The Society of Song, Yuan, and Conquest Dynasty Studies appreciates the generous contributions of Frank Wang and Laura Young, through the Wang Family Foundation. Through their support the Society has been able to make electronic copy of the initial volumes of the Sung Studies Newsletter and the Journal of Song Yuan Studies available in the public domain.

Please Note: Because this newsletter was converted to a text-searchable format rather than scanned as a series of graphics images of the pages, it is not identical to the originally published version. The formatting has been corrected to reflect the page breaks in the original newsletter. As a result, pages may end abruptly in the middle (or even beginning) of a line. Moreover, the initial scanning converted characters to their simplified form. They have been restored to the traditional form, but some errors may have been introduced in the process.
SUNG STUDIES NEWSLETTER

Number Seven March 1973
Edited by
Edmund H. Worthy

Contents

Article:
Mei Yao-ch’en (1002-1060) and Sung Poetic Theory
Jonathan Chaves ........................................... 1

News of the Field .................................................. 26

Brief Introduction to the Index for Sung Biographical Materials
Wang Teh-i ...................................................... 30

Publishing and Book News:
Hong Kong ....................................................... 32
Japan .................................................................. 34
Taiwan .............................................................. 37
Europe .............................................................. 39

Thesis Registry:
Resumes of Recently Completed Dissertations .................. 41

Bibliography of Chinese Articles on Sung Studies Published in 1972
Ku Jui-lan ......................................................... 44

Bibliography of Recent Japanese Scholarship ...................... 51

SUNG STUDIES NEWSLETTER
Edmund H. Worthy, Editor

The Sung Studies Newsletter commenced publication in May 1970, with the assistance of a small grant from the American Council of Learned Societies. It is published twice a year, usually in March and October. The purpose of the Newsletter is to disseminate news and information to an international community of interested scholars and institutions and to print reports and articles about Sung studies, which is defined to encompass the Sung, Liao, and Chin dynasties as well as the late Five Dynasties and early Yuan periods.

News of personal or project activities, resumes of theses, book notices, bibliographies, reports about research projects, and articles of any length, which can either be finished pieces of scholarship or be of a tentative or speculative nature presenting or testing the preliminary results of research in progress, will be accepted and published in any language of scholarship. Contributions are welcomed and indeed encouraged.

Signed items in the Newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the editor; responsibility for opinions expressed and for accuracy of facts in these signed notices, reports, or articles rests solely with individual authors.

Annual subscription rates for individuals are: Charter, US$5.00, for those who wish to contribute extra support to the Newsletter; Regular, $4.00, which is the normal subscription fee; and Sustaining, $2.00, for students and others unable to meet high U. S. costs. The rate for libraries and institutions is US$4.00 per year. Individual issues are available at $2.00 each. Subscriptions are payable January 1 of every year. Checks or money orders should be sent to the editor and made payable to: Sung Studies Newsletter.

Address all correspondence, items for publication, and subscription orders to the editor at:
New Asia College
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Shatin, N.T.
Hong Kong.

ISSN 0049-254X
Recent years have seen a growing interest in the accomplishments of the Sung Dynasty. In the area of literature, more and more attention is being paid to the Sung shih poems, and it is being realized that the poetic beauties of the period were by no means limited to the lyric, or ts’u poems. In such a context, an examination of the roots of Sung literary theory is certainly in order.

The primary tone of much Sung poetry is one of understatement, and the circle of Su Tung-P’o (1037 - 1101) gave the new mode its most important expression. For this reason, Mei Yao-ch’en’s ideas on poetry are examined here in detail, because they may well have represented the first conscious expression of the new attitude, and because Mei appears to have influenced Su to a considerable degree. Particular emphasis is placed on Mei’s ideal of ping-tan, which might in fact be translated “understatement.”

Few Chinese poets set down their views on the nature of poetry in systematic, logically structured monographs. Mei Yao-ch’en is no exception. We must therefore depend on a few scattered lines in Mei’s poems and on a handful of quotations from Mei in the Liu-i shih-hua, forming some idea of his poetic theory. A small book on poetry entitled Hsü chin-chen shih-ko has been widely considered to be a work of Mei’s does exist, but Kakehi Fumio is certainly correct in his suggestion that it is a forgery. The book opens with a preface which relates how a Buddhist monk praised the poetry of Po Chü-i to Mei, and showed him a copy of Po’s Chin-chen shih-ko poems. Mei was impressed by this work and decided to write a continuation to expand on Po’s. The text presents various tersely stated poetic principles, illustrating them with couplets and some chüeh-chü poems by mostly unidentified authors. Among the poets who are named are Chia Tao 賈島 (c.793 - c.865), Li Po 李白 (c.701 - c.762), and Chou P’u 周樸 (d. 878), a late T’ang poet. The lines quoted are given rather forced symbolic or allegoric interpretations. For example, the couplet, “The sun has risen ten feet above the mountain; / The wind has blown many plants into blossom,” is interpreted to mean that “a wise lord has put the state in order; his instruction and statutes have been issued, and the common men are all content in their places.”

The text also give a number of illustrations for the Eight Defects enumerated by Shen Yüeh (441 - 513), as well as other categories such as the Five Principles, the Three Styles, the Seven Don’ts, and the Eight Modes. Few of the statements made in the work could possibly be construed as characteristic of Mei’s views. One of the Five Principles is said to be “protest” and is illustrated by this couplet from The Widow in the Mountains by Tu Hsün-ho 杜荀鹤 (846 - 904): “Even though the mulberries have been abandoned, they still impose taxes./ The fields and gardens have gone to weed, but they keep collecting tax-sprouts.” According to the author of the text, this couplet “protests the government’s cruel exaction of heavy taxes.” It is possible to see in this example a reflection of the important role played by protest poetry in Mei’s work. Elsewhere in the text, the “upper, middle, and lower” types of poetry are described. The middle type is said to be “bland and yet flavorful,” and is illustrated by the lines, “Leisurely I lean on a Great Lake rock,/ Drunkenly listening to the Tung-t’ing autumn,” a perfectly parallel Late T’ang couplet of the kind later critics were to associate with the “even and bland” (ping-tan) style, as shall be shown later in this paper. Aside from these two examples, nothing in the Hsü chin-chen shih-ko is particularly representative of Mei’s ideas.

The most extensive extant statement on poetry by Mei Yao-ch’en is recorded in Ou-yang Hsiu’s Liu-i shih-hua. As this passage is of great importance, it will be quoted here in full. The first part of the translation (until the Chia Tao couplet is introduced) is partly based on that of Burton Watson. Sheng-yü (Mei Yao-ch’en) once said to me, “Though the poet may emphasize meaning, it is also difficult to choose the proper diction. If he manages to use words with a fresh skill and to achieve some effect that no one has ever achieved, then he may consider that he has done well. He must be able to depict a scene that is difficult to describe, in such a way that it seems to be right before the eyes of the reader, and to express inexhaustible meaning which exists beyond the words themselves—only then can he be regarded as great.” Chia Tao has written, ‘I gather mountain fruits with a bamboo basket,/ Carry water from rocky streams in a clay jar.’ Yao Ho 姚合 (c.831) has written, ‘My horse follows the mountain deer, running free;/ My chickens fly to perch with the wild birds.’ Both these couplets describe lonely, out-of-the-way mountain towns where there is little official business. But neither is as skillful as, ‘The district is ancient; locust roots protrude. / The official is virtuous; the horse’s bones just out.’ I (i.e., Ou-yang Hsiu) said, ‘These are indeed examples of skill-
ful diction. But what poems illustrate ‘depicting a scene that is difficult to describe,’ and ‘expressing inexhaustible meaning’?"

Sheng-yü replied, “The author must get it in his mind; the reader must comprehend his meaning. Examples of this kind are hard to enumerate. I can, however, give a general idea of what I mean. Consider these lines by Yen Wei (c.756): ‘By the willow bank, spring waters are wide; On the flowerbeds, evening sunset lingers.’ Are not the atmosphere and the seasonal landscape—warmed by lam-bent sunlight—depicted here in such a way that they seem to be right before the eyes of the reader? Again, in this couplet of Wen T’ing-yün (c.859): ‘A cock crows—moon above the thatch-roofed shop; Footprints in the frost on the wood-plank bridge,’ and in his one of Chia Tao; ‘Strange birds screech in the vast plains; the traveler is frightened in the setting sun,’ are not the hardships of the road and the sad thoughts of a traveler expressed in such a way that they are felt beyond the words themselves?”

This important passage opens with a statement which might have been intended as a retort to the attitude expressed in the following dictum by Liu Pin (1022 - 1088), who knew Mei: ‘In poetry it is the meaning which is paramount. Diction is of secondary importance. A poem whose meaning is profound and whose purport is exalted is naturally a masterpiece, even though its diction may be facile.’ Mei protests that attention must also be paid to diction. He then presents his criteria for outstanding poetry: it must be new, in the sense that it says things which have never been said before; it must be accurate and evocative in its descriptive passages; and it must be able to conjure up a desired mood that transcends or encompasses the actual words of the poem. Mei illustrates his views with three couplets describing the leisurely life of an official in an obscure district. The third, which I have not been able to identify, is declared to be superior to the Chia Tao and Yao Ho examples, possibly because the locust roots and the horse with jutting bones are felt to represent or symbolize the ancient district and the leisureed official respectively, while at the same time they are sensuously experienced as actual images. But this does not necessarily mean that Mei is rejecting the Late T’ang couplet. He quotes three more—one by Chia Tao, one by Yen Wei, and one by Wen T’ing-yün—with approval as further illustrations at the request of Ou-yang Hsiu.

The poets of the Late T’ang school, concerned as they were with the creation of charming, evocative landscapes, would have accepted Mei’s concept of “depicting a scene that is difficult to describe in such a way that it seems to be right before the eyes of the reader.” In fact, the words “difficult to describe” appear in a poem on river scenery by Lin Pu (967 - 1028), one of the chief Sung poets who wrote in the Late T’ang style.

Hidden poetic scenes strike my eyes; I know they will be difficult to describe.

This concept did not originate with the Late T’ang school, but was first expressed by Lu Chi (261 - 303) in his Prosepoem on Literature (in the translation of Burton Watson): 15

15

Topsy-turvy and fleeting,
shapes are hard to delineate.

The concept of “inexhaustible meaning which exists beyond the words themselves” is also not entirely original. It is implicit, for example, in this famous passage from Chuang Tzu (the translation of Burton Watson): 16

The fish trap exists because of the fish; once you’ve gotten the fish, you can forget the trap.... Words exist because of meaning; once you’ve gotten the meaning, you can forget the words. Where can I find a man who has forgotten words so I can have a word with him?

Chu Tung-jun (1022 - 1088), who knew Mei: “In poetry it is the meaning which is paramount. Diction is of secondary importance. A poem whose meaning is profound and whose purport is exalted is naturally a masterpiece, even though its diction may be facile.” Mei protests that attention must also be paid to diction. He then presents his criteria for outstanding poetry: it must be new, in the sense that it says things which have never been said before; it must be accurate and evocative in its descriptive passages; and it must be able to conjure up a desired mood that transcends or encompasses the actual words of the poem. Mei illustrates his views with three couplets describing the leisurely life of an official in an obscure district. The third, which I have not been able to identify, is declared to be superior to the Chia Tao and Yao Ho examples, possibly because the locust roots and the horse with jutting bones are felt to represent or symbolize the ancient district and the leisureed official respectively, while at the same time they are sensuously experienced as actual images. But this does not necessarily mean that Mei is rejecting the Late T’ang couplet. He quotes three more—one by Chia Tao, one by Yen Wei, and one by Wen T’ing-yün—with approval as further illustrations at the request of Ou-yang Hsiu.

The poets of the Late T’ang school, concerned as they were with the creation of charming, evocative landscapes, would have accepted Mei’s concept of “depicting a scene that is difficult to describe in such a way that it seems to be right before the eyes of the reader.” In fact, the words “difficult to describe” appear in a poem on river scenery by Lin Pu (967 - 1028), one of the chief Sung poets who wrote in the Late T’ang style.

While Mei Yao-ch’en might certainly have derived from such ideas as the concept of an ineffable essence in poetry that lies beyond one’s immediate impressions, his own criterion of “inexhaustible meaning which exists beyond the words themselves” rejects the metaphoric props of which Chinese critics are so enamored, and makes its point in a straightforward manner.

While not without adumbration in earlier critical writings, Mei’s two dicta entered the repertoire of critical formulae almost immediately in the form given them by Mei, although interpretations of their meaning sometimes differed. Ssu-ma Kuang, for example, states that “when the ancients wrote poetry, they prized ‘meaning which exists beyond the words themselves.’” As an example of such poetry, he quotes Tu Fu’s
This latter association recurs in a poem probably dating from 19. Commenting on the first two couplets of the poem, he says, “From ‘mountains and rivers remain’ we realize that nothing else remains; from ‘grasses and trees are thick,’ we realize that there are no people. In ordinary times, flowers and birds are enjoyable things, but from the fact that when the poet sees the former he weeps, and when he hears the latter he grieves, the nature of the times can be known.” That is, for Su-ma Kuang “meaning which exists beyond the words” implies a poetics of suggestiveness and oblique expression.

Ko Li-fang (d. 1164) gives couplets by Mei himself to illustrate the two dicta. After quoting a slightly abbreviated version of Mei’s statement, duly noting it to be by “Mei Sheng-yü,” Ko continues,

This is a truly famous statement. Consider his (i.e., Mei’s) Seeing Off Mr. Su of the Ministry of Finance to Become Vice-Prefect of Hung-chou. which says, “Sand birds dip as I watch them fly toward me; Cloudy mountains: I love how they seem to move in the background!” And his Seeing Off Chang Tzu-yeh to Take Up an Official Post at Cheng-chou, which says, “Autumn rains stir up waters by the embankment; High winds blow off the leaves of the temple wu-tung trees.” His Seeing Off the Assistant in the Department of the Imperial Wardrobe Ma to Become Vice-Prefect of Mi-chou says, “Your high sail sets off on the Huai; Ancient trees are autumnal by the seaside.” And his Echoing a Poem Sent to Me by the Collator of Texts, Ch’en, Following His Rhymes says, “How many years passed on the River’s waters; No longer a youthful face in the mirror!” These are examples of “expressing inexhaustible meaning.”

The first two examples given by Ko are quite clearly couplets, which depict natural scenes in the Late T’ang manner as indeed were the lines quoted by Mei himself in his original statement. Why the last two examples are felt by Ko to “express inexhaustible meaning” is not immediately apparent.

Occasional passages in Mei’s poetry, though they are few and far between, can be used to determine his poetic ideals. The term which occurs with the greatest frequency in these passages is Ping-tan (or 淡) rendered here literally as “even and bland.” Mei wrote of Lin Pu, for example, “when he was in harmony with things, enjoying his feelings, he would write poems which were even and bland, profound and beautiful. Reading them made one forget the hundred affairs. The words achieved the ultimate in calm and correctness, and did not stress satire and protest. Thus I realized that his taste was comprehensive and far-reaching, and that he was simply expressing his happiness through poetry.” Other passages make it quite clear that “even and bland” was Mei’s highest poetic ideal. In one of his poems to Yen Shu 喻職 (991 - 1055), written in 1046, he says, “I write poems about that which is in harmony with my feelings and nature, trying as best I can to achieve the ‘even and bland.’ My rough diction is not rounded or smoothed, but sticks in the mouth more harshly than water-chestnut or prickly water-lily.” Mei goes on to express discouragement at his inability to perform the great task of carrying on the tradition of the Book of Odes 詩經. The first part of this passage is reminiscent of Mei’s characterization of Lin Pu, who wrote “even and bland” poetry “when he was in harmony with things.” It is of considerable interest that the even and bland style is associated here with “rough diction” and with the orthodox Confucian poetic tradition of the Book of Odes. This latter association recurs in a poem probably dating from 1055, in which Mei expresses his own admiration, and that of his friend Tu T’ing-chih 杜挺之, for the poetry of Shao Pi 邵必 (tzu Pu-i 不疑). In the course of this poem, Mei asserts that “In writing poetry, no matter whether past or present, it is only achieving the ‘even and bland’ that is difficult.” It will be shown later in this paper that the phrase “achieving the ‘even and bland’” had already been used by at least three T’ang writers. But none of them gave it the prominence, which it has in this passage. In the same poem, Mei rejoices that the tradition of the Book of Odes has not ended. Shao Pi’s poems are like pearls falling in a plate, or like moonlight, suffusing his pillow and mat with cold. Tu T’ing-chih shares Mei’s enthusiasm, and feels that the poems are worthy of Li Po, Tu Fu, or Han Yu, He and Mei declare their intention of clutching spear and halberd, and fighting to the death at the “altar of generals.”

According to Ou-yang Hsiu, At first he (Mei) liked to write poetry which was fresh and beautiful, relaxed and free, even and bland. After a long time, it became deeply imbued with a profound, detached quality. Sometimes he carefully worked his poems to obtain strange and skillful effects. But the spirit was complete and the strength ample, so his poetry became more and more forceful as he grew older.

This passage seems to suggest that the even and bland style was more characteristic of Mei’s earlier poetry than of his later. However, it would appear that precisely the opposite was the case, if the actual occurrence of the term “even and bland” in Mei’s works provides an accurate means to date his interest in the style. As Kakehi has noted, the term “even and bland” appears very frequently in the poetry of 1045/46, and then consistently thereafter, as in the Lin Pu preface of 1053 and in the poem on Shao Pi’s poetry of 1056. On the other hand, I am aware of only one relatively early occurrence of the term. In a poem which probably dates from 1037, Mei praises a poem by a friend of his on the Ch’i Mountain Temple 齊山寺. The previous poets who wrote on this subject can be number.

5

6
-ed, Mei says, but now the scenes of Ch'i Mountain will be recorded in “beautiful lines” with “diction and rhymes” that are “difficult and outstanding,” surpassing those written in the past by Tu Mu 杜牧 (803 - 852). And, Mei continues, the poem in question is characterized by an “even and bland” manner, “like ancient music.”

Aside from this one early example, the use of the term p'ing-tan appears to be limited to Mei's middle and late years. These were also the periods when Mei was most interested in T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛, and he associated T'ao with the p'ing-tan manner, as in a poem of 1045.

Poetry is basically stating one's feelings; There's no need to shout them out loud! When you realize that the poem should be even and bland, You'll devote yourself to Yüan-ming morning and evening.

In the following year, describing the poetry of Chiang Hsiu-fu 江休複 (1005 - 1060), Mei wrote, “You have sent from far away your 'even and bland' words.” Mei's pupil Han Wei 韓維 (1017-1098) was of the opinion that “many of Chiang's poems are in the manner of T'ao Ch'ien.”

The question which obviously presents itself is the extent of Mei's originality in placing such emphasis on the p'ing-tan concept. Writers on the subject appear to agree that the earliest use of p'ing-tan as a term of literary criticism occurs in the Shih p'in 詩品 of Chung Hung 鍾嶸 (c. 505). In the entry on Kuo P'u 郭璞 (276 - 324) in this work, Kuo is said to be one of the poets who first 'transformed the 'even and bland' style of the Yung-chia period (307 - 313). In the preface to the Shih p'in, we are told that “in the Yung-chia period, poets esteemed Huang (ti) and Lao (Tzu), and tended toward vapid discussions. At that time, the content of their poetry exceeded its diction; their work was bland and had little flavor.” There can be little doubt that the term “even and bland” in the Kuo P'u entry is used in a pejorative sense, meaning something like “insipid.” As p'ing-tan later came to be considered a desideratum of poetry, it is similar in its history to terms of European art criticism such as “Impressionism” and “Fauvism,” both of which were originally pejorative or mocking in tone, but have since been used as the legitimate names for two schools of French painting.

Mei must have been familiar with the use of p'ing-tan in the Shih p'in; he refers at least three times to Chung Hung, as Kakehi has noted. A poem probably dating from 1053, for example, contains this couplet: “In poetry, able to be like Juan Chi 賈逵, / In criticism, not yielding to Chung Hung.” Another poem of the same period includes this line: “Naturally possessing the critical acumen of Chung Hung.” An even later poem, written in 1057 or 1058, also invokes the name of Chung Hung: “Loving to discuss the poetry of past and present... / Laughing at Chung Hung in our critical judgments.”

Although p'ing-tan does not seem to have been used again as a term of literary criticism until relatively late in the T'ang dynasty, early non-literary uses are well attested. Related terms occur as early as the Taoist classics. The phrase “bland and with little flavor” aptly applied by Chung Hung to the Taoist poetry of the Yung-chia period, is modeled on the phrase “bland and flavorless” from the Lao Tzu 老子, where it describes the ineffable Tao. Several passages in Chuang Tzu are relevant. The Nameless Man advises T'ien Ken (in Burton watson's translation) to “let your mind wander in simplicity, blend your spirit with the vastness, follow along with things the way they are.” That this passage may have influenced Mei's conception of “blandness” is suggested by a passage from his Lin Pu preface which has already been quoted: “When he was in harmony with things, enjoying his feelings, he would write poems which were even and bland...” Here as in the Chuang Tzu example, the concepts of “blandness” and “harmony with things” are associated, and the same words are used to express them in both passages.

The Chuang Tzu also uses the compound t'ien-tan 淡恬, “calm and bland,” as in this passage from the Way of Heaven chapter.

Emptiness, stillness, limpidity (t'ien-tan), silence, inaction are the root of the ten thousand things.

It will be noted that in these Taoist examples, the concept of “blandness” is used in a positive sense. It is, in fact, one of the attributes of the absolute. Giving a positive meaning to a quality which is overlooked or even despised by most men is typical of Taoist irony, a mood would not have been uncongenial to Mei Yao-ch'en and his friends.

Positive, though non-literary, uses of p'ing-tan occur several times in Three Kingdoms and Six Dynasties sources. A work entitled Monograph on Personalities 人物志 by the Wei 晉 scholar Liu Shao 劉邵 contains a relevant passage which has been noticed by Kakehi. The passage reads,

In a man's character, it is balance and harmony that are most prized. A character which is bland and flavorless 平淡無味. Thus, such a man is able to develop in equal measure the five virtues (i.e., courage, wisdom, humanity, faithfulness, and loyalty) and to adapt himself flexibly to the situation. For this reason, in observing a man and judging his character, one must first look for the “even and bland,” and then seek intelligence.

Two notes to this passage by a certain Liu Ping 劉柄 explain that:
when something is “bland,” the five flavors are able to be in harmony. If something is (too) bitter, then it cannot be sweet. If it is (too) sour, then it cannot be salty... When a man is...
“even and bland,” without prejudices, then he will as a matter of course be in control of all the virtues. He will be able to use them appropriately, adapting comprehensively, unimpeded, to all situations.

In these passages it is fairly clear that “even and bland” means “in perfect balance or harmony,” a state in which no one quality is in evidence to the exclusion of any other, but all existing together in equilibrium. It may be wondered, as by Kakehi, whether Mei Yao-ch’en would have been familiar with Liu Shao’s book, a reference to the work in the Wang-shih t’an-lu by Wang Ch’in-ch’en, the son of Wang Shu, who is known to have visited Mei together with Ou-yang Hsiu in 1056. The passage in question reads, “In human nature, it is the ‘even and bland’ that is prized.... Formerly, in his discussion of personalities, Liu Shao (written with the knife radical here： 刀) also considered the ‘even and bland’ to be of primary importance.”

Another occurrence to ping-tan, also noticed by Kakehi, is found in the Essay on Music by Juan Chi:

The Male Principle and Female Principle are easy and simple; therefore refined music is not cumbersome. The Way and its Power are even and bland; therefore it (i.e., refined music) is soundless and flavorless. Because it is flavorless, the hundred creatures are naturally joyful.

Here the precise meaning of ping-tan is somewhat more difficult to determine. The parallelism with “easy and simple” and the association with the qualities “soundless and flavorless” would seem to suggest that the term is used to emphasize the purity, subtlety and simplicity of the highest music. Again, the problem of Mei Yao-ch’en’s familiarity with this text has been raised by Kakehi. It does not appear impossible, however, that Mei would have read an essay by a poet who interested him as greatly as did Juan Chi.

A final example of this kind occurs in the biography of Hsi Chien in the Chin shu. The relevant passage reads, “Yüeh Yen-fu 楊殷輔 (Yüeh Kuang 幾, d. 304) is ‘even and bland’ in his moral tone, and calm and pure in his knowledge derived from experience.” Here, as with Liu Shao, ping-tan is used to describe a man’s character. In his article on the term ping-tan in Sung literary criticism Yokoyama Iseo states that T’ang examples of ping-tan as a literary term are not to be found. He does, however, call attention in a footnote to the “unemphatic” 沖淡 mode which appears in The Twenty-Four Modes of Poetry.

Although Ssu-k’ung’s poetic descriptions of his twenty-four modes are extremely vague, some idea of what this particular mode meant to him is conveyed by these lines (in the translation of Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang):

- It dwells in quiet, in simplicity;
- For inspiration is subtle, fugitive;
- Gentle as the breath of wind
- That brushes your gown.
- ...When you grope for it, it slips through your hands and is gone!

In his analysis of the twenty-four modes, Chu Tung-jun lists the “unemphatic” mode as one of those which “relate to the poet’s life.” In addition, the character tan occurs three times in the Twenty-Four Modes of Poetry (the translations are those of the Yangs):

- 人淡如菊 The man, serene an the chrysanthenum.
- (from the “polished” mode 雅典)
- 淡香麝微 But light shades grow in depth.
- (from the “exquisite” mode 精雅)
- 淡不可收 Too ethereal to recall.
- (from the “distinctive” mode 清奇)

Finally, Ssu-k’ung T’u described the poetry of Wei Ying-wu as 淡雅 (736 - c.790) an “limpid and bland, finely structured.”

Yokoyama happens to be wrong in his statement that ping-tan was not used as a term of literary criticism in the T’ang dynasty. The term occurs, for example, in a particularly important passage from a poem sent by Han Yu 吳 厚 (768 - 824) to Chia Tao, which is quoted by Kakehi. The language of the passage in question is unfortunately quite obscure, but the gist seems to be that Chia Tao expresses himself freely with “wild words,” “often achieving the ‘even and bland’” 且 造 阿 言. As Kakehi points out, ping-tan is here given an unmistakably positive sense. Precisely what it meant for Han Yu is another matter; it is not easy to understand how an “even and bland” style is consistent with “wild words.” A similar association occurs in a poem in which Han Yu praises the literary talents of various friends of his. “Chang Chi 張籍 (c.765 - c.830),” Han Yu tells us, “emulates the ‘ancient and bland’ 古淡.” In the same poem, Han Yu expresses his admiration for “difficult diction” 難文字. That the term “ancient and bland” is close to “even and bland” is suggested by the fact that Ou-yang Hsiu uses it to describe Mei Yao-ch’en’s poetic style. “Sheng-yü has worked hard at poetry all his life, writing with feeling that is calm and detached, ancient and bland.”

Kakehi maintains that Mei was conscious of following Han Yu in his use of ping-tan as a positive term of literary criticism. Not only...
is Mei’s and Ou-yang’s veneration for Han Yu well attested to by many passages in their writings, but Chia Tao and Chang Chi, the two poets to whom Han applied the terms p’ing-tan and ku-tan, were also among the poets in whom they took considerable interest.

Although Po Chü-i does not use the term p’ing-tan to my knowledge, related expressions are used by him in interesting contexts. In the letter to Yuan Chen in 888, 60 Wei Ying-wu’s poetry is described as “exalted and refined, calm and bland” 高雅而淡. In the same letter there occurs the phrase “thought bland and diction unusual” 思澹而詞迂. Elsewhere, 61 Po applies the phrase “bland and flavorless” to his own poetry, as well as to the ancient music of the zither (ch’in 琴), 62 in both cases with a sense of irony entirely in the Taoist tradition from which this use of “bland” originally derived. Su Shun-ch’iin 蘇舜欽 (1008 - 1048), a friend of Mei’s and Ou-yang’s and a major Poet, also describes the music of the zither as “sparse and bland” 疏澹. In a poem about an old instrument in his possession, he relates how a great zither master performed on it for him: “Occasionally he expresses deep meaning with sparse and bland sound;/ Deep meaning, thin flavor—I alone understand.”

The phrase “achieving the ‘even and bland’” which forms part of Han Yü’s line, “Often achieving the ‘even and bland’” occurs, as noted previously, in Mei Yao-ch’eni’s couplet, “In writing poetry, no matter whether past or present,/ It is only achieving the ‘even and bland’ that is difficult” 作詩無古今, 唯造平淡難. The same phrase, as it happens, not only occurs in the Han Yü example quoted above, but was also used toward the end of the T’ang dynasty by the famous poet-friends Lu Kuei-meng 陸龜蒙 (d.c. 881) and Pi Jih-hsiu 皮日休 (d.c. 881). Lu’s use of the phrase is literary and therefore provides another instance of the use of p’ing-tan as a positive term of literary criticism in the T’ang dynasty. In his autobiographical sketch, An Account of Mr. Fu-li, 64 Lu writes, “When young, he (i.e., Lu himself) worked at songs and poetry, wishing to compete with the Creator himself. Whenever he encountered suitable material, he would transform it into any number of stylistic forms.” This is followed by impressionistic descriptions of some of these “stylistic forms,” one of which involves “imprisoning and fettering the strange and unusual.” “But,” Lu continues, “it was only when he had achieved the ‘even and bland’ that he stopped”卒造平淡而後已. In making p’ing-tan the ultimate goal of poetic endeavor, Lu Kuei-meng comes closer to Mei Yao-ch’en’s apotheosis of the “even and bland” style than any other writer prior to Mei.

The idea, implicit in An Account of Mr. Fu-li, that the poet only achieves the p’ing-tan style after a long period of development, anticipates a Sung concept. Although, as we have seen, Ou-yang Hsiu considered that the style was characteristic of Mei’s early period (“At first he liked to write poetry which was even and bland.”), Wu K’o 無 }} (c.1126), writing at a time when Su Shih’s approval of the style had ensured its permanent influence, clearly expressed the view that it represented the culmination of a poet’s development. Tu Fu’s poetry, for example, was, according to Wu, “flowery and beautiful” in his youth, but became “even and bland” as he grew older. 66 Elsewhere Wu states this principle in general terms: 66

All literature is first flowery and beautiful, and later even and bland. It is like the sequence of the four seasons. In spring, things are flowery and beautiful; in summer, flourishing and ripe. In autumn and winter they withdraw and hibernate. It is like something which is withered outside but rich inside. The flowery and beautiful, flourishing and ripe, are enclosed within.

The idea that p’ing-tan develops late in a poet’s life has been discussed by Yokoyama. 67 Another modern writer, Chu Tung-jun 朱東潤, has actually divided Mei Yao-ch’eni’s poetic life into two general periods: an early one, during which he was moved by the sufferings of the people and the incursions of the Hsi Hsia troops to write poetry in which he frankly expressed his anger; and a late one, during which he matured and evolved the p’ing-tan style. 68 Lyu Yu also passed through two such stages of development, according to Chu.

Lu Kuei-meng’s friend Pi Jih-hsiu also used the phrase tsao p’ing-tan 造平淡, but in an entirely different context. In the course of a poem describing a visit to the famous Lin-wu Cave 林屋洞, 69 Pi relates in considerable detail how he passed through the fantastic chambers and corridors of the cave. Then, immediately after a couplet in which he has squeezed his way through a narrow opening like the mouth of a jar, these lines occur: “Q—erh tsao p’ing-tan:/ Huo-juan feng kuang-ching” 豁然逢光晶, 俄而造平淡,豁然逢光晶. Given the context of the poem, these lines must mean something like, “Suddenly we came upon a level, smooth area;/ Brilliant light burst into view ahead. “But another line by Pi indicates that for him too tan 淡 (here used in the closely related sense of “limpid”) was a desirable quality in poetry. In the middle of a lengthy poem on the history of poetry, 70 there occurs the line, “Meng (Hao-yan 孟浩然, 689 - 740) is limpid, like rippling wavelets” 孟浩然 湍漪. As a final T’ang example, mention should be made of an interesting entry in the Shih-shih 詩式, attributed to the monk Chiao-yan 皎然 (c.760). 71 One of the styles or modes of poetry listed by him is entitled “the bland and common” 淡俗, and is described as follows:

---

60. Wei Ying-wu’s poetry is described as “exalted and refined, calm and bland” 高雅而淡.
61. Po applies the phrase “bland and flavorless” to his own poetry, as well as to the ancient music of the zither (ch’in 琴), in both cases with a sense of irony.
62. Su Shun-ch’iin 蘇舜欽 (1008 - 1048), a friend of Mei’s and Ou-yang’s and a major Poet, also describes the music of the zither as “sparse and bland” 疏澹.
63. In a poem about an old instrument in his possession, he relates how a great zither master performed on it for him: “Occasionally he expresses deep meaning with sparse and bland sound;/ Deep meaning, thin flavor—I alone understand.”
64. Lu’s use of the phrase is literary and therefore provides another instance of the use of p’ing-tan as a positive term of literary criticism in the T’ang dynasty.
65. Mei Yao-ch’eni’s couplet, “In writing poetry, no matter whether past or present,/ It is only achieving the ‘even and bland’ that is difficult” 作詩無古今, 唯造平淡難.
66. The idea that p’ing-tan develops late in a poet’s life has been discussed by Yokoyama. Another modern writer, Chu Tung-jun 朱東潤, has actually divided Mei Yao-ch’eni’s poetic life into two general periods: an early one, during which he was moved by the sufferings of the people and the incursions of the Hsi Hsia troops to write poetry in which he frankly expressed his anger; and a late one, during which he matured and evolved the p’ing-tan style.
67. Yokoyama.
68. Lu Yu also passed through two such stages of development, according to Chu.
69. Pi Jih-hsiu also used the phrase tsao p’ing-tan 造平淡, but in an entirely different context.
70. In the middle of a lengthy poem on the history of poetry, there occurs the line, “Meng (Hao-yan 孟浩然, 689 - 740) is limpid, like rippling wavelets” 孟浩然 湍漪.
71. As a final T’ang example, mention should be made of an interesting entry in the Shih-shih 詩式, attributed to the monk Chiao-yan 皎然 (c.760). One of the styles or modes of poetry listed by him is entitled “the bland and common” 淡俗, and is described as follows:
This way is like Hsia-chi 西巖 at the wine counter; she seems loose in her morals but is actually chaste. In this mode, the styles of Wu and Ch'ü are adopted. Although common, it is quite correct. An ancient song says,

There’s a hundred-foot well
at the top of Hua-yin Mountain;
Below is a flowing spring,
bone-piercingly cold.
How lovable, the girl who comes to look
at her reflection:
She only sees her slanting neck,
and nothing else!

This curious passage suggests that for Chiao-jan, the “bland and common” mode of poetry encompasses popular and folksongs, often dealing with young girls and their amours, of the kind usually referred to as “Songs of Wu.” The “blandness” of such poetry would lie in its light, easily comprehensible diction, unencumbered by weighty allusions or difficult imagery. Although only slightly related to the sequence of usages leading to Mei Yao-ch’èn’s emphasis on the “even and bland” style, in point of term the present example may well have been the earliest positive, literary critical use of a compound including the character "tan.

Among the early Sung poets, Wang Yu-ch’èng 王禹偁 (954 - 1001) is notable for his use of "tan (or compounds including it) with reference to poetry. In an extremely long poem sent to Ch’ung Fang 撰放 (d. 1015)," Wang describes a "divine work" as “ancient and bland, like sipping broth from a cauldron.” "Ancient and bland" is a term first used by Han Yü with reference to Chang Chi’s poetry, and later used by Ou-yang Hsiu for Mei Yao-ch’èn. In another poem, Wang describes the poetry of Meng Pin-yü 孟賓字 (c.904 - c.983) as being written in a "refined and bland style." 雅澹之體.

The examples quoted above make it quite clear that Mei Yao-ch’èn was far from being the first poet to use "ping-tan" or related expressions as terms of literary criticism. But even if they give some idea of the sources which might have influenced Mei, the problem remains of what precisely “even and bland" meant for him. One of the important passages for the understanding of Mei’s views on poetry, already quoted, is worth repeating here: 75

Poetry is basically stating one’s feelings;
There’s no need to shout them out loud!
When you realize that the poem should be even and bland,
You’ll devote yourself to Yüan-ming morning and evening.

Here, "ping-tan" appears to refer to poetry which is based on the poet’s real, personal emotion, but which expresses that emotion in understated terms. By contrast, the poetry of the Hsi-k’un 西昆 school, popular at an earlier period in the Sung dynasty, was based on artificial emotion, and was extravagant in its expressive techniques.

The poet’s feelings are also stressed in one of Mei’s poems to Yen Shu,76 quoted previously but repeated here: “I write poems about that which is in harmony with my feelings and nature, trying as best I can to achieve the ‘even and bland.’ My rough diction is not rounded or smoothed, but sticks in the mouth more harshly than water-chestnut or prickly waterlily." This example goes a step further in suggesting that "ping-tan" refers specifically to diction. A similar, apparently paradoxical association of “wild words” and “even and bland" style occurred in Han Yü’s poem to Chia Tao.77 In what is possibly Mei’s earliest use of the term "ping-tan," it is again juxtaposed with “difficult and outstanding diction and rhymes.”78

Mei himself emphasized the importance of diction in poetry in his famous statement: “Though the poet may emphasize meaning, it is also difficult to choose the proper diction.” In a poem of 1045, 79 Mei exclaims, “How can it be thought that my interest in poetry is merely superficial? When I am inspired by some affair, I write my short poems, and though the diction may be low and coarse, they are the result of effort and devotion." The same poem goes on to extol the tradition of the Book of Odes, which Mei is striving to emulate, and to castigate “those few poets of the late T’ang who wore away their years trifling with natural images." Here, Mei seems to be advocating a rough, even vulgar diction as a reaction against the excessive refinements of Late T’ang and Hsi-k’un poetry. On the other hand, the fact that Mei applied the term "ping-tan" to the poetry of Lin Pu, perhaps the greatest of the early Sung practitioners of the Late T’ang style, should preclude any hasty or overly simple conclusions as to what “even and bland” meant for him.

Once established by Mei Yao-ch’en as a sine qua non of poetics, "ping-tan" quickly became one of the most important terms in Sung literary criticism. Su Shih insured the prestige of the concept of “blandness" in poetry by his approval of it. “What is prized in the ‘withered and bland’ 徕澹, he wrote,80 “is that the external is withered but the internal is rich. It seems bland but is actually beautiful. Such poets as Yüan-ming (T’ao Ch’ien) and Tzu-hou (Liu Tsung-yüan 柳宗元, 773 - 819) are examples of this. If the internal and the external are both withered and bland, is this worth taking into consideration?" The term "ping-tan" was finally canonized by having a section devoted to it in the great encyclopedia of poetics. 習靖余氏 詩人王屑 by Wei Ch’ing-chiin 魏慶之 (c.1240).81

The question of diction has been touched upon in the preceding para-
graphs. Other passages referring to diction can be found in Mei’s works. There is a poem written around 1050, for example, in which Mei says of his own poetry, “It is just like T’ao Yüan-ming: Rough diction close to that of farmers.” In a poem of 1055 or 1056, one of a series in which he discussed the poetry of various acquaintances who had sent their works to him for his comments, Mei says, “Although my words are very simple, My meaning is trenchant—who understands?” Another poem of 1055 or 1056 answers this question. “Ou-yang understands me best . . . He has compared my poetry with olives!” Later in this poem, Mei describes his own lines as “bitter and hard.” Both this phrase (k’u-ying) and the simile of the olives occur in a poem by Ou-yang Hsiu written over ten years earlier in 1044. The relevant portion of this poem, in which Ou-yang characterizes the styles of both Su Shun-ch’in and Mei Yao-ch’en, reads (in the translation of Burton Watson),

Master Mei valued what is clean and succinct, Washing his stone teeth in the cold stream. He has written poetry for thirty years And looks on us as his juniors in school. His diction grows fresher and cleaner than ever; His thought becomes more profound with age. He is like a beautiful woman Whose charm does not fade with the years. His recent poems are dry and hard; Try chewing on some—a bitter mouthful! The first reading is like eating olives, But the longer you suck on them, the better the taste.

The idea of comparing the effect of words with the taste of olives did not originate with Ou-yang Hsiu. Wang Yü-ch’eng, in a poem entitled Olives, describes how olives taste bitter at first, but become sweet after they have been chewed for a while. “What am I using this as an analogy for?” asks Wang rhetorically; “for the words of a loyal official.” He then explains that the loyal official’s words may at first be displeasing to the sovereign, and possibly even result in the official’s banishment (Wang himself was exiled three times). But later, at a time of crisis, the sovereign will recall these words and regret that he did not pay heed to them. “I send word to the Poetry Collector: do not look lightly on this poem, Olives!” Ou-yang Hsiu was familiar with Wang’s poem. In a poem of his own, also entitled Olives, Ou-yang writes,

Loyal words are at first despised, But when a crisis occurs, how useless is regret! There is no longer a Poetry Collector in the world, So I’ll recite this completed poem for you.

But Wang Yu-ch’eng’s Olives is concerned with the meaning of words, while in his poem on Su Shun-ch’in and Mei Yao-ch’en, Ou-yang Hsiu seems to stress diction: “His (Mei’s) diction grows fresher and cleaner than ever... His recent poems are dry and hard; Try chewing on some—a bitter mouthful! The first reading is like eating olives, But the longer you suck on them, the better the taste.”

Partly, perhaps, because Hsi-k’un poetry was often quite obscure, one of Mei’s concerns was that poetic diction should not be excessively difficult to understand. Commenting on the poems of a certain “Magistrate Chang,” Mei complains, “Although I have not allowed myself to become inattentive while reading them, I cannot understand one out of ten!” On the other hand, Mei was not unaware of the pitfalls awaiting the poet who attempts to make his diction too low. Ou-yang Hsiu records a statement by Mei on this matter.

Sheng-yü once said, “When lines of poetry make sense, but have diction which approaches shallowness and vulgarity, and is laughable, this is a defect. For example, here is a couplet from a poem Sent to a Fisherman:

His eyes see nothing of market business; His ears hear only the sound of wind and water.

Someone has said of this that it refers to disorders of the liver and kidney! And here is another from a poem On Poetry:

I search for it (i.e., a good line) all day long, but in vain; Then sometimes it will come of itself. This actually has to do with the difficulty of hitting upon a good line, but someone has said that it refers to a person who has lost his cat!” Everyone had a good laugh at this.

As it happens, Mei himself did not escape criticism for his “vulgar diction.” The critic Chang Chieh, in a passage beginning, “Every man’s talent has its limitations,” quotes excerpts from a group of poems on climbing pagodas and the like, arranged in a sequence from worst to best. The second worst of the series is Mei’s:

ON HEARING THAT TZU-MEI (Su Shun-ch’un), TZ’U-TAO (Sung Yin-ch’iu; 宋敏求, 1019-1079) AND SHIH-HOU (Hsieh Ching-ch’u; 謝景初, 1020-1082) CLIMBED THE PAGODA OF SKY CLEAR MONASTERY

You three friends, young and strong, Ascended the pagoda’s topmost tier. But why did you waste your thoughts on me? I barely move along on level ground! My legs would surely have buckled in pain. And then I imagine the dizzy descent,
This poem, dating from 1044, is in fact an excellent example of the kind of simple but expressive diction Mei adopted for much of his personal poetry. The influence of Po Chü-i is apparent. But Chang Chieh, after quoting the last four lines of the poem, exclaims in disgust, "What vulgar diction!"—perhaps the first recorded adverse criticism of Mei's poetry. Chang is especially offended by the expression, "head and eyes aswim" 头目旋.

Chu Tung-jun is of the opinion that the influence of prose (散文化) on the diction of Sung poetry began with Mei Yao-ch'en. Reference might be made here to the prose-like diction of Han Yü's poetry and the influence it exerted on Mei and Ou-yang. If asked why his diction was often so rough and seemingly awkward, Mei might have answered, with Dryden,

And this unpolished, rugged verse I chose,  
As fittest for discourse, and nearest prose.

As a poet of essentially Confucian persuasion involved in a literary movement which had as one of its aims the revival of the orthodox literary tradition, Mei felt a need for a poetic style which would allow him to present his ideas in verse, in other words, a discursive style. The diction of the poems in which Mei presents his views on poetry, several of which have been quoted in this paper, is so strongly influenced by prose that these poems are usually best rendered in English prose paraphrase. Prose-like diction constantly recurs in Mei's poems, especially in those, which deal with con-temporary events and works of art. This fact suggests that when Mei is concerned with actual events or objects which he is observing close at hand, he chooses to make extensive use of prose-like phrases which are better suited to precise, detailed description than the vaguer expressions characteristic of lyric diction. Thus one of Mei's goals was greater flexibility in the use of poetry for discourse and description, and he approached this problem by expanding the range of his diction.

It is not surprising that a poet who gave so much thought to the actual craft of poetry should also have been known as a literary critic. Ko Li-fang, writing in the mid-twelfth century, had this to say:

Mei Sheng-yü quickly earned himself a reputation as a poet. Those scholars, therefore, who could compose poetry would often write out scrolls of their work and send them to him, to get his opinion on their good and bad points. Mei would always send poems in reply, never letting the would-be poets off lightly. For example, in Reading the Poetry scroll of the Collator of Texts. Huang Hsin 黃莘 (1021-1085), he says,

The phoenixes are raising fledglings, but they still can't fly high;  
The chickens and ducks are forming flocks, but their wings are still short.

In Reading the Poetry Scroll of the Director of the Imperial Workshops, Hsiao Yüan, he says,

The wild pheasant has five colors, but he is not a phoenix;  
In knowing the hours and crowing well, how can he compare with the rooster?

In Reading the Poetry Scroll of the Auxiliary Secretary Sun Chih-yen, he says,

Although I have not allowed myself to become inattentive while reading them, I cannot understand one out of ten!

And in Reading the Poetry Scroll of Magistrate Chang, he says,

After seeing them, he (i.e., Tu T'ing-chih) sings involuntarily,  
And says they remind him of Li (Po), Tu (Fu) and Han (Yü).

And in Reading the Poetry Scroll of the Scholar Shao Pu-i, he says,

After seeing them, he (i.e., Tu T'ing-chih) sings involuntarily,  
And says they remind him of Li (Po), Tu (Fu) and Han (Yü).

In all these passages, Mei instructs the aspiring poets on the basis of their shortcomings.

The examples quoted here by Ko Li-fang all come from chapters forty-five and forty-six of the Wan-ling chi 宛陵集 (Mei's collected works), and thus date from 1055 or 1056. The first couplet has been explained in this way by Hsia Ching-kuan 夏敬觀:  

“This means that the poet’s work is not mature, although Mei praises his innate talent.”  
Hsia also comments on the second example:  

“This means that although the pheasant has lovely feathers, he is not a phoenix, nor is he as good as the rooster at knowing the hours and crowing. This is what is meant by (my comment on the first line of the previous couplet in this poem,) ‘Prizing what is close to the vulgar.’"

The metaphors of drawing well-water and polishing a mirror are undoubtedly meant to express the unremitting effort, which is necessary to become an accomplished poet. Ko Li-fang takes the lines as a reprimand to Sun Chih-yen, presumably for not working hard enough. The following couplet has already been discussed; it criticizes the poet for his excessive obscurity.
It is hard to see in what sense Mei is “instructing” Shao Pu-i “on the basis of his shortcomings” in the final couplet. On the contrary, this passage would appear to praise Shao in the highest possible terms. At any rate, the Ko Li-fang entry shows that Mei was a respected critic of poetry.

Something of Mei’s style as a teacher can be sensed from the poem *Drinking on Sheng-yü’s Western Porch* by Han Wei 韓維 (1017–1098). Aside from being one of the best portraits of Mei available to us, this poem (translated here in prose) is of interest because it reveals that Mei thought of T’ang poetry in terms of distinguishable schools. After relating how “two or three of us” have gathered for a drinking party at Mei’s, Han continues,

Our host is a doyen of Confucians; his words are worthy of the two Ya’s (of the *Book of Odes*). He enunciates noble principles on how to conduct oneself while drinking, and summarizes the confusing details of literature. First he says that in judging a man’s character, one must base oneself on that which is internal. Then he criticizes our scholarship, saying we should never be satisfied with ourselves. All the poets of the T’ang dynasty he analyzes into their respective schools. Once they have been subjected to the master’s criticism, the wheat is separated from the chaff, and the chaff rejected.

I say, “Our Sheng-yü deserves to be famous in succeeding generations.” He answers by saying my writings are like those of Han (Yü), and also show the influence of the Six Classics. But what have I done to establish myself? When I hear such praise, I feel as if I’m holding a scorpion! Sheng-yü is excellent at encouraging and counselling; these words of his are meant to exhort us. His intention is to urge us all to advance and improve in our work. Although I am dull and untalented, when I hear him I feel vigorous and intelligent.

I call for a cup and pour myself a full measure, not caring if the other guests think me strange. Then back home to write this little poem, just to tell why I admire him so much.

Although it is possible to arrive at some notion of Mei’s views on poetry by piecing together a line here and a couplet there, as I have attempted to do in this paper, one still misses an overall statement on the nature of poetry comprehensive enough to embrace these fragmentary ideas. Interestingly enough, it is a modern American poet who seems best to express an attitude toward poetry which, *mutatis mutandis*, might serve to characterize the new sensibility of Mei and his fellow poets. Wallace Stevens’ *The Poems of our Climate*, published in 1938, is worth quoting in full:

I

Clear water in a brilliant bowl,
Pink and white carnations. The light
In the room more like a snowy air,

Reflecting snow. A newly-fallen snow
At the end of winter when afternoons return.
Pink and white carnations—One desires
So much more than that. The day itself
Is simplified: a bowl of white,
Cold, a cold porcelain, low and round,
With nothing more than the carnations there.

II

Say even that this complete simplicity
Stripped one of all one’s torments, concealed
The evilly compounded, vital I
And made it fresh in a world of white,
A world of clear water brilliant-edged,
Still one would want more, one would need more,
More than a world of white and snowy scents.

III

There would still remain the never-resting mind,
So that one would want to escape, come back
To what had been so long composed.
The imperfect is our paradise.
Note that, in this bitterness, delight,
Since the imperfect is so hot in us,
Lies in flawed words and stubborn sounds.

It would be hard to find a better image for the Hsi-k’un poetry which was so popular in the early eleventh century than “a bowl of white. / Cold, a cold porcelain, low and round,” filled with “pink and white carnations.” Lovely, to be sure, but unreal, unrelated to human passion. In such a literary climate, Mei Yao-ch’en and Ou-yang Hsiu felt a need for “so much more,” a return to the actual human being, “the evilly compounded, vital I” with his “never-resting mind.” They wished, like Stevens, to express the very imperfection which characterizes our personal and social existence in poetry whose diction was a mimesis of that imperfection, diction “harsher than water-chestnut or prickly water-lily,” “flawed words and stubborn sounds.” Such a conception of poetry informs the poems, which Mei wrote, and was, passed on by him to Han Wei and his other students.
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ABBREVIATIONS

1) CCCC: Chia Tao, Chia Ch'ang-chiang chi 賈長江集 in SPPY.
4) CLHSC: Han Yü, Chu Wen-kung chiao Ch'ang-li Hsien-sheng chi 朱文公校昌黎先生集, in SPTK.
5) CTS: Ch'üan T'ang shih 全唐詩, 32 chapter edition of 1887.
7) HCC: Wang Yü-ch'eng 王禹稱, Hsiao-ch'u chi 小蓄集, in Basic Sinological Series.
8) Hsia: Hsia Ching-kuan 夏敬觀, Mei Yao-ch'en shih 梅堯臣詩, 1940.
9) JSTC: Juan Chi 阮籍, Juan Ssu-tsung chi 阮嗣宗集, in Han Wei Liu-ch'ao chu-chia wen-chi 漢魏六朝諸家文集.
14) Liu Pin 劉頻, Chung-shan shih-hua 中山詩話, in LTSH.
15) LTSH: Ho Wen-huan 何文煥, ed., Li-tai shih-hua 历代詩話.
16) LTSH, HP: Ting Fu-pao 丁福保, ed., Li-tai shih-hua. hsü-pien 續編.
17) NYC: Han Wei 韓維, Nan-yang chi 南陽集, in SPTK.
18) OYWCKC: Ou-yang Hsiu, Ou-yang Wen-chung Kung chi 欧陽文忠公集, in SPTK.
19) PSCCC; Po Chü-i, Po-shih ch'ang-ch'ing chi 自氏長慶集, in SPTK.
21) Ssu-ma Kuang 司馬光, Wen Kung hsü-shih-hua 温公詩話, in LTSH.
22) SPPY: Ssu-pu pei-yao 四部備要.
23) SPTK: Ssu-pu ts 'ung-k'an 四部叢刊.
24) SSC: Sung-shih ch'ao 宋詩鈔.
26) TKPS: Tu Fu, Fen-men chi-chu Kung-pu shih 分門集注杜工部集, in SPTK.
27) TPSH: Su Shih, Tung-P'o shih-hua 東坡詩話, in Shuo-fu 說孚.
32) YYYC: Ko Li-fang 葛立方, Yün-yü yang-ch'iu 韻語陽秋, in LTSH.

NOTES

1) Appended to the 1830 edition of Mei's works.
3) CTS, 26/9b.
4) OYWCK, 128/5a-b.
5) In Yoshikawa, p. 78. Also partially translated in James T. C. Liu, pp. 135-136.
6) For this interpretation of shuai-i 率意, see Kakehi, BGSR, p. 455.
7) CCCC, 3/1b.
8) CTS, 18/91a.
9) Ibid., 10/2b.
10) Wen Fei-ch'ing chi chien-chu 温飛卿集箋注 (in SPPY), 7/5a.
11) CCCC, 8/2a.
12) Chung-shan shih-hua, 3a.
13) The P'ei-wen yün-fu 佩文韻府 quotes the present passage twice, under ma-ku 馬骨 and under hui-ken ch'u 槐根出, simply naming Liu-i shih-hua 蘇舜欽 as the source. Elsewhere (OYWCK, 130/6b), Ou-yang writes: "Once when I was in Lo(yang), I heard Hsieh Hsi-shen (Hsieh Chiang 謝絳, c.955 -1039. Mei's brother-in-law) recite, 'The district is ancient; locust roots protrude. / The official is virtuous; the horse's bones jut out. . . . He said, 'The feeling of virtuous hardship exists beyong the words themselves, "and yet is perceived within the words.'" 清苦之意在言外而見于言中. This is very close to the second part of Mei's statement on poetry. It is, of course, possible that the precise wording of Hsieh's comment here is attributable to Ou-yang himself, writing years later under the influence of Mei's dictum.
14) LHCSC, p. 21b.
15) Fang, p. 11.
18) Wen Kung hsü-shih-hua, 6b.
19) TKPS, 2/4a-b.
20) YYYC, l/4a-b.
21) For the poems quoted, see WLC, 3/12a, 3/1lb, 3/9a, 5/15a.
22) WLC, 60/2a.
23) Ibid., 28/11b-12a.
24) Ibid., 46/9b.
25) Shao was known for his seal and “clerk style” calligraphy, and participated, as did Mei, in the compilation of the New T’ang History.
26) OYWCKC, 33/7a-9b.
27) Kakehi, BGSR, p. 444.
28) WLC, 5/7b-8b.
29) Tu wrote, for example, a poem entitled Climbing the Height Mountain on the Ninth Day, Fan-ch’uan wen-chi chu樊川文集注 (in SPPY), 3/11b.
30) WLC, 24/16a-b.
31) Ibid., 27/8b.
32) NYC, p. 18b.
33) Kakehi, BGSR, pp. 445-446; Yokoyama, p. 33.
34) Shih p’în (in LTSH), chung2a.
35) Ibid., preface, p. 2a.
36) Kakehi, BGSR, pp. 446-447.
37) WLC, 17/2a.
38) Ibid., 18/4a-b.
39) Ibid., 57/5b-7b.
40) Lao Tzu, ch. 35.
41) Watson, P. 94.
42) WLC, 60/2a.
43) Watson, p. 143. To this may be added the following passage from the Shan-mu山木 chapter of Chuang Tzu: “The friendship of a gentleman, they say, is insipid as water君于之交淡若水; that of a petty man, sweet as rich wine. But the insipidity of the gentleman leads to affection, while the sweetness of the petty man leads to revulsion. Those with no particular reason for joining together will for no particular reason part.” (Watson, P. 215.)
44) Liu Shao, Jen-wu chih (in SPTK), l/1b-2a.
45) Kakehi, BGSR, p. 446.
46) Loc. cit.
47) Quoted in P’ei-wen yün-fu under p’ing-tan hsien平淡先.
48) Kakehi, BGSR, p. 446.
49) JSTC, p. 22a.
50) Kakehi, BGSR, p. 446.
55) SJYH, p. 256.
56) CLHSC, 5/5a-ba; Kakehi, BGSR, p. 447.
57) CLHSC, 2/4a-5a.
58) OYWCK, 128/2a.
60) PSCCC, 28/1la.
61) Ibid., 6/1Ob-1la.
62) Ibid., l/6b-7a.
63) SSCC, p. 60.
64) Tang Fu-li Hsien-sheng wen-chi 唐甫裏先生文集 (in SPTK), 16/9b.
65) Ts’ang-hai shih-hua 蒲海詩話 (in LTSH, HP), P. Ia.
66) Ibid., p. 3a.
67) Yokoyama, P. 36.
69) CTS, 23/1b.
70) Ibid., 22/91b.
71) Shih-shih (in LTSH), P. 8b.
72) As Ho Wen-huan 何文煥 points out in his notes to this passage in the k’ao-so 考索 appended to LTSH (p. 1b), Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju’s wife Cho Wen-chün is probably intended here.
73) HCC, p. 23.
74) Ibid., pp. 283-284.
75) WLC, 24/16a-b.
76) Ibid., 28/11b-12a.
77) See note 56.
78) WLC, 5/8a.
80) TPSH, pp. 4a-b.
81) SJYH, pp. 218-219.
82) WLC, 37/1b-2a.
83) Ibid., 45/9b-10a.
84) Ibid., 45/8a-b.
NEWS OF THE FIELD

I. Yüan Biographical Project

Professor Igor de Rachewiltz of The Australian National University has recently reported on this project under his direction:

The Yüan Biographical Project was undertaken in 1966 in the Department of Far Eastern History at the Australian National University with the aim of providing scholars primarily working in the field of Chin and Yüan history with basic tools of research, namely a series of indices of biographical material in Chin and Yüan literary works (wen-chi 文集), covering all the important collections of this period, and about one hundred and fifty biographical essays on Yüan personalities.

With regard to the indices, the First Series, compiled by Miyoko Nakano and myself and comprising 23 titles, was published two years ago—I. de Rachewiltz and M. Nakano, Index to Biographical Material in Chin and Yüan Literary Works. First Series, A.N.U. Press, Canberra, 1970 (see Sung Studies Newsletter No. 4, P. 22). The Second Series, prepared jointly by May Wang and myself and comprising 65 titles is in the press. The Third Series, comprising over 90 titles, is almost completed on cards, and we hope to have the manuscript ready by the end of the current year.

As for the biographies, Mrs. Wang and I have prepared to this date 72 draft biographies (in nien-p’u 年譜 form) and expect to begin publication of the biographical essays in English sometime in 1974 in our Departmental journal, Papers on Far Eastern History.

The Third Series of the Indices will conclude the Index Series. The biographies will appear as they are ready and will eventually be revised and brought together in one or more volumes. The personalities include the most important figures of the Yüan (taken broadly 1206-1368), Mongols, foreigners (se-mu 色目) and Han of course, from all professions except artists, as these are being dealt with independently by Professor Chu-tsing Li, who is directing a project on Yüan art history at the University of Kansas. In the compilation of the biographical essays we shall rely also on the contributions of a number of Yüan specialists outside Australia who have expressed interest in the Yüan Biographical Project and willingness to collaborate.

II. Yüan Art History Project

The Yüan art history project was begun in 1968 by Professor Chu-tsing Li 李錦為 at the University of Kansas. Its goal is to build up an extensive
research file on Yuan art history and to produce two books, one on the biographies of Yuan artists and the other on the history of Yuan painting. So far, major materials from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, the United States and Europe have been collected.

The book on Yuan artists is now in the final phase of preparation. This volume will include extensive biographies of about fifty major painters and short references to about two hundred other painters and calligraphers. The biographies of the major painters will follow the form of the Ming and Sung biographical projects and the materials will be drawn from basic art historical sources, literary works (wen-chi), local gazetteers, informal writing (tsa-chi), and inscriptions and colophons from painting and calligraphy scrolls. The book will be published in two editions. The Chinese edition will appear first, and the English edition later.

The second volume will be an extensive discussion of the historical development of Yuan art. It will be taken up after the completion of the biographical volume.

Aside from Professor Li, a number of scholars have made contributions to this project. They include Mr. Chiang I-han 姜一涵, formerly of the College of Chinese Culture in Taipei and now at Princeton University, and Professor Weng T'ung-wen 翁同文 of Nanyang University in Singapore. A number of assistants at the University of Kansas, Kwan-shut Wong 黃君實 and Arthur Mu-sen Kao 高木森, have also been helping with the project.

III. Sung Project, Bibliographical Section

The work of the Project is now in an advanced stage, with some 520 bibliographical notices in hand as of late 1972. Originally the Project planned to publish 600 notices in the handbook, but some of the 85 scholars participating in the Project volunteered to submit additional notices so that the final total number of notices should reach 660. Although a number of notices are still to be submitted, the revising, editing, and indexing of the handbook have already commenced.

English and French will be the only two languages used in the handbook, all the notices written in Chinese, German, Japanese, and Russian being translated into English. Thus, the vast majority of the notices, approximately 500, will be in English.

Three indices will be appended to the handbook: one for personal names, one for book titles, and one for subjects which will include geographical names and official titles. The compilers intend to make these three indices very comprehensive and detailed. Every Chinese word will be listed in the Wade-Giles system of transcription (which will be the standard romanization throughout the volume) followed by the Chinese character(s) and English translation. Every official title, but not book titles, will be translated into English. Finally, the names of persons will be given with dates of birth and death according to Weng T'ung-wen's 翁同文, Repertoire des dates des hommes célèbres des Song (Paris, Mouton, 1962, Materiaux pour le Manuel de l’Histoire des Song, IV).

The notices in the handbook will be listed according to the order of the Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao 四庫全書總目提要 as it appears in the Jinbun Kagaku catalogue 京都大學人文科學研究所圖書分類目錄. The subdivisions of this catalogue will also be followed. The original list of titles to be included in the handbook was drawn up by Professor Kurata Junnosuke 倉田淳之助 who based his selection on the Jinbun catalogue.

The compilers of the handbook expect to complete their editing and indexing some time during 1974 and publish the work shortly thereafter.

IV. Japanese Conference Papers

During 1972 several papers presented at various Japanese conferences dealt with Sung studies.

a) Hokaidō University Oriental History Colloquium, July 1:

変容松男 宋代の執行猶豫刑について

b) Tōhoku University Sinological Conference, May 20 and 21:

佐藤圭四郎 唐宋時代の香料貿易に関する東西史料の比較

c) Tōhoku University, Oriental Historical Research Conference, October 7:

相田伸昭 宋代流民雜考

d) Tōyō Bunko Colloquium, July 1:

草野靖 宋代古田村落に於ける農民家産の零細化とにてわに伴り二、三の問題

e) Waseda University Historical Association Meeting, June 17:

近藤一成 宋末の背後法論争について

f) Ryūkoku University Historical Conference, December 2:

花岡昭憲 宋末に知りたる遊樂試論

g) Hiroshima University Historical Research Association Meeting, October 28:

吉岡義信 宋代の河防について

西岡弘晃 宋代の沙漠湖

本田治 宋代開封における酒專賣と酒酒業

h) Kyoto University, November 10:

夫馬進 宋代自遷教罪ともの反亂
The fifty-first and fifty-second meetings of this association in Taiwan were held this year when the following two papers were presented:

a) March 18: 趙雅書：「宋代之蠶桑與機織」
b) April 29: 王吉林：「南詔與晚唐關係之探討」
行述、墓表、阡表、神道碑、墓志銘、贈序、壽序、書序、字說、題跋、記銘、廟碑、哀辭、祭文、誄文、制誥、舉狀、縊議等。（2）史傳資料，除前述哈燕社編的四十七種全部采錄外，約再增四十多種。此外收于書目或現今單行的年譜、家傳、言行錄、墓誌、碑銘等個人資料皆盡量採入之，並注明編者及版本。（3）地方文獻中資料，如宋元方志及若幹地域性的總集均採錄，其中程敏政編新安文獻志尤為重要。（4）金石類書籍中之宋人碑銘。（5）近人研究成果，限于純學術性的關於個人傳記論著如年譜、評傳、書序等之類，皆注明其版本，或期刊名稱及出版年月，其他宜應用文字不予采編。

本索引的出版，蒙普林斯敦大學東方研究系主任牟複禮教授和宋史研究通信主編衛文熙先生幫忙，獲得美國聯合學會（ACLS）美金三千元的補助，謹此致謝。

PUBLISHING AND BOOK NEWS

I. Hong Kong

1. Chung-kuo ching-chi-shih lun-ts'ung 中國經濟史論叢 by Ch'üan Han-sheng 竦油. Hong Kong: New Asia Research Institute 出版, 1972, 2 volumes, 815 pp., Hardback HK$90, Paperback HK$60.

This volume collects many of the author’s previously published articles dealing with Chinese economic history from the T'ang through the Ch'ing dynasties. A number of the articles, dating back more than 30 years, have heretofore been difficult to locate. They have now been conveniently reproduced from the original publications without correction or emendation. As Professor Ch'üan, early in his career, was one of the first modern Chinese scholars of the Sung economy, most of the articles gathered in the first volume concern this topic; they are listed below. Some 18 more articles, including eight on the Sung, remain to be published in a third volume which will complete the author's collected writings, except for monograph length studies.

a. 唐宋時代揚州經濟景況的繁榮與衰落 b. 北宋物價的變動
b. 北宋汴梁的輸出入貿易 c. 南宋初期物價的大變動
d. 未定南方的貿易 e. 南宋初年物價的變動 f. 南宋杭州的消費與外地商品之輸入
g. 南宋稻米的生產與運銷 h. 未定間的走私貿易
i. 自宋至明政府收入中錢比例的變動 i. 未定的通貨膨脹及其對物價的影響
j. 元代的紙幣 k. 未定的紙幣


Sixty-one articles written mostly during the 1930's and 1940's by some 40 scholars, several quite distinguished, are collected in this volume. A few of the authors are Japanese whose articles were translated into Chinese. Seven journals are the original source for the articles: Wen-shih tsa-chih 文史雜志, Ssu-hsiang yü shih-tai 思想與時代, Yü kung 禹貢, Chung-ho yüeh-k'an 中和月刊, Tse-shan pan yüeh-k'an 責善半月刊, Ch'ing-hua hsüeh-pao 清華學報, and Hsüeh-shu-chieh yüeh-k'an 學術界月刊. All these journals have been reprinted in recent years by the photo-offset process, and it is obvious that this criterion of convenience rather than scholarly merit or importance of the article was a prime consideration in their selec-
tion for inclusion in the volume. Certainly not all of the articles are of equal value and quality. Nor is the clarity of reproduction. A complete list of the articles follows:

a. 張尊鶯： 宋太祖誓碑及政事堂考 北宋的外患和變法 沈括遺年事録 宋太宗繼統考實
b. 侯任之： 燕雲十六州考

c. 王育伊： 石晉割賂契丹地與宋志燕雲雨路範圍不同辨 宋史地理志燕雲雨路考

b. 侯任之： 燕雲十六州考

c. 王育伊： 石晉割賂契丹地與宋志燕雲雨路範圍不同辨 宋史地理志燕雲雨路考

Briefly Noted

The following books have been published in Hong Kong within the last year:

a. 蘇東坡詩選，陳邇冬，大光
b. 北宋詞選注，胡雲翼，中流

c. 元季四畫家詩校輯，莊申，香港大學，301pp.
d. 宋詩研究，胡雲翼著，商務， 240pp.
e. 宋詩選注，程千帆，中流
f. 孟浩然詩選，周汝昌注，中華，84pp.
g. 王安石詩選，姜敬觀編，大光， 137pp.
h. 引慶喜詩選，蘇軾集，中流，234pp.

The following have been recently reprinted:

a. 楊萬裏與成大研究資料彙編，明論
b. 陸遊詩選，趙國恩，李易選注，未名書屋，150pp.

II. Japan

1. Eizo hoshiki no kenkyu 建築法式研究，Vols. I - III by Takeshima Takuichi 竹島卓一

After a delay of 20 years finally Professor Takeshima's dissertation on the Sung building manual, Ying-tsao fa-shih, has been published. The first edition of this manual was printed in 1103, but most copies were lost during the sacking of the capital K'ai-feng at the fall of the Northern
Sung dynasty. A second edition was edited and printed in 1145 and it is this which has reached us through copies of manuscript copies. A facsimile edition of one of the MSS was published in 1919 and 1920, and Takeshima’s teacher Professor Sekino Tei 關野貞 showed it to his student. When in 1925 the revised edition with colour plates was published Takeshima began his studies of the work. During the years 1939 - 1941 he published 16 articles in the journal Kenchiku shi 建築史, vols. 2 - 5, on stonework and carpentry in the Ying-tao fa-shih. Then he decided to enlarge his research in order to write a doctoral dissertation on the work. In 1945 he had completed this, but on the very evening before he was going to deliver his manuscript to the authorities in Tokyo it was completely destroyed in a bombing raid. It took him 3 years to recover from the shock, but in 1948 he began rewriting his lost manuscript. In 1949 it was completed and in 1950 he gained his well-deserved title of Doctor of Science 工學博士, but his valuable MS was stored in the Diet Library until finally it became available to the public in 1970 and 1971.

Professor Takeshima’s work is a translation with thorough commentaries of the most Ying-tao fa-shih, though he admits that several passages cannot be understood. His scope being practical, he has omitted the first chapters on terminology and concentrated on the chapters on rules and material. At the end of volume III, however, he provides an exhaustive list of the architectural terms used in his work. The text is illustrated with many detailed drawings, often correcting mistakes in the drawings in chapters 31 and 32. In order to clarify the badly transmitted manuscript drawings of chapter 31, new drawings were added, but Professor Takeshima’s suspicion that these added drawings represent purely late Ch’ing structures is surely correct.

His approach is clearly technical and very skilful. A more text-critical attitude towards this very difficult and badly transmitted text might have thrown further light on the more obscure passages.

--- Else Glahn


This handy bibliography of some 530 Sung scholar-officials’ collected writings still extant in Japan contains approximately 2300 entries and lists 1000 titles, more or less. Both printed and manuscript volumes are included, as well as Japanese and Korean editions. Most of the wen-chi noted were printed in the Ming and Ch’ing dynasties, with a few dating from the early Republican period and fewer still from Sung and Yuan times. No recent reprints or editions are incorporated. However, reference is made to editions published in collectanea (ts’ung-shu 審叢) and any valuables MS was stored in the Diet Library until finally it became available to the public in 1970 and 1971.

The bibliography first appeared in 1959 as the last of a narrowly circulated series of reference tools for Sung studies entitled Sōdai shakai keizaishi kenkyū 宋代社會經濟史研究輔助資料. Begun in 1953 under the general direction and inspiration of Nakajima Satoshi 中島敏 at TōkyōKyōiku Daigaku 東京教育大學, eight volumes were privately published over the next six years by this university’s Asian History Research Society. All the indices were prepared and edited by the compilers of the present volume. This second edition of the volume under review reproduces the first with some manuscript emendations.

For those unfamiliar with this reference series a brief description follows. Volume 1) 基礎史料解題, 36 pp. A short introduction to some 80 Sung source materials. Also listed are the entries in both the Tōkyō rekishi daijiten 東京歷史大詞典 and Sekai rekishi shiten 世界歷史事典 pertinent to the Sung dynasty. Volume 2) 主要論文目録. Now rather dated and surpassed by subsequent bibliographies. Volume 3) 主要法制史料目録, 100 pp. The greatest portion of thin index comprises a table of contents to the entries of the *Sung Ta-chao-ling chi* 宋大詔令 木集; the unique value of this table of contents was greatly reduced when the first typeset edition of the compendium was published in 1962 (Peking, Chung Hua Shu-chu) with the exact same table of contents. Tables of contents for 宋刑統, 宋刑統法類, and 清明集 take up the remaining few pages of the volume. Volume 4) 國朝諸臣奏議目録, 79 pp. Inasmuch as the 國朝諸臣奏議 by Chao Ju-yü 趙汝愚 is not readily available, this Japanese compilation of a detailed table of contents to all the memorials...
is still quite useful; a fifteen page index to the authors of the memorials is also provided. The tables of contents of four other works—東都事略目録, 太平治績統類目録, 历代名臣奏議目録, 隆平集目録—are included in this volume, but the recent reprinting of these sources obviates the usefulness of this Japanese index.

Volume 5) 山堂先生群書考索目録, 62 pp. The recent Taiwan reproduction of the once rare work 群書考索, with a especially prepared, detailed table of contents, effectively eliminates the value of this earlier Japanese reference tool. Volumes 6 and 7) 玉海目録, 104 and 96 pp. This detailed table of contents retains its usefulness, for the only modern reprint of Yü hai contains only a simple list of the broad topical divisions of the work.


Some 75 t'zu poems, grouped into 11 broad topics, are interpreted and explicated in this volume. Following the Chinese text of each poem is a translation into colloquial Japanese; the terms appearing in which have been simply indexed at the conclusion of the book. Hatano provides an elucidation of the origin and meaning of each poem's title, and the first time a particular author's poem appears a thumbnail sketch of his life and literary career is given. For each poem there is a lengthy exegesis of troublesome terms and allusions. Finally, Hatano adds to each poem his own interpretation and critical commentary.

Briefly Noted

The following three books, here merely listed without review, were published in 1972:

a. 安部健夫, 元代史の研究, 創文社, 567 pp., ¥4,800.
b. 小林高四郎, 元史(中國古典新編), 明德出版社, 266 pp., ¥980.
c. 村松瑛, 五代群雄論, 中央公論社, 331 pp., ¥750.

III. Taiwan


The bulk of this book consists of a detailed account of 10 battles, one per chapter, between the Sung and Liao during the reign of T'ai-tsung. For the most part the author's narrative consists of quotations from a wide range of both Sung and Liao original sources strung together by precious little analytical exposition. The author's limited conception of military history merely as a blow by blow description of clashes and as an exposition of battle strategies is broadened in the penultimate chapter when the political policy issues and struggles behind the military strategy is examined. The final chapter presents a lengthy discussion of the comparative strengths and weaknesses of the Sung and Liao states politically, socially, economically, and militarily, with military institutions receiving the greatest attention. Also the strategic aspects of the northern frontier geography come in for some attention, but this may well have served as introductory material to prepare the reader for the detailed battle descriptions that follow. For readers who do not wish to plough through these descriptions the appendix summarizes in table form all the battles, giving the time, place, major generals, course of the fighting, the outcome, and documentary sources.


Ch'en Liang 陳亮 was a prominent exponent of the so-called utilitarian school of thought peculiar to the Ch'ung 夏南 area in the Southern Sung and later. More than a mere philosopher, he was also an outspoken critic of the appeasement policy followed by the court. The first chapter of this interesting, carefully annotated monograph—the first major work on Ch'en Liang in any language—recreates the political situation and atmosphere of the times and highlights Ch'en's personality and career. This is a prelude to the author's major effort at analysis of Ch'en's philosophical system and its relevance to both pre-Ch'in and Sung philosophical currents. In the second chapter the author isolates and analyses the various conceptual components of Ch'en's philosophy, tracing many elements back to Hsüntzu 荀子. Ch'en's indebtedness to his immediate intellectual forebears in the Sung and his relationship to contemporary thinkers, including Yeh Shih 葉適 and Lu Hsiang-shan 陸象山, is the topic of the third chapter, while the fourth chapter comparatively examines at great length Ch'en's and Chu Hsi's 朱熹.
thought, these two having had a provocative intellectual debate between 1182 and 1186. The reactions to this debate by later scholars, even a few prominent contemporary Chinese scholars, are cursorily presented in the fourth chapter also.

Briefly Noted

The following books have been recently written and published in Taiwan:

b. 宋詞互見考, 唐圭璋, 學生書局

c. 從元代蒙人習俗軍事論元代蒙古文化, 袁國藩, 商務, 179pp.

The following titles have been reprinted within the last year:

a. 宋詞三百首箋注, 上疆村民重編
b. 宋詩記事人傳補正, (清) 陸心源

c. 容齋詩話, 洪邁 276pp.
d. 唐圭璋箋注 259pp.
e. 宋詞選, 胡雲翼編注 454pp.

IV. Europe


The Tangut script was invented in 1036, apparently by one man perhaps with a team of assistants, although we cannot be certain, and was used as a nation’s system of writing for somewhat less than 200 years. After the Mongol destruction of the Tangut state in 1227, there were a few isolated instances of inscriptions and printed sutras during the Yuan period. From this point on, though, the Tangut script was for all intents and purposes forgotten and unknown. Only in the 20th century has there been a revival of interest in the Tangut script, and during the last decades in Russia and Japan great advances were made in its study, particularly by Evgeny Ivanovich Kychanov and Nishida Tatsuo. Professor Grinstead builds on these earlier studies and advances beyond them in a number of ways.

The emphasis of this highly technical monograph is on the formation of Tangut script and the role of phonetics in the script. Aside from brief essays about the structure and phonetics of the script, the main body of the text consists of: a Tangut telecode created by the author for purposes of identification, finding, and computerization of Tangut; a conversion table between his telecode list and another commonly used list; an English-Tangut word list; reproduction of the Book of Filial Piety in the Tangut standard script; and an attempted translation of the preface to this classic. The author’s purpose in providing these various lists is to facilitate the work of scholars from other disciplines in handling Tangut texts.

For readers who do not wish to cope with the esoteric nature of this monograph—the author assumes that readers possess a thorough familiarity with most other major scholarship in the field—the opening section to the book can be profitably read for an introduction to the Tangut script and a general discussion of the invention of scripts in East Asia.


One of the three great Sung landscape painters, Tung Yuan (962) has been one of the most problematical of early Chinese painters. It is on a near-legendary composition attributed to Tung, known as the “Marriage of the Lord of the River,” on which the author of this study focuses. He attempts to clarify the artist’s style and to trace its influence through the Yuan period. The first chapter proposes a reconstruction of the painting, while the second examines and describes the style of Tung in the context of other early Sung landscape styles. The final chapter analyzes the influence of Tung and the painting under examination upon the great Yuan master Chao Meng-fu.
Wu Ch’eng 吳澄 (1249-1333) spent his first thirty years under the Southern Sung and, upon its demise, took refuge in the mountains near his home in southeastern Kiangsi. Here he wrote extensively on the Classics and in 1286 came to the attention of the throne through his friend Ch’eng Chü-fu 樑楫夫 (1249-1318). In serving both as Proctor and Director of Studies in the National University between 1309 and 1312, he was trammeled by narrow scholarly practices and attempted reform and, as Chancellor of the Han-lin Academy from 1323 to 1325; he was highly critical of court involvement with Buddhism. Wu Ch’eng served only four of his eighty-five years because his mission to revivify Sung thought was balanced by the lure of eremitism in difficult times.

Troubled by the overemphasis on exegesis in his time, Wu Ch’eng contrasted the polarities of knowledge-seeking (tao wen-hsüeh 道問學) and cultivation of the virtuous nature (tsun te-hsing 傳道性), used to represent the methodological predilections of Chu Hsi朱熹 (1130-1200) and Lu Hsiang-shan陸象山 (1139-1193) respectively, by tipping the scale toward the Lu side. In thus seeking to enliven the Chu tradition with a strong dosage of the spirit of Lu, he initiated a synthetistic approach that became an omnipresent feature of the controversy between intellectualism and anti-intellectualism in the Ming era.

While “rationalist” representatives of the former current, such as Hu Chü-jen 胡居仁 (1434-1484) and Lo Cheng-an 羅整庵 (1466-1547), were critical of the philosophy of Wu Ch’eng, “idealists” of the latter, such as Ch’en Hsien-chang 陳獻章 (1428-1500) and Wang Yang-ming 王陽明 (1472-1529), found in Wu a kindred spirit. Want not only wrote a laudatory preface to his Li-chi 諒記纂言 (Observations on the Record of Ritual) but also felt that the later Chu Hsi and Wu Ch’eng arrived at philosophical positions close to his own.

In arguing for his own brand of synthesis, Wang Yang-ming subsumed the ideas of Chu Hsi under his idealistic mantle while Wu Ch’eng moved intriguingly between rationalism and idealism. Thus although Wu’s ideas proved to be more useful for the anti-intellectual side than for the intellectual, this in no way diminishes the uniqueness of his synthetic philosophical approach.
undoubtedly closer to the natural process of human feeling.

The last chapter examines the supreme lyrical quality of Chiang K'uei's songs on the level of poetic meaning. He is seen as an egocentric artist who seeks to express the innermost feelings of the self. This egocentric tendency is most readily discernible in his deviation from the tradition of yung-wu 詠物 songs or “songs on natural objects.” He turned this somewhat objective form into an effective medium for self-expression. The lyrical feelings Chiang K'uei seeks to convey are usually those prior to conceptual elaboration, so his songs exhibit a general, universal quality. On the semantic level, the roundabout manner of expression is due to his effort in building layers of complex metaphorical relation within a song. This manner allows him to depict more accurately the process of thought and feeling, with its distinct curves and turns. He always attempts to encompass both the most lyrical and universal modes of expressing experience.

-- Shuen-fu Lin
Bibliography of Recent Japanese Scholarship

This bibliography is copied with the kind permission of the Japanese Committee for the Sung Project 東方學會 from number 51 (December, 1972) and 52 (March, 1973) of the Sōdaikenkyū bunken sokuhō 宋代研究文獻目錄。

赤冢忠：「中庸から見た朱熹と本居宣長」 東京支那學報 16: 55-82 (6/1972)
有井智德：「高麗朝における民田の所有関係にっぷて」 朝鮮史研究會論文集 8: 38-67 (3/1971)

「宏智禮讃考」 駒渕大學佛教學部研究紀要 30: 107-140 (9/1972)
谷原宏伸：「清明上河圖（上） 図解」 955: 5-15 (2/1973)
武田幸男：「高麗田丁の再討論」朝鮮史研究会論文集 8：1-37 (3/1971)
竹內昭夫：「南唐中主の詞句について（再説）」東京支那学報 16：49-54 (6/1971)
竹島卓一：営殖法式の研究三（東京・中央公論美術）703pp.
田中二雄：「步子語類外伝篇譜通（四）」東洋史研究 31-1：82-100 (6/1972)
寺地浩：「范文庵の政治論とその歴史的意義」慶應義塾大学文学部紀要 31-2：5-24 (2/1972)
東方学会：東方学会創立二十五周年記念東方學論集（東京・東方学会 1972）864pp.
中村菊之進：「宋思溪版大藏經刊記考」文化（東北大學文学部）36-3：81-125 (12/1972)
中村治兵衛：「宋代虞氏祠山廟の由来について—宋代社會の一事例として」史草 109：1-24 (11/1972)
西岡弘晃：「宋代慧湖の水利問題」史学研究 117：27-43 (10/1972)
山口修：「蒙古と高麗—1231年の第一次侵攻」聖心女子大學論叢 40：27-55 (12/1972)
横山伊勢雄：「東坡詞論考—作詞の場と作品の分析」東京教育大學文学部紀要 92：59-81 (3/1973)

山口修：「蒙古と高麗—1231年の第一次侵攻」聖心女子大學論叢 40：27-55 (12/1972)
橫山伊勢雄：「東坡詞論考—作詞の場と作品の分析」東京教育大學文学部紀要 92：59-81 (3/1973)