Fan Chengda (1120-1193) there moved a younger literary

figure whose slim volume of eighty-odd surviving ci poems (reinforced by his almost legendary image as a bona fide poet whose life was completely devoted to the art of poetry) has secured him the reputation as a major poet of the late Southern Song style. This figure is Jiang Kui. Jiang Kui's significance in the development of Southern Song ci is twofold. With his profound knowledge of music, he redirected attention to the musical technicalities of ci. The literary aspect of his ci poetry exhibited certain incipient tendencies away from the language and style of the heroic mode still prevalent in his day. As important as these two traits are in Jiang Kui's ci, before elaborating on them it is necessary to point out and emphasize the mostly overlooked transitional and hybrid character of his style.

A scanning of Jiang Kui's small collection of ci poetry in fact yields numerous examples of linguistic and stylistic features much more akin to the heroic mode rather than the late Southern Song style. In diction and syntax, similarities are especially pronounced. Jiang Kui's ci poetry retains many prose features found in the more explicit rhetoric of the heroic mode. Occurrences of personal pronouns- wo 我 and wu 吾 (I), jun 君 and gong 公 (you), and yi 伊 (he, she, it)-are common; there is a high incidence of sentence final particles such as zai 哉, yi 矣, ye 也, yu 歟, ye 耶, and of conjunctions- ran 然, er 而, ji 及 -used in prose; and also of function words (xuzi 虚字). A phrase like 然則非歟 'But then is it not so?', extremely "unpoetic," may be rare, and perhaps imitative of Xin

Qiji's style since it occurs in a poem written to match Xin's rhymes (QSC 3/2188). But prosy lines such as the following are common:

I am drunk and want to sleep, it keeps me company.

我醉欲眠伊伴我

(QSC 3/2177)

Master Wei has gone.

韋郎去也

(QSC 3/2181)

My inspiration is also vast.

吾興亦悠哉

(QSC 3/2187)

Deictic and modal elements bring semantic explicitness to the poem by imparting an immediacy to its tone. The former points directly to the speaker or the recipient/reader of the poem or thing spoken about; the latter indicates the mental and emotional state of the speaker-by indicating a statement of fact, an expression of doubt or surprise etc., the speaker intends his mood to be known and establishes a point of contact with the reader. Function words, often used in lead-word (lingzi 領字) positions, fulfil a similar function by creating semantic explicitness. (This category will be examined in the next section.)

What Jiang Kui's poetry is noted for, almost to the exclusion of the features we have examined above, is the

emergence of a new poetic sensibility which in time came to characterize the late Song style. Stylistically this poetic sensibility is most apparent in a certain semantic ambiguity arising from the implicit embodiment of emotion in imagery, the use of a more complex language involving frequent allusions and metonyms, and a denser syntax, elements all contributing to the quality of "opacity" (ge 晦) which Wang Guowei found so objectionable in Southern Song ci poetry.¹⁸ Let us look at Shuying, one of Jiang Kui's two famous pieces on the plum blossom for elucidation:

- 1 Mossy branches decked with jade-
There are tiny bluebirds
Roosting on them together.
Meeting each other in our wandering,
 - 5 At dusk by the corner of the fence,
Wordless she leans on the slender bamboos:
Zhaojun unaccustomed to the remoteness of barbarian
sands,
Only longed in secret for the Yangzi's shores.
It must be the one with jade pendants that returned on
a moonlit night,
 - 10 That transformed into this flower so solitary.
- I still recall the old tale in the deep palace-
That beauty was then sleeping
When it flew near her dark moth-eyebrows.

Don't be like the spring breeze,
 15 Careless of full blossoming,
 But early prepare for it a gold chamber.
 If one lets all the petals drift with the current,
 He will resent the sad tune for the Jade Dragon flute.
 If one waits till then to find again the subtle scent,
 20 It will have entered the horizontal scroll over the
 small window.¹⁹

(QSC 3/2182)

The syntactic structure of the poem remains on the whole hypotactic and explicit, particularly towards the end when the lines are structured with conjunctions. The complete suppression of subjective emotional expression, however, produces an ambiguity in the overall meaning. One is left with a series of images and allusions connected by grammar without ever being shown the private emotion which should unify them. Traditional critics have always been eager to go on allegorical hunts in obscure poems which offer isolated hints. In this case, the allusion to Wang Zhaojun, the Han palace lady who was married off to a Xiongnu chieftain and spent her life in exile in barbarian desertlands triggers a forced comparison with the last Northern Song emperor who was captured north along with his imperial concubines by the Jurchen invaders. A more plausible interpretation is offered by modern scholars who read in it the poet's reminiscence of a woman associated in his mind with the plum blossom.²⁰ Certainly the first stanza is pervaded by

feminine presence-the personification of the plum tree as a beautiful woman and the blossoms seen as the incarnation of Wang Zhaojun. The poem, however, is not structured on the theme of reminiscence; it belongs to a poetry of mood in which certain generalized moods and feelings are represented in a metaphorical and allusive language. The pervading mood in the first stanza is one of solitariness and seclusion, and in the second, regret at the transience of beauty symbolized by the fading plum blossoms.

At this stage, a unified metaphorical dimension in the ci (particularly in the yongwu subgenre to which this poem belongs) was still in the process of development. Therefore, there was as yet insufficient ground for integral hermeneutics. The linguistic appurtenances are there, we will first proceed to examine what they are before seeing how they are used to create a new mode in Southern Song ci poetry, particularly in the yongwu subgenre as it came to be treated in the late Song.

III. THE YUEFU ZHIMI AND CIYUAN-POETICS AND AESTHETICS IN THE LATE SONG STYLE OF CI POETRY (13TH CENTURY)

Wu Wenying did not leave to posterity any critical theoretical writings on ci poetry. But fortunately his views on the matter have been recorded in a small treatise on the art of ci writing entitled the Yuefu zhimi [A Guidebook to Song-lyrics] written by a contemporary fellow poet Shen Yifu 沈義父(?- after 1279) some time in the second half of the thirteenth century.²¹ The Yuefu zhimi is an extremely terse work containing a brief introductory section followed by 28 items, each

consisting of at most a few sentences, on various aspects of the composition of ci poetry. The stylistic principles it espouses evidence current tastes in late Southern Song ci poetics, indicating the prevalence of aesthetic formalism represented by Wu Wenying's style of ci poetry. This work is therefore very valuable in the insights it offers to aesthetic preferences in late Song ci and in terms of its exposition of the characteristics of Wu Wenying's style. The other treatise to be examined, the Ciyuan was authored by Zhang Yan and dates from the early 1300s.²² In two juan, the first deals entirely with the musical composition of ci, the second concerns itself with the literary craft of the ci and is of a similar format as the Yuefu zhimi.²³ While the Ciyuan affirms and elaborates some of the same concepts found in the Yuefu zhimi, it supplements the Yuefu zhimi by postulating what in effect is an opposition poetics to that embodied in Wu Wenying's ci style and expounded by Shen Yifu. Because of the similarities and differences in aesthetic emphases and the relative proximity in time of composition, these two works are extremely important for an understanding of prevailing as well as changing poetic tastes and norms in the late Song and immediate post-Song era.

In the introductory section of the Yuefu zhimi Shen Yifu begins by recounting his first meeting in 1242 with Wu Wenying's younger brother Weng Yuanlong, and in 1243 with Wu himself, and the subsequent discussions they exchanged on the art of writing ci. Shen, in all modesty as a late beginner in the genre and an inferior in comparison to the two accomplished poets,

acknowledged his realization of the difficulties of this art and his indebtedness to the two brothers. Shen explained that he decided to set down their views and advice on writing ci for reference when students began to seek advice from him on the matter. He then sets forth the four tenets to be observed in the writing of ci.

It is obvious from the phrasing of the introduction and corroborating features in Wu Wenying's poetry that Shen's statements on the four tenets are, if not quoted verbatim from Wu, then certainly influenced by and derived from Wu and his brother's views. As I have pointed out in the biographical chapter, Wu Wenying's stature as a ci poet stood above that of his younger brother; furthermore, judging from the close relationship between the theories expressed in this work and the general practice carried out by Wu in his ci composition, it can be safely assumed that Wu Wenying is the voice of authority behind these words. The four principles on the composition of ci enumerated by Shen Yifu are:

The tones of words should be in harmony with the music; if they do not harmonize, the result would be just shi poetry in lines of unequal length. The diction should be elegant, otherwise it would resemble that of popular songs. The use of words should not be too explicit, as explicitness is blunt and abrupt and lacks deep, prolonged aftereffects. The expression of ideas should not be too grandiose; otherwise you end up with wildness and eccentricity and lose sensibility.²⁴

From the above formulations we can extrapolate the key concepts of musicality, elegance, indirection and sensibility.

Among these, sensibility can be subsumed under elegance as they both deal with language and expression; though indirection begins with how poetic language should be used, it concerns the ideal method or manner of representation. In the following sections, these concepts will be correlated with critical comments in the two works and examined in the context of the development of ci.

Music was an integral part of the ci genre as it was practised in Song times,²⁵ yet it became a problematic aspect quite early on in the development of the ci. Already in Su Shi's time, critics were gibing at the unwieldiness of some of his ci poetry for singing; it was said that the tonal patterns of his words often did not accord with the notes of the melody.²⁶ Shortly after, the poetess Li Qingzhao, an expert in her knowledge of music, voiced her criticism on the unmusicality of ci written by literati scholar-officials such as Su Shi and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, saying that their song lyrics were but shi poetry with untrimmed phrases and sentences. The crux of the problem, as she saw it, seemed to lie in the much finer tonal and harmonic distinctions and interrelations that exist in ci poetry which practitioners of shi poetry, accustomed to the simple distinction between level and oblique tones, could be guilty of neglecting.²⁷ Li Qingzhao's acute disapprobation could be part of a general reaction against a perceptible decline in the musicality of ci poetry. Her near contemporary Zhou Bangyan, the expert musician and ci poet who came to be highly revered and imitated in the late Southern Song, devoted

considerable effort to examining and determining correct versions of old music scores while he served as Director of the Bureau of Music 提舉大晟府 from 1116 to 1118 in the last years of the Northern Song.

In the wake of the flight south after the Jurchen invasion, it was inevitable that numerous ci music scores would be lost. When the Southern Song populace finally settled down to a comfortable life in the lush environment and thriving economy of the south, poets again began paying attention to the technical aspects of ci music. Towards the end of the twelfth century, Jiang Kui and the circle he moved in (including Fan Chengda and his singing girls highly trained in music) pursued the matter with avid dedication. Jiang Kui's long prefaces to his ci poems often contain his musings on music, harmony and prosody, and describe the long and patient process by which he resolved certain difficulties in the music score.²⁸ The music of ci, however, had become such a specialized and intellectual art that it necessarily remained confined to certain members of the cultured elite who had the leisure, learning and inclination to indulge in its abstruse intricacies.

The preoccupation among ci specialists with the music and language of ci was, paradoxically, in inverse proportion to the popularity of ci among society at large.²⁹ By Shen Yifu's time, the process of separation between the text and the music of ci was becoming acute as each tended to fall into the "possession" of discrete social groups. The paradox of the situation as Shen observed was that no one would sing ci which were part of the

literary legacy because they often did not accord with the music, but on the other hand popularly sung ci written by professional musicians and entertainers absolutely lacked literary merit.³⁰ Towards the end of the Song, when the ci musical tradition was still alive though becoming a subtle and esoteric subject, it was natural for concerned practising ci poets to emphasize what was in fact a defining generic characteristic. By the end of the Song and into the early years of the Yuan dynasty, this preoccupation sometimes reached the proportions of an obsession, as exemplified by Zhang Yan. The entire first juan of the Ciyuan consists of a most thorough and erudite treatment of musical theory and composition. Zhang Yan has often been faulted by later critics for his fastidious concern with music to the detriment of the literary aspect of the ci.³¹

Wu Wenying, in his own time and after, was known and admired for his expertise in music. He created a number of new tune patterns and his ci are musically correct.³² This pronouncement in the Yuefu zhimi on the importance of strict adherence to musical harmony underlines his major concern as a ci poet for formal perfection.

As much as the harmony between words and music was tantamount to an authentic practice of writing ci, it is clear that the practical as well as theoretical concerns among the practitioners of the genre at large were focusing on the literary aspects. In the main, late Southern Song ci poets paid meticulous attention to form (structure) and language (various

aspects of style), as a perusal of the contents of the Yuefu zhimi and the Ciyuan will indicate. Both contain discussions on such structural aspects of the ci as stanzaic transition, opening, closure and line structure; literary devices such as allusion, metonymy, and rhyme; and critical theories, however terse, on diction, elegance and so on.³³ And, as we will see, the remaining three tenets set down by Shen Yifu all relate to the literary-textual composition of ci poetry.

The second tenet introduces the idea of elegance (ya 雅); it states that the diction of ci should be elegant. The concept of elegance had by this time become central to Southern Song views of the ci. It had appeared earlier in Southern Song remarks on ci and the term yaci 雅詞 'elegant ci' was appropriated for the titles of several collections and anthologies of ci poetry.³⁴ Its importance was in a sense fortuitous—it arises from the character's original meaning as zhengsheng 正聲 'correct, proper sound' and its classical association with music—yayue 雅樂 was the proper music of ancient times. From this primary meaning the secondary meaning of culture and refinement became the principle behind a poetics of elegance.

Of the six poets on whose ci poetry Shen Yifu proffered pithy evaluative comments, four were criticized for varying degrees of vulgarity, the antithesis of elegance.³⁵ Invariably they were faulted for the incorporation (inadvertent or otherwise) of "low vulgar" language 鄙俗語 in their ci. Basically this vulgar language breaks down into colloquial

expressions and hackneyed clichés in the vocabulary of popular singers and musicians.³⁶ It is interesting to note that this colloquial style of ci, which first raised a few eyebrows among the literati class when the Northern Song ci poet Liu Yong 柳永 (985-1053) practised it with enormous popularity, had persisted down to the end of the Song despite all the negative criticism that had been levelled at it from more orthodox quarters. Li Qingzhao for one said of Liu Yong that his language was "below dust." Wang Zhuo 王灼 (fl.1149) caustically compared the "substandard" but influential popularity of Liu's style to the "poison in the saliva of a wild fox."³⁷ This persistence of the "vulgar" is a sign of the complex and unstable nature of the ci genre, of its reversible metamorphosis from popular song to literary genre, and of the resultant ambivalent boundary between the two which our experts were attempting to define clearly. At the same time, prosaic elements prominent in the heroic style derived from the language of the classics and histories are considered stiff and affected, and therefore also inappropriate for the delicate and elegant diction expected in ci.

The above is elegance in diction negatively defined—the avoidance of colloquialisms and banal clichés forms the basis for elegance. To go from there, affirmative statements on elegance in diction are disappointingly meagre and singularly uninspiring in both the Yuefu zhimi and the Ciyuan. Both authors express the opinion that it derives from the skilful integration of lines of shi poetry, especially those by Tang

poets. On this point, Shen Yifu opines that "in seeking [material for] diction, one should look for fine and unvulgar lines from the poetry of Wen Tingyun, Li He and Li Shangyin," while Zhang Yan praises Wu Wenying and the Northern Song poet He Zhu for their skill in creating a refined, polished diction by adapting lines from the poetry of Wen Tingyun and Li He. The ornamented style of the late Tang obviously had great appeal to Southern Song taste.³⁸ To them Zhou Bangyan, who continued to be admired after the Song for his 'craft' above all else by generations of ci critics, epitomized the artful technique of borrowing.³⁹ The poem most often quoted for illustration of this technique is among Zhou Bangyan's most famous pieces. Written to the tune pattern Ruilong yin, the poem is almost a pastiche of adapted lines from poems and prefaces to poems of no less than four Tang poets.⁴⁰ The adapted lines, however, are woven so naturally into the context that the result is a stylistically unified poem highly admired by discerning readers of the ci. Elegance, then, is sophistication and refinement grounded in a literary tradition. That what nowadays would be regarded as a kind of plagiarism should be looked upon as a primary technique of achieving poetic elegance is not too surprising in view of a predominant traditional Chinese attitude towards literary creation that is essentially backward looking—it seeks to build on, echo and transform an older tradition. During the Song, this attitude is particularly pronounced in the poetic theory and method of the influential Jiangxi school of shi poetry.⁴¹ Since a few prominent Jiangxi school poets wrote in both genres,

it is conceivable that their views had some impact on the general approach to poetry.⁴²

The concept of elegance, as I have mentioned, goes beyond the domain of diction; it also governs music and the expression of sentiment, areas of use which reflect the original meaning of ya. On music, Shen Yifu advised that ci poets of his "generation should choose tunes of classic elegance as models and should not write [words] to those that have been popularized."⁴³ Concerning sentiment Zhang Yan admonished that "when ci poetry becomes the slave of passion, it loses its elegant and correct tone." The lines he quoted for criticism, such as "For her my tears fall," "I am afraid that she will ask and ask for news, / Thinness will ruin the lustre of her looks," and "A lot of trouble / All because at the time, / For a moment I sowed love," are by no less a name than Zhou Bangyan.⁴⁴ What is lacking in these lines for Southern Song taste is art and subtlety. According to the late Song ideal of elegance, they all fall short because of the overly simple and direct manner in which excessively emotive statements are made, some to the point of sounding facile. Though Zhang Yan did not comment on it, the fact that most of these lines are heavily colloquial in tone would render them twice removed from elegance. In the same vein, Zhang Yan also criticizes the Southern Song heroic mode practised by Xin Qiji et al for being inelegant.⁴⁵ Obviously the virile spirit and assertive language of the Xin style are too direct in their own way. As I pointed out before, Shen Yifu's fourth tenet on sensibility really pertains to an aspect of

elegance and, what is more, it is directed against the same virility of expression characteristic of the heroic mode which Zhang Yan censures. Both Shen and Zhang's injunctions on music and the various aspects of elegance are at bottom reactions against the expressivity in both the heroic and popular trends in the ci genre from critics who followed and tried to uphold the orthodox line.

Elegance in ci poetry meant to these poets and critics an aesthetic quality that can be best achieved by indirection, both in manner of expression and in the creation of an allusive and connotative language. This poetic language functions like a prism refracting a source of light into a rich spectrum of colours-the surface text of the poem is extended and enriched by levels of intertextual meaning. So that in fact if we were to point to a stylistic principle which underlies the conceptualization of ci in the Yuefu zhimi, it is that of indirection stated in the third tenet:

The use of words should not be explicit, as explicitness is blunt and abrupt and lacks prolonged aftereffects.

Lu 露 means literally "exposed" or "open," therefore "overt" or "explicit." Its opposite is advocated by Shen Yifu, spokesman for the poet whose style is the ultimate, at times excessive, embodiment of this principle. Indirection best translates the principle and method for its realization which aim for suggestion and curtail direct obvious expression. His

discussions on closure, allusions to names, the use of metonyms 代字 and poems on objects 詠物詞 all relate to the principle of indirection on one level or another. The passage on closure is interesting for its more profound insight and expression of Chinese poetic sensibility:

Closure should evoke endless reverberations. It is best to conclude a poem with a scene which embodies emotion, for although a closure which expresses emotion is acceptable, it can easily sound trite and explicit.⁴⁶

That is to say, an image which conceals and hints at the emotion is preferred to undisguised emotion. The assumption is that a feeling stated directly is apprehended at once, leaving no further evocation, whereas the successful merging of a concrete image and an unstated emotion creates an elusiveness which expands the reader's experience of the poem. If we look at the example he cites of the closure to Zhou Bangyan's aforementioned Ruilong yin, "Heartbroken in the courtyard, / A curtain full of windblown catkins," we will see that the visual image of the last line is neither random nor purely descriptive; it is selected to elicit emotional response and interpretation. Its representational ambiguity, however, makes the image not an obvious, definite symbol but the nucleus of a range of possible associations in a complex network of echoes and correspondences both within the text of the poem itself and intertextually. In this case, a sense of confusion, separation, forlornness are all suggested by the profusion of detached, floating catkins.

Traditional Chinese critics highly value this kind of elusive closural imagery for its rich suggestiveness;⁴⁷ it has become an artistic means to be consciously followed.

What Shen has to say about allusions to names, metonyms and poems on objects sounds rather pedantic and superficial. For instance, in alluding to names, one is advised not to use the full name without some form of alteration, especially when it is used in a parallel structure to another name. He disapproves of Zhou Bangyan's frequent use of full names in parallel lines, as in "Yu Xin's sorrows are many, / Jiang Yan's regrets are extreme."⁴⁸ As a modern scholar noted, in Wu Wenying's ci on the contrary, allusions to names are usually altered (often by reduction to one character), as in the following lines: "So many times passing winecups around we mourned Fu (i.e., Tu Fu), / Holding chrysanthemums we summoned the spirit of Qian (i.e., Tao Qian)."⁴⁹ In this way, the allusion is not obtrusive and there is literally more room to develop semantic and imagistic interplay.

With regard to poems on objects Shen admonishes that words contained in the title of the poem should not be used in the text of the poem; and metonyms are deemed an indispensable device for poetic representation. In other words, the ideal language of the ci should be oblique-as much as possible nothing should be stated directly. One can easily see the inherent pitfall of obscurantism in this principle when it is carried too far. Significantly, elsewhere in the Yuefu zhimi Shen Yifu points to Wu Wenying's occasional obscurity in diction and use

of allusion as his stylistic weakness.⁵⁰

Although Zhang Yan maintained many of the same aesthetic values expressed in Shen's treatise, his own Ciyuan, written somewhat later, represents a reaction to the crystallization of the poetics of indirection found in Wu Wenying's poetic style. In Zhang's own introductory remarks in the second juan of the Ciyuan, Wu is cited among five poets-including Jiang Kui-as well-reputed poets who had developed their own individual style. Wu is further cited favorably in the three sections on line structure, diction, and short lyrics. It is clear that in the late Song and early Yuan, Wu Wenying was a major influence to be reckoned with. If we make a statistical analysis of the poets Zhang Yan referred to in the Ciyuan, the shift in taste becomes quite apparent. Zhou Bangyan, while still regarded as a great master, is by no means held up as the perfect or only model. Frequent positive references are made to other Northern Song ci poets-in particular Su Shi and Qin Guan-hardly mentioned in the Yuefu zhimi.⁵¹ These Northern Song poets stand for a more natural, flowing style before Zhou Bangyan initiated the trend towards "subtlety and sophistication"-to use James Liu's terminology⁵²-in verbal structures and the expression of sentiments.

In the final analysis, Zhang Yan sought a style which retained some of the rhythmic flow of the Northern Song style and at the same time exhibited certain desirable Southern Song sensibilities. He found this in the ci of Jiang Kui. His concept of qingkong 清空 'transparency,' which he formulated

with Jiang Kui's ci as the ultimate model, forms the core of his opposition to certain aspects of Wu Wenying's poetics of indirection, which he characterized as zhishi 質實 'density.' Consequently there is no special discussion on metonyms in the Ciyuan, and his advice on the use of xuzi 'empty words' is antithetical to Shen Yifu's.⁵³ In his famous statement on qingkong versus zhishi, he pits Jiang Kui against Wu Wenying in a passage that has come to occupy the controversial starting point for any critical evaluation of Wu Wenying's style:

Ci poetry should be transparent and not dense. If transparent, it will have archaic elegance and vigour; if dense, it will be stagnant and obscure. Jiang Kui's ci is like a wild cloud that flies alone, coming and going without a trace, and Wu Wenying's ci is like a many-jewelled edifice which dazzles the eye, but when it is taken apart it does not form clauses or sentences.⁵⁴

This statement perhaps says as much about the critic as about the poet criticized. Its intense metaphoricalness, as we will see, only amounts to Zhang Yan's concern for the language aspect of the ci. Both Shen Yifu and Zhang Yan noticed the brilliant surface structure of Wu Wenying's poetry (e.g., in praising the beauty of his diction) and seem to have missed the emotional depth underneath and therefore the final holistic art which comes from a fusion of dazzling sensuousness of imagery with flights of imagination and a palpable depth of feeling.

IV. THE POETICS OF DENSITY

Zhang Yan's characterization of Wu Wenying's style as "dense" is unquestionably perspicacious. That he is critical towards this characteristic strongly reflects his personal taste and preference. However, his incisive view provides a useful perspective in which to examine the poetics of Wu Wenying's ci.

The opposition which Zhang Yan set up between qingkong 'transparency' and zhishi 'density' revolves around the use of shiji 實字 'full words' and xuzi 虛字 'empty words,' the two categories under which words were traditionally classified. These two terms have been used in discussions of poetry since Song times.⁵⁵ Current Song usages of the terms shizi and xuzi indicate that the two terms already constituted an implicit binary system of word classification. Song definitions of these terms are rare, but the neo-Confucian philosopher Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵 (1139-1193) left one in his collected works: "The ideas words represent can be empty or full. In the case of empty words we can only speak of the meaning in the word, whereas in the case of full words we can speak about something real/concrete (shi) that the word refers to."⁵⁶ The definition suggests that words with a perceptual or image content are considered full words, and words devoid of such concrete referents are considered empty.⁵⁷

In the late Qing, Ma Jianzhong wrote the pioneering comprehensive grammar of classical Chinese, the Mashi wentong. In it he defines full words as "those which refer to some definite phenomenon that can be explained" and empty words as

"those which refer to no definite phenomenon but which modify the nature and condition of full words."⁵⁸ A functional criterion for distinguishing the two word classes is provided by the contemporary Chinese linguist Zhou Fagao: full words can function as the subject or predicate of a sentence whereas empty words cannot. With respect to their functions, Zhou subdivides full words into substantives (nouns) and predicatives (verbs and adjectives), and other lesser categories; and empty words into adverbs, connectives, prepositions, interjections, and particles.⁵⁹ In an article entitled "Full words, Empty words, and Allusions," the modern scholar Yuan Zhai notes that in traditional discussions of poetry, nouns and some verbs and adjectives are counted as full words, the rest fall into an undifferentiated category of empty words.⁶⁰ These modern extrapolations of the meaning and scope of full words and empty words agree on the basic difference in semantic content and grammatical function between the two word classes. In poetry, this difference between words with an image content and those which express primarily grammatical relationships affects the syntactic and semantic flow in the poetic structure.

In the concentrated, image-oriented language of poetry, the use of empty words is usually reduced and prose particles in particular are avoided, except in instances when the poet is aiming for a special effect, such as a colloquial, discursive, or erudite tone. Yet, even in shi poetry, in which structural progression is minimally organized on the repetition of the couplet, the presence of empty words in strategic positions is

often vital to the flow and meaning, for empty words are grammatical markers which function to create hypotactic syntax and semantic coherence between lines and couplets by making causal links and logical transitions. Stated inversely, the coherence and flow of a poem is more difficult to achieve in a proportionate absence of empty words. Yuan Zhai, in the article mentioned above, quotes a poem by the Tang poet Wei Yingwu as an example in which the relatively high percentage of empty words are used effectively to bring out the emotional flow.⁶¹ The poem, written in pentasyllabic regulated form, is titled "I rejoiced in encountering an old friend from Liangzhou on the Huai River;" Liangzhou is an archaic name for the southwestern part of Shaanxi around the Han river.

Once sojourners on the Yangzi and Han Rivers,

Each time we met we returned drunk.

Floating clouds-after we parted,

Flowing water-a period of ten years.

Happy and laughing, our friendship same as in the past,

Sparse and thin, our hair is already spotted with grey.

Why do I not return?

There are autumn hills around the Huai.⁶²

Upon scrutiny, many of the empty words pointed out by Yuan Zhai in this poem turn out to be adverbs and prepositions denoting a sense of time, which together produce a smooth temporal transition. A reflective comparison between the past and

present is expressed through the temporal framework set up by the use of these empty words. The poet's happy sentiments-his fond memories of a past friendship and joy about the present meeting-are combined with a certain wistfulness at the passage of time in a deceptively simple and natural manner.

In the case of ci poetry, and we are here primarily concerned with the man-ci form prevalent in the Southern Song,⁶³ its relative complexity in structure-the irregularity of line lengths, strophic and stanzaic divisions-and musical function generated new metrical/structural developments which involve specific usages of empty words. Of course the overall distribution of empty words in a piece remained important in the way it affects the flow, similar to the effect it produces in shi poetry. But the length and asymmetry of man-ci, relative to xiaoling 'short ci lyrics' and regulated shi, require different means in structural organization other than paratactic and hypotactic parallelism and couplet movement. The most notable new feature introduced in the structural poetics of man-ci is a class of "empty words," in prescribed tones used in prescribed positions in man-ci tune patterns, designated by the term lingzi 領字 "leading-word".⁶⁴ The Northern Song ci poet Liu Yong is credited with having been instrumental in popularizing the use of man-ci tune patterns and in developing this new feature.⁶⁵

These positioned "empty words" in man-ci form a specialized group which includes conventional empty words from the grammatical word class, but which includes certain verbs as well. They consist of segments ranging from one to three

characters and invariably occupy the initial position in a line and may govern from one to four consecutive lines. For this reason they are called in Qing and post-Qing ci poetics lingju zi 領句字 'line-leading words' or simply lingzi 'leading-words.' During the Southern Song, no special terminology existed for lead-segments, they were referred to as "empty words" or "empty words at the beginning of the line."⁶⁶ As many lead-segment words do belong to the grammatical class of empty words, it may explain why the term was used.

When ci were actually written to existing tunes and sung, as it was the practice during the Song, the prescribed syntactic position and strict tonal restriction governing lead-segments suggest that they bore an integral relation to the musical pattern. Not only do lead-segments occupy the initial position in a line, but they occur in the first or second line of a strophic unit, indicating some correspondence to rhythmic stress or transition. This is supported by the predominant use of characters in the falling tone for lead-segments.⁶⁷ Xia Chengtao has observed that "the falling tone has a special status in ci; it is used in places where the musical pitch plays a critical role in the tune."⁶⁸ The heavy stress of the falling tone is considered vigorous and expressive,⁶⁹ thus this tonal characteristic is exploited in lead-segments, both in relation to the musical and the poetic structure. It should be noted that the prescribed initial position for lead-segments makes for syntactic flexibility, often resulting in lines with otherwise ungrammatical syntax. This is a common feature unique to the

structure of manci.⁷⁰

Liu Yong's germinal practice of using lead-segments established a structural principle which came to be carefully observed, not only in that set positions are followed in a particular tune pattern, but also in the general choice of words to be used as lead-segments. By far the great majority of lead-segments are monosyllabic. They average two to six occurrences in a manci tune pattern and their prescribed positions are rigidly followed. Previous studies have noted that most lead-segments tend to consist of adverbs and verbs which often serve as conjunctives and interrogatives; some, especially polysyllabic lead-segments, are colloquial expressions.⁷¹ The structural function of lead-segments effects an integration of expressive and imagistic language, and produces a sense of transition as well as flow and continuity. In the following example from a ci by Liu Yong, the lead-segment connects the two lines by introducing the content of perception to the verb in the preceding line; it also gives contextual qualification to the images it governs:

[On] the homeward journey:

Even where I gaze intently,

Only / sunset and dusky haze fill the grassy plain.⁷²

歸途。縱凝望處，但斜陽暮靄滿平蕪。

(Mulanhua man, QSC 1/47)

Another illustrative example is Liu Yong's much admired second

strophe in his poem to the tune Basheng Ganzhou; in it the lead-segment unifies a series of images by providing a temporal context with a preposed adverb which governs three consecutive lines:

Gradually / the frosty wind [becomes] chilly and harsh,
The mountain pass and river desolate,
The fading twilight [falls] on the pavilion.
漸霜風淒慘，關河冷落，殘照當樓。

(QSC 1/43)

As for verbs used for lead-segments, by far the most common varieties are those which denote perception, mentation, or emotion. In revealing the subjective lyrical experience of the poet, these verbal lead-segments also act as structural links in the way they indicate the shifts in experiential states between strophes and articulate the lines they govern as the content of the experience. The opening strophe of Basheng Ganzhou begins with a lead-segment position, and Liu Yong begins it with a verb which brings out his perception:

I face splashing / rain at dusk sprinkling river and
sky,

Once more cleansing clear autumn.

對瀟瀟暮雨灑江天，一番洗清秋。

(QSC 1/43)

Then he proceeds to the second strophe quoted above, led by an

adverb which lends a temporal dimension to his experience. The two strophes suggest that the persona's perception of the autumn evening landscape was a prolonged act. The transition between the strophic units and the linkage of the lines are so skilfully structured on these two lead-segments that they are almost seamless. Of the four strophic units in the second stanza of Basheng Ganzhou, the first three each contains a lead-segment position.⁷³ Liu Yong uses three consecutive verbal lead-segments which indicate respectively perception, emotion, and mentation: first, the verb "gaze upon" 望 elicits the content of his perception, which in turn causes him to "lament" 歎 about his present condition of being away from home and his lover, then he "imagines" 想, the state of his lover faraway (QSC 1/43). Again, the twists and turns of the lyrical consciousness are presented distinctly by the use of such verbal lead-segments. We will later have occasion to compare the lead-segments in Wu Wenying's Basheng Ganzhou with this model by Liu Yong.

That the use of empty words and lead-segments had become an established structural device of importance can be surmised from the discussions on this topic contained in both the Ciyuan and Yuefu zhimi. As we have seen, the views expressed in these two treatises accord with each other on most matters concerning the aesthetics and poetics of ci, but this is one area in which they decidedly diverged. First, let us examine Zhang Yan's comments in the Ciyuan:

Shi and ci are different. Lines in ci can have anywhere from two to eight characters. If one piles up full words, [the ci] would not even make smooth

reading, how can one then give it to a singing girl to perform? One should coordinate it with empty words, those of one character such as "now" 正, "but" 但, "it is that/why" 甚, and "let" 任; those of two characters such as "is it not that" 莫是, "then again" 還又, and "how can I bear" 那堪; and those of three characters such as "moreover how can one bear" 更能消, "most unreasonable that" 最無端, and "yet again it is" 又卻是. However, these empty words should be used appropriately in places where they belong. If as many as possible of these empty words are used, the language will naturally come alive; it certainly will not be dense, and the reader will not scoff at it by closing the book. [Variant reading of the last section: If one uses all empty words, the language will be vulgar. Though it certainly will not be dense, one cannot avoid being mocked at by the reader closing the book.]⁷⁴

Zhang Yan's discussion at once concerns the overall use of empty words and the use of empty words as lead-segments. The latter point may not be immediately apparent due to the lack of a specific term for lead-segments. But it can be inferred from the examples of empty words cited by Zhang Yan, as they are mostly used in lead-segment positions, and also from his qualification that "these empty words should be used appropriately in places where they belong." From the list, we can also see that these "empty words" are nearly all adverbial conjunctions, interrogatives, and colloquial expressions; consequently, by employing them a poet can create hypotactic syntax and explicit rhetoric. The importance placed on the use of empty words/lead-segments by Zhang Yan in fact constitutes the backbone of his poetics of transparency. Lead-segments, as we have seen, are denotative links which thread together and make manifest the varied dimensions of image, thought, and feeling in a manci, thus enhancing its flow and continuity.

Therefore, Zhang Yan asserts that the frequent use of empty words in proper places will make the language "come alive." The variant reading is noteworthy for its admonition concerning the adverse effect of vulgarity resulting from an abundant use of empty words: fluency is desired, not an overly colloquial tone. Even more significant is the point made in both readings that the language "certainly will not be dense" if empty words are employed. This discussion immediately precedes the famous passage criticizing the "density" of Wu Wenying's ci. Although Zhang Yan never states explicitly that Wu Wenying's density hinges on the use of empty words, or want of it, at least half the explanation lies precisely in this matter.

We may recall that the model Zhang Yan upholds for his poetics of transparency is Jiang Kui's ci. Jiang Kui does tend to use conjunctive lead-segments and empty words within lines to effect hypotaxis and concatenation. Only, as we have discussed in the last section, in his representative works the emotional and conceptual process remain suppressed, and the flow is maintained foremost on the syntactic and structural level. Biassed though Wang Guowei is towards Southern Song ci, his summary comment on Jiang Kui interestingly reflects this dual aspect in Jiang's ci: "Baishi (Jiang Kui) has style but no feeling."⁷⁵ Other critics and readers greatly appreciate Jiang's ci, I believe, at least in part for the ambiguity and elusiveness produced by this union of opposites which leave something to savour.

Zhang Yan should have used himself as an example of his own

poetics; he is a critic who does put theory into practice. His ci are sometimes transparent to the point of being naked. Not only do his poems exhibit an extremely fluent structure constructed with lead-segments and a high ratio of empty words, by means of these structural elements he also lays bare his heart and mind. One example will suffice to show his practice, for Zhang Yan is quite consistent stylistically. On taking leave of an old friend after a chance visit, Zhang effuses his reluctance to forsake his companion with the aid of many empty words:

....

Didn't plan to meet each other on an old path.

Just when I was doubting it was a dream, I was then
again startled awake.

Light breeze on the willows,
The river sways with white waves,
The boat leaves at the wake of dawn.

No matter that I had come again,
It is better not to depart,
How can I bear this feeling in my bosom?

Who will know that once again the gate with the five
willows will be deserted

Where I had heard the cuckoos cry.

(Shuiling yin, QSC 5/3471)

Aside from the strophe evoking the scene of departure, the

stanza is quite devoid of images. With the hypotactic conjunctions "just when...then again" 纔...又還, "no matter that...it is better" 遮莫...不如; and the interrogatives "how can I bear" 怎堪 and "who would know that" 那知又, the stanza acquires a loose syntax and a conversational tone. This is further enhanced by Zhang Yan's propensity for verbal resultatives; the stanza ends with two of his favorites—de in tingde 聽得 'had heard', and liao in tiliao 啼了 'had cried.'

Wu Wenying's practice is diametrically opposed to that of Zhang Yan. The two represent antithetical extremes in late Southern Song structural poetics. In order to see Wu's theory, we will again turn to his spokesman Shen Yifu's record in the Yuefu zhimi:

Tunes often have lines which should begin with an empty word, such as: "to lament" 嗟, "how can one bear" 奈, "how much more" 况, "even more" 更, "then again" 又, "to imagine" 料, "to think/imagine" 想, "just when" 正, and "it is that" 甚. These can be used without harm. However, it will not be good if they are used two to three times in one ci, in which case they will be called empty head-words 空頭字. It is far better to use instead a static word 靜字 right at the beginning [of the line] to lead the following; then the line structure will be vigorous. Yet they should not be used too often.⁷⁶

The passage clearly concerns the use of monosyllabic lead-segments. What is immediately apparent is the way it contradicts Zhang Yan's advice. Whereas Zhang Yan encourages the use of empty words in lead-segment positions, Shen Yifu cautions against their repeated use. Perfunctory and redundant

use of empty words as lead-segments result in what he calls "empty head-words," a kind of meaningless repetition. Shen goes further to suggest the substitution of an empty word in a lead-segment with a "static word." Within this context in which "static word" is used in opposition to empty word, it means evidently full word.⁷⁷ The fact that Shen does not provide any example of static words also suggests that they refer to a broad lexical category understood as full words. Since nouns cannot function structurally as monosyllabic lead-segments, the choice of static words for this purpose has to be drawn largely from verbs and adjectives. Moreover, Shen's list includes one emotive verb ("to lament") and two verbs of mentation ("to imagine" and "to think"), it thus excludes two of the common categories of verbs used as lead-segments from his intended range of static words. By inference, we arrive at verbs which denote a more "visible" semantic content. The possibilities would still be endless were it not for the tonal restriction which severely limits the number of such verbs (and adjectives) to be used as lead-segments and, not least is the final caution in Shen's passage not to over-exploit this technique of substitution. Shen proves to be a very observant disciple, for his advice is supported by Wu Wenying's practice.

To be sure, Wu Wenying for the greater part employs the more common adverbs and verbs in the accepted repertory of lead-segments. But his deviations from accepted norms are what contributes to the density of his style. There exists in Wu's corpus a number of stray verbs which he varies judiciously with

the more commonly used lead-segment words. The following are some illustrative examples:^{7 8}

1. River herons just began to fly;
Drifting / thousands of miles-white clouds,
 The sky's horizon seems bathed.
 江鳥兒初飛, 蕩萬里素雲, 際空如沐。
 (Sanbu yue, QSC 4/2874)
2. Moistening / cold plum blossoms-a fine drizzle,
 It puts out lamplights, in darkness the dust is
 scented.
 潤寒梅細雨, 捲燈火, 暗塵香。
 (Mulanhua man, QSC 4/2917)
3. Passing / a few drops of rain at sunset,
 Weeping on silk, traces of cold powder.
 過數點斜陽雨, 啼綃粉痕冷。
 (Fagu xianxian yin, QSC 4/2888)
4. The chilly sky is pale blue;
Girdled with / light clouds screening the willows,
 And deep mist protecting the flowers.
 冷空澹碧, 帶翳柳輕雲, 護花深霧。
 (Sao hua you, QSC 4/2886)
5. I detest spring for being too jealous,
Splashing / her outing skirt, I regret even more
 Her phoenix shoes soiled by dust.
 恨春太妒。濺行裙更惜, 鳳鉤塵汙。
 (Sao hua you, QSC 4/2886)

6. Imprinted / on the lichen her paired lovebird shoes,

I recall our walks through the deep woods.

印蘚迹雙鴛，記穿林窈。

(San shu mei, QSC 4/2923-24)

Invariably the use of these verbs in lead-segment positions highlights the sensuous aspect of the images; they do not "lead" or link the lines structurally in an obvious way. Moreover, since many lead-segment verbs are intended as signposts of the lyrical voice, their displacement cannot but submerge it to some degree. Instead of being made explicit by verbs indicating subjective experience, it remains implicit in the poetic structure. In the last two examples, the presence of the lyrical voice is clearly discernible through the use of the verbs "detest", "regret", and "recall"; but interestingly, though "detest" and "recall", being in the falling tone, can be used as lead-segments, they are displaced from these structurally prominent positions. It is especially clear in the last example that it is the image aspect that the poet wants to stress.

What is rare and quite unorthodox in Wu's choice of words for monosyllabic lead-segments is the use of adjectives. In a structurally prominent position, an adjective intensifies the image aspect of the line(s) it modifies, but does not satisfy the pivotal function usually expected of a lead-segment. For that reason, they form only a small portion of lead-segment words in Wu's corpus; they are nevertheless significant for

contributing to the impact of sensuousness and density in his
ci:

1. Placid / her springtime pose and snow-white beauty,

[Like] cold plum blossoms fresh and pure.

澹春姿雪態，寒梅清北。

(Rui he xian, QSC 4/2876)

2. Far off / misty sands-a flying sail,

Dusky hills display their green.

渺煙磧飛帆，暮山橫翠。

(Qi tian yue, QSC 4/2885)

3. Resplendent / dragon rays suddenly soaked,

Cloud vapors on apricot-wood rafters.

燎馬麗光乍溼，杏梁雲氣。

(Sao hua you, QSC 4/2886-87)

4. Ten years by the river maples,

Cold / frosty waves turn into patterned silk.

十載江楓，冷霜波成纈。

(Wei fan, QSC 4/2927)

5. Teardrops stretch to the lone city wall,

Endless / grassy plain, extending mist.

淚接孤城，渺平蕪煙闊。

(Wei fan, QSC 4/2927)

6. I imagine at the villa by West Lake, love is most
fervent,

Luminous / the painted boat in the moonlight,

[And you] drunk with your palace robe of brocade.

料別館，西湖最情濃，爛畫舫月明，醉宮袍錦。

(Dong xian ge, QSC 4/2904)

It is particularly noticeable in translation that these adjectival lead-segments tend to blend in as part of the description of the image and lose the distinct character of lead-segments as directives and connectives. In the original, some of the lines which begin with adjectival lead-segments form curious syntactic inversions of normal pentasyllabic lines. For instance, (1) would normally read "Her springtime pose and snow-white beauty are placid" 春姿雪態澹, (4) may be construed as "Frosty waves, frozen into patterned silk" 霜波冷成纈, and (6) "The moon being bright, the painted boat is luminous" 月明畫舫爛. (5) can be thought of as both inversion and ellipsis combined, whose normal syntax would be: "The grassy plain endless, the mist extending" 平蕪渺渺煙闊.⁷⁹ In all cases, the syntactic disruption, the "static" quality of descriptive lead-segments, and the relative lack of internal empty words, while making for imagistic density, at the same time interrupt the normal fluency of language expected in recitation. Thus Zhang Yan can say that "if one piles up full words, the ci would not even make smooth reading", much less can it be given to an ordinary singing girl to perform. The statement of course first speaks for Zhang Yan's preference for a fluid style enhanced by the use of empty words. Theoretically, the musical tune should carry the words along; the metrical conformity of the lines to the musical pattern must

have effected a degree of transition and flow in the performance of a ci. We should also remember that Wu generally uses the more common lead-segment words and only occasionally varies them with "static" words.

The lead-segments in the poem Wu wrote to the tune Basheng Ganzhou illustrate well his variation of "static" and "empty" lead-segments, though even this work is exceptional among Wu's poems in its "static" preference in regard to lead-segments. The poem is about an excursion to Mount Lingyan near Suzhou, the ancient palace site of King Fucha of Wu. It has come to be one of Wu's most well-known works and is typical of his condensed style in its use of allusions and of unusual and complex imagery, and in its general eschewal of empty words.⁸⁰ As previously noted in Liu Yong's example, the first two strophes of the tune pattern Basheng Ganzhou both begin with a monosyllabic lead-segment position. Liu Yong's handling presents a distinct lyrical presence and temporal progression by means of the lead-segments "I face" and "gradually." In Wu Wenying's version, the consecutive strophes each begins with a descriptive lead-segment:

Endless / void and mist to the four distances,
 What year was it the meteor fell from a clear sky?
Illusory / green crags and cloud trees,
 Celebrated beauty's chamber,
 Failed Leader's palace wall.⁸¹

(QSC 4/2926)

Clearly, "endless" and "illusory" do not provide structural links in the obvious sense. Rather, they impart the paradoxical qualities of timelessness and illusion to the images they modify (three lines in the case of "illusory"). In fact, the opposition posed by the lead-segments "endless" and "illusory" is crucial to the meaning of the poem. The poet is not concerned with a sequential presentation of an experience but with the presentation of the tension and interaction between continuity and discontinuity, reality and illusion, seen in the relics left behind from a bygone age. It has been said of Wu Wenying's ci that, due to the lack of empty words, structure and flow are maintained through the "method of internal transition of hidden forces" 潛氣內轉法.⁸² The technique sounds rather mystical; but we do get a sense of Wu's alchemy in this poem where the surface links are deemphasized and the coherence derives from an underlying idea.

Through the more conventional verbal lead-segments employed in the second stanza, past history gives way to lyrical presence in a complex process of transformation:

In the palace the King of Wu is dead drunk,
Sending / the weary traveler of Five Lakes
 To angle alone, cold sober.

[I] ask / the blue waves: they won't talk;
 How can white hair cope with the mountain's green?⁸³

(QSC 4/2926)

The weary traveler, while alluding to the historical figure Fan Li, also takes on shades of a persona, a transformation which is completed in the next strophe. "White hair" is clearly a metonym for the poet, but it also echoes the weary traveler.⁸⁴ It is the poet who asks the blue waves, and the question underlies the poem's concern with the impermanence of man against the permanence of nature.

Where Liu Yong begins the next strophe with a lead-segment: "I imagine the fair one / gazing hard from her boudoir chamber" (QSC 1/43), Wu replaces it with an image: "Water enveloping the void / from the balcony's height." On the level of structural poetics, this poem shows that the image content of full words, especially in the case of descriptives used as lead-segments, performs a different operation on the poetic structure from normative lead-segments. It does not "move" the poem along but instead increases the visual "density" by focussing on the images in a poetic structure already inclined towards "piling up full words." However, this poem also shows that the transitions are effected on a deeper structure of thought.

Compared to most Southern Song ci poets, Wu Wenying does rely much less on empty words for flow, whether throughout the text of the poem or specifically in lead-segment positions. Sometimes he even dispenses with monosyllabic lead-segments. The ten poems he wrote to the tune pattern Shuiling yin provide an extreme example. The last strophe of the first stanza should begin with a monosyllabic lead-segment which directs two tetrasyllabic lines. In five of the ten poems Wu wrote to this

tune, he does without this lead-segment and the lines yield normal pentasyllabic lines.⁸⁵ He does of course observe the falling/rising tone rule governing that position. The second stanza begins with an optional disyllabic lead-segment position;⁸⁶ of the ten, only three opted for a disyllabic lead-segment. In contrast, Xin Qiji employs a disyllabic segment in seven out of the eleven poems he wrote to this tune, almost the exact reverse of Wu in ratio. Xin Qiji, writing in the haofang style, naturally tends to use more empty words in the poem and in lead-segments. Yet, when Wu Wenying's manci poems are compared to those written to the same tunes by Zhou Bangyan and Jiang Kui, the results are generally consistent in showing Wu to be enamored of full words.⁸⁷

Wu's handling of trisyllabic lead-segments also corroborates his preference for semantic and imagistic density. Trisyllabic lead-segments occur in lines of longer length, the most common being heptasyllabic and octosyllabic. In order to function metrically as a lead-segment, the initial character of the trisyllabic cluster has to be in the falling (or rising) tone, and is often followed by one or two more oblique-tone characters.⁸⁸ Moreover, many standard trisyllabic lead-segments comprise empty words which form colloquial expressions, exemplified by the examples Zhang Yan offered. Their colloquial tone lends a characteristic expressiveness and flow to the line(s). Wu Wenying does employ a number of them in his manci. But he more often than not takes the alternative of using a monosyllabic segment to lead the line, with the caesura

maintained after the third syllable. It is obvious that this allows for more development of imagery. For illustration, let us examine the trisyllabic lead-segments in the five ci Wu wrote to the tune pattern Xi qiu hua. This is a tune Wu himself composed and one to which he wrote the greatest number of poems among tunes of his own composition. The third strophe in the first stanza and the fourth strophe in the second both contain trisyllabic lead-segments in all five poems.⁸⁹ None of them are trisyllabic colloquial formulae. The trisyllabic clusters all begin with monosyllabic lead-segments that can be divided into three categories. The first consists of the more conventional adverbial and verbal lead-segments:

1. Lady Autumn's tears dampen the evening;

Once again over the whole city / light rain and slight
wind.

秋娘淚溼黃昏，又滿城、雨輕風小。

(QSC 4/2912)

2. On earth the dream is on the other side of the west
wind,

I reckon that in heaven / a year is just the blink of
an eye.

人間夢隔西風，算天上、年華一瞬。

(QSC 4/2912)

3. In great haste we pour the farewell cup,

I regret our meeting / [is like] the gathering and
dispersing of clouds and duckweeds.

忽忽便倒離尊，悵遇合、雲銷萍聚。

(QSC 4/2913)

4. A tiny boat lodged at night on the Wu River,
Just at a time when water pendants and rainbow skirts
 are countless.

扁舟夜宿吳江，正水佩霓裳無數。

(QSC 4/2913)

5. With my grief dusk gathers into emerald clouds,
 I have it be chanted into / the music of the Liu yao
 tune.

愁邊暮合碧雲，倩唱入六么聲裏。

(QSC 4/2913)

This type of lead-segments, as expected, do perform the primary function of structural linkage. They correlate the two lines of the strophe with a logical connection as well as imparting a forward movement to the lines in which they occur. In the second category, we find verbal lead-segments which are visually oriented, and the structural function is less obvious:

1. The Autumn Goddess, endowed with leisured feeling,
Leaning on the jade cup / tiny brows just raised.

秋娥賦得閒情，倚翠尊，小眉初展。

(QSC 4/2912)

2. The mirror of West Lake covered by dust and sand,
Dimming the dawn reflection / of the hill's coiffure

ruffled by clouds.

西湖鏡掩塵沙，翳曉影、秦鬟雲擾。

(QSC 4/2912)

When we come to the third category of adjectival lead-segments, a descriptive and qualifying function prevails:

1. Penglai Pavilion across rises in dark clouds,
Placid the rustic scene / the hill's mien gathers in
sadness.

蓬萊對起幽雲，澹野色、山容愁捲。

(QSC 4/2912)

2. All frail flowers cannot endure autumn,
Illusory glossy jade / luscious red [so] bright and
lovely.

凡花瘦不禁秋，幻膩玉、睽紅鮮麗。

(QSC 4/2913)

The last example in particular constitutes a line which is packed with colour and texture, and generally perceptual qualities. It occurs in a poem on the autumn-flowering hibiscus. The line thus maximizes the sensuousness of this showy flower. Next to all the wilted and wilting flowers, its voluptuous glamour must appear incredible and unreal. In the way it emphasizes this contrast established in two lines, "illusory" can be said to fulfill a structural function in the transition. But this is by no means apparent when such an

unusual word is encountered in a lead-segment position, followed by a string of metonyms. Immediate understanding is deferred, however slightly, in the absence of explicit rhetoric. If we replace "illusory" with a more common and perfectly tenable verbal lead-segment such as guai 怪, producing "I marvel at the glossy jade / luscious red [so] bright and lovely," the meaning of the line is somewhat more transparent. But not much more, for it is also deferred by the metonymic components which require a process of translation to arrive at their referents. However spontaneous this process of translation may be in the case of well-versed readers of ci poetry, it is nonetheless there.

If the basic function of empty words and lead-segments is to effect a kind of structural kinetics, this kinetics is often the result of the externalization of subjective states and of sequential progression achieved through normative applications of these structural elements. Wu Wenying's radical tendencies in the use of lead-segments and his disproportionate reduction of empty words represent a reversal of the normative structural poetics developed and perfected by Liu Yong. His deviations produce the opposite result of internalization of subjective elements and ambiguous temporal structures. However, these traits alone do not adequately account for the density, or complexity, of Wu Wenying's ci. It is when they are combined with his proclivity for an image-oriented language—a metonymic and allusive diction—that the effects of density are most visible. Metonymy, in its substitution of an image through

associations of attributes and qualities, tends to anatomize the image into its sensuous components of colour, shape, and texture. In a literary genre as inbred as the ci had become in the late Song, metonymy creates a connotative textual surface whose constituents often have definite associations and evocative power. Similarly, the skilful use of allusions, by condensing and implicating dimensions of thought and meaning from a body of intertexts, imparts added depth and complexity to the poem. But behind all the artifice, there is the artificer, and one with a sensitive heart and mind. We should therefore turn to look at how these disparate elements constitute an individual style and compelling poetry.

- ¹ See for example James J. Y. Liu, Major Lyricists of the Northern Sung (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1974) and Kang-i Sun Chang, The Evolution of Chinese Tz'u Poetry from Late T'ang to Northern Sung (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1980). An exception is Shuen-fu Lin's study of Jiang Kui, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition.
- ² Liu Dajie, Zhongguo wenxue fada shi (Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), Vol.2, 120.
- ³ Lu Kanru and Feng Yuanjun, Zhongguo shishi (Beijing: Zuoja chubanshe, 1956), Vol.3, 670.
- ⁴ Hu Shi, Cixuan (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1928), p.10.
- ⁵ Wang Guowei, Renjian cihua (Cihua congbian ed., vol.12).
- ⁶ Zhu Yizun, "Cizong fafan," in Cizong (1691; rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1978), Vol.1, 10.
- ⁷ Wang Guowei, Renjian cihua (Cihua congbian ed., vol.12), 4263.
- ⁸ Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, A Theory of Literature (New York: Harcourt, 1962), p.265.

- ⁹ For Su Shi's contribution to the development of the ci genre, see Kang-i Sun Chang, The Evolution of Chinese Tz'u Poetry from Late T'ang to Northern Sung, pp.158-206, and James J. Y. Liu, Major Lyricists of the Northern Sung, pp.121-60.
- ¹⁰ Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition, p.183.
- ¹¹ Adapted from the translation by Irving Lo, Hsin Ch'i-chi (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1971), p.71.
- ¹² For an explanation of the allusions see Zheng Qian, Cixuan (Taipei: Huaguang chubanshe, 1970), PP.100-101, and Irving Lo, ibid., pp.71-72.
- ¹³ QSC 4/2910.
- ¹⁴ Traditionally ci is divided according to length into xiaoling 小令 (short lyrics under 58 characters) and manci 慢詞 (slow or long tunes between 59 and 240 characters). Manci is further divided into zhongdiao 中調 (medium length tunes with 59-90 characters) and changdiao 長調 (long tunes over 90 characters). See Wang Li, Hanyu shilü xue (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1963), p.518. Since the popularization of manci after Liu Yong (985-1053) among the literati, it remained the dominant form used throughout the Song.

- ¹⁵ This is a common view among Qing critics. See for example Zhou Ji's comment, "Later poets tried to imitate Jiaxuan (Xin) by using crude heroics," Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu (Cihua congbian ed., vol.5), 1627.
- ¹⁶ Although the Qing critic Chen Tingzhuo thought that Liu Kezhuang was far inferior to Xin, he still considered Liu one of the more able ci poets of this style. Baiyu zhai cihua (Cihua congbian ed., vol.11), 3818.
- ¹⁷ By the late Southern Song, the language of the ci had evolved a metaphorical and allegorical dimension, and major poets of the time such as Zhou Mi, Zhang Yan, and Wang Yisun chose to express their lament over the collapse of the Song in an oblique/allegorical mode rather than the heroic/expressive. See their relevant works contained in Huang Zhaoxian, Yuefu buti yanjiu ji jianzhu (Hong Kong: Xuewen chubanshe, 1975).
- ¹⁸ Wang Guowei, Renjian cihua (Cihua congbian ed., vol.12), 4250-51.
- ¹⁹ Adapted from the translation by Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition, p.172.
- ²⁰ See Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition, pp.172-177.

- ²¹ Shen Yifu was a native of Zhenze 震澤 in Jiangsu. His reputation rested on being a neo-Confucian scholar of some learning. He had lectured at the White Deer Grotto Academy where Zhu Xi had taught. None of Shen's other writings have survived, the Yuefu zhimi being his only extant work. See Xia Chengtao and Cai Songyun, Ciyuan zhu Yuefu zhimi jianshi (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1981), p.89. There are three poems in Wu's collection addressed to Shen (Jiangnan hao QSC 2903/2, Yongyu le 2910/3 and Shengsheng man 2930/5). In all three Wu matched the rhymes used by Shen in his poems.
- ²² Preface by Qian Liangyou dated 1317, see Xia Chengtao and Cai Songyun, ibid., p.50.
- ²³ For a summary of the juan on music, see Rulan Pian, Song Dynasty Musical Sources and Their Interpretation (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1967), pp.21-22.
- ²⁴ Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 229.
- ²⁵ Song ci poetry was written to music and sung. But the practice from the inception of the genre for poets to write words to existing tunes 填詞 instead of always inventing new ones led to increasing attention paid to the number of characters and the sequences of tones and rhymes used in the tune patterns, thus laying a foundation for the separation of music from the metrical pattern. When ci music was lost, the

post-Song practice of 'filling in words' became and continues to be the only procedure in writing ci poetry. As my focus is on the literary aspect of the ci, discussion of music would be limited to a literary-historical perspective rather than the theoretical. For writings on the music of ci, see Rulan Pian, Song Dynasty Musical Sources and Their Interpretation.

²⁶ Wu Zeng, Nenggaizhai manlu (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 83.

²⁷ Li Qingzhao's "Cilun," recorded in Hu Zi, Tiaoxi yuyin conghua (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1981), Vol.2, 254.

²⁸ For example, see the prefaces to Manjiang hong (QSC 3/2176), Zhizhao, (QSC 3/2182-83), and Qiliang fan, (QSC 3/2183-84).

²⁹ The divergence between ci and popular songs in the Southern Song can be deduced from Shen and Zhang's admonitions to ci writers not to be associated with popular songs in language or music.

³⁰ Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 232-33.

³¹ The passage often cited for criticism relates how Zhang Yan's father Zhang Shu, whom he regarded an exemplary ci writer, had changed one character in a line three times before he felt that it agreed with the music. Meaning hardly seemed to

matter as the sentence went from "The latticed window is deep" to "The latticed window is dark" to "The latticed window is bright." See Ciyuan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 203.

- ³² In discussions of tonal and musical aspects of ci poetry, Wu Wenying is often cited for illustration along with Zhou Bangyan and Jiang Kui as good models. See for example Wu Mei, Cixue tonglun (Hong Kong: Taiping shuju, 1964), pp.10-11 and p.41.
- ³³ For further reference, see the convenient headings in the table of contents made for the annotated edition of the two works in Xia Chengtao and Cai Songyun, Ciyuan zhu Yuefu zhimi jianshi.
- ³⁴ Li Qingzhao in her "Cilun" had appraised the ci poetry of the Southern Tang kingdom of the Five Dynasties period as having "cultured elegance" 文雅. See Hu Zi, Tiaoxi yuyin conghua, Vol.2, 254. Wang Zhuo recorded in his Biji manzhi that Muoqi Yong 万俟詠 (c.1050-c.1130), Zhou Bangyan's colleague in the Bureau of Music, divided his ci poetry into two categories: "elegant ci" 雅詞 and "erotic ci" 側艷. See Biji manzhi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 33. Wang Zhuo also remarks that ci poetry should exhibit the elegance and correctness 雅正 of ancient music. See Luo Genze's discussion of Wang Zhuo's critical bias in Zhongguo wenxue

pipingshi (Shanghai: Gudian wenxue chubanshe, 1957), Vol.3, 252-53. The modern scholar Zhao Wanli observed that elegance in ci was highly esteemed in the Southern Song. He quoted several titles of ci collections which use the character 雅 to demonstrate this self-conscious concern regarding elegance among Southern Song ci poets and anthologizers. See Zhao's preface in his Jiaoji Song Jin Yuan ren ci (Taipei: Tailian guofeng chubanshe, 1971), Vol.1, 2a.

³⁵ They are the Northern Song poet Liu Yong and the three Southern Song poets Kang Yuzhi 康輿之, Shi Yue 施岳 and Sun Weixin 孫惟信.

³⁶ Shen used the term "market place expressions" 市井句 and the "usage of professional musicians" 教坊之習 in his respective criticism of Sun Weixin and Shi Yue. See also Cai Songyun's discussion of 鄙俗語 in Xia Chengtao and Cai Songyun, Ciyuan zhu Yuefu zhime jianshi, p.47 n.4.

³⁷ Li Qingzhao, "Cilun," in Hu Zi, Tiaoxi yuyin conghua. Wang Zhuo, Biji manzhi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 34-35.

³⁸ Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 231. Ciyuan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 206-207.

³⁹ Yuefu zhimi, ibid., pp.229-30. Ciyuan, ibid., p.201. N. B. The term 詩句 is misprinted as 詞句 in this edition.

- ⁴⁰ Xia Chengtao gives the sources for Zhou's adapted lines in Xia Chengtao and Cai Songyun, Ciyuan zhu Yuefu zhimi jianshi, p.30, n.1. See also James Liu's explication of this poem in Major Lyricists of the Northern Sung, pp.165-73.
- ⁴¹ Their poetics of "creative imitation" 奮胎換骨, stated simplistically-to express a new or different idea based on an old word formula and conversely, to express a similar idea (to an old one) in different words, rests heavily on a revered preexisting body of poetry. On the origins of these concepts in Huang Tingjian (1045-1105), see Adele A. Rickett, "Method and Intuition: The Poetic Theories of Huang T'ing-chien," in Chinese approaches to Literature from Confucius to Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, ed. Adele A. Rickett (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press), pp.97-119.
- ⁴² In the Southern Song, the influence of Jiangxi School poetics was pervasive. Shi poets often began their poetic careers as apprentices in this school, though just as often they rejected it later (e.g., Yang Wanli, Lu You and Jiang Kui). Jiangxi School poetics emphasizes technique; many terms from their critical vocabulary, such as "line structure" 句法, "eye of the line" 句眼, and "eye of the poem" 詩眼, were adopted by ci critics. See Zhu Dongrun, Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi dagang (n.p.: Kaiming shudian, 1944), p.202.
- ⁴³ Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 234-35.

- ⁴⁴ Ciyuan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 218.
- ⁴⁵ Ciyuan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 219.
- ⁴⁶ Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 230-31.
- ⁴⁷ Traditional Chinese poetics have placed great importance on the proper distribution between natural scene 景 and lyrical feelings 情, i.e. on the interaction between image-oriented and expression-oriented language. Shen's stress on the treatment of closure is but a specific application of this general principle. In traditional criticism, critics have drawn attention to, but have not explicated poetic segments which fulfill this criterion. One can compare the different interpretations Zhou Bangyan's implicit imagery has given rise to in modern exegesis. Cf. James J. Y. Liu, Major Lyricists of the Northern Sung, p.173 and James R. Hightower, "The Songs of Chou Pang-yen," in HJAS 37 (1977), 245.
- ⁴⁸ Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 234.
- ⁴⁹ The lines are from Shengsheng man (QSC 2/2930). This observation is made by Wu Mei in his preface to the Yuefu zhimi jianshi quoted in Xia Chengtao and Cai Songyun, Ciyuan zhu Yuefu zhimi jianshi, pp.90-92.
- ⁵⁰ Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 230.

- ⁵¹ Su Shi is mentioned only once in the Yuefu zhimi. Shen conceded that some of Su's ci poems written in the non-heroic mode did accord with music. Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 234.
- ⁵² James J. Y. Liu, Major Lyricists of the Northern Sung, p.161.
- ⁵³ Their different views on the matter will be taken up in the next section.
- ⁵⁴ Ciyuan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 207.
- ⁵⁵ I am indebted to Professor E. G. Pulleyblank for alerting me to this fact. For a convenient list of Song and post-Song sources in which the terms shizi and xuzi occur, see Guhanyu yufaxue ziliao huibian, comp. Zheng Dian and Mai Meiqiao, comp. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1964), pp.91-104.
- ⁵⁶ From Lu Xiangshan quanji 陸象山全集, quoted in Zheng Dian and Mai Meiqiao, p.95.
- ⁵⁷ This difference is borne out by the examples of verse lines quoted in the Shiren yuxie, a Southern Song work containing comments and critiques on poetry. The examples are pentasyllabic and heptasyllabic lines illustrating the use of full words and empty words in different positions in the line. Nouns with physical correlates are clearly considered

full words; function words such as prepositions and adverbs as empty words; but the status of verbs and adjectives are not so clear and consistent. See Wei Qingzhi, Shiren yuxie (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), vol.1, 77-80; also quoted in Zheng Dian and Mai Meiqiao, pp.93-4.

⁵⁸ Ma Jianzhong, Mashi wentong jiaozhu (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1954), Vol.1, 1.

⁵⁹ Zhou Fagao, Zhongguo gudai yufa: zaoju bian, Vol.1 (Taipei: Institute of History and Philology, Academica Sinica, 1961), 22.

⁶⁰ Yuan Zhai, "Shizi xuzi yu yongdian," Yilin conglu, 4 (1964), 52.

⁶¹ ibid., p.53.

⁶² QTS, vol.6, 1898; the version quoted in Yuan Zhai has "green hills" instead of "autumn hills" in the last line, see "Shizi xuzi yu yongdian," p.53.

⁶³ See n.14.

⁶⁴ For a general discussion of lingzi, see Xia Chengtao and Wu Xionghe, Duci changshi (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), pp.94-9. Shuen-fu Lin also provides an erudite discussion on

the subject in The transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition, pp.131-41.

⁶⁵ On Liu Yong and the development of lingzi, see Kang-i Sun Chang, The Evolution of Chinese Tz'u Poetry, pp.122-147; and Winnie L. Leung, "Liu Yung and His Tz'u" (M.A. thesis. Univ. of British Columbia 1976), pp.149-166.

⁶⁶ See Ciyuan and Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 207 and 233 respectively.

⁶⁷ Some characters in the rising tone are also used, but these form a small minority.

⁶⁸ Xia Chengtao and Wu Xionghe, Duci changshi, p.59.

⁶⁹ ibid., p.60. Shen Yifu also stresses the importance of the falling tone in tune patterns; see Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 232

⁷⁰ For examples of syntactic abnormalities in manci, see Wang Li, Hanyu shilüxue (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1963), pp.659-661.

⁷¹ Kang-i Sun Chang, The Evolution of Chinese Tz'u Poetry, pp.128-29; and Winnie L. Leung, "Liu Yung and His Tz'u," p.150.

⁷² The slant indicates the caesura after the lead-segment.

⁷³ I am following Kang-i Sun Chang's count, The Evolution of Chinese Tz'u Poetry, p.128. Strictly speaking, the line immediately following the one with the third lead-segment should also be considered as starting with a lead-segment.

⁷⁴ Xia Chengtao and Cai Songyun, Ciyuan zhu Yuefu zhimi jianshi, p.15 and p.16, n.2. The Cihua congbian edition of the Ciyuan adopts the variant reading, Vol.1, 207.

⁷⁵ Wang Guowei, Renjian cihua (Cihua congbian ed., vol.12), 4252.

⁷⁶ Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 233.

⁷⁷ In Cai Songyun's annotation of the Yuefu zhimi, he explains jingzi as "full words which convey the form of things and is used in opposition to dongzi. Jingzi expresses an accomplished scene or condition, and dongzi an action to be accomplished;" Xia Chengtao and Cai Songyun, p.74. This explanation is taken verbatim from Ma Jianzhong's definition of jingzi, a term which Ma uses to stand for adjectives. See Mashi wentong, p.5. In Shen Yifu's passage, the term is used in opposition to xuzi, and should imply a broader range than adjectives.

⁷⁸ All examples of lead-segments are given in the context of the strophe in which they occur. For practical purposes, I take the rhyme positions as marking strophic divisions.

⁷⁹ This is pointed out by Wang Li in Hanyu shilü xue, p.660.

⁸⁰ This poem is analyzed in detail in Chia-ying Yeh Chao, "Wu Wen-ying's Tz'u: A Modern View," in Studies in Chinese Literary Genres, ed. Cyril Birch (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1974), pp.179-191. See also Ch.3, Sec.3 for complete translation and further discussion.

⁸¹ This is adapted from James Hightower's translation in Chia-ying Yeh Chao, "Wu Wen-ying's Tz'u," p.179-80. The version here aims to highlight the presence of the monosyllabic lead-segments.

⁸² Xia Chengtao and Cai Songyun, Ciyuan zhu Yuefu zhimi jianshi, p.75.

⁸³ See n.81.

⁸⁴ See Chia-ying Yeh Chao, "Wu Wen-ying's Tz'u," pp.188-89.

⁸⁵ QSC 4/2879: the first, third, fourth, and eighth poem listed under Shuilong yin; and QSC 4/2935.

- ⁸⁶ Disyllabic lead-segments seem to be the least clearly defined. This disyllabic lead-segment position is pointed out in Xia Chengtao and Wu Xionghe, Duci changshi, p.95. Generally speaking, polysyllabic lead-segment positions are less assiduously observed; they may be "filled" with full words instead. But the choice would of course affect the relative density of the style.
- ⁸⁷ See for example the following tune patterns: An xiang, QSC 4/2902 (Wu), 3/2181 (Jiang); Yan Qingdu, 4/2882-83 (Wu), 2/604 (Zhou); Fagu xianxian yin, 4/2888 (Wu), 2/602 (Zhou), 3/2178 (Jiang).
- ⁸⁸ See Wu Mei, Cixue Tonglun (Hong Kong: Taiping shuju, 1964), p.45.
- ⁸⁹ There are some variations in line division in this pattern which affect lead-segments. For example, the opening strophe varies between having a trisyllabic lead-segment, a monosyllabic lead-segment, or no lead-segment. The two trisyllabic lead-segment positions which I have chosen for illustration do occur in all five poems. Furthermore, not all post-trisyllabic pauses mark the occurrence of lead-segments. It has been pointed out that trisyllabic lead-segments usually have the first two or all three characters in oblique tones; see Wu Mei, Cixue tonglun, p.45.

III. THE POETRY OF WU WENYING: MAJOR THEMES AND SUBGENRES

I. YONGWU CI: POEM AS ARTIFICE AND POEM AS METAPHOR

The term yongwu 詠物 means to celebrate objects in poetic discourse. When it was used in the sixth century by the great anthologist Xiao Tong 蕭統 (502-31) in the preface to Wenxuan, it referred to an already well-established subgenre¹ in the fu, or rhymeprose:

When it comes to fu describing one event or celebrating a single object (詠一物), such as those on wind, clouds, plants and trees, or the ones about fish, insects, birds, and beasts, considering their range, it is quite impossible to list them all.²

As Xiao Tong's statement indicates, the category of objects suitable for description in the fu is almost infinitely expandable—any living thing or natural phenomenon as well as an artifact is a potential candidate for poetic elaboration. This is certainly the case with the category yongwu fu (or fu on objects) as its repertory grew from the Han through the Six Dynasties period. Although it would be an exaggeration to say that by Xiao Tong's time there hardly remained an object in the natural world which had escaped treatment in the fu, one could safely say that its range had become truly encyclopedic.³ Nor is this surprising in view of the nature of the fu, a genre that is characterized by exhaustive and extravagant descriptions of a topic. Insofar as its origin lies in the fu, the element of description remained central to the yongwu mode. The cumulative descriptive technique and epideictic rhetoric of the fu, by

which details are enumerated in lush verbiage in an effort to capture the appearance as well as the essence of a thing, were modified in shi and ci poetry and in yongwu fu of the late Six Dynasties to effect a more selective portrayal of the object.

Thus as the yongwu subgenre evolved across generic boundaries, certain conventions associated with the yongwu fu were carried over, while each genre in turn also imposed its own rules and requirements on the yongwu mode. We find, for example, that the kind of yongwu poetry which constitutes a staple subgenre of palace style poetry 宮體詩, notably as practiced by the Liang court aristocracy, is sharply curtailed in subject matter and length and is written for the most part in short pentasyllabic shi with an economy and preciousness of language undreamed of by the exuberant and effusive Han fu writer. These changes reflect developments brought about by both social and literary historical factors. In the case of the palace style yongwu, the sheltered lives of prince and courtier and a growing sense of normative aesthetics both contributed to a narrowing of the poetic world to the man-made luxuries and tamed aspects of nature found in the palace environment. Yongwu then became a perfect vehicle for verbal ingenuity and display; self-conscious artistry flirted with such poetic devices as parallelism, paronomasia, and tonal euphony, then all in vogue.

The very practice of writing about a specific object in a high poetic tradition demands that appropriate rhetorical and figurative devices be used and formal rules of versification adhered to. The literary conventions expected in yongwu render

it an extremely self-conscious art form. Artifice becomes an inevitable hallmark. When yongwu poetry serves the additional function of social occasional poetry, which it often did in the course of its history, the element of craft is particularly dominant.

It was during the age of palace style poetry (roughly corresponding to the last three Southern Dynasties, the Qi, Liang and Chen), when under aristocratic patronage poetry for the first time was totally divorced from politics and from moral intent and was indulged in as an art for its own sake, that the yongwu subgenre was firmly transplanted into shi poetry. To the court poets and their royal patrons, epitomized by the coterie surrounding Emperor Jianwen of the Liang 梁簡文帝, nothing seemed more amenable to literary pastime than a form of verse which affords the participants communal delight in an object and which enhances the pleasure derived from the object with *recherché* descriptions in a prescribed mode. In the anthology Yutai xinyong [New Songs from a Jade Terrace], commissioned by Emperor Jianwen, yongwu poems fill not just a few pages.⁴ Among the favorite objects for celebration are certain upper class luxury articles-carved candles, bronze mirrors, musical instruments, and the like-and poetic clichés of nature such as wind, moon, and flowers. The superficial artistry in the treatment and the unabashed sensuality generally exhibited have earned their courtly authors the opprobrium of later serious-minded critics as effete and decadent.

The descriptions in these poems generally present a series

of the attributes, striking effects, and unusual properties of the object celebrated, often in florid and ornate diction with appropriate use of set associations and poetic figures. Since the aim is display of wit and refinement, the majority of the poems are adroitly executed "sensuous word-pictures"⁵ lacking any deeper emotional or intellectual significance that would truly involve the reader. The following succinct little piece is by He Sun 何遜 (c.480-c.530), who was much admired by his contemporaries. It is written in pentasyllabic form with two parallel couplets, the second of which anticipates Tang regulated verse in its perfect tonal antithesis. Structurally, the first couplet tries to capture the essence of the object while the second depicts some of the wondrous effects which have caught the poet's fancy:

"On Spring Breeze"

Audible yet invisible,
 May be heavy, may be light.
 Before the mirror spilled powder swirls,
 Across the lute lingering notes are echoed.⁶

The word-game nature of the piece is all too apparent: the mysterious entity of the wind is not named in the lines themselves. The wind, as observed or imagined by a courtier, does not rustle through a hermit's bamboo grove but mischievously scatters the cosmetic powder which a palace lady is using and at the same time plays with the strings of the idle

lute probably lying by her side.

Despite the charge of decadence made during the Confucian reforms of Emperor Wen of the short-lived Sui dynasty,⁷ this tradition of the courtly yongwu, along with other poetic norms and models developed during the period, continued into the early Tang unabated. Tang Taizong (r.627-49), for example, took ingenuous delight in writing in the ornate palace style, much to the consternation of his more morally inclined courtiers.⁸

Yet, in the seventh century, even while many yongwu pieces were still turned out on the numerous courtly occasions when poems were written to imperial command (yingzhi 應制, fenghe 奉和), at the same time when writing poems of a more personal and self-expressive nature, poets began to subject the yongwu subgenre to conscious experimentation in an allegorical mode.⁹ In such poems, the object is no longer simply described with artful dexterity for literary entertainment but the description now serves to signify something outside of itself. In Luo Binwang's 駱賓王 (ca.640-84) dense and allusive poem on the cicada, the insect which is nourished on the wind and dew is used as a symbol of the poet's own purity.¹⁰ Another early example is Chen Zi'ang's 陳子昂 (661-702) allegorical poem on the fragrant orchid in his Ganyu 'Stirred by things encountered' series (No.2):

The fragrant orchid grows in spring and summer,
How brightly luxuriant in its prime.
Hidden and alone in the empty woods,
Vermilion blossoms appear on its purple stems.

Slowly the bright day turns to evening,
 Softly the autumn winds begin to rise.
 When the year's flowering has all fallen away,
 What becomes of its fragrant intentions?¹¹

The statement is quite obvious: the flower of the "Li Sao" stands again as a symbol of high-minded men whose virtues and talents go unrecognized.

As Chen Zi'ang's use of "Li Sao" symbolism suggests, the allegorical mode was by no means new in the Chinese poetic tradition, nor was it without precedent in the yongwu subgenre. Allegorical fu on objects had been written in the late Han,¹² and poets with a penchant for allegory like Cao Zhi 曹植 (192-232) furthered its development. By the late third century yongwu fu had become a common allegorical medium. The various fu on musical instruments or natural phenomena often aimed to express ideas beyond the immediate limits of their subject.¹³ The trajectory of yongwu fu from objective description to descriptive symbolism was paralleled by the course of its counterpart in the shi genre, which similarly moved from the intricate word-pictures of the palace style to the allegorical yongwu of the early Tang and beyond.¹⁴

This development in yongwu poetry can be seen as a reflection of the tendency in verse to move towards complexity and sophistication in methods and modes of representation. Yet in a specifically Chinese context, it also bears a crucial relationship to the dominant concept of poetry inherited from

antiquity, one which bears the mark of the Confucian ethos. From the Shangshu dictum "poetry expresses intent" 詩言志, and its elaboration in the Great Preface to Shi jing, poetry was given a didactic definition from which it never entirely freed itself. Although "intent" 志, was equated with "emotion" 情 in the Great Preface, thus making the lyrical expression of emotion a prominent feature of poetry, in the depths of the Chinese poetic consciousness, the tenacious notion persisted that poetry, to be of true value, should somehow serve ethics; failing this, it should at least not subvert it. The Han fu was criticized in its day for extravagance in language and content, which was judged to have the effect of encouraging the very vices it was to restrain. Clearly, the moral message commonly tagged on at the end of a fu did not suffice to right the balance of prolonged indulgence in tantalizing descriptions. However, if the descriptive process itself can serve to articulate the author's serious thoughts and emotions, thus creating an extra-literal or metaphorical dimension, the resultant composition would serve to "express intent." The great sixth century critic Liu Xie's 劉勰 elucidation of the fu as "writing intent by embodying an object" 體物寫志, testifies to the theoretical merging of the boundaries of the object and intent in allegorical yongwu fu.¹⁵

Palace style verse remained outside this relation between allegory and content. We need only go to the preface of the Yutai xinyong to confirm this fact. Xu Ling 徐陵, the compiler, avowed that the purpose of the anthology was for the

distraction of beautiful palace ladies in their boredom.¹⁶ To "express intent" was simply not the court poets' concern when writing palace style verse, they made no pretensions to it, and it is not surprising that yongwu shi in the palace style failed to develop an allegorical dimension.

This historical perspective on the yongwu subgenre as it evolved in the fu and shi suggests that similar patterns of development in the ci may also be found. The dual potentiality of the yongwu mode as a vehicle for literary amusement and for symbolic expression is bound to have an influence on the evolution of yongwu ci. However, before going into the subject of yongwu ci proper, I want to consider a few salient aspects of the ci genre, and its relation to shi and the orthodox concept of poetry. Yongwu ci, as we will see, eventually came to occupy a significant place in a complex configuration of literary-historical relationships.

The ci, originating as it did in a new song form which first became popular in the entertainment quarters during the Tang, did not have the prerogatives of orthodox poetry, shi, as a time-honoured vehicle for personal and ethical expression. The heterodox status of ci, however, conveniently freed those literati poets interested in the form from any didactic obligations when trying their hands at writing lyrics to the popular tunes. With their literary training and skill, they created song-poems in a refined and elegant diction which courtesans and singing girls performed. The lyrics closely reflected the psyche and boudoir environment of these denizens

of the demimonde, with the result that ci from the late Tang through the Five Dynasties preponderantly focused on exploring the moods and emotions of the fair and often languishing female persona. Such an emphasis was in marked contrast to and complements the predominantly "human-equals-man" world of shi poetry. One of the consequences was that shi and ci began to assume distinct generic roles. The first acknowledged master of the ci, the late Tang poet Wen Tingyun 温庭筠 (813?-70), for example, dealt with significantly different themes in his shi poetry. Ci subsequently evolved its own poetic conventions, by which the poet evokes certain moods and feelings through imagistic diction with little regard for mimetic realism or argumental development of thought. Song poets of the tenth and eleventh century who wrote ci inherited this poetics of mood and realized more of its possibilities for emotional projection, whether of the subtle and elusive variety of the Yan Shu-Ouyang xiu 晏殊 / 歐陽修 style, or of the more personal and direct Li Yu-Liu Yong 李煜 / 柳永 type.¹⁷ Shi poetry, meanwhile, as is well known, took the opposite direction, towards increasing realism and discursiveness.

In an aesthetics of ci where premium is placed on the emotional association and resonance of images, often at the expense of their logical and descriptive unity, the unsuitability of descriptive yongwu should be apparent. And indeed for almost two centuries following the literati adoption of ci in the late Tang, except for the rare isolated example, yongwu poems were absent from the corpus of ci.¹⁸ The first

epoch of yongwu ci began in the second half of the eleventh century with ci written by the many-sided genius Su Shi and his circle of scholar-official poets. Typical of Su Shi's general daring and innovative spirit in artistic matters, in his ci Su demolished some of the established generic boundaries between shi and ci poetry by putting ci to purposes previously restricted to shi. Su wrote ci poems with philosophical and historical themes and introduced the frequent use of allusions, even from the classics and histories, practices which were anathema to more orthodox views of ci. Su Shi's unorthodox approach has elicited both praise and blame from his contemporaries and later critics, but the important point for us in Su Shi's departure from tradition concerns the introduction of the yongwu subgenre into ci poetry.

It is no doubt the social occasional function which ci poetry now assumed in the hands of Su Shi and his friends which in part stimulated the appearance of a sizeable quantity of yongwu poems. In the preface which they often provided for their ci poems, itself a new feature, one sees the multifarious occasions-farewells, banquets, excursions-on which ci poems are now composed. In a sociable milieu where literati gatherings of all descriptions abounded, the yongwu mode once again lent itself to versification when extemporary poems were called for. The object furnished a common theme for individual efforts, and the finished products could then be sung. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that the popularity of flower-viewing and tea-drinking in Song life precipitated a great number of yongwu

poems, with those on flowers outnumbering all the others. Once instituted, the yongwu remained a major and staple subgenre in the ci, reaching its apex in the Southern Song. As an index of its continued popularity in the Southern Song, we can turn to the reign (1127-62) of Emperor Gaozong, when not long after the 1127 loss of the northern half of the empire to the Jurchens, yongwu ci poems written to imperial command and ci poems celebrating imperial birthdays were happily produced by his court officials.¹⁹ In a Southern Song sheltered by an expensive peace bartered from the Jurchens, yongwu ci thrived among the entertainments the cultured upper classes devised for themselves. The phenomenon of ci poetry clubs 詞社 also made its appearance at this time, providing yet another congenial environment in which yongwu figured as an eminently appropriate literary form.²⁰

The above account suggests a causal relationship between the function of ci poetry as occasional verse and the rise of the yongwu subgenre, but it does not follow that all yongwu ci are occasional poems. In fact, a great majority of those yongwu ci for which the preface simply gives the name of the object are not occasional. In many instances they belong to the category of personal yongwu.²¹

What approach did a poet take when writing a yongwu poem in the ci genre? By definition the yongwu mode takes the object as the organizing principle and, on the most elementary level, the ci poet readily subscribes to the conventions of the subgenre by manipulating the common lore of poetic images, allusions, and

stock symbols associated with the particular object in fashioning his lyric. Inevitably a great many insipid descriptive pieces were produced. If we examine stylistic elements of yongwu ci, however, we can discern a shift-with gradations-in the yongwu mode, a shift which epitomizes the general transition from the relatively direct and explicit rhetoric of the Northern Song ci style to the dense and allusive mannerism of the Southern Song style.

At its most typical, the Northern Song yongwu ci, from Su Shi to Zhou Bangyan, maintains a poetic voice independent of the object. Both Su Shi and Zhou Bangyan often employed the technique of sustained personification-hitherto little explored but a principle device in later yongwu ci-to project the object onto the human plane for poetic effect. By conceiving of the object as having human attributes, the poet asserts his own self as the lyrical consciousness musing on the object. This is particularly true of Su Shi's yongwu ci, in which his personality dominates as observer. Examples are his famous anthology piece written to the tune Shuiling yin on the willow catkin (QSC 1/277) and the following short lyric on the red plum blossom:

To the tune Ding feng bo

On red plum blossoms

- 1 Fond of sleep, too lazy to bloom, she does not mind
being late,

She pities herself because her icy face is not

becoming.

At times she puts on little red blossoms, in the colour
of peach-and-apricot.

Easy and graceful

5 She still maintains her lonely and slim posture of snow
and frost.

Don't let your idle heart follow the manner of others;

But why

Did the wine make you somewhat flushed, cause your
heart to retint your complexion?

The old poet does not know where the spirit of the plum
blossom lies,

As he chants

10 He goes on to look for green leaves and new branches.²²
(QSC 1/289)

Through the poet's lively imagination, the flowering plum is depicted as a woman, with the flower's traditional symbolic values made over as attributes of the woman. The personification makes it possible for the poet to address the plum tree in the second stanza, further highlighting its red colour through the conceit of a wine-flushed face. Su's presence as animator is strongly felt in the second stanza as by his commanding presence, he delineates an essential image of the flower.

The subjective voice of the persona is also maintained in

many of Zhou Bangyan's yongwu ci, but the relationship between the subject and object in the poem begins to change in some of them. Rather than maintaining the distinct roles of observer and observed, an empathic correspondence is developed between the lyrical self and the object "sung about." In other words, through the subject's encounter with the object, various nuances of subjective feeling are evoked, echoed, and finally embodied by the object. For example, in Zhou Bangyan's Liu chou, on faded roses, the poet begins by lamenting the transience of life, shown by the passing of spring. This regret finds its "objective correlative" in the faded flowers, personified as palace beauties, dead and buried. The poet's regret and longing is further amplified by sad images-bees and butterflies that still seek the vanished flowers, the branches, now bare of blossoms, that try to "detain" the poet, as if seeking some solace for their loss, and the wilted rose which he puts in his turban, a foil to the remembered rose in full bloom worn in his lover's hair.²³ In such a poem, it is the mood and emotional associations roused by the object rather than any realistic description or intellectual contemplation of the object which form the core of the lyric.

This process of empathic objectification of one's personal moods and sentiments, whose beginnings can be seen in some of Zhou Bangyan's yongwu ci, is developed into an extreme interiorization of subjective sensibility in the yongwu works of major Southern Song ci poets such as Jiang Kui, Wu Wenying, Zhou Mi, Zhang Yan and Wang Yisun 王沂孫. With the yongwu mode

thus turned into a metaphoric projection of the private realm, it is inevitable that ambiguity and obscurity would result. Since the poet's intentionality is no longer purely directed towards a descriptive rendering of the object, but aims to metaphorize some personal emotion through the object, even familiar allusions and kennings selected from the usual literary fund available for a given object may prove to be semantically elusive in the particular context. We are no longer sure of their true referent: they signify some aspect of the object which is itself in turn only a signifier, whose ultimate referent may remain conjectural. The highly complex referential structure of these late Song yongwu ci is compounded by the then current poetics of indirection—a poetics which favours allusive and connotative language—to produce a dense, sometimes almost opaque, texture and meaning. It is easy to see how these poems have offered critics in the tradition of ci hermeneutics fertile ground for enthusiastic exegesis as well as pejorative criticism.

It is true that these late Song poets continued to write yongwu ci of a descriptive or occasional nature, in which case a clever, literary description of the object remains a priority. But their most representative yongwu pieces show an unmistakable tendency towards extreme subjectivity. The object merely provides a tenuous thread on which the poet strings together glimpses of past memories, elusive thoughts, and subtle emotions through a partly formal (i.e., object-oriented) and partly personal (i.e., self-oriented) associative process.²⁴ In other

poems, the subjective voice of the poet disappears from the surface of the poem altogether; there is no longer a subject/object dichotomy and the object takes on the full weight of actualizing private moments and emotions.²⁵

For exegetical purposes, I have selected three yongwu poems from Wu Wenying's collection, each to exemplify a different aspect of the yongwu subgenre, artifice, lyricism, and metaphor. The first poem is a model of an occasional yongwu:

To the tune Shengsheng man

A friend entertained guests with a display of plum blossoms, orchids, daphnes and narcissus, which he named the Four Fragrances. In the distribution of rhymes I received the character feng.

- 1 In mountain valleys deep in clouds,
Or river marshes chilled by mist,
Rare it is in life to meet one another.
Smiling together before the lanterns,
- 5 Springtime faces arranged in rows of two.
Pure fragrances vie by night in their true forms,
Stirring fresh scents to confuse the east wind.
The hand that gathered the flowers
Must arrange for them a golden chamber:
- 10 The romantic official is at a loss.

Haggard are the slanting feathers and wilted girdle-
pendants,

How sad the Jade Maiden has grown thin,

Drifting to follow the light swan.

I ask my bosom friend:

15 Whose charms are most alluring before the goblet?

Again and again we call for Purple Cloud to keep our
drinking company.

The little clove, only just revealing a faint red;

If it understands words,

I will take it home to make rain in a dream.

(QSC 4/2920)

The preface furnishes the details regarding the occasion of the composition; it was a literary gathering to view flowers, to which the poet had been invited. This prefatory information orients the reader to a particular way of reading and interpreting the poem. On one level at least, the entire poem can be read as referring to the social event: the poet will perform the feat of magically bringing to life the unique floral assembly of plum blossom, orchid, daphne and narcissus. To do so only, however, is to miss half the meaning, or perhaps half the fun, of the poem, for Wu Wenying skilfully combines apt allusions with the personification device to produce a poetic structure with two simultaneous sets of referents. To be sure, the formal description of objects is there, but through the tropes and structure employed in the description, the poet aims at portraying another reality.

The poem unfolds as a narrative, moving spatially from the natural environment of the flowers to the lively scene at the

party where they are the main attraction. At this point, the identity of the flowers undergo a metamorphosis-personified, they now also represent real women, singing girls or entertainers who were brought together for the occasion. Their competing charms ironically are causing some confusion to the host who has brought them together. The allusion which comes at the close of the first stanza consolidates the flowers' personification and relationship to the host. "Gold chamber," a term originating in a story about the love of Emperor Wu of Han as a child for his cousin Ajiao, is a conventional figure symbolizing the care and protection a man should give to the woman he loves.²⁶

In the new stanza we witness in the wilting of the narcissus, orchid, and plum, how some of the singing girls lost in the competition for favour. True to yongwu conventions in occasional verse, the flowers are deftly referred to by familiar allusive kennings, which are also, appropriately, feminine accessories, and by a woman's name. The twofold description of flowers and women is thereby maintained. By using the character giao 翹 (1.11), which means long feathers as well as a woman's hair ornaments, the poet by a metonymic trope refers to both the narcissus, with its long, feather-shaped leaves, and a woman with a disarrayed headdress. In the term "wilted girdle-pendants" 委佩, the orchid is thinly disguised by an allusion to the "Li sao" line, "I strung together autumn orchids for girdle-pendants."²⁷ By describing the orchid-pendants as wilted, one of the "Li sao" themes-being out of favour-is borrowed,

minus its allegorical significance, to amplify the dejection felt by some of the singing girls already suggested by the word "haggard." Thus the craft of yongwu poetry can be merely lapidary. The precedent for using the name Jade Maiden to refer to the plum blossom lies with the inventive genius of Su Shi. In one of his shi poems on the plum blossom, Su personifies the plum blossom as the beautiful concubine of a nobleman of the Southern Qi, whose name was Jade Maiden.²⁸ Wu here describes the fading and falling of the plum petals in the image of an ethereal maiden so slender as to float away, her motion in harmony with the graceful movements of a swan.

With the disposal-on literal, metaphorical, and structural levels-of three out of four of his subjects, Wu devotes the rest of the poem to the handling of the daphne, whose attributes are manipulated for ingenious wordplay to complete the verbal artifice. By the association of colour, the daphne is personified as Purple Cloud, the name of a singing girl whom the Tang poet Du Mu desired,²⁹ and perhaps one whom our poet desires on the present occasion, as the last line seems to suggest. Line 17 sustains the personification by a metonymic substitution. By association through colour and shape, the daphne is referred to as the clove, which is, conveniently, the conventional figure for a woman's tongue. The line may be paraphrased as "Her small clove tongue, only just revealing its faint red." The note of eroticism thus introduced is consummated in the last line; "cloud and rain" or "moving rain," especially in a dream, is a stock image for sexual encounter

whose locus classicus is in the "Gaotang fu" attributed to Song Yu.³⁰ The reference to a dream in the last line, moreover, alludes obliquely to the daphne, whose alternative name is shuixiang 睡香 'sleep fragrance,' thereby artfully maintaining the flower aspect of the poem to the end.

Such an involute system of signification in the occasional yongwu serves as no more than erudite and literary embellishment in a poem which is otherwise devoid of deeper meaning. Here is a poem of artifice par excellence, and one which is reminiscent of the gloss and wit of its Southern Dynasties antecedent.

In Wu Wenying's use of the yongwu mode when the occasion is not a social one, there is a tendency to violate the primary convention of the subgenre by deviating from the declared topic. The following poem on medicinal broth is an example:

To the tune Xinghua tian

On broth

- 1 Southern ginger and cardamon-the taste of love,
I reckon it was in the spring breeze beneath her
tongue.
River's purity tenderly given to dispel a lingering
drunkenness,
A haggard Wenyan rose from illness.
- 5 I stopped my neighing horse-her brows full of song
conveyed her feelings,
I remember dawn colours in a dream by the eastern city

wall.

Purple sandalwood, hazy and light, fragrant glances so
delicate,

Heartbreak in the little quarter with weeping willows.

(QSC 4/2933)

This is hardly what one would expect to find in a yongwu on medicinal broth. There should have been some more elaboration on the preparation of the broth and more praise of the broth's healing properties and magical effects. For comparison, we can take a look at a short ci poem by Zhang Yan on the same subject, which does exactly what the form requires:

To the tune Ta suo xing

On broth

- 1 Collecting fragrances of rare herbs, gathering mercury
from immortal flowers,
Where the ice wheel grinds, scented dust is stirred.
On a stove with bamboo the broth warms over a reddening
flame.
After the blending by jade hands, it was delivered with
song.

- 5 I wave away the Classic of Tea, hide the Eulogy of
Wine,
Enjoying a cup of pure flavour with wonderful guests.
Immortality has always been gained by gathering herbs,

Don't be fooled by the love potion at Indigo Bridge.

(QSC 5/3510)

The methodical description in the first stanza of Zhang Yan's poem makes for a flat reading and, together with the little Taoist injunction at the end, give it a discursive flavour more characteristic of trends in Song period shi poetry than ci.

Wu Wenying, on his part, used this topic as a warp on which he wove a small but touching human incident; the poem becomes a vehicle for the memory of a tender experience. The poet, suffering from illness and a hangover, was nursed back to health by a pretty and loving singing girl in the brothel district in the eastern part of Hangzhou.³¹ Then came the parting inevitable in all such encounters, made sad here by a genuine sense of the tenderness and care which had transpired.

There is very little description of the object itself except that the broth, made of ginger and cardamon, is clear like a river and regenerative like love. The ingredients of the broth also allude to the tender age and beauty of the girl who made it. The term "cardamon" 豆蔻 has stood for an attractive young girl ever since one was celebrated by Du Mu:

Delicate and pretty, a little over thirteen,

The tips of cardamon branches at the start of March.³²

The epithet for ginger, man 熱 虫 'southern,' may echo the name of Bo Juyi's young concubine, Xiao Man 小 熱 虫, who has become a

stock poetic figure for a young charming mistress. These literal and literary ingredients impart an ambiguous and mildly erotic tone to the first two lines. The taste of love is the girl herself, experienced by the poet through the "spring breeze beneath her tongue," that is, the pleasing songs and words which come forth from her mouth. Concealed in this image is also the possibility that the taste of love is derived from the manner in which she feeds him the broth-with her mouth. "Spring" here is read with its romantic and erotic connotations.

The parting and heartbreak in the second stanza, seemingly far removed from the surface topic, hinge on an implied analogy between the singing girl and medicinal broth-both are curative and beneficial but not everyday fare.

As befits the personal nature of this poem, Wu Wenying makes fewer resorts to rhetorical tropes or embellishments. The allusions to Du Mu's poem and to Bo Juyi's concubine fit into the text of the poem very naturally. The only other allusive name, Wen yuan 文园, derived from the title of the Han poet Sima Xiangru. A popular reference rich with the associations of literary talent, romantic disposition, and failing health, Wu often uses the term for his persona.

What becomes apparent in reading this yongwu poem is that the violation of form may serve as an assertion of lyricism in a poetic mode which otherwise could tend toward excessive impersonality and artificiality in language and sentiment.

The last poem we will consider is written to the tune Suochuang han and is simply subtitled "The Magnolia":

- 1 Magenta strands on layers of cloud,
 Clear cheeks of moist jade-
 The Woman Adrift first appears,³³
 Southern stench not yet washed off,
 5 The seafarer's heart is full of sad regret.
 Far they journeyed on the magic raft to ride on high
 winds.

Possessing the noblest fragrance in the kingdom, her
 secret heart opens.

[one character missing] leaving sweet scent but
 concealing colour,

Her real beauty is quiet and subdued-

- 10 A resurrected soul from the land of Sao.

One glance

Exchanged for a thousand pieces of gold.

Then smiling she accompanies Master Leather-flask,

Together they return to Wu Park.

- 15 Amid separating mists and sorrowful waters

She dreams of faraway southern skies on an autumn
 evening.

Frail when she came, more so now,

Cold fragrance seeping into her bones she grieves at
 the distance of her native soil.

Saddest of all is seeing the guest off in Xianyang,

- 20 Sash tied to the plaint of the west wind.

(QSC 4/2873-74)

The overt subject of the poem is the magnolia, but even an initial reading will show that the image of the flower is inextricably bound up with and superseded by the image of a woman in the poet's vision. The discussion here will not aim to explicate the meaning of the poem so much as to show how the metaphoric dimension is brought about in the yongwu mode.

The poem begins with the personification of the flower as the Woman Adrift. Behind this figure is a strange tale of romance from the Tang set in the south of China and concerning an ill-fated love between a water-nymph from the dragon palace and a young scholar.³⁴ The figure of the Woman Adrift is not uncommon in poems on flowers-Wu Wenying uses it elsewhere in his poetry, and so does Zhou Mi.³⁵ But in all cases it is used for flowers which grow in water, such as the lotus and narcissus. The fact that the magnolia is a tree or shrub which does not even have to grow near water destroys the mimetic correspondence of the personification and throws into relief another element associated with the Woman Adrift tale: it is the south, a water country and barbaric region during the classical age, the native growing range of the magnolia, and here the setting for a poetic reenactment of the sad romance. The first stanza tells of a seafarer's meeting with a flower/woman and their journey together to a distant kingdom where the fragrance and beauty of the flower/woman are enhanced by the happiness she feels. With the stanzaic change the personification of the flower is reiterated in the figure of Xi Shi, the legendary "kingdom-toppling" beauty. One tradition has it that she wandered off

with Fan Li (Master Leather-flask), the Yue minister who had engineered the ruse to use her beauty to defeat the kingdom of Wu.³⁶ Except for the equation between the beauty of Xi Shi and that of the flower/woman, any mimetic correspondence to the magnolia has all but disappeared in this personification. This does not, however, affect the structural progression in this yongwu as it is clearly not activated by a description of the object, but by the quasi-narrative made possible by the personification. The personification at the beginning of the second stanza repeats the journey motif only to dramatize the final denouement: the rest of the poem abruptly turns into a tale of grief, decline, and parting.

Even in this seemingly bizarre account of the magnolia, yongwu conventions are still observed. The description of the Woman Adrift in the first two lines of the poem is also a perfect description of the magnolia. Through the highly connotative diction of ci, in which terms like cloud and jade can have a wide range of referents depending on the context, the woman with cloudlike curls, her hair adorned with red ribbons, is also the magnolia with its cloudlike white petals marked with purplish red streaks at the base; the soft delicate texture and white colour of the petals are likened to the woman's soft, nephrite-white cheeks. These first two lines actually establish a strong mimetic correspondence, but one which is destroyed, or at least frustrated, as the poem immediately veers into the strange realms of the poet's private world, metaphorized in a quasi-narrative. Much of the power and movement, and perhaps

obscurity, of the poem derives from this tension between the yongwu demand for mimesis and the poet's own metaphorizing impulse. Ultimately, mimesis (I use it here in the narrow sense of reproducing the object verbally) is maintained only in the surface text.

On one level, the poem develops the imagistic possibilities in the name of magnolia. Since the magnolia, unlike the plum blossom and other flowers with impressive yongwu portfolios, lacks even a literary antecedent, the poem's figural references to the magnolia are derived from its constituent characters—yu 玉 and lan 蘭, "jade-orchid." These two characters denoting the special characteristics of the magnolia—its white colour and orchidlike scent—are amply exploited; in a sense we can read the entire poem, with the exception of a few strophic units, as a series of descriptions generated by yu and lan. We have already looked at an example of the amplification of yu in the opening two lines. As for lan, there is the allusion at the end of the stanza: "the land of Sao" 騷畹 is the "many an acre" 九畹 on which the Li Sao poet tended his beloved orchids;³⁷ and in the closing lines of the poem, there is an oblique reference to the wilted orchid of the powerful couplet by Li He (791-817) on the grief of parting: "The wilted orchid sees off the guest on Xianyang road, / If heaven had feeling, heaven too would grow old."³⁸

When the poem is thus analyzed solely on the level of adherence to the yongwu topic, it does stand in danger of falling into dazzling fragments of jade and orchid. But as we

have already seen, the real code is not the magnolia as object but the magnolia as a metaphor or a private symbol of a woman, with the poem expressing a metaphoric tale of love. The unifying principle is located in the poet's metaphorizing impulse, which merges the yongwu texture and the structure of events and emotions together in an organic whole. It may be useful here to recall Su Shi's poem on the red plum blossom for comparison. Even though Su Shi describes the plum blossom through its personification as a woman, he remains mimetically committed to the actual object and we do not suspect for a moment that he is writing about anything but a particular species of prunus. In Wu Wenying's poem, the subversion of true mimetic involvement creates a metaphoric dimension no longer commensurate with the physical object. This change constitutes a decisive turning point in the development of Southern Song yongwu ci. In the yongwu works of ci poets a generation before Wu Wenying, signs of this dissociation from the object can already be detected;³⁹ in some of Wu's yongwu ci the dissociation is radical and complete.

Less than two decades after Wu Wenying's death, the Southern Song fell to the Mongols. In 1279, a group of men gathered in secret to mourn the Mongol-instigated looting of the Song imperial tombs and the desecration of imperial corpses. Among them were the ci poets Zhou Mi, Wang Yisun and Zhang Yan. The medium they chose for the expression of their thoughts and emotions about this humiliating incident was yongwu ci, written in the allegorical mode.⁴⁰ This choice is significant in two

respects. One, with respect to the yongwu subgenre, it represents a logical conclusion to the development of yongwu in ci poetry from description to allegory, comparable to its evolutionary patterns in the fu and shi. And two, with respect to the ci genre, it demonstrates concretely the elevation of the generic status of ci in the literary orthodoxy to a form considered proper for the expression of intent. Both processes had been evolving all along. On the first point, I have tried to show, by certain stylistic and structural changes the gradual shift in the yongwu mode since it was first taken up by ci poets. On the second, it is the violation of generic boundaries between shi and ci practiced by Su Shi and his friends that marks a definite step in the elevation of ci to a serious literary genre.

The process was not fast and the goal perhaps never clinched. From extant critical comments, it seemed that Su's contemporaries and near-contemporaries, governed by a strong generic expectation that ci should be delicate, subtle, and musical, were more critical of the technical faults of his new ci than aware of his contributions in widening the subject matter of ci. Yet, as ci became more established as a literary genre in the hands of literati scholar-officials, the moral demands of the literary tradition began to make themselves felt in the minds of its critics and practitioners. In the early Southern Song, the critic Wang Zhuo, who expressed the highest esteem for Su Shi's ci, began a discussion of the origin of ci by quoting the shi yan zhi 'poetry expresses intent' dictum.⁴¹

Coming at the end of the Song, Zhang Yan similarly states in his critical treatise, the Ciyuan, that "ci should be elegant and proper; it is where the heart's intent goes," also taking the Great Preface as his authority ("Poetry [shi] is where the heart's intent goes").⁴² In using the orthodox definition of shi for their discussion of ci, these critics and practitioners of ci eagerly subscribed to the orthodox concept of poetry and sought to elevate ci to the same status as shi poetry. That they did not entirely succeed is reflected both in the renewed efforts of their Qing successors to legitimize ci along the same lines and in the ambivalent and sometimes depreciative attitude towards the genre expressed by some Qing period ci practitioners. But this properly belongs to another chapter in the history of the ci. Yongwu ci poetry as written in the allegorical mode at the end of the Southern Song was both a confirmation in practice of what ci critics held in theory-the higher function of ci poetry-and an illustration of the evolutionary possibilities of the yongwu subgenre.

II. POEMS IN REMEMBRANCE OF LOVE

Memory is vicarious experience in
which there is all the emotional
value of actual experience
--John Dewey

Of the 340 extant poems by Wu Wenying, close to one third are poems written in memory of his two mistresses.⁴³ An account of the events in Wu Wenying's life which gave rise to the

outpouring of these poems of remembrance has been given in Chapter One. Here I will just recapitulate the essentials: in his youth Wu Wenying had an ill-fated romance with a singing girl in Hangzhou which ended tragically with the girl's death while he was absent. Later on in his life, during his sojourn in Suzhou (early 1230s to 1240s), Wu lived with a mistress for a number of years, but for some unclear reason they were eventually forced to part. These two losses left him with indelibly beautiful, and therefore all the more sad, memories. Remembrances and longings for his vanished loves became almost obsessive themes in his poetry.

In the wake of late Qing interest in Wu Wenying's ci style, there was a renewed effort among ci specialists in the earlier part of this century to carry out biographical and exegetical studies on Wu Wenying and his poetry in the traditional formats of biochronology and annotated editions.⁴⁴ It was in these works that the existence of these love poems was first systematically noted and their significance duly acknowledged. A few decades later, in an isolated brief article on Wu Wenying, a mainland scholar made the astute comment that "[Wu's] love and longing for the departed mistresses ... are great sorrows in his life and constitute the very core of emotion in his poetry."⁴⁵ In view of the sheer quantity and exceptional quality of these love poems, it is inevitable that any serious attempt to examine Wu Wenying's poetry would involve examples from this corpus. Indeed, the most recent crop of articles on Wu Wenying by mainland scholars with their marked focus on the "nouvelle

vague" aspect of Wu's poetic style-notably in their penchant for characterizing it as the Chinese thirteenth century prototype of twentieth century "stream of consciousness" technique-select examples for illustration or generalization that are most often from among his love poems.⁴⁶ While it may be somewhat simplistic and forced to apply a highly self-conscious art form developed in modern fiction in characterizing Wu Wenying's poetry and the endeavour symptomatic of a certain trendiness in the resurgent critical climate of the post-Mao years, the attempts in toto signal a rising recognition of Wu's individual style that is perhaps most readily discernible in the love poems.

A common attribute of Wu's love poems which may lend them to facile analysis à la mode is the distinctive hallucinatory ambience they exhibit (to some extent this can be said of his poetry as a whole). Frequent transposition between reality (actual experience) and the illusory experience of dream and reverie, vision and flashback is a pronounced feature in the morphology of these love poems. As the development, or movement, of the poem is primarily guided by memory, emotional association, and sense perception (image-making), rather than by any apparent logic, time sequence is often disrupted and spatial viewpoint shifted without any clear demarcation: the poem moves back and forth between reminiscence and description, between the past and the present. The first stanza of Shuang ye fei, a poem written on the Double Ninth festival, is an extreme example which clearly shows these traits:

- 1 Intervening mist and parting feelings,
 Things that concern the heart.
 The setting sun's redness hides behind frosty trees.
 Half a jar of autumn water I offer to the yellow
 flower,
 5 Its fragrance sprays the west wind and rain.
 I let go the jade rein-lightly flies a swift bird.
 So desolate, no one mourns for the antiquity of this
 deserted terrace.
 I remember drunkenly treading on Nanping Hill:
 The painted fan sobs, the cold cicada is weary of
 dreaming,
 10 Not knowing Man or Su.

(QSC 4/2874-75)

Notes:

1.8 Nanping Hill is in the southern outskirts of Hangzhou.

1.10 "Man-Su" is an acronym made from the names of the Tang poet Bo Juyi's 白居易 two concubines, Xiao Man 小蠻 and Fansu 樊素. It stands for Wu's long departed mistresses.

The poem moves from an internal reflection (1.1-2) to external description (1.3-5), to flashback (1.6-8), and fantasy (1.9-10). The only overt indication of time and space is 1.8: "I remember drunkenly treading on Nanping Hill," except what follows is hardly a sensible recollection of the hike. What links the succession of scenes and images is the "concern," the emotional current, expressed at the beginning of the poem. In the

inability to forget this concern with the past, an acute appreciation is born for a moment of autumnal beauty, as well as a solicitude for the autumn chrysanthemum, and a lament associated with the Double Ninth for the past (historical). But ultimately it is the obsession with a personal past which reasserts itself, expressed in strangely surreal images.⁴⁷

When the corpus of love poems is examined for Wu's handling of the theme, they yield a variety of modes and settings; chief among them are the metaphorical yongwu mode (discussed in the previous section), lyrical and narrative modes, and seasonal and festival settings. Many festivals observed on the traditional lunar calendar frequently figure as settings in Wu's love poems, with the Qingming 清明 festival in spring, the Double Fifth 重午 in summer, and the Double Seventh 七夕 and Double Ninth 重九 in autumn being the most common. They seem to be occasions which Wu particularly favoured for reminiscing about his past loves. It is a universal feature of fêtes and festivals that they involve families and groups in communal ritual observances and celebrations. Thus for those who are alone or away from home, festivals become times when they would feel a strong longing for friends and loved ones. Chinese poets over the centuries had a penchant for composing festival poems which express their thoughts for home and family when away; the general flavour can be seen captured in the Tang poet Wang Wei's famous lines written on a Double Ninth: "Alone, a sojourner in a strange land, / Whenever a festival comes around, thoughts of kin increase manifold."⁴⁸ In Wu's love poems, the constant

interweaving of festival motifs with the theme of remembrance and yearning constitutes a unique feature which deserves study. Xia Chengtao has further noted that these love poems record distinct memories of the two women by means of different seasonal and geographical indicators, which are temporal and spatial segments associated with the respective lovers-spring and Hangzhou allude to one, summer, autumn and Suzhou to the other.⁴⁹

In the ensuing discussions, examples will be selected from the different modes and settings used in this corpus of poems. Attention will be given to the analysis of key images and motifs whose vital presence marks these poems as superbly crafted and moving love lyrics. Moreover, in the usual absence of true referential prefaces in this group of love poems, it is the characteristic recurrence of leitmotifs which function as codes for interpreting the entire series as such. Despite its brevity, the following unprefaced poem, written to the tune Feng ru song, contains a number of significant leitmotifs:

- 1 Listening to wind, to rain, I pass Grave-sweeping Day,
 Too weary to write an epitaph for buried flowers.
 Before the pavilion, green shade obscures our path of
 parting-
 One sprig of willow, one inch of tender feeling.
- 5 Chilly in the spring cold I got drunk...
 The chirping orioles mingle in my daybreak dream.

Day after day I sweep the wooded arbour in the West
Garden,

Relishing the new clear weather as in the past.

Again and again yellow bees strike the swing's ropes

10 Where fragrance from her delicate hands still clings.

Grieved that her mandarin-duck shoes do not come,

Overnight, moss has grown on the secluded steps.

(QSC 4/2906)

Memories of the dead are associated with Grave-sweeping Day, which translates the Qingming festival in spring when the Chinese traditionally make their annual visits to the family gravesites to clear them of weeds and make ritual offerings. Thus this festival often serves in Wu Wenying's love poems as an apt device to call up poignant memories of his deceased lover. The association with death evoked in the opening line is immediately reinforced by "epitaph" and "buried flowers" in 1.2; the image of the fallen flowers of spring, ravaged by wind and rain, acts then as an implied metaphor for the young lover who died in the spring of life. In another poem, Wu Wenying employs a similar metonymic figure, "interred jade and buried fragrance," in referring to her.⁵⁰

The element of time plays an important role in these poems of reminiscence: its irrevocable passage often forms an antithesis to the ironic persistence of memory. While the lapse of time obliterates the past as empirical reality, its failure to erase the stubborn traces of memory becomes a source of

bittersweet pain. Wu Wenying in these love lyrics will typically use images which emphasize the protracted remoteness of time past, and then contrast, almost defy, them with images which signify undying emotion. This poem contains a series of binary images which express this tension. Sometimes one and the same image would embody the polarity, as for example the willow (1.3-4), which through time has grown to block out physically a view of the past, yet paradoxically, in its very growth and proliferation is lodged the proportionately increased emotion (tenderness and love) associated with the past.

The entire second stanza foregrounds this counterpoint between time and feeling. The persona encloses himself in the West Garden, the symbolic world of the past which he persists in living in. Sweeping its grounds becomes a psychologically pregnant act of clearing away what is on the surface to reveal what is hidden, to push aside present reality in order to recreate the past. The verb "to sweep" is modified by the adverbial phrase "day after day," emphasizing the persistence of the action. In another poem also set at the time of Qingming, images of the past are conjured up through the same act of sweeping the ground:

Kiosks and arbors newly swept,
 Imprinted on the lichen, traces of her paired lovebird
 shoes,
 I recall our walks through the deep woods.
 (San shu mei, QSC 4/2923)

In lines 9 and 10, the poet projects his own persistent longing for the past onto the fragrance-seeking bees which "again and again" alight on the swing's ropes where the perfume from the dead lover's hands is imagined to still remain. This vivid and haunting imagery has been very much admired by traditional critics for its beauty and power of evocation.⁵¹ In the closural image, however, even the illusory presence of the lover is negated by the accumulation of moss growth, which indicates contrariwise the truth of her long absence. The figurative overnight growth of the moss is expressive of the compressed intensity of unfulfilled longing and desire. The imagery of the gardenscape is infused with emotional symbolism.

In this short poem we have encountered three of the most common metonyms Wu Wenying uses for the lover—her delicate hands, her shoes/footprints, and her perfume. These often constitute hallucinatory, partial and fleeting apparitions of the lover peculiar to these poems; they are fragmentary images made all the more potent by their symbolic condensation.

Set in a narrative mode with the season of the Qingming festival as its background, the poem written to the longest ci pattern Ying ti xu is an engrossing tour de force in its recollection of and lament for a bygone love:

- 1 The lingering chill afflicts one sick with wine—
 I close ornamented doors of aloewood.
 Swallows come late, flying over the western city wall,
 As if announcing the end of spring.

5 Painted boats have already carried away the Qingming
festival;

In clearing mist tender are the Wu Palace trees.

I muse on how the traveler's moods drift on,

Changing into light catkins in the wind.

Ten years ago at West Lake,

10 I tethered the horse by the willow

And followed charmed dust in a soft haze.

Tracing red petals upstream step by step, I was

summoned to Fairy Creek,

And Brocade Maid furtively conveyed your deep

feelings.

By the silver screen spring was indulgent but our

dream was confined:

15 Soon falling rouged tears soaked your singing fan and

gold-thread gown.

At dusk the dike was empty.

Lightly we took the sunset

And returned it all to the gulls and egrets.

Orchids quickly age,

20 Pollias grow again,

And I still journey among river villages.

Since parting I've revisited Six Bridges-no news.

Our affair's in the past, flowers have wilted,

Interred jade and buried fragrance

- 25 Have gone through much wind and rain.
 Long waves envied your glance,
 Distant hills were shamed by your brows,
 Fishing lamps scattered reflections in the spring
 river night-
 I recall our small boat at Peach Root Crossing.
- 30 The green chamber seems a mirage
 Where I inscribed poems at parting on walls now
 crumbled,
 Tears and ink are dulled by dust and soil.
- From a high pavilion I gaze on the horizon-
 Colour of grass to the world's edge;
- 35 I sigh at my hair, half turned white.
 Secretly I count the parting tears and happy stains
 Still colouring your silk handkerchief-
 The dangling phoenix lost its way back,
 The luan-bird on the broken mirror no longer danced.
- 40 Fervently I want to write down
 My eternal sorrow in a letter,
 But into blue mist over a distant sea passing wild
 geese sink.
- In vain I play my love-yearning into the mournful
 zither's strings.
- Grieving over a thousand li south of the river,
- 45 With rueful song I summon you again,
 But is your severed soul still there?

(QSC 4/2907-08)

Notes:

- 1.6 "Wu Palace trees" stand for trees in Hangzhou. Hangzhou was the capital of the Wu-Yue kingdom during the Five Dynasties period. It was of course the Southern Song capital during Wu's lifetime. Depending on the context, 'Wu' or 'Wu Palace' can also refer to Suzhou.
- 1.12 This alludes to the story about Liu Chen 劉晨 and Ruan Zhao 阮肇, who met two fairy maidens on Mount Tiantai by a stream lined with peach trees. See You ming lu 幽明錄 (Linlang mishu congshu ed.), 15b-16b.
- 1.13 Brocade Maid: a name which stands for a maidservant who acts as a secret go-between for her mistress, delivering messages to her lover.
- 1.22 Six Bridges: a scenic spot at West Lake in Hangzhou.
- 1.29 Peach Root Crossing is not a real place name but is reconstituted from the Jin poet Wang Xianzhi's 王獻之 two poems about his mistress Peach Leaf. See Yutai xinyong, j.10. The name is used for the sake of its romantic connotations.

The narrative mode in this poem effects an uncommon sequential flow in the presentation structured along the division of the tune pattern into four stanzas. After the delineation in the opening stanza of the season (late spring), place (Hangzhou), and mood (solitary and retrospective) of the persona-familiar signifiers of a love poem of remembrance in Wu's system of representation, the past unfolds as the recollection begins in the second stanza. With typical stylistic compression, Wu depicts telescopically in this stanza the contour of the romance and its accompanying emotional process, from the excitement of the meeting and the subsequent involvement to the joy of the

consummation of love, and finally to the sorrow of separation, all in a few masterful strokes. In telling his story, Wu alludes to a tale of romance about two men who met two fairy maidens on Mount Tiantai by a stream lined with blossoming peach trees. By casting his own romantic encounter in this fairy tale mode, he gives it an elusive and dreamlike quality so appropriate to the description of a beautiful love affair which has vanished.

The last three lines of the stanza sums up symbolically the careless letting go of an enchanted love: "At dusk the dike was empty. / Lightly we took the sunset / And returned it all to the gulls and egrets." The interpretation of these somewhat enigmatic lines hinges on the word "empty": to the persona the dike at West Lake, the scene of the romantic past, is now empty, deprived of the love he had thoughtlessly foregone. The sunset, something beautiful but ephemeral, could stand for their love as well as the pleasures they had enjoyed together, and it had been too easily, too unthinkingly relinquished. The carefree gulls and egrets are as separate from human affairs as the past is severed from the present. The suggestion of regret in these lines follows logically from the imminence of the lovers' separation implied in the preceding two lines: "By the silver screen spring was indulgent but our dream was confined, / Soon falling rouged tears soaked your singing fan and gold-thread gown."

Stanza three continues the narrative after the parting, when the persona returned to Hangzhou after his traveling and

discovered that his lover had died sometime ago. This tragic discovery triggered more flashbacks of their time together and of their doomed parting. Here also, the image of the dilapidated walls in her chamber where he had inscribed parting poems and of the inscription now covered by dust both concretize the long passage of time. Time, however, never seems to bring him oblivion nor does it ease his "eternal sorrow." The concluding stanza is an unconsolable lamentation over the lover's death.

Very different in mood and expression but equally moving is a short imagistic poem written to the tune Huan xi sha:

1 Behind the gate, dense flowers: I dream of the old
haunt.

In a wordless sunset mournful the swallows' return.
Delicate white hands stir fragrance around a small
curtain hook.

Noiseless falling catkins, tears shed by spring.

5 Behind shadows of moving clouds, a demure moon.
At nightfall the east wind is colder than autumn.

(QSC 4/2894)

Nowhere in this lyric does the persona express his emotions directly. Yet in the way the images are constructed, a wistful mood, sadness and nostalgia unmistakably permeate the world expressed in the poem. As the poem begins by depicting a dream

of the "old haunt," it immediately implies a past in the persona's life which he cannot forget and which has remained to haunt him. The dream motif of the opening line leaves the remaining two lines of the first stanza ambiguous and elusive, hovering as it were between dream and memory. This ambiguity in fact asserts the equivalence between dream and memory, both whose contents are impalpable. While the melancholic atmosphere created by pathetic fallacy in l.2 can be an attribute of the dream, it can also belong to the dreamlike content of memory. A dead stillness and inaccessibility surround the past which surfaces in dream and memory; the persona is separated from the "old haunt," the scene of past romance, by temporal and spatial distance, represented by the thick growth of flowers and the gate, and the longed-for vision of the beloved is characteristically fleeting and metonymic.

The second stanza continues to deploy images of a spring night in a dreamlike ambience. But the memory of the beloved subtly colours the perception of these springtime images-endowed with feminine sensitivity, the falling catkins are perceived to be tears shed by spring and the moon partly obscured by clouds to be shy, so that the elements of dream/memory and reality remain fused. Throughout the poem, the negation of sound intensifies the visual qualities of the images. Not only is the sunset "wordless" and the falling catkins "noiseless," but nature images which are often associated with sound-swallows and wind-are apprehended through emotional empathy and thermal sensation, rather than auditory perception.

The style of this poem exemplifies the poetics of indirection at its best application. The last line in particular has been cited by the eminent Qing critic Chen Tingzhuo 陳廷焯 as an exemplary poetic closure which subsumes emotion in imagery, ideal in the way it defers foreclosure of emotional response even at the end of the poem.⁵² In order to fully appreciate the subtle art and emotion of the closural line, we should take note of the key words "flowers," "spring," and "east wind," whose function as cyclical constants in the realm of nature contrasts with vicissitudes in the world of man. The poem begins with the persona's dream of a beautiful spring in the past associated with his love, which is contrasted with the lonely loveless spring of the present. This implied contrast produces the poignant irony of the last line in which the persona experiences spring, a season of warmth and growth, as being chillier than autumn.⁵³

In the next poem to be examined, written to the tune Manjiang hong, the season is summer, the locale Suzhou. The poem's preface provides an unusually specific reference to the time and place of composition in the corpus of love poems: "In the year Jiachen (1244), I passed the Double Fifth while lodging outside Pan Gate." Pan Gate remains today as a gateway on the southwestern limit of Suzhou, with both land and water routes to areas to the south. If we recall from the biographical chapter, the years 1243-1244 were a period of unrest and transition in Wu Wenying's life. During these two years he traveled several times to Hangzhou, and eventually terminated his period of

residence in Suzhou. Indeed 1244 turned out to be a decisively tragic year in his personal life as he had to part with his Suzhou mistress. All four poems with prefaces dated 1244 were written on festival occasions and, without exception, contain oblique reference to the separation.⁵⁴ Chronologically the poem under consideration is the earliest expression of regret and longing after the departure of the Suzhou mistress:

- 1 With artemisia bound into fairy shapes,
 Demons howling on rafters are still not quelled.
 Outside the desolate city,
 Listless, I look on idly-
- 5 A trace of rustic smoke.
 Baby plums have not yellowed and I am depressed by the
 night rain,
 The pomegranate flower is not seen worn in autumn-snow
 hair.
 Again-writing fragrant lyrics in scarlet words on
 folded silk-
 The festival of past years.
- 10 Affair behind the curtain,
 Only the swallows speak about.
 Joined-happiness silk strips,
 A pair of bracelets.
 Since fragrance vanished with her flushed arms,
- 15 Past feelings have all changed.

Zizania leaves mourn the Xiang River's departed soul,
 No dream of Yangzhou, half the bronze mirror is
 missing.

I ask the flute to blow asunder clouds in the night
 sky,

To see the new moon!

(QSC 4/2877)

Notes:

- 1.7 What I have translated as 'autumn-snow hair' is simply 'autumn snow' 秋雪 in the original, a metonym whose referent is not entirely obvious. As object of the verb zan 簪 'to pin on a cap,' it can be interpreted as referring to the poet's white hair.

It is to be expected that in a poem expressly stated as written on the Double Fifth, the imagery and allusions would be dominated by the multifarious appurtenances of this important festival.⁵⁵ Since Han times, the Double Fifth has become the major summer festival, combining the dual function of commemorating the drowned spirit of Qu Yuan and of ritual prevention of evil influences, diseases and pestilence brought by the onset of summer heat. The Jingchu suishiji, a sixth century work describing seasonal observances in southcentral China, provides a concise account of the customs and ritual practices of the Double Fifth as it came to be observed since the Han:

The fifth month is popularly known as the evil month. One should avoid roofing a house It is said that one should not climb a roof in the fifth month, as one is apt to encounter demons up there.... On the fifth

day of the fifth month, people gather artemisia to make man-shaped figures for hanging on doorways. This is done in order to exorcise noxious influences. On this day boat races are held; it is the custom for mourning the death of Qu Yuan who drowned himself in the Milo.... Five-colour silk streamers, called "charms to ward off weapons," are worn on the arm for protection against diseases and epidemics; presents of bracelets and other woven articles are also exchanged [on this occasion]...⁵⁶

This passage shows at a glance how thoroughly Wu Wenying has incorporated Double Fifth material into the text of the poem. In what follows, we will see how the same imagery and allusions are also used to effect mood and atmosphere and to express personal sentiments.

As indicated by the numerous apotropaic practices, the fifth month was regarded as an ominous time of year when evil forces are on the ascendent. The first two lines of the poem capture the sinister aspect of the Double Fifth, providing a perfect backdrop to the persona's negative state of mind expressed in the two succeeding strophic units. It is not, however, until l.7 that the reader gets a hint of the reason for the persona's despondency. The fact that the pomegranate flower, in its fifth month brilliant red colour, is missing from the poet's capped white hair underscores the absence of the woman-she was not there to pin it on for him, or, in her absence, he was in too despondent a mood to put on such a symbol of gaiety. Once the note of romantic remembrance is introduced, the poem's imagery shifts correspondingly to the colourful and sensuous aspects of the Double Fifth associated with the

presence of the woman in the past. L.8 alludes to the making of silk amulets to be hung on gates or worn on the chest.⁵⁷ Whether or not in the process "fragrant lyrics," that is love poems, instead of appropriate demon-quelling spells were written on the silk becomes immaterial, that it was an activity shared in the past with a lover/mistress endows it with romantic associations. But that was the Double Fifth of former years.

Images in the second stanza reveal the lost romance from different Double Fifth angles. The silk streamers and bracelets, charms which would have been worn on the person of the woman on this occasion, are now left unused. Even grammatically they are left as isolated nouns, put into a strophic unit without verb or context. Yet the mere fact of their existence generates a contiguous vision of her sensual arms where these objects would have belonged. An emphatic twist of a Double Fifth allusion occurs in l.16, in which the personal element threatens to overtake the legendary: in "Zizania leaves mourn the Xiang River's departed soul," the ostensible reference is to Qu Yuan and the custom of commemorating his suicide by throwing ricecakes wrapped in zizania leaves into the river. But the underlying drive of the line is a deep longing for a departed person (the mistress), a reading which is lent support by the allusions in the parallel line (l.16).

Line 16 involves a complex melange of allusions. Coming at the crucial position of the penultimate strophe as the second half of a parallel couplet, this line bears the strong burden of summing up both the subject matter of the Double Fifth and the

theme of lost romance to complement the particular closure technique used in this poem. The dissolution of romantic love is conveyed cleverly enough through alluding to the gay city of Yangzhou, long turned into a poetic symbol of romance and pleasure by Du Mu's poetic record of his dalliance there. Textually Du Mu's famous line: "After ten years at last I wake from my Yangzhou dream" accounts for the first half of the line- "No dream of Yangzhou" signifies the loss of romantic love and gaiety.⁵⁸ The second half of the line hints at a story of parted lovers who, when separating, broke a mirror and each kept half as a love-token which they would try to match together again.⁵⁹ In this poem, the fact that half the mirror is still missing precludes the possibility of reunion. How does all this relate to the Double Fifth? Conscientious craftsman that he is, in his use of allusions Wu seldom strays from the topic. Though in this case, the application of the Yangzhou allusion and the mirror image to the Double Fifth turns out to be quite superficial and factitious: according to the Tang work Tang guoshi bu, a former tribute to the court from Yangzhou used to be a special bronze mirror cast in the middle of the river on the Double Fifth!⁶⁰ Plainly, the layers of references and cross-references which try to satisfy two apparently unrelated subjects detract from each other and weaken the immediate impact of the line when the structural demand requires an emotional climax to offset the effort at self-transcendence expressed in the closure. In contrast to the opaqueness in some of the preceding allusions, the closural expression of transcendence of

sorrow-using the symbolic imagery of breaking through the clouds after the rain (delusion) to see the new moon at the beginning of the month (light, truth), is refreshingly clear and transparent.

Two months later, in the seventh month of the same year (1244), a poem was written with a preface that dates from the night of the Double Seventh festival:

To the tune Feng qi wu

Night of the Seventh in the year Jiachen (1244)

- 1 The southern bough having blossomed, flowers fill the
yard.

Under a new moon in the west chamber

We had promised to thread needles together.

On tall trees cicadas are seeing the evening off with a
few chirrs

- 5 When the homecoming dream is shattered at twilight.

In the night scene the Milky Way is one expanse of
feeling.

Stolen joy beneath a light canopy-

A silver candle grieved beside the silk-folding screen.

Past traces disperse like mist blown by the dawn wind.

- 10 The clasp that holds up the curtain gathers cobwebs in
vain.

(QSC 4/2937)

The night of the seventh day of the seventh month celebrates the annual reunion between the Weaver Girl and Herdboy, two star(-crossed) lovers (Vega and Aquila) separated by the river of the Milky Way. Legend has it that magpies form a bridge on this precious night to help the Weaver Girl cross the celestial river to meet her lover. It is quite natural that, given the background, poems written on this festival occasion would contain overtones of love-longing. In this poem, the one overt reference to the Double Seventh (1.3) is the custom for women to thread needles in the moonlight on this night and pray for skill in sewing.⁶¹ Wu uses this custom in a personal and novel way by implying that he and his mistress had arranged for her to return and thread needles together, meaning to celebrate the occasion together, and that she had failed on some account to keep her promise, thus prolonging their separation.

The loneliness of the present leads to reveries and memories of the past in the second stanza. In the presentation, the time sense is foreshortened and past and present are intermingled. The entire duration of the past romance is symbolically embodied by one night in the image-bank of his memory: the empathetic candle which witnessed the "night" of love felt grief for its brevity. Since the late Tang, with lines such as "The wax candle's heart suffers at our parting: / Its tears drip for us till the light of dawn" by Du Mu,⁶² and "The candle-wick turns to ashes before its tears dry" by Li Shangyin,⁶³ a guttering candle has become a favorite image of love. Through this conceit, love is perceived to be evanescent

and self-consuming. The night of passion ("Stolen joy beneath a light canopy") symbolizing the bygone years is presented as if it were the present night. But in the light of morning (reality), all dreams and visions of the past recede into insubstantiality. The desolate state of the present, long severed from the sustenance of the past, is all too apparent in the spectral imagery of the last line.

The happy occasion of the celestial lovers' reunion acts as a sad reminder to the poet's own forlorn state in another poem written on the Double Seventh:

To the tune Li zhi xiang jin

Night of the Seventh

- 1 Dozing lightly I hear from time to time
The din of evening magpies in the courtyard trees.
Again they are saying that tonight at the celestial
ford
The joyful reunion will be by the west shore.
- 5 Cobwebs have imperceptibly locked in the red pavilion
Where swallows had flitted through the curtains.
In heaven, love cannot be as bitter as on earth.
- My autumnal hair has changed,
I envy Sister Moon her eternal charm.
- 10 Rain passes in the west wind,
The few leaves on the paulownia by the well dance
sadly.

In a dream I reach Indigo Bridge:

A few scattered stars shine on a vermilion door-

Teardrops on the sandy shore where I stand and wait.

(QSC 4/2890)

Dream, myth and reality are all mingled in the images of the poem. The legendary magpies heralding the joyful event in the heavenly realm as they set out to perform their altruistic deed only bring to the poet a rude awakening to his earthly plight. The total inaccessibility of a beautiful past is most forcefully conveyed through the image of the red pavilion locked in thick cobwebs. Hence the pain of his own irrevocable separation from his mistress is perceived to be greater than that suffered by the Weaver Girl and Herdboy, who at least have the certainty of being together once a year. In the end he can only try to seek love and deliverance in dream at Indigo Bridge. Indigo Bridge is an allusion often used in love poems, being the place in a Tang wonder tale where a mortal man encountered and wed a fairy maiden.⁶⁴ However, the wish for a love-meeting is a dream within a dream that cannot be fulfilled. The poem ends with a dream landscape skilfully constructed with Double Seventh imagery, in which the persona finds himself waiting for his lover by the shores of the Milky Way (ironic twist of fate!). Through the juxtaposition of stars and teardrops, a metaphorical link between the two images is produced, evoking a pervasive sense of sadness.

In one of the most lyrical expressions with a brief

recollection of the past, the allusion to Indigo Bridge figures again as a symbol of an unattainable state of love:

To the tune Qi tian yue

Thoughts while drinking white wine alone

1 Dew in the heart of the lotus at midnight,
Lush fragrance rinsed in the spring water of the jade
well.

I wash the silver cup,

And slowly begin the pale drink.

5 The moon falling into an empty cup has no reflection.
When shadows in the courtyard are not yet dark,
The cicadas make a new song
Whose autumn rhymes merit listening to.

My thin bones seem immersed in ice,

10 I fear they are startled by the deep night's cold on
the bamboo mat.

In times past we carried wine on the lake,

Where emerald clouds parted,

A snow-white face in a mirror of waves.

Stirred to the depths by this nephrite broth,

15 With a thousand stalks of snowy hair-

Mist locks in the path of flowers by Indigo Bridge.

I linger in the dusky scenery

Just to steal a little solitary joy

And try to heighten the autumn mood.

20 Drunken I lean on the tall bamboos,
The night wind blows, making me half sober.

(QSC 4/2884)

Notes:

- 1.14 'Nephrite broth 瓊漿' has a double meaning: in the context of the poem, it stands for the white wine he is drinking; in the context of the allusion to Indigo Bridge of which it forms a part, it is the name of the love elixir which was offered by the fairy maid to Pei Hang in the story.

Most of the poem is built on a description of the solitary imbibing of a pale-coloured wine in an autumn evening. Consequently many of the images have a limpid and translucent quality, partaking of the water element-dew, spring water of the jade well, ice, snow-white face etc.; their coolness mirrors the sedate mood of the poet. In this autumnal calm of both scene and emotion, the past surfaces briefly in a slightly intoxicated state of mind in a vivid vision of the beloved's face, only to dissolve quickly again in the sober solitude of the present moment. The failure of the search for love is symbolized by the impenetrability of a mist-locked Indigo Bridge.

Wu Wenying wrote a number of love poems in the yongwu mode. Invariably the objects of these poems are species of flowers—real as well as painted—which are associated in his mind with his former mistresses or which, on particular occasions, stir up memories of them. Yongwu love poems in the former category usually attempt to combine some formal description of the object with reference to the lover, as in the opening strophe of

Suochuang han on the magnolia discussed in the previous section. In the latter category, objects (flowers) often function as stimuli to free association. In such cases, references to the object are mainly textual and not descriptive. In other words, object-related textual allusions are there by virtue of yongwu conventions, but their descriptive function, being irrelevant to the lyrical core of the poem, is largely ignored.

To the tune Feng ru song

Cassia

- 1 The magnolia boat tosses on rising waves,
I grieve that it is barred by the low bridge.
In evening haze and drizzle, on the way to West
Garden,
I have missed Lady Autumn, brows lightly touched with
palace-yellow.
- 5 Once again I order wine, moored at the posthouse
Where I had seen her off in the twilight.
- Cicada-notes drag on in vain on another branch,
Like a melody that does not become the autumn mode.
By a gauze screen she waved her singing fan:
- 10 I recall opening a window overlooking West Lake.
With wine I seek once more that obscure dream,
Only the scent has already vanished from the faded
quilt.

(QSC 4/2906-07)

Notes:

- 1.4 Qiuniang 秋娘 (Lady Autumn), a common term in ci which stands for a courtesan or concubine, originates in two Tang poems written about two women with this name: Du Mu's poem on a courtesan named Du Qiuniang and Li Deyu's 李德裕 poem "Dreaming of Jiangnan" which mourns the death of his concubine Xie Qiuniang. It is therefore an apt epithet for Wu's own mistress.
- 1.6 The line is literally "Where I had seen the guest off in the twilight." In Wu's ci the character 'guest' 客 is often short for 'Zither Guest,' 琴客 the name of the Tang poet Liu Hun's 柳渾 singing girl-cum-concubine who was made to remarry.

The obvious factor which identifies this as a yongwu poem is the stated subtitle "Cassia," an autumn-flowering shrub with fragrant clusters of tiny yellowish blossoms. To an untutored eye, there may seem to be nothing about the cassia in the poem. There are, however, three references to the cassia: in 1.1 "magnolia boat" carries an oblique textual reference by alluding to the Chuci line: "Cassia oars and magnolia boat-sweeps";⁶⁵ in 1.4, Lady Autumn with the fashionable yellow brow-makeup stands as a personification of the autumn cassia; and the "scent" in the last line is xunxiang 熏香 in the original-incense burnt in a brazier for perfuming clothes and bedding. In the present context it suggests the kind made from cassia.⁶⁶ When the references are determined, it is all the more obvious that the cassia does not constitute the subject of the poem; although its colour and fragrance have worked like the taste of Proust's petite Madeleine in arousing memories of the past-of the time of parting and of an idyllic love at West Lake. The poem begins

and ends with images that act as obstacles to the poet's realization of the love remembered and longed for. With the disappearance of the scent, the link to the remote dream of the past is severed.

Love poems in the ci genre tend towards the extremes of an objective impersonality or frank eroticism in expression, as exemplified by the respective works of Wen Tingyun and Liu Yong.⁶⁷ These traits in part reflect the casual nature of amorous relationships in the gay quarters. In hindsight we can say that the erotic and the impersonal assumed the form of generic conventions, for later Song ci poems on women and love in the main continued to be characterized by these traits. Wu Wenying's corpus is exceptional in that it is highly personal and revolves around two relationships in his life which he could not forget. The memory of these experiences was given various expression in his poetry. By way of conclusion, it may be interesting to note a Western parallel. The English novelist Thomas Hardy wrote more than one hundred poems covering a period of forty-two years, all centring around the relationship with his wife. Carl Weber, in his preface to Hardy's Love Poems, ranks Hardy's poems third in English love poetry, after Shakespeare's and Elizabeth Browning's love sonnets.⁶⁸ They certainly present a tempting case for comparison with Wu's corpus. Weber contends that their preeminence lies in "[t]heir emotional range and variety: the intensity, the originality, the tenderness, the poignancy, the delicacy, the wistfulness, are

all reflected in a paralleling profusion of metres and stanzaic forms."⁶⁹ The same can be said for Wu's love poems, except that they go beyond the variety of tune patterns employed to the variety of modes and settings we have examined. If one were to rank Hardy and Wu Wenying, with ready bias perhaps, Wu's expertise in the ci genre endows his love poems with an elegance of diction and imagery beside which Hardy's poems do seem to pale.

III. SELF AND OTHER IN OCCASIONAL POETRY

The direction in which occasional ci poetry developed in the Southern Song can be regarded in many ways as representing the decline of a genre. As I have discussed in the section on yongwu ci, early literati ci were mainly songs for entertainment, written in a diction marked by elegance and modal and emotional imagery, to be performed by singing girls at banquets and parties, and it was not until Su Shi that ci began to be used as a common verse form for occasional poetry. This new function to which ci was put was reflected in the appearance of information-oriented prefaces which indicate the situation or event occasioning the composition, and in a corresponding broadening in vocabulary and thematic scope. Even then, there were major mid and late Northern Song poets, such as Qin Guan 秦觀, He Zhu, and Zhou Bangyan, whose works on the whole did not reflect these changes and who continued to write ci along more orthodox lines.

With the transition to the South, the situation changed considerably. What was a nascent function in the Northern Song

became an entrenched practice. Looking at the works of many high-ranking bureaucrats in the Southern Song era, it can almost be said that ci flourished by virtue of its applicability as a tool for superficial social intercourse. A clear sign of this sad turn of affairs is the sudden increase of shouci 壽詞, "ci poems celebrating birthdays"-a formal occasion less than stimulating to the creation of good poetry. Yet court officials composed formal ci poems celebrating the august birthdays of the imperial family, friends and officials presented birthday poems to each other, and poets to patrons. Seldom are these poems informed with any dimension of the self of the person writing it, either on the level of thought or feeling; most often they are simply a pastiche of hackneyed images, clichés, and platitudes designed to please and flatter the addressed party.⁷⁰

Birthday poems may represent the extreme degeneration of social occasional ci poetry. But in the hands of lesser poets and officials with pretensions to writing poetry, other occasional poetry fared no better. In the affluent and cultured society of the Southern Song, every conceivable situation and event in life or nature became an occasion to be commemorated in verse. The performance aspect of ci no doubt lent it to be used as a popular form of social and aesthetic pastime. Thus when social convention rather than individual inspiration dictated the exigency of versification, the products are invariably artificial and dull.

With the overwhelmingly social nature of occasional ci poetry in the Southern Song, the elements of "self" and "other"

become obvious criteria in distinguishing what constitutes merely a perfunctory social art as opposed to genuine poetic expression. Self and other are of course very often tied to the nature of the occasion. Some occasions decidedly require verse which is completely oriented towards the other-the party for whom one is writing; some obvious instances are found in poems celebrating birthdays, official promotion, or someone taking on a concubine, where the only aspect of self that may be appropriately expressed is one that tries to curry favour or makes a show of envy and admiration. Other occasions provide more freedom in orientation, while some are more conducive to self-expression.

Parting poems are good examples of occasional poetry which can be dispatched easily with established conventions and cliché sentiments, or which can inspire more individualistic treatment, accompanied by expressions of genuine emotion and thought. On the whole, however, trite examples are the rule. The formality of the situation, the relation between the addresser and addressee (e.g. that between two officials of similar rank, superior and inferior, poet and patron), and the cause for the departure are all factors which might affect the style used and sentiments expressed. Therefore, according to the combination of factors, the poem can be mechanically churned out with a readymade store of stock symbols, appropriate allusions, and in a proper level of language. If the person is leaving to assume a new post, it will be suitable to mention the merits and honours he will attain, using masculine, 'heroic' expressions

with proper allusions to historical models; similarly, if the person is going to retire from official duty, the poem should be seasoned with allusions exalting the eremitic ideal. Parting poems by Xin Qiji are often exceptions which bear the stamp of his stylistic temperament; he usually feels and expresses strong emotions towards the party leaving. Often he would find something in common which he himself shares with the departing person, whether it be a view of life, patriotic sentiments or drinking, and by doing so makes the other person in some way meaningful and important to himself. The pain of parting is thus given the reality of experience as the poet's emotional self is engaged. Xin can even be truly innovative in writing a parting poem. In his famous poem written to the tune He xinlang on the occasion of parting from his cousin, he structured the entire poem on the idea of separation.⁷¹ First he describes the cuckoos' cries as symbolic of the regret they felt for the 'parting' of spring, then contrasts nature's regret with the greater pain at parting suffered in the human world by alluding to five historical episodes associated with separation, and in doing so intensifies the personal grief he experienced on this particular occasion of parting from his cousin.

Among occasional ci poetry, those written on visits to historic sites are often most expressive of the poet's thoughts and feeling. However, their quantity is relatively small compared to that in other categories of occasional ci. There are several possible explanations for this: visiting historic sites was not an activity as frequently engaged in as attending

the endless Southern Song varieties of banquets and celebrations; it was not an occasion which necessitated commemorative verse as a banquet gathering often did (therefore if one was not moved to compose poetry, there would be no poem); and it may also be the result of generic discrimination exercised by both ci poets and poets who wrote in both shi and ci, the latter might have preferred to use the 'serious' genre in which the contemplation of history was a well established theme with a venerable tradition. Xin Qiji stands again as a striking exception. His large ci collection contains many excellent pieces written at historic sites.

It should be obvious from the above discussions as well as from the biographical chapter that Southern Song upper-class society and lifestyle exerted a great measure of influence on the kind of occasional ci produced under their aegis. Wu Wenying, having lived much of his life as a guest-poet on the staff of prominent patrons, was in that sense very much a poet of his times. He had to satisfy what must have been frequent demands for social occasional poems, and his collection stands as living testimony. According to the information provided in the prefaces, nearly half of the entire collection can be designated as social occasional poems. In the superficial range, it runs from the highly ornate and insipid birthday poems for Prince Sirong to a pretty poem dashed off at a gala banquet at the request of three singing girls.⁷² In all fairness to Wu, Xia Chengtao concludes his biochronology by remarking that among the peregrine poets of the Southern Song, Wu was never a

sycophant in his occasional poems written to people of wealth and power.⁷³ Moral extenuation aside, these are rightly not the poems for which Wu Wenying is remembered.

Parting poems are of course legion among Wu Wenying's occasional verse. They were written to all manner of friends and acquaintances, officials and patrons. The fact notwithstanding that many of these are purely occasional pieces in the sense that they do not stand on their own beyond the occasion of composition, in some of them a novel motif can be observed which is as much a topos peculiar to ci as it is a peculiarity of Wu Wenying. This is the amorous nuance which Wu often injects into a parting poem, a flair which is not evident in farewell poems written in ci, and would surely be a flagrant violation of decorum in shi. Woven among common motifs found in a parting poem-scene and time of departure, anticipated journey ahead, imagined life after arrival, etc., a line or two, or perhaps a strophic unit, would make reference to the romantic life of the departing party. Wu may intimate the sadness felt by the lovers and concubines being left behind, or he may picture the happy reunion ahead if the person is traveling home. The parting poem to Feng Qufei 馮去非,⁷⁴ an official who was Wu's one-time friend in Suzhou, on this occasion on a homebound journey, closes with the following lines depicting a projected romantic scene upon Feng's arrival:

Quick skiff crossing reeds on the returning tide:

Just then by the west window, lamplight blossoms herald the

joyous news.

With willow Man and cherry-lip Su
Serving wine, fighting for affection,
You can't help but be inebriated.

(Zhuying yao hong, QSC 4/2914-15)

Commenting on a farewell poem written to Yin Huan, Wu's friend and possibly patron, Chen Xun notes that "the title is about Wu Wenying seeing off Yin Huan, the lyric concerns grief at Yin Huan's departure, but the grief is that of someone else. Wu assumes the stance of a sympathetic observer."⁷⁵ The first two stanzas of this poem are taken up with portraying the emotional state of Yin Huan's lover:

To the tune Ruilong yin

Sending off Meijin (Yin Huan)

- 1 Soul-searing the parting!
- Broken-hearted at the duckweed borne away on water,
The halted boat moored by a willow.
Pretty moon and graceful flowers of Wu Palace-
- 5 To his drunken verse her sorrows lean,
Young Cardamon of the southern river.

- Dashing off spring-embroidered lines.
From his brush, how many lovely sentiments
For her sparkling eyes and crescent brows.
- 10 New garden locked tight in gloomy shadows,

Dewy chrysanthemums wilt in vain,
Half an acre of cold fragrance.

(QSC 4/2891)

Notes:

- 1.9 'Crescent brows' translate 眉山, brows arched
like the contour of hills.

The language of the poem is extremely figurative: Yin Huan's departure is compared to duckweed drifting away, his romantic lyrics are compared to vernal embroidery (literally "spewing forth spring embroidery"), his lover appears in the kenning "cardamon" which, as we have seen, is used to stand for a pubescent beauty,⁷⁶ her loneliness is reflected in the image of the deserted garden, and her despondency during his absence to chrysanthemums fading away, uncared for. The metaphoric imagery together with the elliptical shifts in time perspective—from the present (1.1-3), to past (1.4-9), and to future (1.10-12)—are both reminiscent of Wu's own love poems.

By incorporating romantic elements into parting poems Wu is on the one hand breaking conventions that have evolved around this subgenre. However, in so far as the expression and exploration of various aspects of love belongs in the generic tradition of ci, such liberties do not seem entirely out of place. That Wu did have a tendency to do this indicates perhaps that he was on intimate terms with certain friends and patrons, and was well acquainted with their private lives and feelings, at least to the extent that he felt comfortable enough to make

poetic reference to them. This tendency may be at the same time a displaced, subliminal expression of his own personal concerns, a possibility well attested by the preponderance of love poems in his work.

Wu sometimes would reveal his own thoughts and attitudes in parting poems written to poet-friends who belong to more or less the same station in life as himself, that is to say, the class of poets dependent on patronage. These poems communicate aspects of the self which do not surface in the more formal, public kind of parting poems. A parting poem he wrote to Weng Mengyin furnishes an excellent example which also invites extra-literary speculation:

To the tune Mulanhua man

Seeing Weng Wufeng off to his travels in
Jiangling

- 1 Seeing the autumn cloud off to thousands of miles,
 It rolls and unrolls, does it have a heart of care?
 I sigh at the path winding and turning
 Where men build dwellings, swallows nests;
- 5 Frosts cover the wanderer's hatpin,
 Assailed by sorrow.
 Sleeves covered with thick dust,
 Though enfeoffed, what is there to envy the Marquis of
 Huaiyin?
 Just be drunk with fine cress and delicate perch,
- 10 Not having the heart to let pine and chrysanthemum
 grow old untended.

Parting music:

I hear again the west wind-

The tree by the gold well stirs in autumn chant.

My gaze fails over the river at dusk,

15 Far far away flies the wild goose,

In the dark solemn sky.

Tears wet my lapels

At the nocturnal notes of the pipa,

Ask Yang Qiong, events of the past come to the cold
fulling block.

20 How can it compare to the year's end amidst lakes and
hills,

Or sharing a cup under the fragrance of serene plum
trees.

(QSC 4/2917)

Notes:

1.9 Cress translates chun 葍, an edible water plant. Chun soup and sliced perch 魚鱸 (here in the euphemistic "sliced jade") were the regional delicacies of the southeast where the Jin official Zhang Han 張翰 came from. Zhang gave up his office in the north to return to the countryside for these rustic enjoyments. Jin shu, j.92, vol.8, 2384.

1.19 The meaning of the line is ambiguous. Presumably, Yang Qiong, identified by Yang Tiefert (Mengchuang ci guanji jianshi, p.241) as a lover of music in ancient times, would understand why Wu is moved by the sound of the pipa. The fulling block usually refers to women washing cloth to prepare clothes for their departing husbands; it may hint at a woman in Weng's life in the past.

The poem states unequivocally Wu's negative attitude towards

patronage-seeking as opposed to a life of reclusion. I will deal with the expression of this attitude in the poem in detail further on; first, the preface calls for some expansion. Reference has been made to Weng Mengyin in the biographical chapter. Weng is chiefly known as a peregrine poet who had been a periodic 'guest' on the staff of Jia Sidao. The frequency of his travels, often associated with seeking out patrons, can be surmised from the three poems-all written at parting-addressed to him in Wu's collection. It is unfortunate that the poem under consideration cannot be dated, for it contains sentiments which form a perplexing antithesis to the poem Qinyuan chun (QSC 4/2906), dated to 1259 and referred to in the biographical chapter, which is full of positive sentiments regarding Weng Mengyin's journey to join Jia Sidao's retinue in Hubei.

It is unlikely that this poem was written after 1259, since Wu Wenying himself became a guest-poet at the residence of Prince Sirong around that time. It would then have been highly improper and hypocritical to espouse such anti-patronage views. Whatever the date of composition or the external circumstances surrounding Weng's trip, it is apparent from the poem that Weng had not been faring too well at the time: he was growing old and still roaming around in search of support. Wu advises him not to get involved in the life of officialdom and politics and sings the praise of a life of retirement. All these thoughts are conveyed through a consummate blending of metaphors sui generis, historical allusions and conventional symbols. Weng Mengyin's wandering is compared to the drifting of autumn

clouds; autumn because it was the season when Weng was leaving. The autumn motif recurs again in lines 9 and 10 and in the beginning of the second stanza. Not having "a heart of care" is an apt enough epithet for scudding clouds, but applied to Weng in the extended metaphor, it implies a contrary reality beneath deceptive appearances: Weng was in truth quite careworn. Weng's frazzled state is made explicit in the second strophe in which life is seen as a long and uncertain road on which man and beast try to build up comfort and security, efforts which ultimately do not alleviate the assaults of old age and sorrow. The historical allusion to Han Xin 韓信, the Marquis of Huaiyin, is a most potent warning to the dangers of involvement in political life. The successful career of Han Xin, a man of humble origins, in the end only earned him decapitation and the extermination of his clan.⁷⁷ Though Weng Mengyin was not seeking public office himself, to be a literary retainer on the staff of a public figure could entail rise and fall with the political fortunes of the patron which are beyond one's control.⁷⁸ In contrast to such potential hazards (perhaps quite real if the concrete situation surrounding Weng's trip were known), Wu posits the peace and integrity to be found in a life of retirement, represented by the familiar eremitic symbols of cress and perch, pine and chrysanthemum. Most of the second stanza is taken up with expressing the sadness which Wu felt at the scene of parting, and the poem closes with a reiteration of the rustic nobility of the reclusive life. The message is strong and clear: "Don't go!" Weng Mengyin must have been in

desperate circumstances if he left after receiving such an ill-omened poem.

Subjective attitudes are rarely expressed so overtly in Wu Wenying's occasional poetry. But personal reflections not infrequently take form in his poems written on visits to historic sites. These poems, though very few in number, comprise some of the finest and most frequently anthologized pieces among his work, and justifiably so. The emotional depth in these poems arises from the concerns of the self, but these go beyond the personal scope of the love poems and extend to the broader, more universal levels of man, nation and history, in short life itself in the traditional Confucian weltanschauung. Yet, surely, emotional amplitude alone does not suffice to make good poetry no matter how proper the subject of emotion is; indeed, second-rate poets of the heroic style have been criticized precisely for an emotional excessiveness which mars their works. Wu's greatness lies in his superb poetic art which fuses profound thought and emotion with brilliant imagery, thereby giving them tangible and affective form. At the same time, it is true that this image-oriented practice produces a fragmentary and disjointed effect in his lesser poems, a weakness which has incurred criticism. Wu's masterpiece, written on a visit to Mount Lingyan near Suzhou, is cited by Shuen-fu Lin as exemplary of the sensory impact found in Southern Song ci:

To the tune Basheng Ganzhou

An Outing on Mount Lingyan with colleagues from
the Grain Transport

1 An endless void, mist to the four distances.

What year was it

The meteor fell from the clear sky?

Illusory green crags and cloud trees.

5 Celebrated beauty's Golden Chamber,

Failed Leader's palace walls.

On Arrow Creek a sour wind impales the eyes,

Creamy water stains the flower's stench.

At times tripping love-birds echo:

10 An autumn sound in corridor leaves.

In the palace the King of Wu is dead drunk,

Leaving the weary traveler of Five Lakes

To angle alone, cold sober.

Ask the blue waves: they don't talk.

15 How can grey hairs cope with the mountain's green?

The water envelops the void;

From the balcony's height

I follow random crows and slanting sun dropping behind

Fisherman's Isle.

Again and again I call for wine

20 And go to climb Lute Tower:

Autumn level with the clouds.⁷⁹

(QSC 4/2926)

Lin comments that "[e]ven his allusions impress us more for

their sensory content than for their historical references."⁸⁰ Though this observation only points to one side of the picture, Wu's art of creating a surface brilliance is undeniable. As I will try to demonstrate in the following analyses, the sustaining power of this brilliant superstructure is very much based upon a vital conceptual core.

Wu Wenying's long sojourn in the ancient and cultured milieu of Suzhou left its mark in his occasional poetry. Mention has been made in the biography of the many social occasional pieces he wrote there which belong to the category of "other." But the antiquity of the area, particularly the historical figures and sites associated with the ancient state of Wu, seemed to have had a great deal of affective power on him which he translated into masterful poems in contemplation of the past. Witness in the Basheng Ganzhou quoted above the dramatic recreation of a ghostly past associated with King Fucha on Mount Lingyan and his own profound response to that history. Tiger Hill, located just outside the northwestern part of Suzhou, is another historical site associated with the state of Wu. It is recorded that King Helu 闾 閼, the father of Fucha, was buried there with three thousand swords under a pond which came to be known as the Sword Pond.⁸¹ This historic hill occasioned two poems in Wu's work, one of which is the following:

To the tune Mulanhua man

An excursion to Tiger Hill with colleagues from the Grain Transport. At this time Wei Yizhai has already been selected for transfer, and Chen Fenku and Li Fang'an will soon finish their

terms.

- 1 Black-maned bays neighing on frozen grass,
 Dawn clouds veil the frowning peaks.
 Now snow has just vanished from the orchid blades,
 On the pine's waist the jade is thin,
 5 Like a worn and weary Zhen Zhen.
 With light canes we thread our way through steep stone
 steps,
 Treading on wild moss we still can discern traces of
 the buried flower.
 Perennial grief for a thousand ages' rise and decline,
 On mid-hill, fading sunset and a solitary cloud.
- 10 Opening winejugs
 We mourn again the ghost of Wu.
 The emerald chill of the mountain mist clears our
 light intoxication.
 How many times lodging here at night
 Have I risen in the moonlight to watch-
 15 Patterns of stars on the sword-entombing pond.
 Though we climb here to gaze, we will inevitably
 depart,
 But still for the fragile blossoms, there will be
 early seekers of their fragrance.
 Looking back-blue waves, ancient park,
 20 At dusk in misty rain and falling plum blossoms.
 (QSC 4/2916)

Notes:

- 1.17 Wu often uses the term "soft red" 軟紅, translated as "fragile blossoms, to refer to the worldly splendors associated with the capital. As Suzhou used to be the capital of Wu, ruanhong carries that implication as well as being the more obvious metonym for flowers.
- 1.18 "Blue waves" makes reference to the ancient topography of the area around Tiger Hill. Tiger Hill was originally called Sea-surging Mountain 海湧山 in the Spring and Autumn period, as it was surrounded by lakes and marshes. See Wujun tujing xuji (Xuejin taoyuan ed.), j.2/18b.

The poem is a complex working in ci of the huaigu 懷古 subgenre, which involves meditation occasioned by the visit to an ancient historical site. Reflections on time-on the changes wrought by time, on permanence versus impermanence-constitute the central theme. It is presaged in a seemingly offhanded manner in the preface: Wu casually mentions three names of people whom he has worked with and befriended in the Grain Transport office; however, it should be noted that it is done in the context of their imminent departure. The excursion was undertaken as an affirmation of friendship before friends were separated by life's current. From this perspective, the occasion must have been dominated by a mood of pensiveness, and it is reflected in the poem itself.

In recording the thought and experience of an occasion, this poem presents probably the most clearly structured temporal and spatial progression to be found in Wu's otherwise elliptical style. It indicates the matinal scene of departure, the scenery upon arrival, the ascent, the overnight stay and the return,

neatly framed by seasonal indicators. Worked into this straightforward narrative progression of the event is a complexity of temporal dimensions-of time past and time future, and of timeless eternity, and the concomittant meditation on man's lot in the scheme of time and history.

The complexity of time and thought dimensions is mainly achieved through two historical allusions, one woven into the semantically tiered description of the scenery in the first stanza, the other coordinated with the topical associations of denglin 登臨, "to ascend to a high place and contemplate (the past)." The first allusion is introduced through the description of the scenery at the destination of the excursion (1.3-5). Zhen Niang 真娘, "Lady Zhen" (changed to Zhen Zhen due to the requirement of rhyme), was a famous courtesan of the Wu region whose grave was also situated at Tiger Hill. It was said that visitors, moved by her legendary beauty, competed to celebrate it by inscribing poems on the tree by her grave.⁸² With this background, the line "on the pine's waist the jade is thin" takes on different levels of meaning. On the literal level, it is descriptive of the actual scenery of early spring at Tiger Hill, 'jade' being used as a metonym for snow, forming a parallel to the melting snow on the orchid grass in the previous line. On a figurative level, "thin jade," generated by the metonym 'waist' used for the pine trunk, acquires nuances of femininity, thus bringing in the tree's association with Zhen Niang's grave. On this level, the line's reading approximates: "the pine is delicate and slim like a woman's waist." This

meaning is made explicit by the juxtaposition with "a worn and weary Zhen Zhen" of the next line. The juxtaposition not only evokes a sense of desolation in the scenery around the tomb, but it also evokes the presence of the famous courtesan whose physical beauty has not survived the passage of time. The past remains to haunt the imagination of sensitive minds in the form of a grave and a legend.

The tiered description continues in the next two lines as the party of friends proceed up the boulder-paved path of Tiger Hill: "With light canes We thread our way through steep stone steps, / Treading on wild moss we still can discern traces of the buried flowers." While the image of wild moss 荒苔 on the boulders intensifies the sense of bleakness already introduced, it also signifies the timeworn antiquity of the site. In this thought-provoking landscape, fallen flowers, a conventional symbol of transience, are described as "buried" with remnants still visible; they are not simply perceived as signs of nature's ephemeral beauty but hark back to the relics of the beautiful courtesan. Thus far the poem has refrained from any direct expression of thought or emotion; the theme of mutability seen from the aspect of beauty is completely submerged in the descriptive imagery which pertains to both the natural and the human world. As though no longer able to bear the strain of suppressed emotion, the last strophe of the first stanza erupts on mid-hill into a lament for the ceaseless cycles of change in history, and signals the transition to the physical as well as the contemplative goal of the climb.

The "ghost of Wu" is of course King Helu, the mighty ruler of Wu during the Spring and Autumn period. The group of friends commemorated his past glories with libations when they reached his underwater tomb on top of Tiger Hill. The sombre occasion calls for more contemplation: on a moonlit night, on the summit of this burial mound, an individual existence confronts momentarily the intersection between the images of nature, history, and eternity as the poet watches the stars reflected on the pond water engulfing Helu's swords. Wu clearly excels in capturing the profundity of the moment in its beauty, and its beauty in the profundity.

The rest of the poem is devoted to an elaboration of the denglin topos and the departure. For a Chinese poet, to ascend to an elevation and look into the distance means to contemplate yet again the sobering theme of human transience in the face of nature's perpetuity. In Meng Haoran's 孟浩然 poem "On ascending Mount Xian with some friends," this idea is explicitly stated:

Human affairs rise and decline in succession,
 Coming and going, they make up past and present.
 Mountains and rivers leave their beauty,
 We again climb up to have a look....⁸³

Wu Wenying sees the act of denglin as part and parcel of the constant flux in human life, being itself a marker of the inevitability of change and movement: "Though we climb here to

gaze, we will inevitably depart." In the same breath, Wu also affirms this act and the evanescent splendors of this world in their sure recurrence-not only this time, this group, but in future times, in all times, other people have done and will do the same again. The final vision, the looking back, bridges the time gap by fusing the rain-shrouded hill of the present with the hill surrounded by lakes of Helu's time.

Visiting a Suzhou garden with a more recent history brings topical allusions into the only poem in which Wu comments directly on the state of affairs in the late Song:⁸⁴

To the tune Jinlü ge

Viewing plum blossoms at Canglang Garden in the company of Mr. Lüzhai

- 1 Clouds and vapours rise from lofty trees
Where we search for relics of the hero of the
Restoration,
And secretly ponder past events.
Scant help did the war ships get from the east wind:
- 5 His dream was shattered in the old kingdom.
Soon after, he built a little dwelling in the idle
grounds of Wu Palace.
In the moonlight the night crane returns to the
pillar,
Sighing over the flowers and bamboos of old now come
to this.
Dew on the branches, spilling clear tears.

- 10 The governor's little spring-outing troop,
 Treading on green moss, seeking secluded spots by the
 detached wall,
 To ask the plum whether it has flowered.
 Again we sing new tunes by the plum trees
 To hasten the sprouting of frozen buds on cold twigs:
 15 Hearts with the same desire as the spring god.
 The future will not compare to the present, the
 present to the past.
 Both wordless, facing each other by the waters of the
 Canglang.
 Harboursing this grief,
 We seek solace in a last drink.

(QSC 4/2939-40)

Notes:

Preface:

Lüzhai is Wu Qian's sobriquet. This poem is dated to 1238 when Wu Qian was Administrator of Suzhou. (See ch.1, p.11).

- 1.7 The night crane alludes to the story of a man by the name of Ding Lingwei 丁令威 in the Sou shen ji 搜神記. Ding left home to study to become an immortal. When he returned in the form of an immortal crane to the pillar by his village cemetery, he found that the faces of people in the village were all new and unfamiliar.

The Canglang Garden, whose site dates back to the Five Dynasties period, is often associated with its early Northern Song owner, the scholar-poet Su Shunqin 蘇舜欽, who gave it its name. But even more so, and especially during Wu's time, it is known for having been the residence of the great Southern Song general

Han Shizhong 韓世忠 (1089-1151) during the Shaoxing period (1131-1162).⁸⁵ In fact Wu Qian, whom Wu Wenying accompanied on this visit, refers to it as "Han's Canglang Garden" in the preface to his poem written on this occasion to match Wu Wenying's rhymes.⁸⁶

The first stanza makes topical reference to the career of the famous general, aptly styled here as the "hero of the Restoration." In the early years of Gaozong's reign (1127-1161) in the 1130's, Han Shizhong and two other patriotic generals, Yue Fei 岳飛 and Chang Jun 張俊, were scoring a series of brilliant victories against the Jurchens in an effort to recover the north.⁸⁷ When Gaozong eventually decided in favour of an appeasement policy towards the Jurchens, the generals were ordered to return to court from the front in 1141. Yue Fei was subsequently imprisoned with trumped-up charges and murdered. At odds with the policies, Han Shizhong retired from politics with hopes for revanche prematurely crushed. Wu uses two details from Han's life with poetic license to maximize the sense of futility and frustration a man of Han's temperament must have felt under the circumstances. Line 4 alludes to the only battle recorded in Han's career at which his fleet had suffered a heavy casualty due to the lack of a favorable wind, and the enemy was able to escape back north.⁸⁸ This defeat took place in 1130 and was not by any means the end of Han's ambition to recapture the north the way it is portrayed in the poem, as Han went on to greater battles and victories in the next ten years. The real cause which eventually shattered Han's

revanchist dream is carefully displaced, it being the humiliating peace treaties with which the Southern Song bought its existence from the Jurchens. According to his biography in the Song shi, Han retired in Hangzhou and not Suzhou, though it is quite possible that he spent time at the Canglang Garden during the ten years of retirement until his death in 1151. The point is, these disparate historical elements function effectively within the logic and structure of the poem to evoke the pathos embodied in the frustrated career of Han Shizhong. This pathos is intensified by the allusion in the next line (1.7). The allusion to the returned crane by the pillar generally suggests the vicissitudes and transitoriness of human life. In Wu's application, he puts a qualitative judgment on these changes; he is in effect saying that were Han Shizhong's spirit to return like the immortal crane, he would only see that the times have changed for the worse. The crane's sigh, the tearful dewdrops on the branches become also symbols of the poet's own lament at the deterioration from the past to the present. The chain of deterioration is seen even to go beyond the present into the future, impervious to man's ardent hopes and desires for the contrary. Wu spells out his pessimism quite plainly in the second stanza. Such a despairing view of things has not earned him praise by later critics, but it may in part explain his eschewal of politics both in life and in poetry.

The occasion of passing by the grave of an ancient historical figure brought to Wu's mind a lesson to be learned from history, and the poem which records this experience also

reflects a basic distrust of the world of politics:

To the tune Gao yang tai

Passing Zhong Mountain-the grave of Wen Zhong of
Yue

- 1 Sails drop with the incoming tide
As I return to the ancient kingdom;
With heavy heart I roam again this mountain top.
The bow was snapped in the frosty chill,
- 5 By a scheming mind the seagull was felled.
Before the lamp a precious sword-the light breeze
stopped,
Just then there on Five Lakes, a rainhat of bamboo on
a tiny boat.
Most unfeeling
These wild flowers on the crag,
- 10 Infusing spring's sorrow with their sanguinary odor.
- At that time, from the path of white rocks and green
pines
He turned back his reins to the imperial carriage-
Mists hide the mountain's shame.
The woodcutters' song has come to an end,
- 15 Youth a dream on the desolate hills.
Year after year the west wind comes to the ancient
park,
And wild geese cry in grief amidst autumnal reeds in
green waters.

Don't climb up to gaze-

Only a few trees in fading haze

20 From the tall tower in the northwest.

(QSC 4/2923)

Notes:

Preface:

Zhong Mountain was so called because Wen Zhong, minister of the state of Yue, was buried there. It is located in Shaoxing, Zhejiang province. In Song times it had come to be an old name for Wolong Mountain 卧人龙山. See Shaoxing fuzhi, comp. Li Hengte (Taipei: Chengwenchubanshe, 1975), vol.1, 77.

In order to decode the montage of images in this poem, one needs to know the historical tragedy which informs it. One can also assume that in the case of traditional Chinese readers, this knowledge is taken for granted; Wen Zhong was a key figure in the intrigues between the states of Wu and Yue in the Spring and Autumn period. One of the two able ministers who assisted King Goujian 句踐 of Yue to stage his final defeat of Wu, Wen Zhong stayed on in the service of Goujian after the victory, while Fan Li, the other minister, wandered off as a recluse. In the Shi ji account of the aftermath, Fan Li is reported to have relayed a message to Wen Zhong, warning him of Goujian's distrustful and ruthless character, and advised him to leave. Since Goujian had fulfilled his ambition to conquer Wu, Wen Zhong's ability as a strategist would be regarded as a liability. Wen, however, did not heed Fan Li's advice and met his fatal end as Fan Li predicted when Goujian, suspicious of seditious plots, ordered him to commit suicide by sword.⁸⁹

Finding himself at the burial site of this self-immolated victim, Wu felt profoundly affected by Wen Zhong's death, which he saw as the result of a mistaken choice between two lifestyles. The grid of symbolic images and allusions both conducts the emotional current and accentuates the contrast between a violent death and deliquescent freedom. Wen Zhong's gory fate is first symbolized by the shooting of an unsuspecting gull by a hunter's (Goujian) design; the act of his suicide is represented by the sword; and his death, the ceasing of the wind. After this rapid succession of death symbols, the sudden appearance of the raincapped figure, the wandering recluse Fan Li drifting carefree on a boat in the misty lakes, evokes by powerful contrast the pathetic irony of Wen Zhong's choice. The first stanza ends with a perceptual expression of Wu's deep sympathy for Wen Zhong: "Most unfeeling, / These wild flowers on the crag / Infusing spring's sorrow with their sanguinary odour." The flowers which still bloom at the site are seen as "unfeeling," insensitive. Wu's own acute sensitivity to the disjunction between nature's insentient continuity and the violent and bloody vicissitudes in human history translates into a perceptual language which compounds these opposing qualities into expressive imagery. Here, the sweet fragrance of the flowers is instead perceived as sanguinary stench, as having been contaminated by and thus carrying the scent of Wen Zhong's spilled blood. In the Basheng Ganzhou quoted above, which was written on Mount Lingyan, the site of King Fucha's ancient palace grounds, the line "Creamy water stains the flower's

stench" carries a similar connotation: nature continues its seemingly oblivious existence, but the poet sees it branded with the signs of human folly.

Before further elaboration of the huaigu theme in conjunction with the denglin topos, both integral to a poem written at a historical tomb on a mountain, the second stanza begins with a reiteration of Wen Zhong's fatal mistake of not having chosen the eremite's life of freedom. This is repeated both for emphasis and to provide a thematic link to the first stanza. "The Proclamation on North Mountain," an essay in parallel prose by Kong Zhigui 孔稚珪 (447-501), established the convention of employing pathetic fallacy to underscore the abhorrence at a hermit who abandons his purity by taking up office.⁹⁰ In it, nature, the hermit's abode, is portrayed as reacting to the apostasy in a full range of human emotions—clouds are angered, streams disappointed, mountains and valleys express their contempt, cranes and apes are grieved, woods humiliated, and so on. In later poetry, these become conventionalized motifs to be used when an occasion presents a potential for antithetical play between office and retirement. For example, in a parting poem to an official who is transferring from one post to another, it is not unusual that mention will be made of a grieved crane waiting for him in the mountain. The second stanza of this poem begins with Wen Zhong's turning away from the "path of white rocks and pines"—the life of retirement, thus the mountain is described as being shamed by his desertion. It should have been horrified. The

pathos of this passage lies in the reader's knowledge of the destiny that awaited Wen Zhong.

The rest of the poem rises above the life and death of an individual to the rise and fall of a state. The shift in perspective is even more disheartening, for in hindsight history seems to be an inexorable decline. Yue's victory did not last forever, it was in turn wiped out by Chu a century and a half later. The rise and fall of Yue is depicted in one stroke through the allusion to the woodcutters (l.14), who were men Goujian sent into the mountains to obtain lumber to present to King Fucha of Wu, to encourage him in his extravagance in building palaces. This was part of the longterm strategy of revenge designed for Goujian by Wen Zhong.⁹¹ The allusion therefore stands for the pre-victory days of Goujian, and by extension, to the Yue state in its ascendent period. But their song has "come to an end"-what is left of the victorious Yue are only ruins seen from a gloomy hill.

If contemplation from a hill already brings one to an emotional nadir, to ascend to a higher vantage point would surely plunge one into the abyss. The closure, therefore, issues a direct warning: "Don't climb up to gaze from the tall tower!" The emotional devastation is subsumed in the imagined view of desolation from the tower. By making reference to another plane of contemplation-both physical and psychological-without developing it, the closure is almost too obvious as a technique to extend the emotional scope of the poem. In the context of poetic convention, the emotional implications created

by the closural arrest would be clearly understood, as "climbing a tower" 登樓 constitutes a well established subgenre of poems exhibiting a strong contemplative bent.

As early as the Han, Wang Can 王粲 wrote his celebrated "Fu on climbing a tower" 登樓賦 in which he expressed his homesickness as an exile,⁹² and many Tang poets left memorable works written at the various traditional architectural colossi. The subgeneric conventions associated with "ascending a tower" evolved such that the occasion became a medium for introspective verse; the poem calls for some comments, whether personal, historical, political or philosophical. Within the tradition, it is understood and expected that the sheer physical elevation should provoke such a response. One would often find the immensity of the view from the tower reproduced in some descriptive lines, more often perhaps than dealing with the historical significance of the particular tower. We may recall Tu Fu's well known "Ascending Yueyang Tower" 登岳陽樓, one of his many "ascending a tower" poems, and Li Shangyin's "The Tower on the city wall of Anding" 安定城樓.⁹³ Both poems begin by establishing the vantage point, followed by a brief description of the vista, then move on for the greater part to self-introspective thought. Li Shangyin's poem in heptasyllabic regulated form is the more extreme in that only the first couplet refers to the actual tower and view, the remaining three couplets all express his personal feelings and ambitions in a series of allusions:

The city wall stretches far; the tower stands a
hundred feet.

Beyond the green willow branches, I see nothing but
banks and islets.

Master Chia in his youth in vain shed tears;
Wang Ts'an in spring once more went on a distant
journey.

Forever remembering the rivers and lakes to which I
would return, white-haired,
I yet wish to turn around heaven and earth before
entering a tiny boat.

Not knowing the rotten rat was considered tasty,
The phoenix unwittingly aroused endless suspicions!⁹⁴

Wu Wenying's opus contains only a few "tower" poems. Some of these deserve mention, if not for their exploration of the subgenre in ci, then at least for their sheer verbal art. For in Wu's case, the elevated field of vision seems to have excited his imagination as much as inducing introspection, at times perhaps more. Inasmuch as these tower-buildings were ones located in Hangzhou, Suzhou and Shaoxing, they had served as popular places where the Southern Song upper classes gathered for banquets, drinking parties and other social occasions. Some of Wu Wenying's poems written at these locations are clearly occasional, as indicated by either the preface or content. There are three occasional poems he wrote at the Abundant Happiness Pavilion 豐樂樓 in Hangzhou. According to the

contemporary work Meng liang lu, this tower-pavilion was situated on the bank of West Lake just outside Fengyu Gate, the western city gate. It further records that it was torn down and rebuilt by the official Zhao Yuchou during the Chunyou period (1241-1252); upon completion its height "reached up to the clouds," commanding a majestic view of the lake and surrounding scenery; and that scholars and officials had frequent gatherings there.⁹⁵ In fact, Wu Wenying's preface to one of the three poems reads, "Abundant Happiness Pavilion-newly built by Jiezhai (Zhao Yuchou)" (QSC 4/2907). The poem is written to the four-stanza tune pattern Ying ti xu, and Wu reportedly brushed it on the wall of the pavilion to "advertize" himself.⁹⁶ Aside from the ostentatious description exaggerating the fantastic height of the building in the first stanza, which was obviously written to dazzle the eye, the poem is an uninspiring piece of occasional verse written for Zhao Yuchou (at the opening banquet?): it eulogizes the peaceful times they live in, Zhao's work on the building and his life as an official. I have selected instead another poem written at the Abundant Happiness Pavilion. Even though judging from the preface, this poem also seems as occasional as occasional can be, the poem itself has an emotional content that is personal and a language that does display the positive aspects of Wu's style:

To the tune Gao yang tai

At Abundant Happiness Pavilion, I obtained the character ru when rhyme words were distributed.

1 Tall bamboos in glossy dress

And willows hanging down entice riders to stop:
 By the railing a few light strokes become a painting.
 Who will place an inscription on this mountain
 landscape?

- 5 Before the pavilion wild geese write a slanting line.
 The spring wind hastens the setting sun's departure,
 Reviving winter's chill as I grow sober from the
 evening's wine.

Alone and deeply moved:

How many more years have I with these flowers?

- 10 For suddenly Xiangru grows old.

It is not on a tall pavilion that I lament for spring,
 But propped on a pillow by the lamp,
 Beside the clothes-censer while it rains outside.
 I hesitate to moor my pleasure boat-

- 15 Looking into the stream I cannot bear my thinness.
 If falling petals reach the bottom of West Lake,
 Nothing but sorrowful fish would churn up emerald
 waves.

Don't come back!

After the fragrant catkins have all been blown away,

- 20 Tears will fill the grassy plain.

(QSC 4/2922)

Notes:

- 1.10 The Han poet Sima Xiangru is used as a persona of
 the poet.

As is wont, the poem opens with a depiction of the groundview seen from the height of the pavilion. What is novel is the description of this landscape as details in a painting and the line formation of wild geese in flight across the sky is imagined to be the inscription on this painting. The transition from description to contemplation is effected in the poignant imagery of line 6, in which the sunset is compared to a guest being seen off by the spring wind. A moment of beauty quickly disappears, and the poet is reminded of youth and life slipping away from him. His thoughts leave the pavilion altogether in the second stanza as he delves into the theme of lament for the passing of spring, an obvious symbol of youth and beauty. The unusual affect of an otherwise commonplace theme comes from the reversal of the emotional vantage point. The poet refutes the conventional association of height with heightened emotion: "It is not on a tall pavilion that I lament for spring," he declares, but down in his room, while listening to the rain at night. The rain implies that the flowers in bloom are being damaged, and therein lies his regret for the destruction of youth and beauty, which is also mirrored by his own emaciated form. Moving along this inverted vertical scale of sorrow, the poet's imagination dives into the bottom of West Lake with the rain-scattered petals, to impute to even the fish playing in the depths this pervasive sadness. The closure reverts back to the proper emotional scale associated with the elevated view from the pavilion. However, it does so only to assert the utter inescapability of life's transitoriness and the analogous

totality of man's sorrow.

Not all of Wu Wenying's finer works are so lugubrious and grave in tone, as the above poems may suggest. To end this chapter on a positive note, I have selected a poem he wrote probably in the sunnier period of his manhood, before his vision was clouded by life's shadows:

To the tune Qi tian yue

Level-with-Cloud Tower

- 1 At the break of dawn, a shadow from Yang Terrace
Flew from the firmament and stayed here.
Its pillars are level with Orion,
And curtains hook onto the Dipper's curve:
- 5 How high this tower on the northwest wall,
Celestial sounds resemble voices.
Lightly I push open the gates of the empyrean palace
And smoothly ascend the rainbow river,
Wondering through how much rain and shine
- 10 It has lorded over the plains of Wu, defying time.

Hills to the west, like darkened brows, are seen in
their emerald hues,

But even sharp eyes cannot reach
The misty horizon where egrets vanish.
The plaintive chant of the bamboo flute

- 15 Suddenly rends the layered fog-
A cold moon spreads its hazy light across many miles.

I dance intoxicated in the Void,
 Dreaming of a marble white balustrade
 Changing into flying mist.

- 20 Red and green are cleansed
 When a sudden rain sweeps across the azure sea.

(QSC 4/2884)

Notes:

Preface:

The name of the tower alludes to its height. It is derived from the fifth of the "Nineteen Old Poems," the first couplet of which reads: "In the northwest there is a tall tower, / Its top soars, level with the clouds." Wenxuan, vol.1, 632. Line 5 also alludes to this couplet.

- 1.1 Yang Terrace was the dwelling of the goddess in Song Yu's Gaotang fu. She had described herself as the "dawn cloud." The line alludes to the character "cloud" in the name of the tower. The oblique allusion to this mythical tale in the Gaotang fu introduces a mysterious and fantastic dimension to the height of the tower.
- 1.20 "Red and green" 青 紅 are often employed in Wu's poems as metonym for an edifice, as they are common in the colour scheme of traditional Chinese architecture.

In this poem Wu dispenses with, or subverts, subgeneric conventions and gives free rein to his imaginative power. What comes forth is sheer verbal magic. Through his wonderful imagination and magnificent description, the reader derives vicarious enjoyment of the exhilaration of being in the celestial realms on the top of the tower, and finally experiences the same sense of purification at the close of the poem.

- ¹ I follow Stephen Owen's use of the term subgenre "to designate the classification by subject matter and occasion and the term genre for the formal, metrical classification." In Poetry of of the Early T'ang, (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1977), p.445, n.13.
- ² Trans. by James R. Hightower in "The Wen Hsuan and Genre Theory," HJAS, 20 (1957), 520.
- ³ A perusal of the table of contents of the Lidai fuhui will demonstrate this fact.
- ⁴ For a complete translation of the Yutai xinyong, see Anne Birrell, New Songs from a Jade Terrace (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1982).
- ⁵ John Marney, Liang Chien-wen ti, Twayne's World Author Series (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1976), p.108.
- ⁶ Yutai xinyong (Shanghai: Shijie shuju, 1935), p.281.
Translation adapted from Anne Birrell, New Songs from a Jade Terrace, p.278.
- ⁷ For the extent and duration of Emperor Wen's reform measures affecting the literary heritage, see Arthur Wright, The Sui Dynasty (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1978), pp.122-25.

- ⁸ See Liu Su, Da Tang xinyu (Congshu jicheng chubian ed., vol.2741), 28; and Ji Yougong, Tangshi jishi (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965), Vol.1, 6.
- ⁹ In the Chinese poetic tradition, allegory has the narrower sense of possessing a specifically moral or political tenor. The allegorical mode was first consciously employed in some of the Chuci poems, and allegorical interpretation, a hermeneutics with pre-Qin origins specifically applied to the Book of Odes, was first fully established in the Han with the systematic distortion of the Shi jing poems to elucidate their moral or political message. In later ages, allegorical interpretation was of course not restricted to the Shi jing.
- ¹⁰ "Zaiyu yong chan," Quan Tang shi [hereafter QTS] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), Vol.3, 848.
- ¹¹ QTS Vol.3, 890. Trans. adapted from Stephen Owen, Poetry of the Early T'ang, p.218.
- ¹² Mi Heng's (c.173-198) "Yingwu fu" for example; see William T. Graham, Jr., "Mi Heng's 'Rhapsody on a Parrot'," HJAS, 30:1 (1979), 39-54.
- ¹³ Xi Kang's 嵇康 "Qin fu" is a good example; see Xi Kang ji jiaozhu (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1962), pp.82-109. In this piece Xi Kang is not just interested in describing

the external attributes of the qin and its music, but in expressing certain truths about the nature of music, human emotion, and the Dao.

¹⁴ I am indebted to Stephen Owen's discussions of Tang yongwu poetry in Poetry of the Early T'ang; see in particular, pp.281-93.

¹⁵ Liu Xie, Wenxin diaolong zhu (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1958), p.134.

¹⁶ This preface has been translated by James R. Hightower in "Some Characteristics of Parallel Prose," in Studies in Chinese Literature, ed. John L. Bishop, pp.108-39.

¹⁷ The following works contain discussions on the styles of these four ci poets: Kang-i Sun Chang, The Evolution of Chinese Tz'u Poetry; James J. Y. Liu, Major Lyricists of the Northern Sung; and Yeh Chia-ying, Jialing tanci.

¹⁸ In the earliest anthology of ci poetry, the Huajian ji, certain tune titles still served as the subject matter of the poems, thus giving us some poems on objects. The small number of poems written to the tune Liuzhi and Yangliu zhi are usually about willows. Huang Qingshi, in his essay "Tan yongwu ci," does not mention any of these willow poems but quotes Niu Qiao's two Meng Jiangnan on the swallow and

mandarin ducks (which he mistakes for one ci with two stanzas) as being the first example of yongwu ci; Yilin conglu, 5 (1964), 84-91. Before the mid Northern Song period, examples are rare indeed; there is one in Ouyang Xiu's corpus-Liangzhou ling (QSC 1/146), and four in Liu Yong's-Huangyinger (QSC 1/13) and Mulanhua (three) (QSC 1/52).

¹⁹ See the ci collections of Cao Xun 曹勣 (1098-1174), in QSC 2/1206-39, and of Kang Yuzhi 康輿之 (fl.1140s) in QSC 2/1302-10. Although only a small number of Kang Yuzhi's ci poems survive, he is known in the Southern Song for having produced great numbers of them. See Huang Sheng's comment in Zhongxing yilai juemiao cixuan, in Hua'an cixuan, p.161.

²⁰ Xue Liruo in his Songci tonglun goes so far as to characterize Southern Song ci of the middle and late period (i.e., beginning in the late twelfth century) as the product of ci poetry clubs (Taipei: Kaiming shudian, 1958), pp.50-52. Some of the earliest occurrences of the term sheyou, "club friends," are found in Shi Dazu's 史達祖 (1155-1220) prefaces to his ci, e.g., Dian jiangchun (QSC 4/2337) and Long yin qu (QSC 4/2345).

²¹ William T. Graham, Jr., in his article on Mi Heng's rhapsody (p. 51), classifies yongwu fu into two broad categories of the social and personal. He suggests that in writing social

pieces the poet adhered to strict conventions, whereas in the personal he is afforded almost unlimited license in approaching the subject. While the distinction may not be as clear-cut in the case of yongwu ci, the same general tendencies can be observed.

²² Trans. adapted from Kang-i Sun Chang, The Evolution of Chinese Tz'u Poetry, p.178.

²³ QSC 2/610. See also James J. Y. Liu's analysis of this poem in Major Lyricists of the Northern Sung, pp.173-78.

²⁴ Examples are Jiang Kui's Shu ying (QSC 3/2182) and Wu Wenying's Xinghua tian (analysis to follow).

²⁵ An example is Wu Wenying's Suochuang han (analyzed below).

²⁶ Ban Gu, Han Wu gushi, in Xu tan zhu (Congshu jicheng chubian ed., Vol.272), p.64.

²⁷ Zhu Xi, Chuci jizhu (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1979), p.3.

²⁸ Su's poem is entitled "After the rhymes of Yang Gongji's poem on the plum blossom (no.4)" 次韻楊公濟奉議梅花(十四). See Wang Wengao's annotations in Su shi bianzhu jicheng (1888 ed.), j.33/1b-2a.

- ²⁹ Tangshi jishi, p.849.
- ³⁰ Xiao Tong, Wenxuan (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1978), vol.1, 392.
- ³¹ Hangzhou in Song times had a brothel district in its eastern section. See entry on 瓦子巷 in Li E, Dongcheng zaji (Congshu jicheng chubian ed., vol.3174), p.43.
- ³² From the first of two poems entitled "Written at parting" 貝曾別, QTS, vol.16, 5988.
- ³³ The felicitous rendering of the term 泥人 as "Woman Adrift" comes from James R. Hightower; see Chia-ying Yeh Chao, "Wu Wen-ying's Tz'u," pp.162-63.
- ³⁴ Recounted by Shen Yazhi as "An Account of the Unhappy Person by the Xiang River" 湘中怨解, in Shen Xiaxian ji (Sibu congkan ed.), j.2/14a-b. A translation of the story by James R. Hightower is found in Chia-ying Yeh Chao, "Wu Wen-ying's Tz'u," pp.162-63.
- ³⁵ Wu's poem with the term "Woman Adrift" are Qitian yue (QSC 4/2884) and Qiliang fan (QSC 4/2927); and Zhou Mi's is Yizeshang guoxiang man (QSC 5/3290).
- ³⁶ See Liu Wenying, "Xi Shi di xialuo wenti," yilin conglu, 5

(1964), 315-20.

- ³⁷ The line is "I had tended many an acre of orchids." Trans. by David Hawkes, Songs of the South (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959), p.23.
- ³⁸ The last couplet of the poem "Song of the Bronze Immortal bidding farewell to the Han," 金銅仙人辭漢歌 (QTS, vol.12, 4403).
- ³⁹ Jiang Kui is of course the most obvious example; see Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition. But even some yongwu ci by Xin Qiji exhibit this dissociative trend.
- ⁴⁰ In all, fourteen men participated on different occasions and wrote a total of 37 ci using 5 tune patterns on 5 different objects. The poems were assembled in a collection entitled the Yuefu buti. See Xia Chengtao, " Yuefu buti kao," in Tang Song ciren nianpu, pp.376-82, and Huang Zhaoxian, Yuefu buti yanjiu ji jianzhu.
- ⁴¹ Wang Zhuo, Biji manzhi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 19.
- ⁴² Zhang Yan, Ciyuan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 218.
- ⁴³ For a list of tunes cited as love poems, see Xia Chengtao,

Tang Song ciren nianpu, pp.467-69; and Yang Tiefu, "Wu Mengchuang Shiji kao," in Mengchuang ci quanji jianshi, pp.364-67.

⁴⁴ Besides the above two works, see also Chen Xun's commentaries on a selection of Wu Wenying's poetry in his Haixiao shuoci (Cihua congbian ed., vol.12), 4401-43.

⁴⁵ Chen Lianzhen, "Du Mu Mengchuang ci," first published in Guangming Daily, 28 April 1957; rpt. in Tang Song ci yanjiu lunwenji (n.p., 1969), p.189.

⁴⁶ See in particular Tao Erfu, "Shuo Mengchuang ci Ying ti xu," in Wenxue yichan, No.3 (1982), pp.110-19; and Xu Yongduan, "Xuan ren yanmu de jingjie," in Cixue, No.1 (1981), pp.176-79.

⁴⁷ Cf. Chia-ying Yeh Chao's analysis of these two lines in "Wu Wenying's ci," p.160. Though my translation follows the different punctuation in the QSC, the imagery of these two lines is not any less strange.

⁴⁸ QTS, vol.4, 1306.

⁴⁹ Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, p.469.

⁵⁰ In Ying ti xu, the next poem to be discussed.

- ⁵¹ In fact, not only these lines but the whole poem has merited high praise; cf. the various comments on it quoted in Songci sanbai shou jianzhu, ed. Tang Guizhang (1931; rpt. Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1971), p.213.
- ⁵² Baiyuzhai cihua (Cihua congbian ed., vol.11), 3807-08.
- ⁵³ Chinese critics have quoted lines by earlier poets which play with the idea of the spring/autumn displacement to show the precedents for this line. See Yu Pingbo, Tang Song ci xuanshi (Beijing: Renming wenxue chubanshe, 1979), p.252, n.5. In the way it subsumes emotion and conveys it entirely through imagery, Wu's line surpasses its models in sophistication.
- ⁵⁴ Besides Man jiang hong, the other three are Xi qian ying, QSC 4/2918; Wei fan, QSC 4/2928; and Feng qi wu, QSC 4/2937. The last mentioned is discussed further on in this section.
- ⁵⁵ For an informative study of the Double Fifth and its amalgamation of certain Summer Solstice observances, see Chapter 8 in Derk Bodde, Festivals in Classical China (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1975).
- ⁵⁶ Zong Lin, Jingchu suishi ji (Sibu beiyao ed.), 7b-8b.
- ⁵⁷ Derk Bodde discusses inscribed Double Fifth silk charms with

quotes from Han sources in Festivals in Classical China, p.306-307.

⁵⁸ From the quatrain entitled "Written to ease my mind" 遣懷, in QTS, vol.16, 5998.

⁵⁹ Meng Qi, Benshi shi (Congshu jicheng chubian ed., vol.2546), 1.

⁶⁰ Li Zhao, Tang guoshi bu (Shanghai: Gudian wenxue chubanshe, 1957), p.64.

⁶¹ See Zong Lin, Jingchu suishi ji, 9a.

⁶² In the second of two quatrains entitled "At Parting" 贈別, in QTS, vol.16, 5988.

⁶³ "Untitled" 無題, in QTS, vol.16, 6168-6169.

⁶⁴ The story entitled "Pei Hang" 裴航 collected in Taiping quangji (Xiaoshuo congshu daquan ed.), j..50/27a-28a.

⁶⁵ In "Xiang jun" of the "Nine Songs," in Chuci jizhu, p.33.

⁶⁶ There are numerous lines in Tang poems which refer to the burning of cassia for fragrance. Cf. Li Shangyin's line "The brazier is warm with hidden embers of cassia" in his poem

"Apricot Blossoms," in QTS, vol.16, 6179.

- ⁶⁷ See James J. Y. Liu's discussion on the world of romantic love in ci poetry in his article "Some Literary Qualities of the Lyric," in Cyril Birch, ed., Studies in Chinese Literary Genres, pp.135ff.
- ⁶⁸ Carl J. Weber, ed., Hardy's Love Poems (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1963), pp.vff.
- ⁶⁹ ibid., p.viii; the list after the colon is taken from p.vii.
- ⁷⁰ Eminent scholar-officials in the Southern Song such as Wei Liaoweng 魏了翁, Wu Qian, Li Zengbo 李曾伯, and Liu Kezhuang were all prodigious writers of birthday and other social occasional ci poems, see the numerous examples in their respective works in QSC, vol.4.
- ⁷¹ He xinlang: "Parting from my twelfth cousin Maojia," in QSC 3/1914-15.
- ⁷² QSC page references for Wu's birthday poems to Prince Sirong and his wife are given in ch.1, n.76. The banquet poem referred to is Shengsheng man, QSC 4/2920.
- ⁷³ Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, p.483.

⁷⁴ Feng's biography is in Song shi, vol.36, 12677.

⁷⁵ Chen Xun, Haixiao shuoci (Cihua congbian ed., vol.12), 4425-26.

⁷⁶ See analysis of Xinghua tian in Sec.1 of this chapter.

⁷⁷ See Han Xin's biography in Han shu (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), vol.7, 1861-78.

⁷⁸ The ci poet Shi Dazhu had his face tattooed as a punishment after his patron, the chief councillor Han Tuozhou, fell from power. See Ye Shaoweng, Sichao jianwen lu (Congshu jicheng chubian ed., vol.2763), 151.

⁷⁹ Trans. by James R. Hightower in Chia-ying Yeh Chao, "Wu Wenying's Tz'u," pp.167-68; quoted by Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition, p.184. In her article, Prof. Chao provides penetrating and exhaustive exegeses for this poem and another written about a visit with Feng Qufei to the grave of Yu (Qi tian yue, QSC 4/2883). These two poems will not be dealt with in detail here.

⁸⁰ Shuen-fu Lin, The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition, p.185.

⁸¹ Yue jue shu (Sibu congkan ed.), j.2.

- ⁸² Fan Shu, Yunxi youyi (Congshu jicheng chubian ed., vol.2832), 35.
- ⁸³ QTS, vol.5, 1643.
- ⁸⁴ With the possible exception of the undated poem Shuילong yin: "Sending off Wan xinzhou" (QSC 4/2880). As suggested by Zheng Qian, the opening lines: "How often have we discussed over and again current events, / At the banquet we both regret the setting sun's decline," may be a comment on the current, more advanced deterioration in Southern Song politics, in comparison to its initial years; Cixuan, p.134.
- ⁸⁵ Gong Mingzhi, Zhongwu jiwen (Congshu jicheng chubian ed., vol.3155), 21.
- ⁸⁶ QSC 4/2730.
- ⁸⁷ See their respective biographies in Song shi, vol.36, 11355ff; 11375ff; and 11297ff.
- ⁸⁸ A detailed description of this battle is found in Li Xinchuan, Jiānyān yilai xīnián yāolu (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1956), vol.1, 634-35.
- ⁸⁹ Shi ji, j.41 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), vol.5, 1746-47.

- ⁹⁰ In Wenxuan, vol.2, 957-60. Trans. by James R. Hightower in "Some Characteristics of Parallel Prose," pp.118-122.
- ⁹¹ Yue jue shu, j.9.
- ⁹² Wenxuan, vol.1, 221-223.
- ⁹³ QTS, vol.7, 2566 and vol.16, 6191-92 respectively.
- ⁹⁴ Trans. by James J. Y. Liu with notes and commentary, in The Poetry of Li Shangyin (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1969), pp.129-130.
- ⁹⁵ Wu Zimu, Meng liang lu; rpt. in Dongjing menghua lu waisizhong (Shanghai: Gudian wenxue chubanshe, 1957), p.230.
- ⁹⁶ See Xia Chengtao, Tang Song ciren nianpu, pp.476-77.

IV. CRITICAL VIEWS

Critical opinion regarding Wu Wenying's ci became divided shortly after his lifetime with Zhang Yan's famous critique in the Ciyuan. While Wu had been lauded by his contemporaries Yin Huan and Shen Yifu as being the equal of the Northern Song ci master Zhou Bangyan, Zhang Yan emphatically faulted him for the obscurity and fragmentation he found in his poetry. Zhang Yan was himself an important late Song poet and critic; his critical views therefore bore weight and influence among his successors. Zhang's critical statement on Wu Wenying's ci had two notable consequences: first, it drew attention to verbal density and surface elegance as the salient characteristics of Wu's ci and, second, it emphasized the negative side of these characteristics. Later critical views on Wu often echo Zhang Yan's view either in agreement and easy dismissal of Wu's ci or in disagreement and counter elaboration in defense of it. However, articulation of these critical trends did not begin to surface until several centuries after the death of both poet and critic.

With the post-Song decline of the ci as a poetic genre, it fell outside the mainstream of creative productivity and critical interest. The subsequent Yuan and Ming periods represent more than three barren centuries both in the writing of ci and in ci criticism. The handful of works on ci written during this period contain no critical insight of note, and Wu Wenying's name hardly figure in them at all.¹ Post-Song ci poetic criticism is properly a legacy of the Qing period revival

of the genre. Renewed interest in ci poetry began in the late Ming and early Qing when poets again took up the writing of ci. The Ming loyalist Chen Zilong 陳子龍 (1608-1647), and many early Qing literary talents such as Wu Weiye 吳偉業 (1609-1672), Zhu Yizun (1629-1709), and Chen Weisong 陳維崧 (1625-1682), to name but a few, all left behind reputable collections of ci poetry.

Critical interest in the genre also revived, indicated by the appearance of contemporaneous writings devoted to the discussion of ci poetry. Some of these writings contain the earliest comments on Wu Wenying. His name is generally mentioned in the context of comments on Southern Song ci, often in comparison to ci of the Northern Song period. In the eyes of early Qing critics, Northern Song ci emanated a quality of "naturalness," while that of the Southern Song exhibits stylistic subtlety and sophistication. Though the two "styles" seem to have been valued each for its own merits, some of the comments show a marked appreciation for the "art" in the Southern Song style, with which Wu Wenying is at once associated. This favorable disposition towards Southern Song ci is especially evident in the writings of the eminent shi poet and theorist Wang Shizhen 王士禎 (1634-1711) and his friends Zou Zhimo 鄒祇謨 (fl.1666) and Pang Sunyu 彭孫遹 (1631-1700). In the Huacao mengshi Wang noted that:

Since the Song moved south, with poets such as Meixi (Shi Dazhu), Baishi (Jiang Kui), Zhuwu (Gao Guanguo), and Mengchuang (Wu Wenying), ci reached its ultimate in elegance and beauty. Even Qin [Guan] and Li [Qingzhao] cannot be their match in some ways.

Although their ci may have less resonance and naturalness, one is made to sigh with admiration at their unsurpassed excellence.²

To Wang Shizhen, the only weakness in the Southern Song style is a diminution of the resonant and natural quality found in Northern Song ci, a fact which does not seem to deter his estimation of its artistry. Wang's view is echoed by Zou Zhimou in his discussions on manci:

Long tunes were the last development in ci. The outstanding works among Southern Song poets all excel in this form. In the works of Meixi (Shi Dazhu), Baishi (Jiang Kui), Zhuwu (Gao Guanguo), and Mengchuang, lovely sentiments and beautiful diction reached the highest expression. Moreover, their embellishment and polish have a marvel of movement like the subtle traces left by snakes and earthworms linked in a continuous flow.³

Zou made this statement in support of his view that the manci form was handled perfectly only by Southern Song ci poets. Elsewhere he even criticized Zhou Bangyan's manci for their crude fluency.⁴ But the stylistic ornamentation which Zou notes with such admiration is to him as much or even more of an achievement than structural organization. Poetic diction is an engaging characteristic of Southern Song ci for these critics. In Wu Wenying's case, Pang Sunyu perceives it to be excessive and thus to overshadow the expression of emotion. He notes with regret that "although Mengchuang's ci is full of ornamentation, it is somewhat lacking in emotional appeal."⁵

The comments made by Wang Shizhen's group are illuminating

in that they show the strong stylistic appeal of Southern Song ci during the early stages of the Qing revival and Wu Wenying to be in the vanguard of that appeal. The group, however, did not formulate any consistent theories nor did it advocate any models for emulation, and Wang Shizhen himself gave up the study and writing of ci very early on in his career. Consequently, their writings did not have significant influence on later developments. It is with a contemporary of Wang Shizhen, the early Qing poet Zhu Yizun, that definite trends were set in the world of ci.

Zhu Yizun was a prolific ci poet with a commanding reputation among his contemporaries and a scholar of versatile talent; but he did not leave behind any work on ci criticism. Yet, through him, Southern Song ci was placed on the pedestal of perfection. This was the result both of the models Zhu professed to emulate in his practice of writing ci and of the influential anthology of ci poetry he compiled. The Cizong, completed in 1678, was the first ci anthology to appear in the Qing and was timely in its appearance as interest in ci was burgeoning. In it the major late Song poets are favoured with the greatest number of selections. We have already quoted Zhu Yizun's famous pronouncement in the explanatory foreword to the Cizong in which he claimed that "only in the Southern Song did the ci attain its perfection, and only at the end of the Song did it exhaust its transformations." This is immediately followed by the statement that "Jiang Yaozhang (Jiang Kui) is the most outstanding [ci poet in the late Song]." ⁶ In prefaces

Zhu wrote to ci collections by his contemporaries and in his own poems, he states in no uncertain terms his preference for Jiang Kui among Southern Song ci poets.⁷ He conceptualizes Jiang Kui's poetry as the matrix of the late Song style from which ten others, among them Wu Wenying and Zhang Yan, represent offshoots.⁸ In practice, he advocates Jiang Kui and Zhang Yan as models for imitation.⁹ Since Zhu Yizun is completely at one with Zhang Yan's ideal of ci poetry, one wonders where Wu Wenying stands in his scheme. In point of fact, mostly in peaceful shadows by default. For Zhu did not follow Zhang Yan's lead in using Wu as a foil to his poetic ideal, and left no specific comment regarding Wu Wenying's poetry.¹⁰

Wu Wenying, along with most other ci poets of the past, remained subordinate names for a century or so from Zhu Yizun's time. During this period when poets interested in the genre were engaged in the writing of ci, stylistic models became the catchword for many. The most prominent models were of course Jiang Kui and Zhang Yan representing the late Song style of elegance and refinement, which had its rival in the haofang 'heroic' style modelled after Su Shi and Xin Qiji.¹¹ By the late eighteenth century, objections were raised at the practice of Qing epigones, who were thought to have succeeded only in developing the worst traits of each style.

The criticism hailed from a group of ci poets/critics in Changzhou (Jiangsu) with the classical scholar Zhang Huiyan 張惠言 (1761-1802) as its founding authority; the group subsequently became known as the Changzhou School of ci

criticism.¹² To rectify the faults to which Qing ci writers had degenerated, and to elevate the ci genre to a proper status in the literary tradition, Zhang Huiyan compiled an anthology of ci poetry, the Cixuan (printed in 1797), in which he advanced and applied the method of allegorical interpretation to ci poetry after the manner of Shijing and Chuci exegeses, to reveal the poems' hidden moral and political tenor.¹³ However forced Zhang Huiyan's methodological application may have appeared to later critics, the undertaking was grafted on a venerable tradition and it was not questioned by his immediate followers.

With respect to the development of ci criticism, Zhang Huiyan's epoch-making critical approach profoundly affected the course of Qing studies on the genre. It significantly redirected attention to meaning and content from the sole preoccupation with style prevalent in his day. Zhang's theoretical emphasis, however, entailed strong partiality. The selections betray a predilection for ci poems with indefinite and ambiguous reference, which are open to allegorical treatment, and for ci in which there are discernible signs of an allegorical dimension. The former tend to be short lyrics by poets from the late Tang to the Northern Song, the latter, ci poems by Southern Song poets such as Xin Qiji and Wang Yisun.¹⁴ Zhang Huiyan excluded Wu Wenying from his anthology with one pithy comment in the preface: "Scattered parts that do not form a whole."¹⁵ This is just Zhang Yan's critique put in a capsule.

It is evident from the above overview that there had been no real critical interest in Wu Wenying for well over a century

into the renaissance of ci, and Zhang Huiyan could even dismiss him so summarily. Ironically, the turning point for Wu Wenying came with Zhou Ji 周濟 (1781-1839), the most important successor to Zhang Huiyan in the Changzhou School. A few decades after the publication of the Cixuan, Zhou Ji elaborated on and refined Zhang Huiyan's critical approach. In Zhou Ji's works, Wu Wenying was catapulted from neglect into a position of prominence. Zhou Ji left behind two anthologies of ci poetry, the Cibian [Ci Differentiations] and the Song sijia cixuan [Ci by the Four Masters of the Song], and a short work of critical comments, Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu [Miscellaneous Notes on Ci from Jiecun Studio]. Zhou Ji's critical discussions are contained in the Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu and the prefaces to the two anthologies. Zhou was not a prolific critic, but what he did write is incisive and reflects a solid connoisseurship that can only be the result of dedicated study combined with a native sensitivity to the subject of his interest.

In view of Zhou Ji's stature as a ci critic and his importance in the history of Wu Wenying criticism, it is worthwhile to take a brief look at Zhou's own evolution in his involvement with ci, especially when he himself provides a most candid account in the preface (dated 1812) to his earliest work, the Cibian. Zhou Ji said he began writing ci at the age of sixteen (in the same year Zhang Huiyan's Cixuan was printed). In 1804, when still a young man of twenty-three (and a year before he obtained his jinshi degree), Zhou Ji came into contact with Zhang Huiyan's theories through meeting Zhang's nephew Dong

Shixi 董士錫 (fl. 1811). According to Zhou, Dong Shixi, who was his junior, was already a more accomplished ci poet. Two years followed with discussions and arguments between the two friends over differences in their critical opinions regarding ci poets of the Song. Over the course of the exchanges, most significantly Zhou convinced Dong of Zhang Yan's inferiority as a ci poet—"his ideas end with his words," and through Dong's coaching, Zhou acquired a deep appreciation for Zhou Bangyan's ci, which he at first disliked. Later (sometime before 1812 when this preface was written), while Zhou Ji was in Wusong (Jiangsu) tutoring a student surnamed Tian on how to write ci, he compiled ten juan of ci poetry which he entitled Cibian, an anthology meant to illustrate various features in ci, both positive and negative, with examples drawn from the past.¹⁶ The original manuscript of the Cibian, Zhou records later in the postface to Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu, was given to his student Tian who was traveling north by boat, and accidentally fell into the river. Zhou subsequently managed to reassemble only the first two juan from memory.¹⁷

Zhou Ji is noted for developing Zhang Huiyan's simplistic method of locating allegorical meaning into a sophisticated concept of allegory which allows for a kind of reader-induced plurisignation: there is no one fixed meaning to a poem, and each reader arrives at his interpretation, his own "truth," from the interaction with the metaphorical structure of the poem.¹⁸ This idea was introduced in the preface to the Cibian. In Zhou's later elaborations on allegory (jituo 寄託) from the

poet's and aspiring poet's point of view; he distinguishes between "intentional" and "unintentional" allegory. In these discussions, however, Zhou remains circumscribed by Zhang Huiyan's allegorical models. He sees an allegorical dimension in some late Tang and Northern Song ci poetry which is unintentional, while the allegorical content in Southern Song ci is seen to be intentional. Moreover, the former type of poetry is judged to be superior, an ideal one should aim for in writing ci.¹⁹

In the context of critical views on Wu Wenying, the Changzhou School's focus on the content aspect of ci poetry must have indirectly contributed to Zhou Ji's insight into the "substance" of Wu Wenying's poetry. In the Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu, Zhou Ji has this to say about Wu Wenying:

Yin Huan knew what he was saying when he compared Mengchuang to Qingzhen (Zhou Bangyan). In Mengchuang's ci there are often leaps and turns in the void; it can only be achieved if one had great mental power. It is true that there are difficult and obscure pieces in his work, but they are far better than any empty and facile poem. What's more, his best poems have the feel of celestial radiance and cloud reflections undulating in green waves; one can never tire of enjoying them and seeking after their elusiveness. Junte (Wu Wenying) has deep thoughts about the times. But the manner in which he expresses his emotion is not tightly structured and makes it difficult to infer its presence.²⁰

For the first time a critic penetrates what had seemed to be a blinding brilliance of style and takes cognizance of the substratum of thought and emotion in Wu Wenying's poetry, and explains, however briefly, why it is not easy to get at their

meaning. In another passage, Zhou Ji also accounts for the general failure to perceive what is subtle and profound in ci poetry, and Zhang Yan is found to be the culprit:

Shuxia (Zhang Yan) was a late-comer to the critics' scene. He was a contemporary of Bishan (Wang Yisun) and moreover differed from Mengchuang in style. Therefore he overestimated Baishi (Jiang Kui) and advocated the poetics of transparency to the exclusion of everything else. In later ages, his views led to an inability to carefully examine complexity and depth in ci poetry.²¹

Zhou Ji's criticism was primarily directed at the detrimental effect the overwhelming popularity of Jiang Kui and Zhang Yan's styles had on critical perspective. The reference to Wu Wenying alludes to the opposition between the poetics of transparency and density postulated by Zhang Yan, which had put Wu in an unfavorable light. The widespread inability to appreciate depth, then, encompasses an inadequate understanding of Wu Wenying's poetry.

Although Zhou Ji's ruminations on allegory have their source in the general context of Changzhou theories, his remarks on specific poets often impress one as highly original and perceptive. Certainly the impartial recognition he gives Wu Wenying in the Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu is without precedent in the Qing. But the comments in the Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu only mark the beginning of Zhou Ji's growing esteem for this somewhat controversial poetic figure. In 1832, almost thirty years after he first came into contact with the critical canons of the Changzhou School, Zhou Ji came out with his own anthology of

Song ci poetry, the Song sijia cixuan. The work stands for Zhou Ji's definitive evaluation of ci poets of the Song. Alongside Zhou Bangyan, Xin Qiji, and Wang Yisun, Wu Wenying is designated as one of the four exemplars of Song ci, under whose leading styles other major Song ci poets are consigned. Zhou Ji begins the preface to the anthology with a brief characterization of these four principal styles:

Qingzhen (Zhou Bangyan) is the great synthesizer of styles. Jiayuan (Xin Qiji) puts in check his heroic ambitions and finds an outlet in lofty tunes; he transforms the delicate mode into an expression of tragic sorrow. Bishan's (Wang Yisun) burdened heart keeps to the principle of speaking about one thing and referring to another; the tone and expression in his poetry can all be traced. Mengchuang's poetry has extraordinary thought and intense beauty; it soars to the heights and plumbs the depths; it turns away from the shallow clarity of the Southern Song and returns to the full richness of the Northern Song.²²

Higher praise than these comments, which captures the essence of what is superlative in Wu Wenying's poetry, would be superfluous if not impossible. If we examine the configuration of the four poets, it still posits the Northern Song style as the ideal of ci poetry and, furthermore, Wu Wenying as the one poet whose style approaches the "richness" of Northern Song ci. The latter point may seem both vague and untenable. But the clue to its logic lies in the choice of Zhou Bangyan as the orthodox model, the supreme master of all times. Zhou Bangyan's stylistic sophistication and refinement embraces much of the mainstream developments in the Northern Song and became the model of inspiration behind much of the Southern Song's concern with

elegance and artistry. The gap is thus not so difficult to bridge between Zhou Bangyan and Wu Wenying. In fact their names had been linked together in the Southern Song, first by Yin Huan (whose remark is judged to be apposite by Zhou Ji), and then by Shen Yifu, who believed that Wu Wenying "had truly obtained the secret" of Zhou Bangyan.²³ Zhou Ji's scheme, while upholding the Northern Song style as ideal, actually comes close to a total affirmation of much Southern Song ci in critical appreciation. In the program he proposes for the aspiring ci poet, Wu Wenying represents an important stage to be reached: "Seek the way of Bishan (Wang Yisun), then go through Jiaxuan (Xin Qiji) and Mengchuang to return to the wholeness of Qingzhen (Zhou Bangyan)."²⁴ If the dictum is considered in conjunction with Zhou Ji's exposition of the four styles, it can be paraphrased as follows: "Begin with imitable good technique, express respectable emotion, fuse the two in an original way, and then you can approach perfection."

Zhou Ji's elevation of Wu Wenying is nothing less than a flat contradiction of Zhang Huiyan's denigration. As a follower of Changzhou tenets, Zhou Ji offers an explanation for the discrepancy: "Gaowen (Zhang Huiyan) dismissed Mengchuang because his vision was circumscribed by the path of Bishan (Wang Yisun);" and elaborates on his own approbation of Wu Wenying: "Mengchuang expresses elevated thought with far-reaching implications. The rest cannot equal him in this respect."²⁵ Presumably, Zhang Huiyan could discern allegorical elements in Wang Yisun's ci, but with Wu Wenying's ci, he could not even put

the pieces together, much less see anything beyond. Zhou Ji, however, is not wholly uncritical towards Wu Wenying, as the reference in the Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu to the difficulty and obscurity in some of Wu's ci already indicated. The present passage also goes on to point out another fault: "But he delights too much in ornamentation, and has thus been criticized for it. Yet, among his works, those which achieve balance between the abstract and the concrete cannot be surpassed even by Qingzhen (Zhou Bangyan)."²⁶ Wu Wenying has always been praised and condemned on the same ground of his figurative density. It took a man of Zhou Ji's critical acumen and poetic sensitivity to elucidate the real strength of Wu Wenying as a poet-his ability to express what really moves him in superb language.

Credit should also be given Ge Zai 戈載 (fl.1821), a contemporary of Zhou Ji, who seems to have independently arrived at a similar view regarding Wu Wenying's ci.²⁷ Ge Zai's special interest in ci is prosody. His anthology of ci, the Song qijia cixuan [Ci by Seven Masters of the Song] which came out in 1837, was compiled to illustrate the elegant sound of ci. The seven poets he selected are, with the exception of Zhou Bangyan, all the noted Southern Song "technical experts." Ge Zai's criteria for inclusion of particular poems are "perfection in structure and meaning and finesse in meter and rhyme."²⁸ Because of the nature of his interest, Ge Zai offers very few literary-critical comments. But he does come to defend Wu Wenying from Zhang Yan's charge:

Mengchuang's ci excels in the subtle and beautiful. The ideas he conveys are profound and his technique in diction and structure is unfathomable and vastly different from the others. On the surface his poems may seem glutted with figurative embellishment, but they are actually animated by an inner force. If one reads and recites them carefully, one will find that their flavour is more exquisite than [Fang]hui's (He Zhu) ci, and be led into a state of enchantment. They can neither be faulted for obscurity nor for artificial ornateness.²⁹

Ge Zai's wholesale rebuttal of Zhang Yan's critique arises in part from his own inordinate fondness for Wu Wenying's ci. He confesses that he has not succeeded in his attempt to model his own ci after Wu Wenying and, since he "loves Wu's ci to the extreme," he has included more selections by him.³⁰

Wu Wenying's position in the hierarchy of ci criticism became firmly established in the mid Qing with the pioneer championship of Zhou Ji and Ge Zai. By illuminating its essential merits, their discerning remarks indicate to the reader what to look for in Wu Wenying's ci, and thus a way to its appreciation. Subsequent critics mostly followed suit with comments that are largely variations on a theme. Wu is discussed on the same level as Zhou Bangyan and Jiang Kui, as a major representative of the subtle and delicate mode in ci. Vagaries in taste still produced differences in grading the relative superiority of the three, and there is a lingering note of circumspection with regard to the potentially negative elements in Wu's style for a learner; but on the whole, Wu is viewed from an extremely positive angle. Major late Qing

critics such as Feng Xu 馮煦 (1843-1927), Chen Tingzhuo 陳廷焯 (1853-92), and Kuang Zhouyi 況周頤 (1859-1926) all made favorable observations about Wu's poetry. Among them, Kuang Zhouyi is an avowed admirer of Wu Wenying's greatness as a poet. One of his remarks is an apt and readily understood metaphoric description of Wu's poetry:

In the dense texture of his poems, Mengchuang can animate countless beautiful words into a lively dance, like the profusion of flowers that create spring.³¹

Criticism, as we have already noted, is but one side of the Qing interest in the ci. Most ci critics were ci poets as well, and the pursuit of an effective model remained an absorbing concern. Many critical remarks written in the late Qing on Wu and other poets were in fact delivered from the perspective of writing ci. With the critical scale tipped so much in favour of Wu Wenying, it is inevitable that his style would be sought after as a desirable model; Ge Zai had already heralded the trend. At the height of its popularity in the late Qing, Wu Wenying's style became the hegemon among models to be imitated. In other words, exit Zhang Yan. Even Jiang Kui at times did not escape from the association with Zhang Yan. In 1876, the critic Tan Xian 譚獻 (1832-1901) recorded in his diary that "recent talks are all centred on the ci poets of the Southern Tang and Northern Song, and on Qingzhen (Zhou Bangyan), Mengchuang and Zhongxian (Wang Yisun); Yutian (Zhang Yan) and Shizhou (Jiang Kui) are regarded as old straw dogs," that is, worthless models to be discarded.³² In 1937, Wu Mei 吳梅 (1884-1939), another

latter-day lover of Wu Wenying's poetry, summarized the extent of Wu's influence, albeit rather hyperbolically: "In our age, people who imitate Mengchuang almost number half the world."³³

Wu Mei's statement, at the time it was made, already belonged to another world in another age. Hu Shi's anthology of ci, the Cixuan, had already been published in 1928, and with it, ci ventured into the domain of modern, post-May Fourth non-ci specialists, whose values and critical standards necessarily represent a break with the past. Hu Shi emphasizes the "historical" perspective, and is typically vocal in his critical judgments. He endorses the popular origin and vernacular aspect of ci and views the generic evolution solely as a degeneration from an "alive" literature of the common people to a "dead" plaything of the literati. Needless to say, Southern Song ci-the "ci of craftsmen"-stands at the bottom of his scale of values.³⁴ With some help from Zhang Yan, Hu Shi categorically denounces Wu Wenying's ci as an incoherent heap of clichés and allusions devoid of any meaning or emotional appeal. He further notes that many recent ci poets have been "poisoned" by it.³⁵ In modified and more moderate fashion, Wu Wenying's ci has been criticized along the same lines by the "moderns."³⁶

Since 1949, the Marxist perspective has emphasized the social dimension of literature in criticism. Ci poets who stand up best under ideological scrutiny are the "progressive" patriotic heroes of the Southern Song, with Xin Qiji in the lead. The lack of proper ideological content and the dominance of aesthetic formalism in Southern Song ci have earned it the

derogatory epithet of "decadent." In anthologies and histories of Chinese literature, Wu Wenying's poetry appears as one of the worst examples of ci in its decline; it shows a decided absence of "content," that is to say, concern with social and political realities.³⁷

Research and critical studies on ci came to a complete halt with the onset of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). For nearly a decade, not a word was written on the subject. Only in the mid seventies did some ci poets reappear in articles dressed up in legalist and patriotic garb.³⁸ Interest in Wu Wenying began in the early years of the present decade, largely stimulated by the 1980 mainland publication of Yeh Chia-ying's 葉嘉瑩 collection of essays on ci, the Jialing lunci congkao, which contains a critical reevaluation of Wu Wenying's ci.³⁹ But even in the latest article (1984) on Wu Wenying, the mainland author still feels a need to defend him on the grounds of "content."⁴⁰

My own study has aimed to show precisely the literary qualities of Wu Wenying's poetry in the context of Southern Song ci; that his poetry is characterized by an extremely metonymic diction, syntactic density, an associative and implied rather than explicit logic in structure, and a unique handling of imagery. In his best works, these diverse elements of his "art" are unified into superb poetic structures that are informed with significant themes. Today in the West, we can perhaps read and enjoy Wu Wenying's poetry with fresh eyes without ignoring the tradition to which it belongs, and at the same time acknowledge

its part in the affirmation of the artistic integrity of literature.

- ¹ Only four works by Ming authors are included in the Cihua congbian, see vols. 1 and 2.
- ² Huacao mengshi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.2), 675.
- ³ Yuanzhizhai cizhong (Cihua congbian ed., vol.2), 647.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Jinsu cihua (Cihua congbian ed., vol.2), 707.
- ⁶ In Cizong, vol.1, 10.
- ⁷ See the third poem under the tune Shui diao ge tou, in Pushuting ci, pp.36-37, in Qing mingjia ci, ed. Chen Naigian, (Hong Kong: Taiping shuju, 1963), vol.3.
- ⁸ See Zhu's preface to Shen Anding's ci collection, Heidiezhai ci, p.1, in Qing mingjia ci, vol.4. Zhu does not elaborate on how the poetry of these ten poets represent different aspects of Jiang Kui's style. The sentence is repeated by Wang Sen, the co-compiler of the Cizong, in the preface he wrote to the anthology; see Cizong, Vol.1, p.1.
- ⁹ See Zhu's preface to Cao Rong's ci collection, the Jingtutang ci, p.1, in Qing mingjia ci, vol.1.

- ¹⁰ Zhu did include a good number of Wu Wenying's ci (45) in the Cizong, see j.19.
- ¹¹ Zhu Yizun and his followers who took Jiang Kui and Zhang Yan as models represent the Zhexi School. Poets who wrote in the haofang style were collectively known as the Yangxian School. Each school was named after the region to which most of its members belonged. Chen Weisong was the leading poet writing in the haofang style.
- ¹² For a detailed study of the critical theory and practice of the Changzhou school, see Chia-ying Yeh Chao, "The Ch'ang-chou School of Tz'u Criticism," HJAS, 35 (1975), 101-32. A revised version of this article appears in Chinese Approaches to Literature, ed. Adele A. Rickett, pp.151-88. See also Wu Hongyi, Changzhou pai cixue yanjiu (Taipei: Jiaxin shuini gongsi wenhua jijinhui, 1970).
- ¹³ It is commonly noted that Zhang Huiyan's training as a classicist influenced his approach to ci. Zhang provides allegorical interpretation for 40 of the 116 ci in the Cixuan.
- ¹⁴ On Wang Yisun's yongwu ci, see Chia-ying Yeh Chao, "On Wang I-sun and His Yung-wu Tz'u," HJAS, 40, No.1 (1980), 55-91.
- ¹⁵ Zhang Huiyan, Cixuan (1797; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju,

1957), p.8.

¹⁶ See Zhou Ji's preface to the Cibian in Tanping Cibian Song sijia cixuan (Taipei: Guangwen shuju, 1962).

¹⁷ Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu (Cihua congbian ed., vol.5), 1629.

¹⁸ Cf. Chia-ying Yeh Chao's discussion in "The Ch'ang-chou School," pp.126-32.

¹⁹ See Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu (Cihua congbian ed., vol.5), 1624; and the preface to Song sijia cixuan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.5), 1630.

²⁰ Jiecunzhai lunci zazhu (Cihua congbian ed., vol.5), 1626.

²¹ Ibid., 1623.

²² Preface to Song sijia cixuan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.5), 1630.

²³ Yuefu zhimi (Cihua congbian ed., vol.1), 230.

²⁴ Preface to Song sijia cixuan (Cihua congbian ed., vol.5), 1630.

²⁵ Ibid., 1633.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ge Zai moved in a different circle and there is no indication of interaction with the Changzhou group. See He Guangzhong, Lun Qing ci, in Lidai shishi changbian, ed. Yang Jialuo (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1971), vol.23, 20-21.

²⁸ "Song qijia cixuan tici," 1a, in Song qijia cixuan (Hong Kong: Wenchang shuju, n.d.)

²⁹ Ibid., j.4/38ab.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Huifeng cihua (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1961), p.47.

³² Futang cihua (Cihua congbian ed., vol.11), 4025. Until this century, "Shizhou" 石帚 was taken to be one of Jiang Kui's style names. The cause for this mistaken identity comes from a number of poems in Wu Wenying's collection addressed to a person by the name of Jiang Shizhou. Xia Chengtao has proven that Jiang Kui and Jiang Shizhou were in fact two different people; see Jiang Baishi ci biannian jianjiao (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1958), pp.283-86.

³³ In his preface to Cai Songyun's Yuefu zhimi jianshi, in Xia Chengtao and Cai Songyun, Ciyuan zhu Yuefu zhimi jianshi,

p.92.

³⁴ Hu Shi, Cixuan (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1928), pp.5-11.

³⁵ Ibid., p.343.

³⁶ See for example, Hu Yunyi, Songci yanjiu (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1926), pp.176-79; and Zheng Zhentuo, Chatuben Zhongguo wenxueshi (1932; rpt. Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1961), vol.3, p.589.

³⁷ See Hu Yunyi, more than thirty years later, in Songci xuan (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), pp.361-62. The emphasis on "content" is clearly stated in the introduction. We have already referred to Liu Dajie's view in his Zhongguo wenxue fadashi in Ch. 2.

³⁸ Xin Qiji is the all time patriot. Chen Liang (1143-94) is not noted for his ci; but the utilitarian bent in his prose writings made him into a "legalist" whose ci was worth discussing. See articles listed in Cixue yanjiu lunwenji: 1949-1979 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982), pp.535-36.

³⁹ It contains the original Chinese version of Chia-ying Yeh Chao, "Wu Wen-ying's Tz'u."

⁴⁰ Chen Bangyan, "Du Mengchuang ci qianyi," Wenxue yichan, No.1
(1984), 84-92.

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APPENDIX A - CHINESE TEXTS OF CI POEMS

p. 45

浪影龜紋皺。離平煙、青紅半溼，枕溪窗牖。千尺
晴霞慵臥水，萬疊羅屏擁繡。漫幾度、吳船回首。
歸雁五湖應不到，問蒼茫、釣雪人知否。樵唱杳，
度深秀。重來趁得花時候。記留連、空山夜雨，
短亭春酒。桃李新栽成蹊處，盡是行人去後。但
東閣、官梅清瘦。欸乃一聲山水綠，燕無言、風定
垂簾畫。寒正悄，顰吟袖。

又 爲德清趙令君賦小垂虹

pp. 15-16

澹雲籠月微黃，柳絲淺色東風緊。夜寒舊事，春期
新恨，眉山碧遠。塵陌飄香，繡簾垂戶，趁時妝面。
鈿車催去急，珠璣袖冷，愁如海、情一線。猶記
初來吳苑。未清霜、飛驚雙鬢。嬉遊是處，風光無
際，舞愁歌倦。陳迹征衫，老容華鏡，歡悵都盡。向
殘燈夢短，梅花曉角，爲誰吟怨。

又 癸卯元夕

p. 18

十年心事上眉端。夢驚殘。瑣窗寒。雲絮隨風，
千里度關山。琴裏知音無覓處，妝粉淡，釧金寬。
瑤箱吟卷懶重看。憶前歡。淚偷彈。我已相將，
飛棹過長安。爲說摧微憔悴損，須覓取，錦箋還。

江神子 贈妓寄夢應

pp. 54-55

千古江山，英雄無覓，孫仲謀處。舞榭歌臺，風流
總被，雨打風吹去。斜陽草樹，尋常巷陌，人道寄
奴曾住。想當年，金戈鐵馬，氣吞萬里如虎。元
嘉草草，封狼居胥，贏得倉皇北顧。四十三年，望
中猶記，烽火揚州路。可堪回首，佛狸祠下，一片
神鴉社鼓。憑誰問，廉頗老矣，尙能飯否。

永遇樂 京口北固亭懷古

pp.60-61

苦枝綴玉。有翠禽小小，枝上同宿。客裏相逢，離
角黃昏，無言自倚修竹。昭君不慣胡沙遠，但暗憶、
江南江北。想佩環、月夜歸來，化作此花幽獨。
猶記深宮舊事，那人正睡裏，飛近蛾綠。莫似春風，
不管盈盈，早與安排金屋。還教一片隨波去，又卻
怨、玉龍哀曲。等恁時、重覓幽香，已入小窗橫幅。

疏影

p.87

亂紅飛已無多，豔游終是如今少。一番雨過，一番
春減，催人漸老。倚檻調鶯，卷簾收燕，故園空杳。
奈關愁不住，悠悠萬里，渾恰似、天涯草。不擬
相逢古道。纔疑夢、又還驚覺。清風在柳，江搖白
浪，舟行趁曉。遮莫重來，不如休去，怎堪懷抱。
那知又、五柳門荒，曾聽得、鶯啼了。

水龍吟 春晚留別故人

pp.129-30

好睡慵開莫厭遲。自憐冰臉不時宜。偶作小紅桃
杏色，開雅，尚餘孤瘦雪霜姿。休把閒心隨物
態，何事，酒生微暈沁瑤肌。詩老不知梅格在，吟
詠，更看綠葉與青枝。

又 詠紅梅

pp.133-34

又 友人以梅、蘭、瑞香、水仙供客，日四香，分韻得風字
雲深山隔，煙冷江皋，人生未易相逢。一笑燈前，
釵行兩兩春容。清芳夜爭真態，引生香、掠亂東
風。探花手，與安排金屋，懊惱司空。憔悴敲煙
委佩，恨玉奴銷瘦，飛趁輕鴻。試問知心，尊前誰
最情濃。連呼紫雲伴醉，小丁香、纔吐微紅。還解
語，待攜歸、行雨夢中。

pp.137-38

杏花天 詠梅
蠻薑豆蔻相思味。算卻在、春風舌底。江清愛與
消殘醉。悴憔文園病起。停嘶騎、歌眉送意。記
曉色、東城夢裏。紫檀暈淺香波細。腸斷垂楊小
市。

pp.138-39

踏莎行 詠湯

瑤草收香，琪花采采。冰輪碾處芳塵動。竹鐺湯
暖火初紅，玉纖調罷歌聲送。磨去茶經，裏藏酒
頰。一杯清味佳賓共。從來采藥得長生，藍橋休
被瓊漿弄。

p.141

瑣窗寒 無射商，俗名越調，犯中呂宮，又犯正宮 玉關
絳縷堆雲，清顯潤玉，汜人初見。蠻腥未洗，海客
一懷悽惋。渺征槎、去乘間風，占香上國幽心展。
□遺芳掩色，真姿澹澹，返魂騷晚。一盼。千金
換。又笑伴鵲夷，共歸吳苑。離煙恨水，夢香南天
秋晚。比來時、瘦肌更銷，冷薰沁骨悲鄉遠。最傷
情、送客咸陽，佩結西風怨。

p.150

霜葉飛 黃鐘商 京九

斷煙離緒。關心事，斜陽紅隱霜樹。半盞秋水薦
黃花，香噀西風雨。縱玉勒、輕飛迅羽。淒涼誰弔荒
臺古。記醉踏南屏，綠扇咽、寒蟬倦夢，不知鬢素。
聊對舊節傳杯，塵牋蠹管，斷闌經歲慵賦。小蟾
斜影轉東籬，夜冷殘蛩語。早白髮、綠愁萬縷。驚
飄從捲烏紗去。漫細將、茱萸看，但約明年，翠微
高處。

pp.152-53

聽風聽雨過清明。愁草瘞花銘。樓前綠暗分攜路，
一絲柳、一寸柔情。料峭春寒中酒，交加曉夢啼
鶯。西園日日掃林亭。依舊賞新晴。黃蜂頻撲
鞦韆索，有當時、纖手香凝。惆悵雙鴛不到，幽階
一夜苔生。

pp.155-57

殘寒正欺病酒，掩沈香繡戶。燕來晚、飛入西城，似說春事遲暮。畫船載、清明過卻，晴煙冉冉吳宮樹。念綢情遊蕩，隨風化為輕絮。十載西湖，傍柳繫馬，趁嬌塵軟霧。迴紅漸、招入仙溪，錦兒偷寄幽素。倚銀屏、春寬夢窄，斷紅溼、歌紈金縷。隕隕空、輕把斜陽，總還鷗鷺。幽蘭旋老，杜若還生，水鄉尚寄旅。別後訪、六橋無信，事往花委，瘞玉埋香，幾番風雨。長波妒盼，遙山羞黛，漁燈分影春江宿。記當時、短楫桃根渡。青樓彷彿，臨分敗壁題詩，淚墨慘澹塵土。危亭望極，草色天涯，歎鬢侵半苧。暗點檢、離痕歡唾，尚染鮫綃，彈鳳迷歸，破愁滿舞。殷勤待寫，書中長恨，藍霞遶海沈過雁，漫相思、彈入哀絳柱。傷心千里江南，怨曲重招，斷魂在否。

p.160

門隔花深夢舊遊。夕陽無語燕歸愁。玉纖香動小簾鉤。落絮無聲春墮淚，行雲有影月含羞。東風臨夜冷於秋。

pp.163-64

又 甲辰歲暮門外寓居過重午
結束蕭仙，嘯梁鬼，依還未滅。荒城外、無聊閒看，野煙一抹。梅子未黃愁夜雨，榴花不見睍秋雪。又重羅、紅字寫香詞，年時節。簾底事，憑燕說。合歡縷，雙條脫。自香消紅臂，舊情都別。湘水離魂菰葉怨，揚州無夢銅華闕。倩臥簫、吹裂晚天雲，看新月。

p.168

鳳樓梧 甲辰七夕

開過南枝花滿院。新月西樓，相約同針線。高樹數聲蟬送晚。歸家夢向斜陽斷。夜色銀河情一片。輕帳偷歡，銀燭羅屏怨。陳迹曉風吹雲散。簾鉤空帶蛛絲捲。

pp.170-71

睡輕時聞，晚鵲噪庭樹。又說今夕天津，西畔重歡
遇。蛛絲暗鎖紅樓，燕子穿簾處。天上、未比人間
更情苦。秋蟬改，妒月姊、長眉嫵。過雨西風，數
葉井梧愁舞。夢入藍橋，幾點疏星映朱戶。淚溼
沙邊凝竚。

又 七夕

pp.172-73

芙蓉心上三更露，茸香漱泉玉井。自洗銀舟，徐開
素酌，月落空杯無影。庭陰未暝。度一曲新蟬，韻
秋堪聽。瘦骨侵冰，怕驚紋竄夜深冷。當時湖上
載酒，翠雲開處共，雪面波鏡。萬感瓊漿，千莖
雪，極領藍橋花徑。留連暮景。但偷覓孤歡，強寬
秋興。醉倚修篁，晚風吹半醒。

又 白酒自酌有感

pp.174-75

蘭舟高揭浪波涼。愁被矮橋妨。暮煙疏雨西園路，
誤秋娘、淺約宮黃。還泊郵亭喚酒，舊曾送客斜
陽。蟬聲空曳別枝長。似曲不成商。御羅屏底
翻歌扇，憶西湖、臨水開窗。和醉重尋幽夢，殘衾
已斷熏香。

又 桂

p.183

飛蓋西園，晚秋卻勝春天氣。霜花開盡錦屏空，紅
葉新裝綴。時放清杯汎水。暗淒涼、東風舊事。夜
吟不絕，松影闌干，月籠寒翠。莫唱陽關，但憑絲
袖歌千歲。秋星入夢隔明朝，十載吳宮會。一棹
回潮度葉。正西窗、燈花報喜。柳邊櫻紫，試酒爭
憐，不教不醉。

又 錢酒深居，羣日，其初度

p.183-84

歸分袖。腸斷去水流萍，住船繫柳。吳宮嬌月嬌花，醉題恨倚，蠻江豆蔻。吐春繡。筆底麗情多少，眼波眉岫。新園鎖卻愁陰，露黃漫委，寒香半畝。還背垂虹秋去，四橋煙雨，一宵歌酒。猶憶翠微攜壺，烏帽風驟。西湖到日，重見梅鉤鉞。誰家聽、琵琶未了，朝暉嘶漏。印剖黃金鑄。待來共凭，齊雲話舊。莫唱朱櫻口。生怕遺、樓前行雲知後。淚鴻怨角，空教人瘦。

又 送梅津

pp.185-86

送秋雲萬里，算舒捲、總何心。歎路轉羊腸，人營燕壘，霜滿蓬簷。愁侵。庾塵滿袖，便封侯、那羨漢淮陰。一醉尊前，忍教菊老松深。離音。又聽西風，金井樹、動秋吟。向暮江目斷，鴻飛渺渺，天色沈沈。沾襟。四枝夜語，問楊瓊、往事到寒砧。爭似湖山歲晚，靜梅香底同斟。

又 送翁五峯還江陵

pp.190-91

渺空煙四遠，是何年、青天墜長星。幻蒼崖雲樹，名娃金屋，殘霸宮城。箭徑酸風射眼，膩水染花腥。時艤雙鴛，廊葉秋聲。宮裏吳王沈醉，倩五湖倦客，獨釣醒醒。問蒼波無語，華髮奈山青。水涵空、闌干高處，送亂鴉、斜日落漁汀。連呼酒，上琴臺去，秋與雲平。

八聲甘州 陪廣希諸公遊靈巖

pp.191-93

木蘭花慢 虎丘陪介壽遊。時魏益齋已被親掇，陳芬寫，李方庵皆將滿秩。紫駟嘶涼草，曉雲鎖、岫眉顰。正蕙雪初銷，松腰玉瘦，憔悴真真。輕裘漸穿險磴，步荒苔、猶認瘳花痕。千古興亡舊恨，半丘殘日孤雲。開尊。重弔吳魂。嵐翠冷、洗微醺。問幾曾夜宿，月明起看，劍水星紋。登臨總成去客，更軟紅、先有探芳人。回首滄波故苑，落梅煙雨黃昏。

木蘭花慢

虎丘陪介壽遊

時魏益齋已被親掇，陳芬

pp.197-98

喬木生雲氣。訪中興、英雄陳迹，暗追前事。戰艦東風慳借便，夢斷神州故里。旋小築、吳宮閒地。華表月明歸夜鶴，歎當時、花竹今如此。枝上露，凝清淚。

遊頭小簇行春隊。步蒼苔、尋幽別陽，問梅開未。重唱梅邊新度曲，催發寒梢凍蕊。此心與、東君同意。後不如今非昔，兩無言、相對滄浪水。懷此恨，寄殘醉。

金樓歌 陪履齋先生浴浪看梅

pp.201-02

又 過橫山 卽越文種墓

帆落迴湖，人歸故國，山椒感概重遊。弓折霜寒，機心已墮沙鷗。燈前寶劍清風斷，正五湖、雨笠扁舟。最無情，巖上閒花，腥染春愁。當時白石蒼松路，解勒回玉輦，霧掩山羞。木客歌闌，青春一夢荒丘。年年古苑西風到，雁怨啼、綠水蘋秋。莫登臨，幾樹殘煙，西北高樓。

pp.208-09

高陽臺 豐樂樓分韻得如字

修竹凝妝，垂楊駐馬，憑闌淺畫成圖。山色誰題，樓前有雁斜書。東風緊送斜陽下，弄舊寒、晚酒醒餘。自銷凝，能幾花前，頓老相如。傷春不在高樓上，在燈前鼓枕，雨外熏鑪。怕艤遊船，臨流可奈清臞。飛紅若到西湖底，攪翠瀾、總是愁魚。莫重來，吹盡香絲，淚滿平蕪。

pp.211-212

又 齊雲樓

凌朝一片陽臺影，飛來太空不去。棟與參橫，簾鉤斗曲，西北城高幾許。天聲似語。便四閣輕排，虹河平迤。問幾陰晴，霜吳平地漫今古。西山橫黛瞰碧，眼明應不到，煙際沈沈。臥笛長吟，層甍乍裂，寒月溟濛千里。憑虛醉舞。夢凝白闌干，化為飛霧。淨洗青紅，驟飛滄海雨。