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SEMIOTIC INTERPRETATION OF CHINESE POETRY: TU MU'S POETRY AS EXAMPLE

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SEMIOTIC INTERPRETATION OF CHINESE POETRY:
TU MU'S POETRY AS EXAMPLE

BY
Ching-song Gene Hsiao

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF ORIENTAL STUDIES
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1985
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As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Ching-song Gene Hsiao entitled Semiotic Interpretation of Chinese Poetry: Tu Mu's Poetry as Example. and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. 

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

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SIGNED: Ching-ying Hsu
In this dissertation I attempt to introduce an explicit model of interpretation for traditional Chinese poetry. The decision to do so resulted from my frustration in finding specific ways to develop my interpretive sensitivity and skills. In the early stages of my graduate study of Chinese poetry, I tried to learn interpretation by reading critical theories. But I was not able to produce my own interpretive discourse until I had read Professor Ch'en Shih-hsiang's "To Circumvent 'The Design of Eightfold Array'," which provides a critical model, although an incomplete one. The reason why I could not write critical discourse was that I had not found any specific model of such discourse. To learn criticism, merely reading critical theories is not enough. One who wishes to produce interpretive discourse should expose himself to models of such discourse as well as to the poetic texts that will become the subject of interpretation. That is, if he wants to write about text A, he should see examples of criticism X, Y, Z, interpreting texts A1, A2, A3, which are similar in structure to text A. Therefore, if a student of Chinese poetry wants to write interpretive discourse of "ancient-style poetry" (ku-t'ı shih), "modern-
style poetry" (chin-t'ı-shih), etc., in addition to being familiar with the texts of such poetries, he should also examine models of such interpretive discourse so that he can absorb the customs and principles governing this kind of writing.

The semiotic model introduced here is one which I consider to be explicit, consistent, and especially helpful in cultivating interpretive sensitivity and skills in students of Chinese poetry. As for example of interpretation, the poetry of Tu Mu (803-852) is chosen purely out of personal preference. In Chinese poetry, other than the works of Li Po (705?-762), Tu Fu (712-770), and Li Shang-yin (813-858), I enjoy Tu Mu's the most. And because the first three poets' oeuvres have already been studied quite extensively, Tu Mu's poetry, which has been less thoroughly investigated, naturally became the focus of my research effort. It should be noted that I am here mainly concerned with a methodology with which traditional Chinese poetry may be profitably discussed; I am not concerned with the history of semiotic criticism as such; nor do I aim at a complete study of the poet Tu Mu or his poetry. Therefore the references and poems chosen are only those which are most useful for this purpose. In the first chapter of this dissertation, I shall attempt to define the semiotic model and explain the basic concepts supporting it. In the second chapter I shall present a brief biography of Tu Mu,
which will be useful in interpreting his poems from the semiotic point of view. The third and the fourth chapters are semiotic interpretations of Tu Mu's poetry based on the model established in the first chapter. The concluding chapter will review the strengths of the semiotic model, and demonstrate how some of the ideas advocated by this model may also serve as principles for the translation of poetry.

Chinese words in this dissertation are romanized according to a modified form of the Wade-Giles system as found in H. A. Giles, *A Chinese-English Dictionary*: the circumflex above the ə is omitted, and so is the breve above the u in ssu, tsu, and tz'u; the single syllable i is written as yi to avoid possible confusion with the Roman numeral "1" or the Arabic numeral "1." For well-known place names, the Postal Atlas spelling is used; for place names not generally known, the Wade-Giles system is followed with a hyphen between each element of the name (e.g. Fan-ch'uan).

Japanese words are transcribed according to the Romaji system found in Kenkyusha's *New Japanese-English Dictionary*, with an apostrophe between n as a syllabic final and a vowel initial (e.g. kan'in), and macrons (̃) over long vowels except in well-known place names, such as Tokyo.
Chinese characters for words and names in the main part of the dissertation are listed in the "Glossary," apart from those in the "List of References"; Chinese texts of poems interpreted or cited are provided in the "Appendices."

My debts are many and it is a pleasure to acknowledge them here. Dr. Ronald C. Miao never failed to make my graduate study enjoyable and profitable because of his easy accessibility and thoughtful guidance. And as my dissertation director, he offered valuable advice on the research and writing. Dr. William Schultz continued to encourage and challenge me throughout my graduate study, and helped make the dissertation a better work. Dr. Marie Chan was of great assistance in calling relevant materials to my attention and in improving my presentation. Her criticisms and suggestions enriched my thinking on the writing of literary biography and the interpretation of poetry. Dr. Douglas Canfield's counsel was also of great value to the completion of this dissertation: his stimulating questions helped focus my thinking and shaped the interpretive model, which embodies many of his ideas. In the beginning, Dr. Don C. Bailey helped improve the general readability of my translations. His generous assistance was most helpful at a critical juncture in the work. The completion of this project would have been greatly delayed without my friend, Dan Beeson, my son, Kai-lung, and my
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ABSTRACT

To interpret a poem is to comprehend a complete act of written communication. And to comprehend such an act, the reader must break the codes in which the communication is framed. Thus, poetic interpretation becomes the study of codes—or semiotics. Poetic codes exist at pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and phonic levels. The decoding requires the reader's linguistic skills, literary competence, and personal experience. It involves an initial reading and a retroactive reading. At the first step, the reader attempts to supply elements missing in the text. Yet trying to interpret the text literally, he encounters problems in pragmatics, semantics, syntactics, or phonics, and is unable to grasp a coherent sense of the poem. Those problems give rise to a retroactive reading. At this step, the reader looks for a higher level of understanding where a unity of meaning can be identified. And by explaining the clues in the text according to his linguistic and literary competence, and revising his understanding on the basis of his new findings, he finally discovers a kernel concept, on which the whole text can be seen as a single unit, and every element, which first appeared to be puzzling, has a significative purpose.
This semiotic model of interpretation has proven to be very fruitful in the explication of Tu Mu's poetry. It also enables the reader to appreciate the poetic discourse more thoroughly. Some of the ideas advocated by the model may also serve as principles for the translation of poetry. For example, in reading a poem, the model requires a search for unified pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and phonic patterns, which convey the kernel concept. Thus, in translating a poem, the translator should also try to re-produce in the target language such unified patterns so that the reader may grasp the same kernel concept as contained in the original discourse. The model stresses implicitness of poetry. Hence the rendition of a poem should preserve the implicitness of the original text in order to invoke from the reader a response similar to what would be induced by the original poem.
CHAPTER 1

A SEMIOTIC MODEL OF POETIC INTERPRETATION

Introduction

The approach to be used for poetic interpretation in this dissertation is one derived from semiotics. In the community of literary semioticians, there are many well known members, such as Roland Barthes, Gerard Genette, Julia Kristeva, Tzvetan Todorov, Umberto Eco, Yuri Lotman, Boris Uspensky, and Seymour Chatman. However, the model to be presented here is one developed from the ideas of Robert Scholes' *Semiotics and Interpretation* and Michael Riffaterre's *Semiotics of Poetry*. Both these two books provide procedures that are more explicit, more consistent, better demonstrated, and, thus, easier to follow. In the following, I shall attempt to explain the origins and development of the semiotic model and the key concepts on which it is based.

Modern semiotics grew out of two earlier schools of criticism: the Parisian School and the International School. The Parisian School was founded by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), who conceived of "semiology" as the scientific study of "the life of signs within society," and
as a means of showing "What constitutes signs, what laws govern them" (Saussure 1966:16). The so-called International School began with Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914) (Hervey 1982:219; Deely 1982:7), who created the term "semiotic" (as a noun and an adjective) (Steiner 1980:100). Although usually defined as the study of signs, semiotics has in fact become the study of codes, namely, the study of the systems of thoughts or conventions that enable human beings to perceive certain events or entities as signs, bearing meaning (Scholes 1982:ix). "Semiotics" as a singular noun was coined by Margaret Mead in 1962 on the model of ethics, mathematics, etc. In the interests of consistency, this term has now been widely accepted in Eastern Europe, Italy, and the U. S. (Steiner 1980:100).

Because semiotics has become the study of codes, it is necessary to keep in mind that codes have far-reaching effects on human civilization and that the human mind is inseparable from the functioning of codes. All human utterances, for instance, are dependent upon and limited by codes that are shared by all who make and understand such utterances. Medical discourse, for example, has its own conventions, which dictate not only the interpretation of message, but also who is entitled to utter it and who may act upon it. Accordingly, a prescription must be encoded by a physician and decoded for action by a pharmacist. Likewise, poetic discourse is both produced and interpreted
through the mediation of linguistic as well as generic and cultural conventions. The poet is neither a god contemplating his creation nor a fully unified individuality freely making aesthetic choices. He is a creature of culture, who has attained a human subjectivity through language. What he produces as poetic text depends upon his acceptance of the constraints of generic or discursive norms. In addition to his own conscious and unconscious emotions and reasoning, his work speaks in other voices—cultural and public. As for the reader of the poem, he is similarly conditioned with his divided psyche being traversed by codes. His interpretation of the poem is constrained not only by the manipulative features of the text, but also by its generic and cultural conventions. Hence, critics of poetry may use semiotics as an instrument: through semiotic analysis, they may discover the conventions that enable poetic texts to have the meanings that they do for members of a given culture; they may define the conventions, such as those of prosody, genre, or received explanations of poetic devices, which enable readers to interpret poetic texts as they do (Culler 1981:87; Homman 1980:406).
Jakobson's Communication Theory

In poetics, the most frequently cited study involving codes is that of Roman Jakobson. In "Linguistics and Poetics" (1972), Jakobson takes the reading of a poetic text as an act of communication consisting of six elements. According to this communication theory, a poem constitutes a "message" sent by an "addresser" to an "addressee." To be operative, the message requires a "context" ("referent" in another, somewhat ambiguous, nomenclature), seizable by the addressee, and is either verbal or capable of being verbalized; a "code" fully, or at least partially, common to the addressee and addresser (or in other words, to the encoder and decoder of the message); and, finally, a "channel," a physical and psychological connection between the addressee, enabling both of them to enter and stay in communication. In the area of context, we find what the message is about. But to get there, we must understand the code in which the message is framed—as in this dissertation, the messages reach the reader or listener through the medium of an academic/literary subcode of the English language. Yet even if we possess the code, we understand nothing until we make the connection with the

1. The term originally used by Jakobson is "contact." But the term "channel" seems to be more appropriate for a communication theory.
utterance—in the present case, until one encounters
the typed words on this page or hears them read aloud, they
do not exist as a message (Jakobson 1972:89; Scholes 1974:
24). Jakobson schematizes the six elements involved in his
communication theory as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{c|c}
\text{Context} & \\
\text{Message} & \\
\hline
\text{Addressee} & \text{Addressee} \\
\text{Channel} & \\
\text{Code} & \\
\end{array}
\]

Jakobson further asserts that, when a communicative
event takes place, each of the six elements mentioned above
determines a different function. The six functions may be
presented in a schema paralleling that of the six elements
diagrammed above:

\[
\begin{array}{c|c}
\text{Referential} & \text{Conative} \\
\text{Poetic} & \\
\text{Emotive} & \text{Phatic} \\
\text{Metalingual} & \\
\end{array}
\]

Although all six functions may be distinguished in
a complete event of communication, usually only one func-
tion dominates. The "referential" function is the function
of a speech act which is aimed at direct reference, deno-
tation, or cognition. The "emotive" function is noticeable
when a speech act focuses on the addressee’s feeling about
what he is saying, as in the interjection: "I forgot. Dammit." Some communicative events emphasize the command or request to the addressee, thus have the "conative" function, as in the imperative expression "Finish your dissertation quickly!" Some speech acts have the "phatic" function, which refers to the effect of establishing, prolonging, or discontinuing communication, checking whether the communicative channel is open (e.g. "Hello, do you hear me?"), attracting the attention of the listener or confirming his continued attention (e.g. "Are you listening?") (Jakobson 1972:92). Sometimes a verbal communication carries a "metalingual," function, namely, it is assumed by the addressee and/or the addressee to check if they are applying the same code, or to gloss the words being used in the communication. For example, "I don't follow you--what do you mean by 'semiotics'?" asks the addressee. Or imagine such a dialogue: "The sophomore was plucked." "But what is 'plucked'?" "'Plucked' means the same as 'flunked'." "And 'flunked'?" "To be 'flunked' is to fail an examination." Finally, there are speech events which possess a "poetic" function. That is, they focus on the message by drawing attention to its sound patterns, diction, and syntax. This function appears in all kinds of discourse, by no means confined to poetry. But in poetry it is predominant (Jakobson 1972:93).
How does the poetic function then manifest itself in poetry? According to Jakobson (1972:95), "the poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination." And by emphasizing resemblances of sound, rhythm, and image, poetry thickens language, drawing attention to its formal properties and away from its referential significance (Scholes 1974:26). For Jakobson (1972:86), these peculiar formal properties are the primary concern of poetics. To be more specific, although Jakobson compares the reading of a poem to the communicative act, which involves six elements—addresser, addressee, context, message, code, and contact—he is primarily concerned with the element of message.

**Scholes' Semiotic Model**

Jakobson's formulation is useful, but it has some drawbacks. First of all, in trying to present a single universal description of the communicative act, he has necessarily ignored the differences between written and oral communications (Scholes 1974:27-28). In an oral communication, all of the Jakobsonian elements of communication may be at hand: context, addresser, and addressee may be physically present when the message is delivered orally in a code such as English. The addresser may hand the addressee a cup of contextual hemlock, for instance,
and deliver the message, "Drink this!" But in a written act the message itself is frequently all we have. In particular, the addresser is not likely to be present, and very frequently, even though you or I may read the message, it may not be addressed to us. For example, a poem may be considered a message sent to a reader, perhaps you or me, by the poet, a person like ourselves. But almost invariably this message is presented in the form of someone addressing someone else, instead of the poet addressing the reader, you or me. Take for instance the poem "Chung-tzu, Please" (Chiang Chung-tzu) from the Book of Odes (Shih-ching):

Chung-tzu, please,
Don’t trespass upon my estate;
Don’t break my medlar trees.
Not because I love them too much,
But because I’m afraid of my parents.
Love you as I may,
I can’t bear to think what my parents would say.

Chung-tzu, please,
Don’t cross my wall;
Don’t break my mulberry trees.
Not because I love them too much,
But because I’m afraid of my older brothers.
Love you as I may,
I can't bear to think what my older brothers
would say.

Chung-tzu, please,
Don’t transgress my garden;
Don’t break my sandal trees.
Not because I love them too much,
But because I’m afraid of people’s gossip.
Love you as I may,
I can’t bear to think what people would say.2

This anonymous poem is written in such a way that we feel
it is someone other than the poet himself speaking to
someone else, not to you or me as readers. And when we
read this poem we seem to be overhearing someone talking to
someone else. Thus our participation in this written
communication (i.e., our activity of reading this poem)
becomes distinctly voyeuristic. Secondly, by concerning
himself primarily with the peculiar formal properties of a
poem, Jakobson takes it as a structured object, an artistic
entity to be contemplated in its own right, thus failing
to give fair consideration to other possible aspects of
poetry, such as cognition, instruction, etc.

2. The Chinese text is available in Ma Ch’ih-ying
Adopting Jakobson's formulation of the communicative act but developing it further, Scholes redefines poetry in more precise semiotic terms. He first treats poetry in the larger context of literature, which he describes as communicative acts wherein literariness is a dominant quality (Scholes 1982:17-19). And for literariness he offers the following notion: "Stating it as simply as I can, we sense literariness in an utterance when any one of the six features of communication loses its simplicity and becomes multiple or duplicitous" (Scholes 1982:21). This notion of literariness Scholes illustrates with some minimal cases. We are all familiar with what happens when we sense a difference between the addressee (i.e., the addresser) of an utterance and the speaker of it. We say then that the words are those of a "persona" of the addresser (i.e., the author), meaning, as the word implies, that the addresser (i.e., the author) has donned a mask. Similarly, if the words of an utterance seem to be aimed not directly at us (i.e., the addressee) but at someone else, this duplicitous situation is essentially literary.

We are also placed in a literary situation when the channel of the communication is not simple. If spoken words are presented to us in writing, for instance, either the writer or the reader must supply the features of oral communication lost in this act of translation (i.e.,
translation from the spoken into the written form)--as Laurence Sterne reminds us when he takes such pains to record Corporal Trim’s posture, gestures, and emphasis when he reads a document aloud in *Tristram Shandy*. Of course, by recording in writing the reading aloud of a written document, Sterne makes the situation doubly literary with respect to the channel. Similarly, all verbal descriptions of things normally perceived visually tend to become literary because they seek to "translate" what would be a visual channel into a verbal one.

A literary situation may also occur when the form of the message becomes complicated and duplicitous. For example, messages in poetry are usually opaque, conveyed through various sound effects, syntactic patterns, ironies, ambiguities, paradoxes, and other features that make the discourse poetic.

Literariness results from duplicity of context, too. For instance, assume that two friends, John and Mike, are looking at a heavy rain through the window, both aware of the situation. If John says, "Nice weather we’re having," this would instantly be perceived by Mike as a simple irony because he knows that John is referring to a fictional context--where the weather is indeed nice--as a way of signaling his disapproval of the actual phenomenon of this particular rainstorm. It is this complex process of comparing two contexts that allows us to say that the
apparent meaning of the phrase is not the real meaning intended.

According to what has just been said, it is probable that all writing possesses some kind of duplicity (i.e., duplicity of message, addresser, addressee, codes, context, or channel) and thus contains literariness in some aspect. But we must remember that literariness does not equal literature until it dominates any given utterance. That is, an utterance has to be dominated by some kind of duplicity in order to be considered literary. In Sholes' formulation, major literary genres may be correlated with the dominant duplicity of the six elements involved in a communicative act as follows (Scholes 1982:31):

**Drama:**
- Duplicity of addresser--role-playing, acting.
- Duplicity of addressee--eavesdropping, voyeurism.
- Duplicity of codes--dramatic conventions and devices.

**Story:**
- Duplicity of context--allusion, fiction.
- Duplicity of channel--description of acts.
- Duplicity of codes--fictional conventions and devices.
Poetry:

Duplicity of message—sound effects, syntactic patternings, opacity, ambiguity.

Duplicity of codes—poetic conventions and devices.

As shown in the above list, each literary form is dominated by certain kinds of duplicities. Drama is designed to facilitate role-playing by actors and eavesdropping/voyeurism by spectators. Story embodies descriptions of situations and narrations of actions that are not present to us but are conveyed by the discourse, requiring us to visualize and respond emotionally to events we cannot enter as persons, though we may well connect them to our own personal experiences. Poetry is characterized by sound effects, figurative speech, and other verbal strategies that stimulate our awareness of the message as a specific, unique thing.

It is apparent from the above that Sholes agrees with Jakobson that poetry is dominated by the duplicity of message. However, while Jakobson emphasizes that the formal structure is a result of the duplicity of message, Sholes stresses that the formal qualities of poetry are the result of a process that multiplies or complicates the normal features of human communication (Scholes 1982:35). He points out that duplicity of message, which is embodied
in the verbal formula, is only the dominating feature of poetry, not the sole feature that creates poeticity: poeticity may also result from other kinds of duplicity, such as context, channel, etc., which often manifest themselves in the form of irony, paradox, and other devices, which, if to be comprehended, require consideration beyond the verbal structure (Scholes 1974:28). In poetic interpretation, therefore, while Jakobson emphasizes the study of the verbal structure, Scholes attempts to comprehend a complete act of written communication: to unravel the message, to search for the missing elements, to sort out the duplicitous aspects, and, ultimately, to discover the total meaning of the poem (Scholes 1982:38-40). The message we have to unravel, the missing elements we have to search for, the duplicitous aspects we have to sort out, and the total meaning we have to discover are all framed in codes. To understand the complete act of written communication, therefore, we have to break the codes in which the communication is framed. This is why poetic interpretation becomes the study of codes—or semiotics.

According to Sholes' model, the codes involved in the poetic text may be sought at three levels: pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic. The terms pragmatics, semantics, and syntactics were first used by Charles Morris (1969:84ff) to define semiotic study: pragmatics studies the relations of signs to interpreter; semantics studies the
relations of signs to the objects to which they are applicable; and syntactics studies the formal relations of signs to one another. Adapted to Sholes’ semiotic model of poetic interpretation, they may be defined as follows: pragmatics is the study of the conditions that surround the poetic utterance, in particular, the relationship between the addressee and the addressee, and the general situation of the discourse; semantics is the study of the meaning of signs and their paradigmatic relationships with other signs before their use in a particular utterance; and syntactics is the study of the rules which govern sign combinations in, and interpretation of, the utterance (Sholes 1982: 146-149).

To the three levels defined by Sholes, another should be added, namely, phonics. The term phonics usually refers to the science of sound or a method of teaching beginners to read and pronounce words by learning the phonetic value of letters or letter groups. But here it is employed to represent the study of sound in poetry, including pronunciation of words, metrical mode (number of syllables in each line), tonal patterns, rhyme, rhythm, etc. It is specially concerned with the features of sound that reinforce meaning and intensify the communication.

According to the formulation set forth above, a reader, when facing a poem, has to break its pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and phonic coding. In more specific
terms, this means that the reader must use the clues in the text to construct a pragmatic situation, to figure out a semantic pattern, to establish a complete discursive syntax, and to determine a phonic structure.

But what does the reader need in order to accomplish the tasks mentioned above? Here we have to know the major premises of the semiotic study of literature, which are different from those of the New Criticism. The New Critics claim that a literary piece is a complete "work," a closed and self-sufficient entity. The "words on the page" are all that is needed for the reader to interpret the piece. At its extreme, New Critical interpretation of a given literary work is limited to the text itself; outside of lexical information in a historical dictionary like the Oxford English Dictionary, nothing can be considered that is "not there." The semiotician, on the other hand, regards a literary piece as a "text," but a text which is a sketch or outline that must be completed by the active participation of a reader equipped with the right information.

Following this line of analysis, Scholes suggests that in poetic interpretation we must regard a poem as a text which is open, incomplete, insufficient, and which takes its meanings from the interpretive gestures of the individual reader, who is equipped with an adequate knowledge of the literary and cultural codes involved, with
personal experience, as well as an acquaintance with the linguistic features involved. The question of knowledge of literary and cultural codes and personal experience needs some elaboration. With respect to literary codes, we need to know that a poem is often related to other poems, and that this necessitates that the reader familiarize himself with those related poems in order to bring them to bear upon the particular one being studied. For example, the text of Fu Hsi-fan's (218-278) "Song of Wu Ch'u" (Wu Ch'u ko):

She's as pretty as a woman of Yen, she's as graceful as a woman of Chao.
She lives so close, yet seems separated by many cliffs.
I wish to ride the cloud as a car, or the wind as a horse.
She's like a jade on the mountain, or an orchid in the wilderness.
Yet the cloud is unreliable, the wind will stop.
My thoughts of her are all entangled--who can straighten them out?\(^3\)

is evolved from two earlier anonymous poems: "The Empty

\(^3\) The Chinese text is available in Ting Ying 1979 v. 1:251-252.
Ground of the East Gate" (Tung-men chihsan)\textsuperscript{4} and "Yen and Chao Abound with Beauties" (Yen Chao to chiao-ten).\textsuperscript{5} In "The Empty Ground of the East Gate," which reads:

By the empty ground of the east gate,
Madder grows on the slope.
The house is so close;
The person is so far away.

the speaker, who may be a man or a woman, is embittered: although the one he/she loves lives close by, it is so difficult to see her/him. And "Yen and Chao Abound with Beauties," which says:

Yen and Chao abound with beauties.
There's one looking like jade.
Wearing a silk garment,

She plays "Ch'ing-shang Tune"
by the window.
It sounds so sad—
The peg so tight, the pitch so high.
Filled with passion, she straightens her clothes;

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{4. This poem is included in the Book of Odes, compiled about 600 B.C. For the Chinese text see Ma Ch'ih-ying 1971:127-128.}
\footnote{5. This poem was written sometime between 206 B.C. and 220 A.D. For the Chinese text see Ting Ying 1979 v. 1:175.}
\end{footnotes}
She moves her steps, then hesitates, and stops.

She wishes to become a pair of swallows, Carrying clay to nest in his house.

presents a beautiful woman, longing to see the man she loves, fantasizing to be with him. In the later poem "Song of Wu Ch'u," Fu Hsuan derives the first line "She's as pretty as a woman of Yen, she's as graceful as a woman of Chao" from the poem "Yen and Chao Abound with Beauties," but changes the craving persona from a woman to a man. He also bases his second line "She lives so close, yet seems separated by many cliffs" upon the fourth and fifth lines "The house is so close / The person is so far away" of the poem "The Empty Ground of the East Gate." And from the ideas of the two poems "Yen and Chao Abound with Beauties" and "The Empty Ground of the East Gate" he develops a new poem of beautiful love fantasy. The earlier poems from which Fu Hsuan's poem is created are the intertexts for the latter. To fully understand Fu Hsuan's poem, the reader must be familiar with these intertexts.

We also need to be aware that literary works often enrich their contextual reference by quoting from, alluding to, or parodying works of other genres. They are frequently not only comments on their own generic tradition, but also comments on other traditions from which they take their being (Scholes 1982:33). This means that to under-
stand a given literary piece, the reader has to be familiar not only with the genre in which the text is written, but also with the conventions of the other genres involved, as well as with all texts connected with it. In the case of poetry, we know that short poems are often compressed, truncated, or fragmented versions of the forms of other genres, particularly the play, story, public oration, and personal essay, or even combinations of all of these. Thus, to comprehend a poem the reader has to possess an understanding of the poetic conventions, the codes of the other genres involved, and all the texts related to the poem so that he can supply those elements--dramatic, narrative, oratorical, or personal--that are lacking because of the elliptical nature of the poetic utterance.

As for the cultural code, this refers to the various conventions practiced in the culture in which the poetic text is composed. These include such things as formal philosophical ideas, mythological and religious beliefs, descriptive systems, themes, etc. that exist and are used in the poet's society. To break the pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and phonic coding of the poem, the reader often needs to discover clues in the text and relate them to his understanding of these cultural conventions.

From Scholes' point of view, personal experience is also necessary for a thorough understanding of the poem. This is based on his theory that "an act of communication
may indeed point to the phenomenal world and even have the temerity to aim at what may lie behind the wall of phenomena—as *Moby Dick* seeks to tell us something about a real whaling industry and the behavior of real whales and whalers, while also probing deeper into the mysteries of the universe" (Scholes 1982:24). Unlike many other critics who claim that the poetic text is largely self-referential rather than oriented to a world context, Sholes believes that poetry is connected with the phenomenal or experiential world (Scholes 1982:31). The meaning of any sign or word in a poem, for instance, is not only a function of its place in a paradigmatic system and its use in a syntagmatic situation, but also a function of human experience (Scholes 1982:35). For example, for those who have had personal experiences with such things as marriage or bereavement, the words themselves will signify something different than they will for those who have had no experience of those things. According to this notion, all poems, like all plays and stories, assume experience of life as an aspect of the context shared by poet and reader. Some poems refuse to open up to us until we are sufficiently mature. Others close as we lose access to some contexts through growing older or forgetting our youthful beginnings. This indicates that, in poetic interpretation, human experience is also needed, not just a knowledge of the poem's formal features.
This brings up the issue of the value of poetry. Just as an understanding of a poem also relies on the reader's experience, our reasons for valuing a given poem may have to do with the experience it provides, too. As Sholes rightly observes:

To the extent that a work of literature points toward our experience as living human beings, we may value it for what we call its "truth" or "rightness"—which is not a specifically formal quality but a matter of the fit between a message and its existential context.... Literary coding of discourse is a formal strategy, a means of structuring that enables the maker of the discourse to communicate certain kinds of meaning. We may, of course, value some literary utterances mainly for their formal elegance, but we also may value literary utterances for the insight they provide about aspects of existence (Scholes 1982:34).

**Riffaterre's Reading Procedure**

So far we have learned that to understand a poem is to comprehend a complete act of written communication, and that to comprehend a complete act of written communication, we have to break the codes in which the communication is framed. We have also learned that codes exist at the pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and phonic levels, and that to break these codes the reader needs a knowledge of literary and cultural codes and experience, as well as an acquaintance with linguistic features. In summary, we have already learned where the codes exist and what the reader needs in order to break the codes. However, how the reader goes about breaking the codes of a
poetic text is a problem not yet touched upon. On this issue Sholes is very vague. In the demonstration of his interpretive model the most specific advice he has offered in this connection is the following:

The skill required for poetic interpretation involves a strong concern for prosaic meaning combined with a readiness to push beyond the prosaic to generate new meanings. In semiotic terms this often means that the established codes of interpretation, whether grammatical or lexical, may have to be reconstructed (Sholes 1982:42-43).

From the above, it seems that Sholes' "prosaic meaning" refers to "literal meaning," and that his "push beyond the prosaic to generate new meanings" and "the established codes of interpretation ... may have to be reconstructed" suggest a process of reading or interpretation. But Sholes has never specifically spelled out or described this process. To answer our question "How can the reader break the codes in a poetic text?" it will be useful to refer to the writings of Michael Riffaterre.

In his *Semiotics of Poetry* Riffaterre points out that the poetic phenomenon is "a dialectic between text and reader" (Riffaterre 1978:1). And in this dialectic, the text plays two roles: "referentiality" and "indirection." Referentiality means "expressing message or relating to reality literally through linguistic conventions." For example, in Chang Chiu-ling's (673-740) poem "Since you, my Lord, Left me" (Tzu chün chih ch’u yi):
Since you, my lord, left me,
All my labors, left undone.
Thinking of you, I am like the full moon,
Night follows night, bright luster wanes.\(^6\)

the first and the second lines mean what their words literally say. Indirection means "saying one thing and meaning another." For instance, in the above poem, the third and the fourth lines say "... I am like the full moon / Night follows night, bright luster wanes," but they actually mean something like "I pine from thinking of you" or "I waste away through craving for reunion with you."

Up to a point, referentiality and indirection are capable of existing side by side as opposed forces in a poetic text. Beyond a certain level, where the clutter of trivial details works against a literal interpretation of the text, indirection completely overcomes referentiality.

Paralleling the text's two roles, the reader also enters the text seeking two kinds of meaning: "mimesis" and "semiosis." Mimesis is the literal, referential meaning the poem offers through its purely linguistic elements. When a literal, referential meaning is impossible to obtain—as in metaphor, metonymy, and other figures of speech—the reader attempts to generate a

\(^6\) Quoted from F. Cheng 1982:108.
"figurative" meaning by not moving from words directly to realities, but from word to word, sign to sign. For Riffaterre, the figurative meaning is called "semiosis," and the move from mimesis to semiosis is called a "semiotic process," a process indispensable in poetic interpretation.

After clarifying the concepts of referentiality, indirection, mimesis, and semiosis, Riffaterre indicates (1978:4ff) that decoding the poem starts with an "initial reading" stage that goes on from the beginning to the end of the text, from the top to the bottom of the page, and follows the syntagmatic unfolding. The initial reading requires the reader's "linguistic competence," which refers to the reader's grasp of linguistic system of rules which permits him to produce or understand utterances or to identify ungrammatical utterances (Culler 1978:9). Such a grasp includes the reader's mimetic assumption that language is referential—and at this stage

7. Based on Charles S. Peirce's semiotic theory, a sign is something that stands for something else, and every sign that is understood gives rise to another sign in the mind of the interpreter. This notion of one single sign being interpreted by another has been presented as an infinite regress called unlimited semiosis (Scholes 1982: 147). In poetry, a sign is a verbal formula, which may be a word, a phrase, a sentence, or even a whole text.

8. "Syntagmatic" is the adjective form of "syntagm," which, according to post-Saussurian linguistics, is opposed to "paradigm." Syntagm refers to a word's grammatical relation to other words within a particular utterance. Thus, the "syntagmatic unfolding" of a poem is the linear flow of words in its text.
words do indeed seem to relate first of all to realities or
to express messages directly. It also includes the
reader’s ability to perceive incompatibilities between
words. For example, the reader may recognize that a word
or phrase may not make literal sense, and that it may make
sense only if he performs a semantic transfer, only if, for
instance, he reads that word or phrase as a metaphor or
metonymy. Linguistic competence further embraces the
reader’s ability to identify difficulties called “ungram-
maticalities,” deviant expressions which would not be
expected or tolerated in a normal situation, for example,
"For fear I’d wake them, up in heaven" in Li Po’s "Summit
Temple" (T’i feng-ting sau):

This night, in Summit Temple,
Raise my hand, touch stars.
Don’t dare to raise my voice,
For fear I’d wake them, up in heaven.9

The initial reading also requires "literary
competence," which refers to the reader’s familiarity with
the literary and critical traditions, descriptive systems,
themes, mythology, religion, and philosophy available in
the culture in which the poem is written, and, above all,
other texts related to the one under study. Wherever there
are gaps or compressions in the poetic text--such as

incomplete descriptions, or allusions, or quotations--it is this literary competence alone that will enable the reader to respond properly and to complete the text or fill in the missing elements.

In the initial reading the reader may be frustrated for two reasons. First, the text may characteristically display patterns (metrical, phonological, semantic) which cannot be interpreted referentially; these patterns are signs which need to be interpreted but can only be dealt with at another stage. Secondly, the text may be a mere string of juxtaposed trivial, literal representations refusing to yield any coherent sense, so the reader knows that if he is to interpret it properly he must seek a higher level at which a unity can be identified--a level where the text can become a single unit. These frustrations give rise to a "retroactive reading"--in which the obstacles that arose when one tried to read literally become the keys to a new reading, the keys to "significance," the formal and semantic unity of the poem (Riffaterre 1982:2, 6). At the second stage, the reader progresses through the text, remembering what he has just read and modifies his understanding of it in the light of what he is now decoding. As he works forward from start to
finish, he is reviewing, revising, and comparing backward. He is in effect performing a structural decoding; as he moves through the text he comes to recognize, by dint of discriminations and comparisons, or simply because he is now able to put them together, that the successive and differing statements, first noticed as mere ungrammaticalities, are in fact equivalent, for they now appear as variants of the same "kernel concept." The text is in effect a variation of one structure—thematic, symbolic, or whatever—and this sustained relation to one structure constitutes the significance of the poem. In this process there occurs a transfer of a sign from one level of discourse into another. In other words, this process integrates signs from the mimetic (literal) level into the higher level of significance. It is a manifestation of

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10. Here Riffaterre seems to be suggesting that the progression of the retroactive reading is like that of the initial reading, i.e., moving from the beginning to the end, following the syntagmatic advance. In reality, however, the retroactive reading does not necessarily take place that way. It may start from the middle and then progress back and forth, or it may even commence from the end and then move backward. In any case, the reader may set out from wherever he can find a heuristic point.

11. For Riffaterre (1978:19), a poem results from the transformation of a "kernel concept" (or "matrix"), which is a word, a phrase, or a minimal literal sentence, into a longer, complex, and nonliteral periphrasis. The kernel concept and the text are variants of the same structure; the verbal form of the poem is only a detour or circuitous path around what it means.
semiosis, and is how the reader breaks the codes in the poetic text.

The interpretive procedure outlined above may be understood better if illustrated with the famous poem "Seven-pace Poem" (Ch'i-pu shih), which has been attributed to Ts'ao Chih (192-232):

Beans boil on a beanstalk fire.
In the pot they cry,
"Having sprung from the same roots,
So eager are you to boil each other, why?" 12

In the initial reading of this poem, the reader, equipped with linguistic competence, attempts a literal interpretation and finds that it actually presents no referential difficulty in the first and the third lines—a literal reading is perfectly feasible here. But in the second line he perceives an incompatibility—"In the pot they cry" does not make perfect literal sense. To make sense, "they" ("beans") have to go through a semantic transfer: we have to say that the beans are personified and that the sound of the boiling water is likened to human crying. In the fourth line, "So eager are you to boil each other, why?" the reader encounters greater difficulties: who are "eager

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12. There has been some doubt about the authorship of this poem (see Ch'en Kuei-chu 1978:154). But for our present purpose, let us put that issue aside. Also, this poem has two versions; one with four lines, which is more widely known and which is quoted here; the other with six lines, both available in Chao Fu-t'an 1982:148.
to boil each other"? Are they the beanstalks? The beanstalks are inanimate objects, so how could they have the animate attribute of being eager? In other words, "The beanstalks are eager to boil each other" is an ungrammatical utterance, resulting from the deviant collocation of the inanimate "beanstalks" and the animate attribute of "eagerness." Furthermore, beanstalks are collected and burned as fuel. In a literal sense, they suffer just as much as the beans being boiled. For the beans to be boiled, the beanstalks have to be burned first, so why would they be eager to boil the beans? Therefore, to say that "who" refers to the beanstalks does not make any literal sense.

By taking the language of the text as being literally representational, the reader obtains a string of referential representations which do not make clear sense. Therefore he knows that if he is to make any sense out of this poem he must abandon attempts at mimetic interpretations altogether in favor of semiosis—he has to look for a higher level of meaning where the aforementioned trivial elements may be united to signify a single kernel concept. Thus the reader's frustration with mimesis urges him to conduct a retroactive reading, and his difficulties with the literal interpretation of "So eager are you to boil each other, why?" become keys to a significance at a higher level.
In the initial reading, when the reader was perplexed by problems of ungrammaticality, his literary competence reminded him that Chinese poetry often embodies polar oppositions in diction. For example, in Ch' en Tzu-ang's (661-702) "Climbing the Terrace of Yu-chou" (Teng Yu-chou t'ai):

Before, I cannot see the men of old,
Beyond, can't see the men to come.
Ponder the infinite, Heaven-and-Earth.
Alone, confused, I melt to tears. 13

one can see these oppositions: "before" / "beyond"; "the men of old" / "the men to come"; "Heaven" / "Earth." With this understanding, the reader, in the retroactive reading of the poem under study, finds that "beans" and "beanstalks" may be treated as polar oppositions, which may be personified and infused with hostility.

In addition, because the poem is thought to have been written by Ts' ao Chih, the reader's literary competence (in this case his historical knowledge) encourages him to interpret the "beans" and the "beanstalks" as analogous to Ts' ao Chih and Ts' ao P'i (187-226), and the hostility as a metaphor of the rivalry between the two. In the third century, the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-220) had grown weak and its territory had been divided by contending

generals into three kingdoms: Wei, Shu, and Wu. Ts’ao Ts’ao (155-220), general of Wei, was the most successful of the contenders for power until 220. He gained control over the last Han emperor and exercised imperial power even while the emperor was still on the throne. Among his sons, Ts’ao Chih and Ts’ao P’i (five years older than the former) were the most hopeful of becoming heir to his power. A sharp rivalry naturally developed between the two. Eventually, Ts’ao Chih, allegedly an arrogant and unrestrained person, lost Ts’ao Ts’ao’s favor, and, in 217, Ts’ao P’i became heir to the throne. In 220, after his father’s death, Ts’ao P’i, forcing the last Han emperor to abdicate, took the throne himself and founded the new dynasty of Wei. And by his implacable dislike of Ts’ao Chih, he effectively barred the latter, who aspired to win a reputation by serving the state, from any real political capacity. Furthermore, he kept looking for opportunities to persecute his brother. In 225, he visited Ts’ao Chih’s estate. Presumably after some heated discussion, he said that Ts’ao Chih would be punished by death if he could not compose a poem while they walked seven paces together (Dunn 1970:91; Shih-shuo_hsin yü 2.60). Thereupon, after the seventh pace Ts’ao Chih improvised the “Seven-pace Poem” quoted above.

14. For a fuller account see Dunn 1970:5, 6, 17, 76.
Supported by this information, the reader's treatment of the "beanstalks" and the "beans" as polar oppositions analogous to Ts'ao P'i and Ts'ao Chih, and the hostility between the beanstalks" and the "beans" as a metaphor of the rivalry between the two brothers becomes feasible. And these analogies in turn lead to a hypothetical kernel concept, "one's complaint against one's brother's scheme to harm him." In other words, the reader is guided to assume that this poem embodies the theme of the poet's protest against his brother's plot to persecute him. With this hypothesis, the reader, in the retroactive reading, instead of taking the "beans" and the "beanstalks" literally, considers them as a vehicle of semiosis; that is, he interprets both these items as unified metaphors that completely overlay their referential meanings. This hypothesis also urges him to re-interpret other items in the poem: in the retroactive reading, the word "boil" assumes the meaning of "persecute"; "roots" becomes the metaphor of "parents"; "eager" suggests the keen rivalry between the two brothers. Moreover, the phrase "they cry" and the question "So eager are you to boil each other, why?" which were noticed in the initial reading as containing an incompatibility and an ungrammaticality respectively, are both recognized in the retroactive reading as utterances for advancing the poet's protest. In short, the literally different items of the text are
actually indirect, variant actualizations of the same kernel concept: "the poet's protest against his brother's persecution."

An Interpretive Model for Chinese Poetry

In the above illustration, Riffaterre's procedure proved to be very powerful in helping the reader decode the poetic text. Incorporating this procedure with the four levels (pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and phonic) identified earlier, we can derive a new model of interpretation for Chinese poetry which may be diagramed as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Pragmatics} & \quad \text{Semantics} & \quad \text{Syntactics} & \quad \text{Phonics} \\
\text{Initial reading} & \rightarrow & \text{--- Retroactive reading} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Based on this model, the interpretation of a poem is accomplished in two steps: initial reading and retroactive reading. In the initial reading, the reader goes from the beginning to the end of the text, following the syntagmatic unfolding. While trying to interpret the text literally, he is frustrated by problems, such as incompatibilities, ungrammaticalities, etc., which may be in pragmatics, semantics, syntactics, or phonics, or in some or all of these areas. The puzzles that surface at this stage become keys to the retroactive reading. At the second stage, the reader may begin anywhere he can find
a heuristic point. He may deal with pragmatics, semantics, syntactics, or phonics first, and not necessarily in the same order. He can commence from the beginning, the middle, or the end of the text. And he may move forward, backward, or back and forth. At any rate, in the process of this reading, he remembers what he has just read and modifies his understanding of the text in the light of his new discoveries. By reviewing and revising the interpretations of the elements which appeared to be incongruous in the first reading, based on the clues just found in the second stage, he finally obtains a coherent sense of the poem.

In this chapter I have established a semiotic model of poetic interpretation. Later on I shall apply this model to the interpretation of Chinese poetry, using Tu Mu's works as example. But before doing that, I shall present a brief biography of Tu Mu in the next chapter, which will be helpful in the understanding of the poems from a semiotic point of view.
CHAPTER 2

TU MU’S LIFE AND TIMES

Certain critics, such as Rene Wellek and Austin Warren (1956:77), argue that the literary work should be divorced from its creator. But for semioticians, a literary piece is an elliptical text, open to interpretation. If the reader wishes to approach full understanding of the text, he must fill in the gaps with appropriate information, including the knowledge of the poet’s life and times (Scholes 1982:30, 34, 38). The study of biography is also valued by some other scholars. As Leon Edel (1973:64) observes, biography can offer us a clear understanding of the creator, and such understanding in turn can make the creator’s works more intelligible. Guerin (1966:3) also suggests:

Any piece of literature will always be more meaningful to knowledgeable people than to uninformed ones. The greatness of the work comes from the fact that when the wisest, most cultivated, most sensitive minds bring all of their information, experience, and feeling to contemplate it, they are moved and impressed by its beauty, by its unique kinds of knowledge, and even by its nonaesthetical value.

In studying a poet, however, one may be easily tempted to use the poet’s life and works interchangeably to illuminate each other, deriving biographical data from
his poems and then read his poems in the light of the supposed biography, or deducing the poet's personality from his poetry and then basing interpretation of his poetry on the assumed personality (Rogerson 1974:169; J. Liu 1969:25). To eschew such hazards, in discussing the life and times of Tu Mu, I have tried to avoid, whenever possible, using those poems of his that can only lead to pure speculation. Instead, I have attempted to rely mainly on the data contained in external sources, such as his letters and other prose writings, poems or letters addressed to him by other people, as well as his two biographies in the official histories of the T'ang Dynasty, the Chiu T'ang-shu and Hsin T'ang-shu.

The Times

Tu Mu was a literatus of the T'ang Dynasty (618-906), which was culturally one of the most glorious periods of Chinese history. Unfortunately, however, he lived in a time when the empire was starting to crumble. In 755, about a half century prior to Tu Mu's birth, when the empire was at the apex of its glory under the reign of the emperor Hsuan-tsung (r.712-755), An Lu-shan,Military
Commissioner (chih-tu-shih) of P'ing-lu, Fan-yang, and Ho-tung provinces (covering the major portions of modern Liaoning, Jehol, Hopeh, Shansi, and Shantung provinces) rebelled and plunged the empire into chaos. Although the rebellion was eventually suppressed, the empire never fully recovered its former strength and vitality (Pulleyblank 1955:1). Instead, it continued to disintegrate, and by Tu Mu's times (the beginning of the ninth century) the central government had lost effective control over many parts of the empire. The crumbling of the empire may be attributed to several factors--political, military, social, and economical (Somers 1979:682). However, they are not all particularly pertinent to Tu Mu's poetry. In the following I shall only point out those--provincial warlords, alien invaders, unscrupulous eunuchs, and rival factions--that had a significant impact on Tu Mu's life and poetic creation. Since a thorough discussion of these factors would require a great deal of time and space, here I shall only give a concise account, leaving further relevant details for the next section "The Poet's Life," or as comments accompanying the interpretations of specific poems.

1. The translations of T'ang official titles used in this dissertation are adopted from Charles O. Hucher's A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China.
Provincial Warlords

In T'ang times, the nation was divided into prefectures (chou), 2 which in turn were further divided into a number of districts (hsiên). Each prefecture was governed by a prefect (tz'u-shih), 3 and each district by a magistrate (hsiên-ling). In addition to the civil administrative system, the frontier territories were also guarded by a military system. These territories were composed of circuits (tao), each with a commander-in-chief called a ta-tu-tu. Under each circuit were a number of regions (chün), 4 each with a commanding officer called a shih. A circuit usually covered several prefectures. And its commander-in-chief's responsibility was only to defend the territories from foreign invasion and involved no civil administrative duties. Later during the reign of Hsuan-tsung the military defense system was expanded and the number of commanders-in-chief increased. Furthermore, each commander-in-chief was given the title of military commis-

2. The prefecture was called chou during the reign of Kao-tsung (650-683), and chün during the reign of Hsuan-tsung (712-755). The name was changed back to chou again during the reign of Su-tsung (756-762) (Shen Jen-yüan 1977:163).

3. The prefect was called tz'u-shih when the prefecture was called chou, and t'ai-shou when the prefecture was called chün (Shen Jen-yüan 1977:163).

4. Chün is sometimes called shou-t'i, ch'eng, or ch'en (Li Chieh 1971 v. 1:226f; Chang Ch'ü 1978 v. 2:457-462).
sioner, bestowed with civil administrative authority, and allowed to recruit his own mercenaries. Gradually they became powerful warlords who defied the imperial orders. In addition, although military commissioners were normally appointed by the court, some of them obtained their titles by hereditary succession or by seizing power after their predecessor’s death. To this, the court was unable to put an end (Peterson 1979:509). Practically independent of the central government, the military commissioners often fought among themselves for power and territory and sometimes even attempted to topple the throne, An Lu-shan being a notable example (Pulleyblank 1955:61; Peterson 1979:487-90). After the An Lu-shan rebellion, this system of military governance was extended to the inner territories. Thus, the court faced a growing threat to its continuance and the people suffered more and more from fractional strife. And finally it was a military commissioner named Chu Ch’üan-chung who destroyed the empire and founded a new dynasty called Hou-liang (907-923).5

Alien Invaders

The T'ang empire was bordered by several tribal peoples who sometimes invaded or even temporarily occupied parts of China. During Tu Mu's times the Tibetans of the west and the Uighurs of the north especially caused great trouble to the empire (Twitchett 1979a:33).

Early in the seventh century the Tibetans grew into a powerful kingdom and embarked on a career of aggressive expansion. Then during Kao-tsung's reign (649-83) they destroyed the T'u-yü-hun kingdom in modern Tsinghai province, which had previously formed a buffer between them and the Chinese territories in Kansu. From then on, the Tibetans constantly threatened the Chinese. During the rebellion of An Lu-shan, when the Chinese frontier troops were summoned to fight the insurgents, leaving the borders unguarded, the Tibetans crossed the northwestern border and took over parts of modern Shensi, Kansu, Sinkiang, Tsinghai, Suiyuan, and Ningxia provinces, where they remained until the 840s (Twitchett 1979a:35). In 763 they even proceeded to occupy Ch'ang-an and caused tremendous destruction (Peterson 1979:490). Although departing two weeks later, they resumed their invasions from time to time and posed a serious threat to China.

The Uighurs were originally not so troublesome as the Tibetans. As the T'ang empire was suffering from the An Lu-shan rebellion, they even provided mercenary troops
who helped bring the rebellion to a close (Peterson 1979: 490; Dalby 1979:567). In 841, however, because of losses of cattle to drought and attacks on their lands by the Kirghiz people, large advance parties of Uighurs moved south into modern Suiyuan province. And in 843 they forced themselves into modern Ta-t’ung, Shansi province. Although eventually pacified, they caused immense misery to the Chinese (Dalby 1979:664-5; Li Chieh 1971 v. 1:236-239, 264-269).

Unscrupulous Eunuchs

Eunuchs were the personal servants of the emperor, and their access to the throne provided them with an opportunity to acquire political power and sometimes to manipulate the succession to the throne, and subsequently to gain special favor from the new emperor. The emperor Hsuan-tsung (r. 712-755), for example, was crowned through the scheming of the eunuchs Yang Sau-hsi and Kao Li-shih. Subsequently Yang and Kao became Hsuan-tsung’s confidants, and Kao, particularly, was even able to get his favorite, Li Lin-fu, appointed to the position of grand councilor (tsai-haiang) (Li Chieh 1971 v.1:205). The emperor Su-tsung’s (r. 756-762) accession to the throne was also arranged by the eunuch Li Fu-kuo. Later Li was given the
command of the Palace Armies (Chin-chūn) along with enormous power in the court (Li Chieh 1971 v.1: 205; Lin 1968: 185). At the same time, many other eunuchs were also made inspectors of the armies (kuan-chūn Jung shih) or army-supervising commissioners (chien-chūn) to watch over professional military leaders (Li Chieh 1971 v.1: 205ff; Lin 1968: 298ff; Peterson 1979: 512). From then on, the eunuchs became more and more powerful. They controlled the succession to the throne and murdered anybody in their way. The emperor Wen-tsung (r. 827-840) tried to eliminate them. Helped by two ruthless officials Li Hsün and Cheng Chu, he liquidated several powerful eunuchs. However, a plot designed to eradicate the remaining eunuchs in 835 backfired, and the eunuchs, led by Ch’iu Shih-liang, slaughtered all the grand councilors, and many other high officials, as well as the families of both. After this massacre, which is known in Chinese history as the "Sweet Dew Incident" (Kan-lu chih-pien) (Li Chieh 1971 v.1: 260-262), no one could get rid of the eunuchs, and they continued to outrage the court. And when they were finally liquidated in 903 by Chu Ch’üan-chung, the T’ang dynasty was already close to its end, because Chu usurped the

throne four years later and founded the new dynasty Hou-liang.

Rival Factions

While the eunuchs were rampant at court, the civil court officials were not able to unite against them. Instead, they were divided into two rival groups, which intrigued against each other. The strife between these two groups, traditionally believed to have been led by Niu Seng-ju (779-848) and Li Te-yü (787-850) respectively, started in 808 (Ch'en Yin-k'o 1974:101). That year Niu Seng-ju and Li Tsung-min, both having passed the examinations for the degree of Presented Scholar (chin-shih-k'ō) in 805, took the special test held by imperial decree (chih chü) for the degree of Virtuous and Upright Men Capable of Outspoken Advice (hsien-liang fang-cheng chih-yen chi-chien k'ō). At such examinations the candidates were supposed to answer questions posed by the emperor concerning contempo-

7. Some historians think these are misnomers. For example, Chao Yi (Kai-yü ta'ung-kao:20.383f) thinks that "Niu-Li" does not refer to Niu Seng-ju and Li Te-yü as the respective leaders of two rival factions, but to Niu Seng-ju and his friend Li Tsung-min. Ta'en Chung-mien (1960:142-145) argues that Niu certainly had a faction but Li Te-yü did not, and points out the unreliable nature of historical accounts written by pro-Niu men. However, even if Li Te-yü did not consciously form a faction, the fact remains that he and his friends acted against Niu and his friends, and the latter no doubt regarded the former as a rival clique. Therefore historians usually call the two groups the "Niu faction" and the "Li faction," and regard Niu Seng-ju and Li Te-yü as the leaders of the Niu faction and Li faction respectively.
ary state affairs. Although this part of the examination had become a mere formality and the papers were usually graded on the basis of literary skill rather than political views, both Niu and Li took the expression "outspoken advice" literally and criticized the Grand Councilor Li Chi-fu's (758-812) policy of using force to subjugate insubordinate military commissioners. Although they passed the examination, the examiners were demoted and sent to the provinces and Niu and Li were kept in minor positions. Such a turn of events, argued Niu and Li, was Li Chi-fu's doing. Thus they started to scheme against Li Chi-fu and his son Li Te-yü, an academician of the Hanlin Academy (Han-lin hêiêh-äh). After Li Chi-fu's death, Niu Seng-ju and Li Tsung-min rose to prominence. Then in 821, a military commissioner accused Ch'ien Hui, Chief Examiner for the degree of Presented Scholar, of favoritism. When the emperor interviewed academicians of the Hanlin Academy in the investigation, Li Te-yü supported the charge. Thus the emperor ordered a reexamination. This time Li Tsung-min's son-in-law, among some others who had passed the previous examinations, failed. Subsequently Ch'ien Hui was banished for favoritism, as was Li Tsung-min for allegedly influencing the examiner. Hence the enmity of Li Tsung-min and Niu Seng-ju for Li Te-yü deepened. From then on until these three leading figures died some forty years later, the two groups struggled against each other. When one
group dominated, members of the other group would be demoted, relegated to powerless positions, or banished (Chang Ch'ún 1978 v.1:211-223; Lin 1968:305-307).

In addition to personal malice, the friction between the two groups, according to Ch'en Yin-k'o (1974:71-87), Miyazaki Ichisada (1981:112), and Wolfgang Franke (1960:7), stemmed from the social backgrounds of the members of the group. In T'ang times the civil service examination was re instituted and eventually became the main avenue to officialdom. And yet, members of the aristocracy enjoyed the so-called yin inheritance, i.e., the privilege of securing official position without examination (CTS: 42.1805). As Ch'en has claimed, Li Te-yü and most of his followers came from the aristocracy and entered officialdom in this way. As a result of family traditions, they usually emphasized the Confucian classics over literary composition, and were politically more conservative. Members of the Niu group, on the other hand, got their positions through examinations. They emphasized literary composition over the Confucian classics and were generally more liberal in view. Also, the aristocratic clique differed from the Presented Scholar clique in their policy toward provincial governors and foreign tribes: while the former favored pacification of both by force, the latter opposed it. The argument that class differences were involved in these struggles might have been true in the
beginning, as Li Te-yü had come from aristocratic origins and entered officialdom without examination, while Niu Seng-ju and Li Tsung-min had entered officialdom through the examination route. But as the struggle evolved, each clique, it would seem, absorbed new members from both sides. And the members of both cliques did not always hold the same attitudes concerning official policy toward the provincial governors and foreign tribes. For example, Tu Mu, as will be discussed later, was allegedly a member of Niu Seng-ju’s group, but he supported Li Te-yü’s policy and actually offered him advice.

Ch’en Yin-k’o (1974:79-83) and Miyazaki Ichisada (1981:74, 114) also suggest that the frictions between the rival groups resulted from the examination system. Although the aristocrats could gain appointments through the yin privilege, those who entered officialdom through the examinations were more highly regarded by the imperial government and by society at large. Therefore most

8. For example, both Tu Mu and his brother Tu Yi entered officialdom through the examination system. However, while Tu Mu sided with the Niu faction, Tu Yi was loyal to the Li faction. Tu Mu’s involvement in the Niu faction will be discussed in the section "Political Strife and Family Burden." Tu Yi’s loyalty to the Li faction is clearly revealed in the following event: He started his official career in 834 under Li Te-yü, then Military Commissioner of Chen-hai. When Li was banished to Yüan-chou in 835, he was offered a job by Niu Seng-ju. But he turned it down, saying that he did not want to disappoint Li who was in trouble (See T’ang ku Huai-nan ... Tu-ch’un mu-chih-ming [hereafter “Tu-ch’un mu-chih-ming], FCWC:138-140).
career-minded individuals sought to pass the civil-service examinations. As this situation developed, a personal master-disciple relationship arose between the examiner and the men he passed, much like the bond between a political leader and his henchmen; while men who passed the examination in the same year considered one another classmates and helped one another much like comrades fighting together against the same enemy on the battlefield. Therefore, group loyalties depended on more than class standing alone, and were often formed in the examination process. In consequence, T’ang officials frequently acted according to personal feelings as much as they did out of concern for the general welfare of the country, and thus factional strife inevitably arose. This seems true especially with the Niu clique: its two leaders Niu Seng-ju and Li Tsung-min passed the examinations for the degree of Presented Scholar together in 805 and the special examinations held by the imperial decree in 808. They both criticized Li Te-yü’s father, then a grand councilor, in the 808 examination. And after that, they always stood together against Li Te-yü on all issues.

Whatever the reasons, the two cliques were often engaged in mutual recrimination and retaliation. This was a key factor in weakening the central government. Furthermore, both parties were not averse to seeking support from the eunuch faction, and as a result, neither side made any
determined effort to stop the eunuchs from abusing power, and, in a sense, collaborated with them in depoiling the nation. 9

The Poet's Life

Tu Mu, courtesy name Mu-chih, is also known as Fan-ch’uan, or "Fan River" (after the name of a river near Chu-p'o, some thirty-five li to the south of Ch’ang-an, where part of his life was spent). As a major poet of the T’ang dynasty, he is often differentiated from Tu Fu (712-770), or the "Greater Tu" (Ta Tu), as the "Lesser Tu" (Hsiao Tu). While some sources10 indicate that Tu Mu was a native of Wan-nien district (Wan-nien hsien, to the northeast of modern Lin-t’ung district of Shensi province), Superior Prefecture of Ching-chao (Ching-chao fu, roughly covering modern Lin-t’ung and Ch’ang-an districts of Shensi province), the dates of his birth and death have not yet been clearly established. His biographies in the Chiu T’ang-shu (147.3986-3987) and the Hsin T’ang-shu (166.5093-5097) indicate that he died at the age of fifty. Moreover, the epitaph he wrote for his younger brother Tu Yi (807-851) in 852 indicates that he was himself fifty years

9. For more detailed accounts of this factional strife, see Chang Ch’un 1978 v. 2:330ff and Li Chieh 1971 v. 1:271ff.

10. See Tu Mu’s biography in CTS:147.3986-3987 and HTS:166.5093-5097; "Tung-chih-jih ... Ah-Yi shih" [hereafter "Ah-yi shih"], FCSCC:60.
old at that time, and it would seem to follow that he
must have died in the same year. And by Chinese reckoning
which considers a person one year old as soon as he is
born, we may argue with some assurance that Tu Mu was born
in 803. 1

Family Background and Formative Years

Tu Mu was a grandson of Tu Yu (735-812), a
prominent statesman who served under the emperors Te-tsung
(r. 780-805), Shun-tsung (r. 805), and Hsien-tsung (r. 805-
820), as well as a great scholar who had compiled the
T'ung-tien, a masterful encyclopedic compilation of data on
political and social history from the earliest time to
about 755. In the year Tu Mu was born (803), Tu Yu was
promoted to the position of Grand Councilor, which office
he continued to hold for about ten years. And when Tu Mu
was three years old, Tu Yu was enfeoffed as the Duke of
Ch'i (Ch'i-kuo kung). Tu Yu's sons were also court

11. Kuraishi Takeshiro (1925), basing his argument on
information drawn from Tu Mu's "Shang Ch'ih-chou Li-shih-
chun shu" [hereafter "Shang Li-shih-chun shu] (FCWC:190-
193), "T'ang ... Li-ch'un mu-chih-ming" [hereafter "Li-ch'un
mu-chih-ming], (FCWC:130-132), "Shang ... ch'iu Hu-chou
ti-erh-ch'i, hereafter "Ti-erh-ch'i] (FCWC:244-246),
and "Tu-ch'un mu-chih-ming" reaches the same conclusion that
Tu Mu was born in 803. Ch'ien Ta-hsin (Yi-nien lu:1.17b)
claims that Tu Mu was born in 803 (the nineteenth year of
the Chen-yuan era and died in 852 (the sixth year of the
Ta-chung era). Miao Yu-chu (1962:413ff) refuting Ts'en
Chung-mien's argument that Tu Mu died no earlier than 852,
also claims the dates of Tu Mu's birth and death to be 803
and 852 respectively.
officials. When he died in 812, his oldest son was serving as the Vice Minister of the Court of the National Granaries (Sau-nung shao-ch’ing); his second son as the Magistrate of Chao-ying district (Chao-ying hsien-ling); and his third son, Tu Mu’s father, Tu Ts’ung-yü, as the Vice Director of the Bureau of Equipment (Chia-pu y’an-wai-lang), the Ministry of War (Ping-pu).12

Tu Yu occupied a magnificent mansion in An-jen li, a ward situated in the center of Ch’ang-an.13 During his tenure as Grand Councilor, the family was very prosperous and large. Three generations occupied the household. In the huge mansion, the young Tu Mu seems to have enjoyed most the large collection of books which included a copy of his grandfather’s monumental work, the T’ung-tien, as well as the Confucian classics, the histories, and literature.14

In addition to the mansion, the Tus owned a family temple nearby, and an estate at Chu-p’o.15 On the latter there were beautiful creeks, trees, birds, pavilions, and ancient relics. Tu Yu often invited dignitaries and

12. See Tu Mu’s biography in CTS:147.3987 and HTS:166.5090.


14. Ibid.

15. See Feng Chi-wu’s annotation in FCSCC:25 and Tu Mu’s biography in HTS:166.5090.
celebrities there to hunt or to enjoy the pleasure of wine, music, and dancing. Tu Mu must have enjoyed the scenery and parties at the estate, for in his later years he wrote many poems fondly recalling his experiences there.16

The death of Tu Yu in 812, however, had serious repercussions on his descendants' standard of living. As indicated above, at that time Tu Mu's father, Tu Ts'ung-yü, was Vice Director of the Bureau of Equipment, the Ministry of War. In terms of actual power and influence, the position was not an important one; it is also unlikely it could have paid very well, either. In T'ang times, official positions were graded into nine ranks (p'in) and subdivided into thirty classes (teng) (Hucker 1985:35; Ta t'ang liu tien 2.10a-18a). A vice director's position usually carried the class of 6b1 (Sun Kuo-tung 1978:53),17 sixteenth on a scale of thirty. Thus, the level of pay was not large, at least by comparison with that his father had enjoyed. And since Tu Ts'ung-yü was a sickly


17. According to Hucker, the T'ang officials were graded into nine ranks and subdivided into thirty classes. The highest ranks, from one through three, were each divided into two classes, a (cheng) and b (ta'ung), from 1a (cheng-1 p'in) down to 3b (ta'ung-3 p'in). In ranks four through nine, each class was further subdivided into an upper (shang) and a lower (hsia) grade, yielding, for example, 5a2 (cheng-5 p'in hsia-teng) and 8b1 (ta'ung-8 p'in shang-teng).
man,\textsuperscript{18} it is also likely his medical expenses were heavy. In any case, Tu Ts‘ung-yü died when Tu Mu was in his middle or late teens,\textsuperscript{19} and he seems to have left rather little for his children except a thirty-room residence, which might have been inherited from his father.\textsuperscript{20} And according to a letter Tu Mu wrote in 850 seeking an official appointment,\textsuperscript{21} after Tu Ts‘ung-yü’s death, the family was in such financial straits that even the thirty-room residence had to be given up to pay their debts.\textsuperscript{22} Thereafter, Tu Mu explained, the family moved ten times, and, during the three years prior to his first appointment in 828, he and his younger brother Tu Yi were compelled to exist on weeds and lacked candles to burn at night. Although protesting one’s poverty is conventional in requests for political preferment by traditional Chinese literati, where their

\textsuperscript{18} See the biography of Tu Shih-fang (Tu Ts‘ung-yü’s older brother) in CTS:147.3984 and HTS:166.5090.

\textsuperscript{19} According to "Ti-erh-ch‘i," Tu Mu’s father had passed away before the family’s residence in Ch‘ang-an was sold toward the end of the Yuan-ho era. The Yuan-ho era started in 806 and ended in 820. "Toward the end of the Yuan-ho era" is about the year 819, when Tu Mu was seventeen years old.

\textsuperscript{20} See "Ti-erh-ch‘i" and "Ch‘iu Hang-chou ch‘i."

\textsuperscript{21} See "Ti-erh-ch‘i."

\textsuperscript{22} It seems that later on, most likely after entering his official career, Tu Mu redeemed this thirty-room residence. According to the essay "Ch‘iu Hang-chou ch‘i" written in 850, this residence seems to have come into his possession again.
financial difficulties were usually exaggerated (Davis 1971:28f), we still can assume that Tu Mu’s adolescent years were not very comfortable.

Tu Mu studied the Book of Rites (Li-chi) when he was a child, and learned that court officials should be familiar with military tactics and affairs, so that they could participate in military campaigns involving more than the passive defense of walled cities. In his sixteenth year (fifteen years old by Western reckoning) (818), Li Shih-tao, Military Commissioner of Tzu-ch’ing (part of modern Shantung province), rebelled. The turbulence of military conflict lasted until the next year, and many people were killed in this conflict. But during the turmoil, many court officials continued to pass their days as though the war was of no concern to them. Tu Mu was infuriated at their seeming indifference to the situation and their apparent inability to effectively pacify the rebels.

In Tu Mu’s nineteenth year (eighteen years old by Western reckoning) (821), the Military Commissioner of Lu-lung (the northern part of modern Hopeh province and the


24. According to "Chu-Sun-tzu hsu," civil wars were in progress in the Shantung area when he was sixteen. And according to the "T’ang-chi 57" of TCTC (241.7761-7762), these civil wars refer to Li Shih-tao’s revolt.

25. See "Chu Sun-tzu hsu."
southern part of modern Jehol province) was killed by his own troops and his title assumed by a staff member, Chu K'o-jung. Meanwhile, the Military Commissioner of Ch'eng-te (the central part of modern Hopeh province) was also killed by a staff member, Wang T'ing-ta'ou. The court ordered the military commissioners of other provinces to launch a punitive campaign against both Chu K'o-jung and Wang T'ing-ta'ou, but they failed to quell the revolts. Finally, it bestowed a military commissionership on Chu K'o-jung, and concentrated the full force of the campaign against Wang T'ing-ta'ou. In the following year (822), Shih Hsien-ch'eng killed the Military Commissioner of Wei-po (the southern part of modern Hopeh province and the western part of modern Shantung province) and collaborated with Chu and Wang in a joint attack on the forces of the central government. Unable to pacify the rebellion militarily, the court adopted other means and named Wang and Shih Military Commissioners of their respective regions. As a result, it gave up effective political control of Lu-lung, Ch'eng-te, and Wei-po (TCTC:242.7794-7823). During this troubled time, Tu Mu witnessed the weakness of the central government and the acute lack of military knowledge and skills on the part of court officials. He later voiced his indignation at that state of affairs in such essays as "Guilty Words" (T sui-ven), "A Discourse on War" (Chan-lun), "A Discourse on Defense"
(Shou-lun), and "A Letter to Grand Councilor Chou" (Shang Chou hsiang-kung shu).26

In his twentieth year (nineteen years old in Western reckoning) (822), Tu Mu began to read the Book of History (Shang-shu), the Book of Odes, the Commentary of Tao (Tao-chuan), the Discourses of the States (Kuo-yü), and histories of the previous dynasties. In this way, he came to realize that military power was a key factor in the rise and fall of dynasties, and that the person placed in charge of military affairs must be versed in tactics and strategy. Therefore, he researched works on military affairs which might be helpful in training later generations. One tangible result of his efforts was his commentary on the classic Sun-tzu, which he considered the best book available on military strategy at his time.27

In 825, at the age of twenty-three (twenty-two years old by Western reckoning), Tu Mu wrote his first datable literary work, a fu or "rhymed prose," entitled "A Fu on the Ah-fang Palace" (Ah-fang-kung fu).28 In this fu we encounter an elegant style, as well as a strong criticism of the extravagance and debauchery of the emperor


27. See "Chu Sun-tzu hst" (FCWC:151-152).

28. See Tu Mu's "Shang chih-chi wen-chang-ch'i" (FCWC:141), and Miao 1941:139b.
Ching-taung (r. 824-826), as shown in the passages quoted below:

[The six kings had been liquidated; all the States had been united. The trees on the mountains of Shu were gone; Ah-fang Palace emerged.] It covered an area extending over 300 li; it towered up almost to the vault of heaven and blocked out the sun's rays. The northern wings overlooked Mount Li; thence the body of the palace stretched straight westward towards Hsien-yang. Two rivers ran peacefully into the garden of the palace. At every five paces there was a tower; at every ten paces, a pavilion.... A long bridge spanned a stream--a dragon bred not from clouds. A balcony hung in the sky--a rainbow after no rain. High and low were confused, east and west were lost. On the singing terrace the voices sounded warmly, and the spring sun shone mildly...

[Alas! Those who destroyed the six States were the six States themselves, not the State of Ch'in; those who wiped out the clan of Ch'in were the clan of Ch'in themselves, not any other people. Indeed, if the kings of the six States had loved their own people, they would have been able to resist the State of Ch'in; if the clan of Ch'in had loved the people of the six States, they would have been able to extend their ruling from three to thousand reigns--who would have been able to ruin them?...]

Adopting the common device of historical displacement, his criticism was directed against the Ch'in emperor Shih-huang (Ch'in Shih-huang, r.221-210 B.C.), but undoubtedly his real meaning did not go unnoticed at court. He warned that an emperor's indulgence in extravagance and pleasure would lead to the fall of the dynasty. Unfortunately, Ching-

29. The Chinese text is available in FCWC:1-2; the English translation is quoted from Kung 1976:8, except the parts in brackets which are my own.
tsung failed to heed his admonition and the following year (826) was assassinated by eunuchs. It is said that this fu was admired for its literary elegance and was recited throughout the capital, thus later helping Tu Mu obtain the degree of Presented Scholar (Wang Ting-pao 1978:63). (We shall touch upon the details of this anecdote later.) In any case, "A Fu on the Ah-fang Palace" is considered to be a masterpiece of its kind, and it has been included in several standard anthologies. It is also regarded as the precursor of the wen-fu, or "prose fu," which was to be perfected later by Ou-yang Hsiu (1007-1072) and Su Shih (1037-1101) (T’an-Li 1972:461).

In the same year (825), Tu Mu also wrote an essay entitled "A Letter to Minister Liu of Chao-i" (Shang Chao-yi Liu asu-t’u shu) (FCWC:173-175). In this letter Tu Mu censured the addressee Liu Wu, Military Commissioner of Chao-i (parts of modern Honan and Shansi provinces), who held the prestigious title of Minister of Education (asu-t’u), for refusing imperial instructions to attack the insurgents, and urged him to cooperate with the court. Here Tu Mu showed the vigor and subtlety that characterize his prose style. His Confucian views regarding the proper

30. For example, Ku-wen kuan-chih, ed. by Wu Ch’u-ts’ai (born ca. 1662); and Wen-chang kuei-fan, ed. by Hsieh Fang-te (1226-1289).
relationships between official and court is also evident in this particular work.

Early Career

As mentioned earlier, members of aristocratic families in the T'ang dynasty had the privilege of securing official position without taking the civil service examinations. According to the "Records of Officials" (Chih-kuan-chih) of the Chiu T'ang-shu (42.1805), if an official held the first rank, his sons were eligible for appointment to office of the class of 7a1, and his grandsons to positions of the class of 7a2; if an official held the full third rank, his sons had the privilege of obtaining a position of the class of 7b1. According to these rules, Tu Mu could have obtained, without taking part in any examination, a position of the class of 7a2, because he was a grandson of Tu Yu, who had been posthumously awarded the title of Grand Mentor (T'ai-fu, normally having the capacity as an advisor to the emperor),31 which carried the first rank.32 However, probably because those who gained office through the civil service examinations were more highly regarded by both the

31. See Tu Yu's biography in CTS:147.3982 and HTS: 166.5089.

32. Unless indicated otherwise, the ranks and duties of the various official positions mentioned in this dissertation may be found in the "Pai-kuan chih" of HTS: 46.1181-1322.
imperial government and society, or because he simply wanted to prove himself, Tu Mu chose to enter officialdom through the examination system. He took the examinations for the degree of Presented Scholar at Lo-yang in the first month of the second year of the Ta-ho era (February, 828) and received the degree the following month (Miao 1941: 131). His success allegedly had something to do with his rhymed prose "A Fu on the Ah-fang Palace" as was noted earlier. In the T'ang dynasty, candidates for the degree of Presented Scholar often presented their writings to high officials, who, if impressed with their work, could speak to the examiners on their behalf (Wang Ting-pao 1978:82; Jung-chai ssu-pi 5.44). In Tu Mu's case, the chief examiner was Ts'ui Yen, then Vice Minister of Rites (Li-pu shih-lang). The story goes that before Ts'ui left to administer the examinations, one of Tu Mu's patrons, Wu Wu-ling, Erudite of the National University (T'ai-hsueh po-shih), showed him this particular composition, which he said was so beautiful as to have been widely circulated among the students at the National University. Wu Wu-ling observed that Tu Mu, author of the fu, was a rare literary talent and would be a great asset to the emperor. Therefore, he recommended that Tu Mu be awarded first place in the examinations. Ts'ui replied that first place had already been promised to someone else, but finally agreed
to place Tu Mu's name in fifth position, which was the ranking he actually received when the final results were posted (Wang Ting-pao 1978:63).

In the third month of the same year (April, 828), Tu Mu returned from Lo-yang to Ch'ang-an to participate in the special examinations convened by imperial decree (Miao 1941:131). Serving as an expression of the emperor's eager desire to seek men of outstanding talents and to elicit their advice, such examinations, which were given at irregular intervals, involved the candidates being tested in one of several designated categories. Tu Mu took the test for "Virtuous and Upright Men Capable of Outspoken Advice" and passed. Among others who also earned this degree was Li Kan, an "upright and outspoken man" who later became one of Tu Mu's closest friends.33

In the intercalary third month of this year (May, 828), Tu Mu was appointed Editor, Institute for the Advancement of Literature (Hung-wen-kuan chiao-shu-lang, 9b1)34 in the Department of Chancellery (Men-hsia-sheng) with a concurrent probationary title of Adjutant, Military Service Section, Left Guard (Shih Tao-Wu-wei ping-ts'ao

33. See "Li Kan shih" (FCWC:10-11) and "Shang Li shih-chün shu) (FCWC:190-193).

34. "9b1" represents the official class carried by the position. This approach will be used throughout this dissertation.
As an Editor, Tu Mu collated and corrected literary texts; as an Adjutant, he was in charge of the registration of officers for guard duties (HTS:49A.1280). Nevertheless, he continued to be concerned about contemporary state affairs. At that time the imperial troops were engaged in suppressing a rebellion in Heng-hai province (parts of modern Hopeh and Shantung provinces) where Li T'ung-ch'ien had without official authorization succeeded to his father's position as Military Commissioner after the latter's death, then defied imperial orders assigning him to another province. In an attempt to find a solution to the problem, Tu Mu made a personal call upon a general, Tung Chung-chih, who had been previously involved in a campaign against a rebellious general, Wu Yuan-ch'i. In the conversation, Tu Mu rather bluntly asked Tung why, in the aforementioned campaign, the numerically superior imperial troops were unable to secure a quick victory. This anecdote is indicative of Tu Mu's

35. See Miao 1941:132-133 for information on dates. About Tu Mu's official titles, it should be noticed that "shih" refers to a probationary title granted as an imperial favor (Tseng 1969 v. 4:380). Another thing that should be noticed is that Tao Wu-wei (Left Guard) was one of the Sixteen Guards units (Shih-liu wei) of the T'ang national army, Garrison Militia (Fu-ping). The Sixteen Guards served to protect the capital area and should not be confused with the Palace Armies, which were under a separate jurisdiction and originally intended to protect the palace (Sun Chin-ming 1960:98).

courage in risking the displeasure of a senior official. Though prompted by his concern for the country's problems, it could have been easily interpreted as casting doubt upon the general's competence. In any case, Tung's answer was helpful to Tu Mu in his forming ideas on the pacifying of insubordinate military commissioners. In the same year, he may have proposed some strategy for bringing the war in Heng-hai province to an end. This was apparently rejected by the court, as indicated by the poem "Expressing My Thoughts: A Poem" (Ken-huai shih) (FCWC:4-5), which may be assigned to this period, where he states in part:

The distant trails on T'ai-hang Mountain,

narrow and thorny.

....

37. Tu Mu indicated that he had benefited from this conversation when he sent a memorial to Grand Councilor Li Te-yü in 843 proposing a strategy for quelling the rebellion (See "Lun yung-ping shu").

38. See "Ken-huai shih" (FCSCC:25). Tu Mu noted under the title of this poem that the poem was written when the imperial troops were campaigning in Ts'ang-chou. According to the "T'ang-chi 59" of TCTC (243.7854-7869), the campaign took place from September, 827 to May, 829. Thus Tu Mu's poem was written during this period, possibly in 828, because in 827 the war had just started and Tu Mu was probably unaware of the details of the situation, and in 829 the rebels already appeared to be losing. Miao (1977:21) claims that because Tu Mu called himself "chien nan-tzu" in the poem, the poem must have been written before he entered public service, i.e., in 827. But, in my opinion, "chien nan-tzu" was a rather common way of addressing oneself in a polite manner; it did not necessarily suggest the status of the individual. Ichinosawa Torao (1972:343) also claims that the "Ken-huai shih" poem was written in 828.
I crave to present my strategy for pacifying the rebels,
But who would care to listen?
....
Whenever I think of this,
I have to get drunk and hate to wake up.
Keeping silent would insult my ambition;
Yet raising my voice would not stir any echo.
....

After only seven months as an editor, in the tenth month (December, 828) Tu Mu accepted an appointment as Inspector of Militia (t’uan-lien hsün-kuan) with the probationary title of Case Reviewer in the Court of Judicial Review (Shih Ta-li p’ing-shih, 8b2), when it was offered to him by Shen Ch’uan-shih, who had just been appointed Surveillance Commissioner of Kiangsi (Chiang-hsi kuan-ch’a-shih), with his headquarters at Nan-ch’ang (in modern Kiangsi province).39 Officials usually preferred working in the capital to the provinces. The position of Editor in the Institute for the Advancement of Literature was a very prestigious appointment, and one which offered the incumbent excellent opportunities for career advancement, especially for promotion to the position of Investigating Censor (chien-ch’a yü-shih),

Investigation Bureau (Ch’ea-yuan), Censorate (Yu-shih-t’ai) (Sun Kuo-tung 1978:7). Furthermore, the position of Adjutant in the Left Guard carried a class of 8a2, higher than that of Case Reviewer (8b2). Why then did Tu Mu decide to seek a provincial post in Nan-ch’ang? This action may have been prompted by a sense of frustration, because his recommendations for dealing with rebellious military commissioners had gone without support. On the other hand, the new position which involved military matters seems to be the kind of work he was interested in. It may also have had to do with his personal fondness for the new supervisor. Shen, a close relative who had been very kind to him,40 was a man of letters himself and respected literary talent in others. He was also known as a "conscientious official who valued capable people."41 Thus Tu Mu may have reckoned that he would be better appreciated working with Shen at Nan-ch’ang.

In Nan-ch’ang, Tu Mu was treated well. Besides Shen, Lu Hung-chih, a colleague and son of the poet Lu Lun (fl.700), was also very helpful to him. When Tu Mu started his new assignment, Lu instructed him in his new duties, how to conduct himself with his supervisor and colleagues,


41. See Shen Ch’uan-shih’s biography in HTS: 132.4540f.
and the procedures and protocol related to his new position.\textsuperscript{42}

In the ninth month of the fourth year of Ta-ho (October, 830), Tu Mu followed Shen to Hsüan-ch’eng (in modern Anhwei province), when the latter was named Surveillance Commissioner (Hsüan-shih kuan-ch’a-shih) of that jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{43} At Hsüan-ch’eng Tu Mu became acquainted with the supervisor’s younger brother, Shen Shu-shih, who was a good friend of Li Ho (791-817), a short-lived poet famed for his use of shamanistic imagery, mystical allusions, and mythological themes in his verses. One night in the tenth month of the fifth year of Ta-ho (November, 831), Tu Mu received a letter from Shen Shu-shih, saying that Li Ho had given all his works to him before passing away, and asking Tu Mu to write a preface for the collection. Tu Mu had never met Li Ho in person, but he was sufficiently impressed with Li Ho’s poetry to accept this request. In his preface (FCWC:148-149) Tu Mu states in part:

\begin{quote}
Clouds and mist gently intermingling cannot describe his [i.e., Li Ho’s] manner; illimitable waters cannot describe his feelings; the verdure of spring cannot describe his warmth; the clarity of autumn cannot describe his style ... seasonal blossoms and lovely girls cannot describe his
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[42] See "Yu Che-hai Lu ta-fu shu" (FCWC:186-187).
\item[43] See Miao 1941:136.
\end{footnotes}
ardour... His poetry is in the tradition of the Li Sao. Even though it does not come up to the latter in reasoning, it sometimes surpasses the latter in expression. The Li Sao is informed with deep feelings of indignation, subtle admonition, and a clear sense of the proper relationship between ruler and official. These elements provoke serious reflection in the reader, but are lacking in Li’s poetry....

From these comments we can see that although Tu Mu praised the beauty of Li Ho’s diction and style, he placed substance above language in poetry. The concepts expressed here on the function and value of poetry are consistent with those conveyed in other places. For example, in an epitaph written in 837 for Li K’an’s tomb, he quoted the latter’s criticism of the poetry of Yuan Chen (779-831) and Po Chü-yi (772-846):

The richness or poverty of a nation’s culture depends largely on poetry, which affects it with the swiftness of the wind. I grieve over the fact that since the Yüan-ho reign the poetry of Yuan Chen and Po Chü-yi, which is both trivial and extravagant, and lacking in restraint, has prevailed. With the exception of those who were steadfast, serious scholars with innate moral principles, everyone has been exposed to their destructive influences. Their poems have been widely circulated among the common people; they were even copied on walls and screens and were taught by word of mouth from father to son, mother to daughter. Their lascivious and wanton expressions are like the winter cold and summer heat that penetrate one’s flesh and bones; once

44. The English translation of this passage is borrowed from Frodsham 1970:2. The addition in the brackets is mine.
subjugated to their influences it becomes irremediable. 45

The comments are not Tu Mu's own; however, his quoting them implies his support of the criticism. In another article entitled "A Letter for Presenting Poems" (Haian-shih ch'i) (FCWC:242), Tu Mu claimed that he took great pains in striving for excellence in his poetry, that he did not seek beauty as such, that he did not identify himself with prevailing fashions, and that he aimed for a common ground between the contemporary and the archaic. According to Miao Yu (1959:362), what Tu Mu describes as "extraordinary beauty" refers to the exotic language in Li Ho's poetry, and what he calls "prevailing fashions" refers to the so-called "erotic style and obscene language" of Yuan Chen and Po Chu-i, which were widely imitated in his times (Ch'en Yin-k'o 1958:338). Therefore the ideas enunciated in "A Letter for Presenting Poems" reaffirm his placement of substance over language in the writing of poetry.

During his service at Haian-ch'eng, Tu Mu was asked, in 830, by his superior to take a trip to Ch'ang-an, where he consulted Wang Yi-chien about the method of making the clepsydra. 46 He also paid a courtesy visit in 833 on

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45. The Chinese text of this epitaph, entitled "Tang ... Li fu-chün mu-chih-ming" [hereafter "Li fu-chün"], is in FCWC:137. The English translation is quoted from Palandri 1977:70.

46. See "Ch'ih-chou tao k'o-lou chi" (FCWC:156).
his superior's behalf to Niu Seng-ju at Yangchow (in modern Kiangsu province). Niu was, according to some historians, the leader of one of two rival political factions of the time. In 830, when Niu was recalled from Wu-ch’ang (in modern Hupeh province) to assume the position of grand councilor at the capital, Tu Mu sent him a poem expressing admiration for his accomplishments during his military commissionership. In 833, when Li Te-yü, allegedly the leader of the opposing faction, became grand councilor, Niu was banished to Yangchow as Military Commissioner of Huai-nan (part of modern Kiangsu and Anhwei provinces). It was at this time that Shen Ch’uan-shih sent Tu Mu to visit him.

On his way to Yangchow, Tu Mu stopped over at Ching-k’ou (modern Chen-chiang, Kiangsu province) to see Haing Ch’un, who was then on the staff of the Surveillance Commissioner of Che-hai (the western part of modern Chekiang province). He had first met Haing Ch’un when taking the examinations for the degree of Presented Scholar at Lo-yang in 828, and he immediately sensed that he was worthy of being a friend. Now he was glad to hear that the latter was well liked by his supervisor as a virtuous,

47. See "T’ang ... Haing-ch’un mu-chih-ming" (FCWC: 132).

truthful advisor. Thereafter, the two became life-long friends.49

He also passed through Chin-ling (modern Tan-t’u, Kiangsu province), where he heard the story of Lady Tu Ch’iu (Tu Ch’iu-niang). Once a charming and talented sing-song girl, Tu Ch’iu was now deserted, old and poor. Feeling strongly about the misfortunes she had undergone and the vicissitudes of human life, Tu Mu wrote the famous "Lady Tu Ch’iu: A Poem" (Tu Ch’iu-niang shih) (FCWC:5-6), wherein he states in part:

Ching River’s water chaste and smooth;

Girls born there white like cream.

Among them the one named Tu Ch’iu

Never has to use beauty powder.

...

She stands in line to meet the emperor;

On her alone his majesty’s eyes linger.

Embroidered curtains hang on the pepper-powdered walls;

Hornless dragons coil on the dressing box.

Wearing a low chignon to receive the new favor,

She is graceful and blithe.

...

And Ch’iu is ordered to return to her native place.

The palace ridge touches the Dipper and Polaris;

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49. See "T’ang ... Haing-ch’un mu-chih-ming" (FCWC: 132-134).
She keeps looking back, loath to leave.
The four reigns totaling three decades
Are like a dream but also seem real.
...
She arrives home, the neighbors have changed;
Her lush garden is overgrown with weeds.
Her tears flow without stopping;
Looking up at heaven, who can she implore?
...
Yesterday I passed by Chin-ling;
Hearing this story, I sobbed and sighed.
It's been the same since antiquity:
Things change, how can one predict?
...
Women's fate is uncertain indeed!
Men's lot is also hard to foretell.
...

Tu Mu served in Hsüan-ch'eng for about two and half years. During his service there, just as in Nan-ch'ang, he often attended banquets and journeyed to various places of interest with his supervisor or colleagues. 50 He was apparently just as happy as in Nan-ch'ang, for he later

50. See "Shang ... Ts'u shang-shu chuang" (FCWC: 239).
wrote several poems recalling his joyful days there as well as the beautiful scenery at both places.\textsuperscript{51}

In 833, Shen Ch’uan-shih was recalled to the capital to fill the post of Vice Minister of Personnel (\textit{Li-pu shih-lang}), and Tu Mu was offered a position as judge (\textit{t’ui-kuan}), with the probationary title of Investigating Censor (\textit{Chien-ch’a vu-shih li-heing}, \textit{8a1}), by Niu Seng-ju, who was then serving as Military Commissioner of Huai-nan with his headquarters at Yangchow.\textsuperscript{52} Shen’s replacement arrived prior to Tu Mu’s departure. On the new staff was one Li Fang-hsttan, Administrative Assistant of Militia (\textit{T’uan-lien p’an-kuan}). Li and Tu had been good friends since their days in Ch’ang-an, and they were very glad to see each other again. Both were straightforward in manner and expression, and they soon became immersed in discussions of current issues, which sometimes became heated, but they always ended up in good spirits.\textsuperscript{53}

Joining Niu at Yangchow in the fourth month of the seventh year of the Ta-ho era (May, 833), Tu Mu soon gained the respect of the latter, and was promoted to the position

\textsuperscript{51} See "\textit{Huai Chung-ling ...}" (FCSCC:255-259), "\textit{Pa Chung-ling} (FCSCC:262), and "\textit{Tzu HaUan-chou fu-kuan ju-chin ...}" (FCSCC:103-105).

\textsuperscript{52} See Miao 1941:139 for information on dates.

\textsuperscript{53} See "\textit{Li chün mu-chih-ming}" (FCWC:130-132) and "\textit{Chi ... Li shih-chü wen}" (FCWC:204-205).
of Chief Secretary (Chang-shu-chi), an important post requiring great literary skill.

Yangchow in T'ang times was a metropolis famed for its pleasure houses and many beautiful sing-song girls. According to Yü Yeh’s Records of Yangchow Dreams (Yang-chou meng-chi), Tu Mu, while serving there, often enjoyed the pleasures of the gay quarters. Learning of this, Niu was concerned for his safety; therefore, without Tu’s knowledge, he assigned agents to protect him. Each time after returning from the gay quarters, the agents submitted written reports stating times and places visited and that Tu had returned safely. Niu kept all these memos, which ultimately filled a large wooden box. Later when Tu Mu was about to leave Yangchow for a new appointment at the capital, Niu said to him candidly, “As an open-minded person, you will have a bright future. But I am concerned that your indulgence in the romantic life might ruin your health.” Tu Mu told Niu not to worry about him because he always restrained himself. Thereupon, Niu showed him the aforementioned memos. Yü’s Records of Yangchow Dreams is a fictitious work, and it need not be taken too seriously. We should notice, however, that several of Tu Mu’s own poems referring to this period do evince romantic, if

54. Yü Yeh’s Yang-chou meng-chi is included in section four of Lung-wei mi-shu. This section is subtitled “Chin T’ang hsiao-shuo ch’ang-kuan,” suggesting the fictitious nature of the Yang-chou meng-chi.
not erotic, overtones.\textsuperscript{55} Living a romantic life as he may have, we could hardly agree with Professor James Liu (1975:572-573) and Miao Yüeh (1962a:3) that that kind of life developed from his disappointment in his official career, because at this time he was enjoying his supervisor's trust and looking forward to a promising future.

His pleasure-seeking with sing-song girls notwithstanding, Tu Mu continued to be concerned about the great issues of the day. In 834 he wrote "Guilty Words," in which he recommended strategies for suppressing the rebellious military commissioners of Lu-lung, Ch'eng-te, and Wei-po. This essay and other undatable essays, such as "Reinsti-
tuting the Sixteen Guards" (\textit{Yuan shih-liu-wei}) (FCWC:89-91) which deals with the T'ang military system in relation to the control of the provinces; "A Discourse on War," which reviews past military actions against rebellious military commissioners; and "A Discourse on Defense," which urges the use of military force against the rebellious military commissioners, are considered important contributions to the studies of central versus local power. These essays exhibit Tu Mu's courage and forthright manner, for in addition to recommending the adoption of specific military strategies, he criticized mismanagement in the central

\textsuperscript{55} See "Tseng pieh" (FCSCC:311-312), "Ch'ien-huai" (FCSCC:369), and "Nien hsi-vu" (FCSCC:133).
government and urged it to correct its faults in order to restore the country to its former peaceful state.

Political Strife and Family Burden

In 835, Tu Mu was summoned to Ch’ang-an to assume the position of Investigating Censor. Responsible for the maintenance of high standards of public behavior by the bureaucracy and the propriety of the court, the inspection of local government, and review of criminal cases, the role of the Investigating Censor was one of importance and prestige. However, Tu Mu soon requested transfer to the eastern capital, Lo-yang, where he held the same title but was largely exempt from any real duties. His request was made on the grounds of ill health, but poems he wrote later suggest that political circumstances were involved. For example, in "A Poem in Rememberance of Li Kan" (Li Kan shih) which recalls the political calamities of this time, Tu Mu noted how even officials known for their candor and courage were frightened by the two ruthless officials Li Hsun and Cheng Chu, who had risen to

56. For references on dates, see Tu Mu’s "Li fu-ch'ün mu-chih-min" (FCWC:136). It should be noted that a censor in the Bureau of Investigation had jurisdiction not only over the provinces but also over the central government (See Sun Kuo-tung 1978:127).

57. Lo-yang and Ch’ang-an had several parallel positions but the incumbents of the positions in Lo-yang did not have any actual duties (See Huang Pen-chi 1965:20).

58. See Tu Mu’s biography in HTS:166.5093.
prominence by collaborating with the eunuch faction. And in "Thirty-two Rhymes on My Previous Service to Emperor Wen-tsung" (Hsi shih Wen huang-ti san-shih-erh yûn) (FCWC:37-38), Tu Mu further indicates that he always feared assassination and, hence, was unable to carry out his duties.

In Lo-yang Tu Mu was among friends. One of them was the upright, outspoken Li Chung-min, who had been a Vice Director of the Bureau of Merit Titles (Ssu-hsûn yûn-wai-lang) in the Ministry of Personnel (Li-pu) until his resignation in 832 following his failure to bring the unscrupulous Cheng Chu to justice.59 Another friend was Li K’an, a man of principle, integrity, courage, and literary talent, for whom Tu Mu had the highest respect and admiration.60 There, he also met a woman, Chang Hao-hao. Chang had been a famous professional entertainer at Shen Ch’uan-shih’s headquarters at Nan-ch’ang and HuSan-ch’eng. Later she was married to Shen Shu-shih, who subsequently deserted her. When Tu Mu saw her again in Lo-yang, she had become a haggard barmaid. Recalling her glorious past and lamenting the misfortunes that had befallen her, Tu Mu wrote the famous "Chang Hao Hao: A Poem" (Chang Hao-hao shih) (FCWC:8-9) of which the original


60. See "Li fu-chûn mu-chih-ming" (FCWC:136-138).
handwritten manuscript is still preserved in the Palace Museum (Ku-kung po-wu-yu'an), Peking, and serves as evidence of his exquisite calligraphy (Miao 1977:49).

Meanwhile Tu Mu's younger brother, Tu Yi, had passed the examinations for the degree of Presented Scholar in 832. In 834 he was named Inspector of Militia at Jun-chou (with headquarters at modern Chen-chiang district of Kiangsu province), where Li Te-yu was posted as Military Commissioner of Chen-hai (part of modern Kiangsu province). When Li was banished to Yulan-chou (in modern Kiangsi province), Tu Yi retired partly to avoid becoming embroiled in political strife and partly as a result of an eye ailment, which was growing steadily worse. In the spring of the second year of the K'ai-ch'eng era (837), Tu Mu learned of his brother's deteriorating vision and brought a doctor from T'ung-chou (modern Ta-li district, Shensi province) to see him at Yangchow.

According to the doctor's diagnosis, Tu Yi needed an operation, which could not be performed until the following year. To take care of his ailing brother, Tu Mu took up residence at a Buddhist temple with his brother. During his previous sojourn in Yangchow from 833 to 835, he

61. See "Tu-chün mu-chih-ming" (FCWC:139).

62. For the development of Tu Yi's eye ailment and Tu Mu's efforts to help him, see "Tu-chün mu-chih-ming" (FCWC:138-140), "Ch'iu Hang-chou ch'i" (FCWC:248-249), and "Ch'iu Hu-chou" ti 1-3 ch'i (FCWC:242-248).
had indulged his sensual passions. But now, as suggested by the poems written at this time, he seemed to be oblivious to the pleasures and luxuries surrounding him, and was instead melancholic and homesick.63

Probably because civil service regulations prohibited an official’s absence from his post for more than one hundred days,64 Tu Mu relinquished his post at Lo-yang at the beginning of summer and began to look for a position in the provinces.65 Later he was offered the position of Supervisor of Militia (T’uan-lien p’an-kuan) at Hsüan-ch’eng, with the temporary title of Auxiliary Palace Censor (Tien-chung shih-yü-shih nei-kung-feng, 7b2), by Ta’ui Tan, Surveillance Commissioner of Hsüan-shé. In the fall, he left for his new post with his brother and an attending physician.

In Hsüan-ch’eng Tu Mu was able to enjoy the companionship of a poet-friend, Chao Ku (810-ca. 856), whose poems he greatly admired (T’ang-shih chi-shih 56.858). He also made some new friends. Among them were a certain Mr. Shen, a gentlemen living in retirement,66 and

63. See "T’ai Yang-chou Ch’an-chih sau" (FCSCC:198-199) and "Chiang fu ... Ch’an-chih sau" (FCSCC:202-202). 
64. For this regulation, see T’ang hui-yao: 82.1519. 
65. See "Tzu-chuan su-chih-ming" (FCWC:160). 
Lu P’ei, both of whom shared his profound indignation at the rebellious conditions in the provinces and his anxiety for a solution to the problem.

Tu Mu had previously worked in Hsüan-ch’eng from 830–833. At that time he was an able, ambitious young man enjoying the confidence of his superiors and looking forward to a promising future. Now, although only four years had passed, his hair had already turned gray and he had become somewhat withdrawn. Instead of engaging himself in exciting activities, he frequented various scenic spots and historical sites which sometimes evoked melancholic feelings that inspired poetic expressions.

In the winter of the third year of the K’ai-ch’eng era (838/839), Tu Mu was recalled to the capital to assume the position of Left Rectifier of Omissions (Tao pu-ch’Ueh, 7b1) in the Department of Chancellery, with a concurrent appointment as Senior Complier at the Historiography Institute in the Department of Secretariat (Miao 1942:1). But because his salary was insufficient to cover his brother’s expenses at Ch’ang-an, he decided to accompany his brother and his doctor to Hsün-yang (modern Chiu-chiang).

67. See "T’ang ... Lu heiu-te’ai nu-chih ming" (FCWC: 144-145).
68. See "Tzu Hsüan-chou fu-kuan ju-ching" (FCSCC: 105).
69. See, for example, "T’i ... K’ai-yüan-seu shui-ko" (FCSCC:202-203).
of Kiangsu province) to stay with Tu Ts'ao, one of his cousins, then Prefect of Chiang-chou (part of modern Kiangsi province). Their journey began the following spring. On the way, Tu Mu came across P'ei T'an, a close colleague during his previous service at Hsüan-chou. As revealed in the two poems presented to the latter, Tu Mu seems to have become haggard, pessimistic, and uncertain of his own future.70 Their journey then took them through Ho-chou and Wu-hu (both in modern Anhwei province). In Ho-chou Tu Mu visited the nearby Pavilion of the Wu-chiang River (Wu-chiang T'ing), which recalled the death of an ancient warlord. In the third century B.C., Hsiang Yu and Liu Pang fought for the throne after the overthrow of the Ch'in dynasty (249-207 B.C.). Finally, Hsiang Yu was pursued to the Wu-chiang River by Liu Pang where the constable of the Pavilion of the Wu-chiang River asked him to escape so as to later stage a comeback. But Hsiang Yu, thinking he was doomed to destruction, killed himself. The common interpretation of this event was that Hsiang Yu had no real chance to alter the situation--his failure was, apparently, due to an irreversible fate. However, in Tu Mu's opinion, there were still many talented youths in his native place who could help him win final victory. Had he escaped and launched a counter-attack, the ending could

70. See "Tzu Hsüan-chou fu-kuan ju-ching ..." (FCWC: 103-104) and "Hsüan-chou sung P'ei T'an ..." (FCSCC:203).
have been different.71 Here, just as in other similar cases,72 Tu Mu adopted a perspective quite independent of tradition.

In the spring of the fourth year of the K’ai-ch’eng era (839), Tu Mu settled his brother at Hsün-yang and left for Ch’ang-an.73 He traveled through Hsiang-yang (in modern Hupeh province), Nan-yang (in modern Honan province). In the late spring he arrived at the capital (Miao 1942:3), where he was supposed to take on such new duties as convening meetings in the court, forwarding officials’ reports, and presenting advice or admonitions to the emperor. Congenial to his talent as the new post would seem to have been, he was not able to discharge his duties in the way he wanted. As mentioned earlier, when Tu Mu was transferred from the capital to Lo-yang, the court was controlled by Cheng Chu and Li Hsün, who seemed to be in league with the eunuchs. In November of that year, Cheng and Li, as the emperor wished, staged a palace coup in an attempt to destroy the eunuchs’ power. But the coup failed and the eunuchs retaliated by slaughtering many high officials and their families. As a result of this outrage,

71. See “T’i Wu-chiang t’ing” and Feng Chi-wu’s annotation in FCSCC:279-280.

72. See “Ch’ih-pi” (FCSCC:271) and “T’i Shang-shen Ssu-hao miao” (FCSCC:308).

73. See “Ti-erh-ch’i” (FCWC:245).
court officials felt even more insecure. Under such circumstances, Tu Mu naturally was reluctant to express himself openly.74

In the following year (840), Tu Mu was promoted to the position of Vice Director of the Catering Bureau (Shan-pu yün-wai-lang, 6b1) in the Ministry of Rites (Li-pu), while still retaining the same concurrent position of Senior Compiler in the Historiography Institute (Miao 1942: 4-5). In the winter, he went to see his brother at Hsün-yang. Originally he considered bringing him to Ch’ang-an, but the latter, knowing his financial difficulties, insisted on staying with his cousin Tu Ts’ao in Hsün-yang. In the fourth month of the first year of the Hui-ch’ang era (May, 841), Tu Ts’ao was appointed Perfect of Ch‘i-ch’ou (part of Hupeh province). Tu Mu followed the family to the headquarters in Ch‘i-ch’un (in modern Hupeh province), whence he returned to the capital in July. Soon afterward he was appointed Vice Director of the Bureau of Review (Pi-pu yün-wai-lang, 6b1) in the Ministry of Justice (Hsing-pu), but was banished to Huang-kang (in modern Hupeh province) to be Prefect of Huang-chou (modern Huang-kang, Huang-p’o, and Ma-ch’eng of Hupeh province) in the spring of the following year (Miao 1942:4-6).

74. See "Li Ken shih" and Feng Chi-wu’s annotation in FCSCC:64-70.
Years in Banishment

The reasons for Tu Mu's demotion are not clear. According to the eulogy and epitaph Tu Mu wrote for Chou Ch'ih, a patron and former grand councilor, and an epitaph written for Niu Seng-ju, Li Te-yü, who was then in power, was responsible for his disgrace. But why would Li have been so hostile to Tu Mu? To quote Ch'üan Tsu-wang (1705-1755), "In view of his aristocratic family background and his early [literary] fame, it should have been easy for Tu Mu to rise in his official career.... Unfortunately, due to his close association with Niu, he was not welcomed by Li...." (Chi-ch'i-t'ing chi, wai-pien, 37.897). Judging by Tu Mu's strong partiality for the Niu faction, as shown in the aforementioned writings, Ch'üan's observation seems to be quite plausible.

Questions of political allegiance aside, Tu Mu's demotion could also be attributed to his personality. In "A Letter to Vice Censor-in-chief Li" (Shang Li chung-ch'eng shu) (FCWC:183) which he sent from Huang-chou, Tu Mu indicated that when he was previously serving at the capital, he was often absent due to illness or drunkenness.

75. See "Ch'i Chou hsiang-kung wen" (FCWC:205-206) and "T'ang ... Chou-kung mu-chih-ming" (FCWC:119-120).

76. See "T'ang ... Niu-kung mu-chih-ming" (FCWC:114-119).

77. This is also indicated in Ch'en Yin-k'o 1974:92.
and frequently neglected various official as well as social duties. In "A Letter to Official Li of Ch’ih-chou" (Shang Ch’ih-chou Li shih-chun shu) (FCWC:190-92) written about the same time, Tu Mu also attributed his political setbacks to faults of personality: he was too straightforward and did not care, in a manner of speaking, to "lick his superiors' boots." Although we should not take all Tu Mu’s words as the unvarnished truth, what he says in these letters, however, would seem to support Ch’en Yin-k’o’s assertion (1974:92) that Li Te-yü disliked Tu Mu partly because of his "frivolity and decadence."

Whatever the reason, Tu Mu arrived in Huang-kang in the spring of the second year of the Hui-ch’ang era (842). Meanwhile his brother in Ch’i-ch’un was still plagued by problems with his sight. Tu Mu arranged to have another doctor visit him there, but without avail. In the fall of the same year, assuming that there was a better chance of finding a doctor in a metropolis to cure his illness, his brother moved to Yang-chou to stay with another cousin, Tu Ts’ung. Like Tu Mu, Tu Ts’ung was a descendant of a meritorious high official. But unlike Tu Mu, he exercised the yin previlege of entering public service without taking the examinations. And by marrying the emperor Hsien-tsung’s daughter in 814, Tu Ts’ung launched a brilliant official career. He was now Military Commissioner of Huai-nan and would later rise to the position of grand
councilor. Thus, he was much more successful politically than Tu Mu, who, according to the *Hsin T’ang-shu*, was throughout his life very jealous of Tu Ts’ung’s fame and position.78 We cannot, however, find any other evidence to confirm this allegation.

In Huang-kang, Tu Mu proved to be a conscientious local official. Huang-chou Prefecture, inhabited by 20,000 poor families, had previously been governed by military officials, who tended to impose heavy taxes and other burdens on the people. During Tu Mu’s administration, the people were relieved from such exploitation and allowed to file grievances with the prefect.79

Meanwhile, he had never ceased to be concerned about developments on the frontier. In 842 the Uighurs invaded Yün-chou (modern Ta-t’ung, Shansi province), bringing great misery to the people in the area.80 Knowledgeable in military affairs, Tu Mu hoped that the court would call him back to the capital and consult him on this matter.81 But such thing did not happen. Thus, in such poems as “Expressing My Thoughts as it Snows” (*Hsieh-

78. See Tu Mu’s biography in HTS:166.5097.
80. See CTS:18A.591.
81. See “Shang Li chung-ch’eng shu” (FCWC:183) and "Shang ... Ts’ui hsiang-kung shu" (FCWC:171-173).
chung shu-huai (FCWC:13) and "Drinking Alone in the Prefectural Study" (ChUn-chai-tu-cho (FCWC:7-8), which were written sometime during this year, the poet expresses a burning desire to save the nation and is tormented by his separation from the court.

Tu Mu was also worried about the situation in the provinces. In 843 Liu Chen seized the military commissionship of Chao-yi when the previous military commissioner, his uncle Liu Ts'ung-chien, died. The court, unwilling to recognize him as a legitimate successor, tried to separate him from his soldiers by ordering him to escort his uncle's remains to Lo-yang. When the latter refused, the court launched a punitive expedition against him. Tu Mu, who had all along been deeply concerned about the growing disobedience of provincial leaders, sent a memorial to the Grand Councilor Li Te-yü, proposing a plan of action for suppressing the revolt.82 With Tu Mu's advice, Li finally brought the war to an end in 844.83 Tu Mu was so excited that he sent a memorial to Li congratulating him upon this success. Nevertheless, Tu Mu was still left to languish in the provinces.

Although this period in Huang-kang was a setback in Tu Mu's official career, it was one of his most productive

82. See Tu Mu's "Lun yung-ping shu" (FCWC:164-168) and the "T'ang-chi 63" of TCTC:247.7982-7983.

83. See "Ho p'ing Tae-lu ch'i" (FCWC:234-235).
periods as a writer. In the poems he wrote at this time he treated a wide gamut of themes and explored a variety of poetic forms.  

In the ninth month of the fourth year of the Hui-ch’ang era (October/November, 844), Tu Mu was transferred to Ch’ih-chou (in modern Anhwei province) as Prefect, with his headquarters located at Ch’iu-pu (modern Kuei-ch’ih, Anhwei province), which was to the east of Huang-chou and still more remote from his homeland of Ch’ang-an. He arrived at Ch’iu-p’u before the old prefect Li Fang-hsüan had left for a new post in Hsüan-ch’eng. As has been noted earlier, Tu and Li were good friends who had last seen each other in 833 in Hsüan-ch’eng. When Tu was languishing in banishment at Huang-chou, Li’s letters offered great comfort. On this occasion, they visited together for ten days. Besides taking care of some official business, they talked and drank, and Li even promised to marry his daughter to Tu’s son.


85. For references on dates, see Miao 1942:11-12.

86. See "Chi Li shih-chün wen" (FCWC:204-205).
Ch’ih-chou was populated by approximately 17,600 families,\(^87\) which had benefited from the old administration. And Tu Mu tried to continue to improve their welfare. For example, the local population was often plundered by river pirates who moved about on the Yangtze and Huai Rivers (Twitchett 1970:96; Somers 1979:685). Because these disturbances also occurred in many other prefectures not under his jurisdiction, in 845 Tu Mu sent a memorial to Grand Councilor Li Te-yü suggesting ways to bring the trouble to an end.\(^88\) Unfortunately, we do not know if his ideas were used or not.

At the same time, Tu Mu continued to follow the conduct of national military affairs. In 844, when the Uighur tribes renewed their attacks on the northern borders, Tu Mu drafted a memorial recommending specific military plans for dealing with the situation.\(^89\) And it is said that his ideas, though they did not materialize, were praised by Li Te-yü.\(^90\) But, as before, Tu Mu’s talent for tactical military operations did not bring him any

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88. See "Shang ... lun chiang-tse shu" (FCWC:168-171).

89. See "Shang ... lun pei-pien shih ch’i" (FCWC: 232-234)

90. See Tu Mu’s biography in HTS:166.5097.
advancement. As a result, his sense of frustration and despair deepened.91

One source of personal gratification to Tu Mu at this time was his meetings with two contemporary poets--Meng Ch’ih (d. ca. 859) and Chang Hu (d.853).92 Meng Ch’ih and Tu Mu had first met in the summer of the third year of the K’ai-ch’eng era (838) at Hsüan-ch’eng. Meng later failed the examinations for the degree of Presented Scholar while Tu Mu was serving as Left Rectifier of Omissions in the Chancellery Department and, concurrently, Senior Complier in the Historiography Institute, Department of Secretariat. The two, sharing a common bond of frustration, visited each other frequently and became closer than before. When Tu Mu was transferred to Ch’ih-chou, Meng Ch’ih went to see him and remained there until the former recommended him in 845 for another examination for the degree of Presented Scholar at the capital, which he finally passed.

Chang Hu, famous for his folk poetry and palace lyrics (kung-tz’u), was much esteemed by Tu Mu. A great talent, he had not been able to obtain an official appointment: he first failed to qualify for the Presented Scholar

91. See "Ch’ih-chou sung Meng Ch’ih hainen-pei" (FCSCC:89-96) and "Chiu-lij Ch’i-shan teng-kao" (FCSCC:209-210).

examination. The chief examiner was the Prefect of Hang-chou, the renowned poet Po Chü-yi; and later, when recommended for a position by Ling-hu Ch’u (766–837), a literary talent famous for his prose and grand councilor for a time, he was slandered by Yüan Chen, a noted literatus and intimate friend of Po Chü-yi. Chang Hu was an admirer of Tu Mu. When the latter moved to Ch’ih-chou, Chang traveled from Tan-yang (in modern Kiangsu province), where he had been residing, to see him. Perhaps owing to a shared sense of disenchantment and mutual admiration, the two men immediately formed a close attachment for each other. They spent some time together and presented each other with some charming poems.

In 846, Pai Min-chung, a member of the Niu faction, became grand councilor, and Li Te-yü, who was allegedly responsible for Tu Mu’s banishment, was exiled from the capital. Yet, somehow, Tu Mu, rather than returning to the capital, was transferred to Chien-te (in modern Chekiang province) to be Prefect of Mu-chou (governing Chien-te, Shou-ch’ang, T’ung-lu, Fen-shui, Sui-an, and Huan-ch’un of

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94. See, for example, Tu Mu’s "Ch’ou Chang Hu ...." (FCSCC:286), "Teng ... chi Chang Hu" (FCWC:46), etc., and Chang Hu’s "Chiang ... Tu yüan-wai," "Tu ... Tu Ch’iu-niang shih," "Ho Tu Mu-chih ....," "Ho Tu shih-chü n ....," (Ch’üan T’ang-shih:511.5828–5847).
modern Chekiang province). At this time, Hsing Chʿun, a friend whom Tu Mu had last seen in 833 at Ching-kʿou, was serving as Prefect of She-chou, which was only tree hundred li from Chien-te. The two—Tu from Chʿang-an, Hsing from Lo-yang—were both homesick and frequently exchanged poems expressing longing for their native abodes.

Despite its scenic splendors, Mu-chou was a rather desolate area. It was inhabited by about one thousand odd families, and plagued by miasmal vapors. Surrounded by such a pestilential environment, Tu Mu became even more disheartened. In 848, he wrote a letter to Kao Yüan-yü, then Minister of Personnel, expressing his bitterness about being long stationed in remote areas. Kao had once been Tu Muʾs supervisor and very kind. But he soon left the capital for the provinces to become a military commissioner. Tu Muʾs letter, naturally, did not produce any immediate results.

Later Years

In the eighth month of the second year of the Ta-chung era (September, 848), Tu Mu was finally recalled to the capital to be Vice Director, Bureau of Merit Titles (Sa-hau Yuan-wai-lang, 6b1) in the Ministry of Personnel and, concurrently, Senior Compiler of the Historiography Institute in the Department of Secretariat (Miao Yüeh

95. For time reference, see Miao 1942:17f.
1942:17f). He apparently owed this promotion to a long- 
time patron, Chou Ch’ih, who was now Grand Councilor.96 He left Mu-chou for Ch’ang-an in the twelfth month of the same 
year.

At the capital, Tu Mu’s duty was the maintenance of 
personnel files for the state bureaucracy. However, his 
main concern was still the problem of national security. In the spring of the third year of the Ta-chung era (849), he submitted his annotations and commentary on the Sun-tzu 
text to Chou-ch’ih, hoping that this would be of help in 
promoting national security.97

At the capital Tu Mu got the chance to meet with 
the famous poet, Li Shang-yin (813-858), another victim of the political strife between the two rival factions, who had been shuffled from one post to another in the provinces and who finally returned to Ch’ang-an in the autumn of 848, where he later was made a sheriff. Before assuming his 
job, Li helped the Superior Prefect of Ching-chao (Ching-
chao yin) to draft memorials to the throne (Liu 1969:23). It was at this time that Tu Mu and Li Shang-yin saw each 
other, probably for the first time. Li wrote two poems for 
Tu Mu. In "Presented to Tu Shih-san, Vice Director of the Bureau of Merit Titles" (Tseng ssu-hsun Tu shih-san 

96. See "Chi Chou hsiang-kung wen" (FCWC:205-206) and "Shang Chou hsiang-kung ch’i" (FCWC:236).

97. See "Shang Chou hsiang-kung shu" (FCWC:177-178).
Li praised Tu Mu's "Lady Tu Ch'iu: A Poem," which laments the vicissitudes of Lady Tu Ch'iu's life and human circumstances in general, and the epitaph Tu Mu composed in 849 for Wei Tan,98 a meritorious ex-surveillance commissioner of Kiangsi (roughly today's Kiangsi province). Probably having read Tu Mu's poems, such as "Inscribed at the Zen Temple" (T'ī ch'ān-yūan) (FCWC:60) and "Expressing My Thoughts about Returning to and Going away from the Court" (Shu huai chi chung ch’ae wang huan) (FCWC:71) wherein Tu Mu regretted his aging, Li, in "Presented to Shih-san...," comforted the latter with the observation that having a strong will he should not worry about the white hairs on his temple. It should be noticed that although Li was known for his sensuous, flamboyant, and ornate poetry, he had great admiration for Tu Mu's poems which were straightforward, rustic, and virile in tone.99 In the poem written for Tu Mu entitled "Tu of the Bureau of Merit Titles" (Tu au-hsün) (Li Shang-yin 1980:157), Li complimented him for his powerful and touching poems in an age of darkness and confusion, and added that Tu Mu was the only man of his

98. See "T'ang ... Wei-kung yi-si pei" (FCWC:113-114).

99. Yamauchi observes (1968:466) that Li appreciated "Lady Tu Ch'iu" because it is, like his own poetry, sensuous and ornate. This conclusion does not hold up under close scrutiny.
times to lament the parting of friends and the passage of youth. Here again one notices that Li not only appreciated such poems as "Presented at Parting" (Tseng pieh) (FCWC:82) "Expressing My Thoughts" (Ch’ien-huai) (WC:321), "Inscribed at the Zen Temple," and "Expressing Thoughts about Returning to and Going Away from the Court," that grieve for separation from friends and the advance of old age, he also admired those poems of his that addressed topical issues in a sincere, urgent tone.

Having seen Li’s poems written for Tu Mu, one is inclined to think that Tu Mu, as a common courtesy, might have also written some poems for Li, but no such poems have been found. Nevertheless, an interesting anecdote is worth noting: when Niu Seng-ju died and was postumously given the title of Grand Guardian (T’ai-wei) in the tenth month of the second year of the Ta-chung era (November, 848), Tu Mu wrote an epitaph for his tomb, and Li Shang-yin composed an eulogy for his funeral. Later the Superior Prefect of Ching-chao reportedly remarked to Li, "The epitaph for our Grand Guardian by Tu of the Bureau of Merit Titles and the eulogy you have written will both last forever!" While the text of Li’s eulogy is no longer extant, Tu’s piece has survived (Liu, James 1969:23).
Tu Mu had been excited when he received notice to return to the capital in 848.\textsuperscript{100} Suprisingly enough, however, in the intercalary eleventh month of the third year of the Ta-chung era (January, 850), he requested a transfer to Hangchow (in modern Chekiang province) as a prefect. In a letter to the grand councilor\textsuperscript{101} he listed the following reasons for this action: 1) he could not provide living quarters for both his own family and that of Tu Ts'ao, who had been without a job for some time and who needed his help; 2) he also had to support his blind brother and widowed sister as well as their families in Yangchow; 3) Hangchow was a rich and large prefecture and the prefect could have a better income.

Tu Mu's request was not granted. Instead, he was appointed to be a Vice Director, Bureau of Appointments (\textit{Li-pu yüen-wai-lang}, 6b1) in the Ministry of Personnel in the summer of 850 (Miao 1942:22). Although holding an important position, Tu Mu continued to press for a post in the provinces. He petitioned the court three times on this matter, each time citing the same reasons, but now asking to be named Prefect of Hu-chou (part of modern Chekiang province).\textsuperscript{102} Finally his request was approved. Before

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{100} See "\textit{Shang Chou hsiang-kung ch'i}" (FCWC:236).
  \item \textsuperscript{101} See "\textit{Ch'iu Hang-chou ch'i}" (FCWC:242-249).
  \item \textsuperscript{102} See "\textit{Ch'iu Hu-chou}" \textit{ti} 1-3 \textit{ch'i} (FCWC:242-247).
\end{itemize}
leaving Ch’ang-an for his new post in the autumn of 850, he visited the tomb of the emperor T’ai-taung (r. 626-49), and wrote the poem “Ascending Lo-yang Plain Before Leaving for Wu-hsing: A Quatrain” (Chiang fu Wu-hsing teng Lo-yu-wan yi-chueh) (FCWC:39), which seems to voice disappointment in the current situation at the court. At this time the grand councilors were Pai Min-chung, Ts’ui Hsuan, and Wei Fu, who belonged to the Niu faction (Miao 1942:21). Perhaps this is the reason why James Liu asserts (1975:572) that Tu Mu was never happy with either the Li clique or that of Niu Seng-ju.

In Hu-chou, a rich and prosperous region, Tu Mu seems to have found some personal solace. He was enchanted by the beautiful scenery, which became the inspiration for many of his most charming poems. He also made the acquaintance of two other poets, Li Ying (fl. ca. 844) and Yen Yün (fl. ca. 844). Their friendship is evident from the poems they exchanged.103

According to Records of Yangchow Dreams, in Hu-chou Tu Mu also visited a woman who had been promised to him fourteen years earlier. But when he saw her again, the woman had already been married to someone else, as Tu Mu had failed to return to complete the ceremonies at the

103. See, for example, Tu Mu’s “Hu-chou ... chao Li Ying ....” (FCSSC:248-249), “Ho Yen Yün ....” (WC:352), Li Ying’s “Ho ... Tu ywan-wai” (Ch’Han T’ang-shih:590.6850), and Yen Yün’s “Lo-hua” (ibid:546.6308).
agreed-upon time. This anecdote is not verified by other sources, and has therefore not been taken seriously by modern scholars.

In the fall of 851, Tu Mu was again called back to the capital to become Director, Bureau of Evaluations (K’ao-kung lang-chung, 5b1) in the Ministry of Personnel, and, concurrently, Participant in the Drafting of Proclama-
tions (Chih-chih-kao) in the Department of Secretariat (Miao 1941:26f). These new positions, which involved the review and rating of imperial officials, as well as the drafting of decrees for the emperor, were important ones. However, Tu Mu, declining in physical vigor and used to the easy atmosphere of the provinces, was not excited by these new opportunities, as we can see from the poems he wrote just before assuming these posts. 104

During the first year at his new post, Tu Mu used his savings from Hu-chou to renovate his grandfather’s estate at Chu-p’o. In view of Tu Mu’s previous claim that his family only inherited a thirty-room residence from Tu Yu and in view of his earlier complaint about his poverty, both have been mentioned in the section “The Poet’s Life” in this chapter, we would wonder if Tu Mu really owned this piece of valuable property; and if he did, how can we

104. See "Pa-yüeh ... te-t’i-hou ...." (FCWC:232), "T’u-chung yi-chüeh" (FCSCC:298), and "Sui-t’i liu" (FCSCC:236).
account for his alleged financial hardships? One possible explanation may be that, after Tu Yu’s death, his properties were divided among his children, but the estate at Chu-p’o remained intact and eventually became a joint property of his descendants. Therefore, on the one hand, although Tu Mu had access to the estate, he could not make use of it to ease the financial difficulties of his own family. On the other, although Tu Mu’s cousins may also have had rights of access to the estate, perhaps none of them lived there regularly, possibly because the maintenance of such a place was very expensive and because they also moved about a good deal because of their official careers. Thus, it would be reasonable to assume that Tu Mu, a joint owner of the estate who now had money to spend, would attend to the long-neglected place (Yen 1978:109). Whatever the true circumstances of ownership, he had the place renovated, and afterward started to entertain friends there. One day over wine he said to his nephew P’ei Yen-han, "... soon I’ll be old.... I don’t expect to be rich and powerful, but at least I have several hundred works. I hope some day you will write a preface to my collected works and entitle it Fan-ch’uan wen chi (Collected Works of Fan-ch’uan). If this is done, I won’t feel that I’ve brought shame on the fish and trees here, because
thousands of years later the fish and trees here will have
died, but my works will still be in existence.105

In 852, Tu Mu seems to have met another famous
contemporary, Wen T'ing-yün (813-870), a poet especially
known for his tz’u. A literary genius, Wen had never had
any luck in the Presented Scholar examinations, and, hence, 
only minor success as an official (Wu Tun-sheng 1973:2-3).
At this time he sent a letter to Tu Mu, asking the latter’s
help in obtaining a position.106 Judging from Wen’s
remarks, Tu Mu had read and liked his poems, and might even
have met him before receiving the letter. We do not know
the outcome of Wen’s request for preferment.

Tu Mu was promoted again in 852, this time to the
position of Secretariat Drafter (Chung-shu-she-jen, 5a1) in
the Secretariat Department (Miao 1942:28). The incumbent
in this position was responsible for drafting imperial
decrees, advising the emperor on merits and rewards, and
writing reports or memorials on behalf of court officials
(Shen Jen-yüan 1977:114). In addition, he served as
advisor to the head of the Secretariat Department, who was
responsible for transmitting imperial decrees and giving
administrative orders (Sun Kuo-tung 1978:30) and often

105. See P’ei Yen-han’s preface in FCWC.

106. See Wen T’ing-yün’s “Shang Tu she-jen ch’i”
(Ch’in-ting ch’üan T’ang-wen:786.10384b).
functioned as grand councilor. Such a position required talent for literary composition and state affairs. It would appear to have been an ideal situation for Tu Mu, considering his literary skills and long study of statecraft. Furthermore, since the job involved the making of decisions on state affairs, it constituted a great opportunity for him to influence policy on national defense matters. But that opportunity seems to have arrived too late.

As noted earlier, when Tu Mu was banished to Huang-kang in 842, his brother moved to Yangchow in the hopes of finding medical treatment for his failing vision, which, however, proved to be incurable. In 851, he died in Yangchow. In 852 Tu Mu reburied him at the family burial ground in Ch'ang-an. In the epitaph written for his funeral, Tu Mu indicated that he himself, at the age of fifty, had already become feeble and sickly. In the winter of the same year, after some dreams that he would die soon, he wrote an epitaph for himself. Toward

107. In T'ang times, the Secretariat Department was originally headed by two Directors (Chung-shu-ling), who also functioned as Grand Councilors. However, from 767 on, the positions of Directors often remained vacant. Thus the persons in the next positions, Vice Directors (Chung-shu shih-lang) became the department heads and also served as Grand Councilors.

108. See "Tu ch'un mu-chih-ming" (FCWC:139).

the end of that year, his dreams came to pass. Tu Mu’s wife, a daughter of P’ei Yen, once prefect of Lang-chou (modern Tsun-yi district, Kweichow province), had died sometime before him.¹¹⁰ He was survived by four sons and one daughter.¹¹¹ The first two were then sixteen and seemed to have been borne by another woman.¹¹² And according to the “Geneology of Grand Councilors” (Tsai-hsiang shih-hai piao) in the Hsin T’ang-shu (72A.2430-2431) the second child, Chu-ni later attained the position of Left Rectifier of Omissions, and the third, Lan, that of Vice Minister of Rites (Li-pu shih-lang). Before his death, Tu Mu composed a poem for his children,¹¹³ reminding them to honor their family by thorough study, honesty, filial behavior, and fraternal support and love. He also

¹¹⁰. Ibid.

¹¹¹. This is the number of children Tu Mu mentioned in his epitaph. And since there is no evidence to indicate that any of them died after the writing of the epitaph and before Tu Mu’s own death, we may assume that all these children were still living when Tu Mu died. Chi Yu-kung (T’ang-shih chi-shih:65.980) has claimed that Tu Mu had another son, the poet Tu Hsü-ho (846-904), born to him by a concubine who lived with him in Ch’ih-chou, but who later married someone else. However, the Ssu-k’u t’i-yao refutes this (Miao 1957:116).

¹¹². In reference to the number of his children, Tu Mu in his epitaph mentions, “Chang-nan ... tz’u ydeh .... Pieh-sheng erh-nan ... yi nu ....” This seems to mean that, in addition to the first two sons, another woman had borne him two sons and one daughter.

left a poem for the grand councilor,\textsuperscript{114} which expressed his appreciation for the opportunity of working under his direction, his regret at being unable to continue to serve his country, and his abiding concern for the welfare of the people. Thus, he died holding to the ideals and ambitions that had guided him throughout his life.

\textsuperscript{114} See "Jan-sau liu-pieh ...." (WG:366).
CHAPTER 3

INTERPRETATION OF TU MU'S POETRY: PART ONE

In this and the following chapter I shall use Tu Mu's poetry to demonstrate the application of the semiotic model established in Chapter 1 for the interpretation of Chinese poetry. It goes without saying that his poems cannot be understood without our knowing something of their context (pragmatics). Therefore, in order to avoid belaboring the obvious--that part of the problem with our initial reading is contextual--I shall often provide what is necessary at the beginning of each interpretation, then proceed to other kinds of problems in pragmatics, semantics, syntactics, and phonics. The poems selected will be classified into four groups: social concern, historical contemplation, parting, landscape and nature. The first two groups will be dealt with here, and the last two groups in Chapter 4. These four categories do not exhaust the entire thematic range of Tu Mu's poetry; they only represent those themes which are most significant and which best exemplify the characteristic qualities of his verse. It should also be noted that this classification is only used for convenience of discussion, and that some of the poems
chosen may be simultaneously informed by two or more of these themes.

Poems of Social Concern

One assumption of the semiotic mode of interpretation is that our understanding of a poem depends on our first understanding the poetic tradition in which it is written. In China the elite tradition was heavily influenced by Confucian values and beliefs. Confucius, the supposed compiler of the Book of Odes, the first anthology of Chinese poetry, urged his disciples to study the Odes, which, he said, might "help you to express your grievances" (Lun yu:17.174). And Tzu-hsia, one of Confucius's disciples, is believed to have written the "Preface" to the Book of Odes, where it is stated that poetry serves "to make permanent the tie between husband and wife, to perfect filial piety, to deepen human relationships, to beautify moral instruction, and to improve the customs of the people" (Mao-shih chu-su:1.5b). Thus poetry was expected to serve a didactic function. Subsequently, poets of later times often employed eloquent and moving utterances to attack misrule and injustice, or to bring the people's suffering to the ruler's attention. Tu Mu, as has been shown in Chapter 2, was a literatus saturated with Confucian learning who aspired to serve his country in an official capacity. It was therefore only natural for him
to use poetry as a means of achieving political, social, or moral ends. Thus, many of his poems fall into this category. In the following, we shall discuss some of his poems which speak to contemporary social problems and issues.

"Expressing my Thoughts as It Snows"

(Hsüeh-chung shu-huai)

(Form: ku-shih pentasyllabic meter)

Winter snows one foot thick;  
Clouds frozen, cold air bleak.  
A lone city by the vast lake;  
Humans few, kitchen smoke scarce.  
Angered, to whom can I talk?  
Distress, how can I bear it?  
The emperor’s noted for kindness and wisdom;  
He uses sages, treating them like masters.  
He seeks effective systems, and  
Adopts both major and minor measures.  
The door of his bright court is wide open;  
All talents are welcome!  
Like the rising sun and moon, the country prospers;  
Like a full-fledged phoenix, it thrives!  
A useless man, by nature as I am,  
Should certainly be ignored.  
The northern barbarians ruin our defensive walls;  
Our troops, it’s said, are spreading on all fronts.
If the entanglement remains unsolved too long, 
Other thieves, too, might plot against us. 
I surely have good strategies 
That could punish the barbarians! 
Were I summoned for advice, 
I'd eat their flesh, sleep on their skins. 
"But this is the Court's business; 
You, small man, know nothing of it." 
Words from a transgressing official 
Often become traps for persecution. 
The winter festival is about to pass; 
Wine should be made in time. 
Thus, when the spring is warm, 
A cup from the jar may be poured. (FCWC:13)

This is a pentasyllabic "ancient-style" poem characterized by a simple, straightforward form, which is commonly used for autobiography or reminiscence (Davis 1971:108-112). In our initial reading, the text seems to unfold clearly except for a few points. First, "A lone city" in line three and "Humans few" in line four suggest the particular place where Tu Mu wrote this poem. Where was the place? In lines five and six the poet indicated that he was angered and distressed. What was the reason? According to the semiotic model, in order to get a full understanding of this poem, we need to construct a pragmatic situation for it. But before doing that, the
questions just raised have to be answered. In syntactics, there are also these questions: In lines seven to fourteen the poet praises the emperor as a wise ruler who valued talented officials. However, in lines seventeen to twenty-eight he indicates that the emperor would not listen to him even if he had good ways to defeat the "barbarians." What did the poet try to express by the conflicting syntax? Furthermore, entitled "Expressing my Thoughts as It Snows," begins with a cold, bleak picture, but ends with references to wine and warm spring. What is the reason for this syntactic movement?

The problems in pragmatics and syntactics just encountered are keys to our retroactive reading. For the pragmatic situation, "A lone city by the vast lake / Humans few, kitchen smoke scarce" suggests an isolated, rural environment, one that can be associated with Tu Mu's banishment to the provinces from 842-848. Therefore, we may assume that this poem was written sometime between 842 and 848. Lines seventeen and eighteen, "The northern barbarians ruin our defensive walls / Our troops, it's said, are spreading on all fronts," suggest alien invasion from the north of China. According to the "Wu-taung chi" of the Chiu T'ang-shu (18A.588-598), such an event occurred in 842, when the Uighurs invaded Yun-chou, bringing great misery to the people in that area. Thus we may further assume that this poem was composed sometime during the
first year of Tu Mu’s banishment to Huang-chou. From here we can also find reason for the poet’s anger. When the Uighur invasion occurred, Tu Mu, a serious student of military affairs, was anxious to recommend a strategy to adopt against the enemy. But, as mentioned in lines twenty-five to twenty-eight, no one would listen to him. In fact, he was banished from court.

As for syntactics, the inconsistency between lines seven to fourteen and lines seventeen to twenty-eight seems to be intended for the expression of intensified personal despair: lines seven to fourteen present the poet’s fantasy of an ideal administration (wise and just); lines seventeen to twenty-eight reveal the actual situation, which was to the contrary. This discrepancy between actual circumstances and the ideal deepens the poet’s despair. Especially, the direct address lodged in lines twenty-five and twenty-six couches in a sarcastic tone the rejection of Tu Mu’s proposal for a solution to the military problems of the time, thus lending his situation a certain poignancy. It may even be stressed that the conflicting syntax of this poem rightly symbolizes the contrast between the ideal and the real situation; and that the contrast results in the poet’s despair, which is what he tried to express in the total poem.

His despair notwithstanding, Tu Mu did not totally give up; apparently he was still awaiting a chance to
return to court. Perhaps this could explain why this poem begins with a cold, bleak picture of heavy snows and ends
with a more pleasant image of spring. In the last section (lines twenty-nine to thirty-two), "The winter festival is
about to pass," in addition to the passing of winter, seems to suggest the departure of a dreadful situation; "wine,"
although something that a disappointed person may be submerged in, invokes a warm feeling; "spring" not only is
associated with warmth, but also stands for hope. Thus, we grasp the coherent sense of this poem: it expresses the
poet's anxiety over the national peril and his despair of strengthening his country, but also conveys his hope for a
more favorable time to come.

"Ho Huang"
(Form: 16-shih heptasyllabic meter)

Premier Yüan Tsai once offered advice;
Emperor Hsien-tsung was also concerned.
Soon gown and cap were seen hung at the eastern market;
Suddenly, when bow and arrows were put aside, the
western expedition stopped.
Those pasturing sheep and horses wear alien clothes,
But remain loyal Han subjects even when old.
Alas, only the songs and dance music from Liang-chou
Have become popular diversions for the gentry.

(FCWC:24)
In the first reading of this poem, we encounter some questions about the general situation of the discourse: What does the title "Ho Huang" refer to? How are "Premier Yüan Tsai", "Emperor Hsien-tsung", "sheep" and "horses", and "Liang-chou" related to the title? In semantics, there are also some difficulties: "Gown" and "cap," and "eastern market" do not make any sense if considered on the basis of their ordinary meaning. Nor can we understand what the phrase "bow and arrows were put aside" means if we have in mind only the regular meaning of "bow" and "arrows." One problem occurs in the syntax, too. This poem is a "regulated verse." According to the prosodic code, a "regulated verse" consists of four couplets. Among them, the second and the third are obligatorily formed of antithetical lines,¹ the first and

¹. I agree with Professor James Liu (1962:146-147) in opposing the use of the English word "parallelism" as equivalent to the Chinese term tui-chang, whose better translation is "antithesis." As Professor Liu points out, antithesis is different from parallelism: while parallelism allows for the repetition of words, antithesis does not. He quotes for example a verse from the Song of Solomon:

Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep....
Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet....
Thy neck is like the tower of David....
Thy two breasts are like two young doves that....

Here the objects enumerated are meant to show the various charms of the beloved, not to draw attention to any contrasting or complementing qualities; and the repetition of the words "thy" and "like" are not permissible in the antithesis of Chinese regulated verse.
the last, of nonantithetical lines. Antithesis means character-for-character contrast, wherein contrasted characters or words are required to differ in meaning, but usually both characters or words belong to the same category of things or concepts. For example, color is contrasted with color, flower is contrasted with flower, number is contrasted with number, etc. Furthermore, the contrasted characters must grammatically belong to the same category: noun against noun, verb against verb, adjective against adjective, etc. However, in our initial reading, these rules for antithesis do not seem to have been followed in the third couplet of the Chinese text. Here, the first four words, Mu-yang ch’u-ma (pasture sheep and tend horses) of line five is a verbal phrase, whereas the first four words, Pai-fe ten-hein (white hairs and red hearts), of line six are a noun phrase. Apparently, these two phrases do not belong to the same grammatical category. How can they be allowed, then, in this couplet?

When we found it hard to construct a pragmatic situation for this poem in the initial reading, we started to search for additional information to fill in the gaps in the text. Based on our knowledge of Chinese geography, "Ho Huang" refers to the region where the Yellow and Huang-shui rivers merge, including parts of modern Shensi, Kansu, and Suiyuan provinces. According to another poem by Tu Mu, "General Shih" (Shih chiang-chün) (FCWC:20), this area was
seized by the Turfans soon after the An Lu-shan Rebellion erupted, and the local Chinese residents suffered under foreign domination. The loss of the Ho Huang region had caused concern for two T’ang authorities. As shown in “The Biography of Yuan Tsai” (Yüan Tsai chuan) in the Hsin T’ang-shu (145.4711-4715), Yuan Tsai, a premier during T’ang Tai-tsung’s reign (763-779), had a good knowledge of the Ho Huang region, and had submitted plans in 773 to regain control of that territory. The first line of our poem, “Premier Yuan Tsai once offered advice,” is an allusion to this historical fact. However, the “Biography” continues to state that, because of his abuse of power and corruption, he was soon ordered to commit suicide in 777, hence his plan was left unmaterialized. Another authority who had been concerned about Ho Huang was the emperor Hsien-tsung (r. 805-820). From “The Biography of the Turfans” (T’u-fan chuan) in the Hsin T’ang-shu (216A.6100-6101) we learn that Hsien-tsung once planned to recover the Ho Huang area by force of arms. The second line of our poem, “Emperor Hsien-tsung was also concerned,” is a reference to this fact. Yet, unfortunately, the emperor was later murdered in 820 by a eunuch, and hence was unable to carry out his plans. With this additional information, we can conclude what “sheep” and “horses” and “Liang-chou” stand for: “Sheep” and “horses,” invoking images of nomadic life, aptly depict the environment of Ho Huang;
"Liang-chou," a prefecture in the Ho Huang region, located in modern Kansu province between Yung-ch'ang and T'ien-chu, is also an element related to the title of the poem "Ho Huang." Therefore, it becomes clear that this poem centers on the loss of a northern frontier region and the hopes for its recovery.

In semantics, we were unable, in the initial reading, to explain literally the terms "Gown and cap," "eastern market," and "bow and arrows" in connection with the poem. This difficulty compelled us to contemplate these terms at a higher level. Originally the utterance "gown and cap were seen hung at the eastern market" was a reference to the capital punishment imposed on Ts'ao Ts'o, an imperial clerk grandee (yu-shih ta-fu) during the Han emperor Ching-ti's reign (156-141 B.C.), who, having offered advice which backfired, was hanged in his official gown and cap at a market. In our present poem, Yuan Tsai, like Ts'ao Ts'o, was also a court official. Therefore, we may assume that the expression "gown and cap were seen hung at the eastern market," which originally alluded to Ts'ao Ts'o's death, is borrowed to represent Yuan Tsai's death by hanging. As for "bow and arrows," it had been used in "bow and arrows were put aside" to allude to the death of the legendary Chinese emperor Huang-ti, who was said to have left his bow and arrows behind and ridden away on the back of a dragon. Because Hsien-tsung in our present poem was
also an emperor like Huang-ti, it is logical to surmise that "bow and arrows were put aside" is adopted here to signify Hsien-tsung's death.

The syntactic problem encountered in our initial reading can also be solved. Previously we had suspected that Mu-yang ch'ü-ma of line five and Pai-fa tan-hsin of line six do not constitute an antithesis. But upon closer examination, we discover that Mu-yang ch'ü-ma (pasture sheep and tend horses), which has the surface structure of a verbal phrase, is actually a noun phrase derived from "those who pasture sheep and tend horses." Moreover, pai-fa tan-hsin (white hairs and red hearts), which appears to be a regular noun phrase, is also a truncated noun phrase originally reading "those who have white hairs and red hearts" (those old and loyal people). In other words, further investigation determined that Mu-yang ch'ü-ma and Pai-fa tan-hsin both function as noun phrases and are an appropriate pair as antithetical components.

With all these duplicities sorted out, we can understand the poem better in the retroactive reading. All the elements that we thought were trivial now appear to be unified in expressing the poetic theme: indignation against the T'ang government's apathy toward the suffering people in the lost frontier region, Ho Huang. The first couplet of the text introduces the two T'ang authorities most concerned historically with the recovery of the Ho
Huang area. The second couplet alludes to their death and the abandonment of their respective plans to recover the region. In a "regulated verse," each couplet is a more or less autonomous unit, and there is usually some sort of stasis between the couplets in terms of flow of thought. In the present poem, however, the stasis between the first two couplets is replaced by a conspicuous progression. Line three, "Soon gown and cap were seen hung at the eastern market," refers back to line one, "Premier Yuan Tsai once offered advice"; line four, "Suddenly, when bow and arrows were put aside, the western expedition stopped," harks back to line two, "Emperor Hsien-tsung was also concerned." The peculiar fluidity between the first two couplets seems to have some special meanings: First, it signifies the abruptness of the deaths of the concerned T’ang authorities, as well as the sudden loss of hope for relief from alien control; secondly, it tightens the first two couplets, separating them from the rest of the poem, and hence creating a discontinuity between the first and the second halves of the poem. This discontinuity suggests the end of official T’ang concern for the suffering in Ho Huang. Thus, there follows resentment in the rest of the poem: The third couplet indicates that the people of Ho Huang were loyal to the T’ang government, but continued to suffer under alien control; the fourth couplet points out that Ho Huang had been forgotten, except for its music.
which was rapidly spreading into the Chinese heartland as an amusement for the gentry. It is with a tone of bitterness that the poem ends.

"The Early Wild Geese"

(Tsao yen)

(Form: 14-shih heptasyllabic meter)

At Chin-ho in mid-autumn barbarians’ bows are drawn;
The wild geese, frightened, wail and scatter in the sky.
Solitary shadows pass the Immortal’s Palms on moon-lit nights
At Ch’ang-men Palace, lights dim, several cries arise--
Beware: hordes of barbarians’ horses are still around.
How dare you ride home on the spring wind?
Hate not the little-populated Hsiao-hsiang region;
Aquatic grass fills the rivers, berries crowd the banks. (FCWC:57)

Wild geese are migratory birds that fly north in the spring and return south in late autumn. In an ordinary sense, "The early wild geese" in the title of this poem would refer to the first flocks of geese in the annual migration. Ostensibly, then, this would be a poem describing wild geese that have been frightened away from their resting place by hunters. Questions that arise in our initial reading, however, cast some doubt about this interpretation. If wild geese were actually what this
poem is about, why does the discourse carry a tone so sympathetic to them and so hostile to the hunters? The two Chinese words *lu* (line one) and *hu* (line five), meaning "barbarian(s)," are derogatory terms for the alien tribal peoples who occupied the northern, northwestern, and northeastern border areas. How are they associated with the "wild geese" in this poem? What does "Chin-ho" (line 1) have to do with them? These questions, unless answered, bar us from comprehending the conditions surrounding this poetic discourse.

On the level of syntax we also have a problem. While couplets one and two contain utterances describing the "wild geese," couplets three and four embody direct speech addressed to the "wild geese." Does this change in speech have any particular meaning?

The initial reading is also frustrated by a duplicitous feature in the phonic structure. This is a "regulated verse." And such a verse is required to have one single category of rhyme, which occurs at the end of even-numbered lines and, sometimes, at the end of the first line. Therefore, in such a poem we would normally expect only the even-numbered lines and, perhaps, the first line to employ rhyme. That is, we would anticipate only four, or at most five rhyme words altogether. In the piece under study, however, the end of the fifth line also rhymes. Thus there are six rhyme words in total. Does this
peculiar phonic phenomenon serve any special purpose? If so, what is its purpose?

Since our literal reading of the poem did not result in a fuller understanding of the poem, we have to attempt a figurative interpretation. As we noted before, lu and hu are references to the alien tribal peoples occupying the northern, northwestern, or northeastern border regions. In addition, we also learned that "Chin-ho" (line one) is a place located in modern Suiyuan province. And according to the "Wu-tsung chi" section of the Chiu T'ang-shu (18A.591-594), it was invaded in 842 by the Uighurs. Therefore, we may reckon that the "wild geese" in this poem symbolize Chinese refugees fleeing from invading Uighur forces. Further, the "Immortal’s Palms" (line 3), a statue shaped like the legendary immortal’s palms, built to catch "sweet dew" for the Han emperor Wu-ti (r. 148-87 B. C.), who allegedly drank it to obtain longevity, was located in ancient Ch’ang-an. Ch’ang-men Palace (line 4), one of the palaces built during Han Wu-ti’s reign, was also situated in Ch’ang-an. And "Hsiao-hsiang" (line 7) refers to the area in modern Hunan province, where the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers flow. In contrast to Chin-ho, a frontier region occupied by invading barbarians, the Immortal’s Palms, Ch’ang-men Palace, and Hsiao-hsiang were all located in the hinterland. Therefore, it is logical to further surmise that the "wild
geese" in the poem we are studying stand for Chinese refugees fleeing southward to the safety of the Chinese heart-land.

Basing a retroactive reading on this assumption, we are able to find answers to several previously confusing questions. While the wild geese represent the fleeing Chinese refugees, the hunters are an apt metaphor for the invading Uighurs. And since they were inflicting misery on the geese, or the poet's countrymen, the poem harbors a tone hostile toward them and sympathetic toward the latter. This tone also justifies a change of speech in the syntax. On the one hand, the first half of the discourse depicts the barbaric northern march lands as well as the terror and anguish of the fleeing refugees. These two couplets are expressed in indicative statements. On the other hand, the second half of the poem shifts to direct speech addressed to the "wild geese," or the Chinese refugees. The third couplet invests the addressees with sympathetic concern, asking them not to return to the dangerous northern region of Chin-ho; the fourth couplet, continuing the tone of personal concern, invites the geese or the refugees to remain in the temperate and fruitful world of the heartland, which is represented by Hsiao-hsiang.

The special phonic features of this poem may represent an attempt to depict in auditory terms the
psychology of the refugees. This poem is written in the genre of "regulated verse," which usually has four or at most five line-end rhymes. But our present poem has six such rhymes. Of these, five occur in the first six lines, which describe the plight of the wild geese/refugees. This seems to point up the ubiquitousness of horror in their world. Furthermore, the additional rhyme at the end of the fifth line, which is not normally expected, quickens the pace of the poem, thus symbolizing the pursuing barbarian armies and the desperate flight of the geese/refugees. Two other sound features contribute to the advance of the poetic theme: The three words, fei, ssu, and san, in line two of the Chinese text, were pronounced in Tu Mu's times as /fjuˈei/, /sjei/, and /san/. The three successive fricatives /f-/, /s-/, and /s-/ in a row create an audible image of the flight of the frightened geese/refugees. The reduplicative fen fen in line five, which is followed by an unexpected end rhyme, accelerates the rhythm, and, thus, also astutely signifies the multitude of the hunters/enemies.

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2. The phonetic transcription of Tu Mu's poems into T'ang pronunciation is obtained by using first Kuang-wen pien-yi so's Kuo-yin chung-ku-yin tui-chao piao to determine the initials and finals in traditional nomenclature, and then Tung T'ung-ho's system of reconstruction to convert them into T'ang pronunciation in International Phonetic Alphabet.
"Passing by Hua-ch'ing Palace"

(Kuo Hua-ch'ing kung chüeh-chü)

(Form: chüeh-chü heptasyllabic meter)

(I)
Looking back from Ch'ang-an: embroidery piles up;
Atop the mountain a thousand gates open one by one;
A steed fallen in the red dust, the consort smiles:
No one knows lichees have just arrived.

(II)
From the green woods of Hsin-feng rises yellow dust;
Several steeds return with the emissary from Yü-yang.
"The Tune of the Rainbow Skirt" sounds atop a thousand peaks--
The dance continues until the Central Plain is shattered.

(III)
Music and songs from everywhere, peace intoxicating;
Lit bright by the moon, the palace soars up to the sky.
Midst the clouds Lu-shan's dance confuses others' steps;
Whistling through a thousand peaks, the wind brings the sound of laughter. (FCWG:28)

Hua-ch'ing Palace in the title of this cycle of poems was a favorite resort of the T'ang emperor Hsüan-tsung. Located on Li-shan Mountain, to the east of the capital Ch'ang-an, it was noted for its hot springs.
and many other luxurious facilities. It is said that Hsüan-tsung spent so much time there with his favorite consort, Yang Kuei-fei, one of the most famous femmes fatales in Chinese history, that he lost his empire.

In the first poem, we have difficulty understanding some items in the initial reading. The word "embroidery" (line 1) does not seem to be limited to its literal sense; it means more than what we can find in the dictionary. But what is the additional meaning? The word "gates" (line 2) may refer to the gates of the Palace or the gates of the pass on Li-shan Mountain leading to the Palace. Which interpretation should we choose? In addition to these semantic problems, there is also a pragmatic hurdle:

"Lichees" (line 4) is a small, tender fruit, but here it concurs with such words as "mountain" (line 1), "thousand gates," and "steed" (line 3), that invoke large or heroic images. Does the difference in imagery signify anything at all?

From the semiotic view, a poetic discourse is a truncated text which needs to be completed with appropriate information. In this poem, the word "embroidery" appears to be associated with the East and West Embroidered Ridges, which, according to our knowledge of Chinese historical geography, were part of Li-shan Mountain, covered with beautiful flowers and trees. Thus, we may reckon that "embroidery piles up" in line one represents the East.
and West Embroidery Ridges, wherein "embroidery" refers to the ridges' names and colorfulness and "piles up" depicts the physical shape of the ridges. This reading fits our interpretation of the first line. The phrase "Looking back from Ch'ang-an" in this line, corroborated by the title "Passing by Hua-ch'ing Palace," clearly indicates that what we have in this poem is a description of what the poet imagined he would see on looking back from Ch'ang-an toward Hua-ch'ing Palace. In such case, the object that first caught the poet's eyes was very likely the conspicuous, colorful East and West Embroidered Ridges surrounding the palace.

This reading is based on the assumption that the picture unveiled in this poem is an exterior view. Thus, the "gates" in line 2 are the gates of the pass leading to the palace. Besides, judging from the third line, "A steed fallen in the red dust . . .," the "thousand gates" were apparently opened for the steed to pass. It is very unlikely these were those of the palace itself, for the steed would not be allowed to run through the magnificent building.

In the retroactive reading, the problem of the "lichees" also becomes clearer once we assume the poem involves imagined exterior views. Besides, the word
"lichees" also recalls a story in Li Ch’ao’s *Kuo-shih pu*. Following this account, Yang Kuei-fei was born in modern Szechwan and liked to eat lichees grown there. When she became the "honorable consort" (*kuei-fei*), lichees were not available in Ch’ang-an. Therefore, the court had to import them for her pleasure. But because they rot quickly, they were transported at great expense by relay horses. And because the horses were forced to gallop long distances, many foundered along the road. Integrated in the poem, this story helps evoke a vivid picture. Confronted with the image of a "steed" galloping through a "thousand gates" on high "mountains" just to deliver this small rare fruit to the "consort," the contemporary reader could not fail to resent the great costs of the imperial family’s pleasure-seeking ways. Furthermore, in this poem, public (Ch’ang-an) and private ("embroidery" representing the resort, lichees) affairs; the heroic (the steed) and the intimate (the consort); the large (thousand gates, the steed) and the small (lichees) are given equal weight. While in a well-organized empire the two aspects of each of these pairs are normally assigned different priorities, their undifferentiated treatment in this poem suggests a state of mismanagement. This interpretation renders a solution to the pragmatic problem we faced before.

3. Quoted by Chou Hsi-fu in his commentary in *TMSH* II:6
In our initial reading of this poem, we were frustrated when attempting to interpret the text at the literal level. But once we filled in the gaps with relevant information, a complete picture immediately emerged, wherein relay horses are employed to deliver lichees for the selfish consort's personal enjoyment. This conjunction of elements implies a strong protest against the emperor's mismanagement of state affairs and the consort's apathy for the people's suffering.

The meaning of the second poem is hard to grip completely in our initial reading. What is "yellow dust"? Why is it used in concurrence with "green woods"? Should we take the phrase "a thousand peaks" in its literal meaning? If not, what is its actual sense? Besides these semantic queries, we also need to know, in pragmatics, what "The Tune of the Rainbow Skirt" represents and how it is linked, if at all, to Hsin-feng and Yu-yang. Finally, we have some problems with the last line in the Chinese text, Wu-p'o Chung-yüan shih hsia-lai, specifically the first part:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Wu} & \quad \text{p'o} & \quad \text{Chung-yüan} \\
(\text{Dance}) & \quad (\text{broken}) & \quad (\text{Central Plain})
\end{align*}
\]

Normally a phrase constructed on the same pattern as this can be analyzed as:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Transitive Verb} & \quad \text{Adjective} & \quad \text{Noun} \\
(\text{as Complement}) & \quad (\text{as Object})
\end{align*}
\]
In such a construction, the word in the first position has to be a transitive verb. For example, *chi* in the phrase

\[
\text{Chi} \quad \text{p’o} \quad \text{pao-lei}
\]

(hit) (broken) (fortress)

is a transitive verb. But in the phrase *Wu-p’o Chung-yulan*, the first word *wu* is not a transitive verb; rather, it is an intransitive verb, which often occurs in such phrases as

\[
\text{Shou-wu} \quad \text{tsu-tao.}
\]

(Hands move) (feet dance)

This means that, in our poem, Tu Mu has used an intransitive verb in place of a transitive verb. In other words, he has violated the expectations of the reader. There is also a problem between *wu-p’o* and *Chung-yulan*. As shown in the above analysis, the word in the third position of such a construction needs to be a concrete noun, as, for example, *pao-lei* in the phrase *Chi-p’o pao-lei*. Yet in the phrase *Wu-p’o Chung-yulan*, the noun *Chung-yulan*, which stands for China as a nation, is not a concrete noun like *pao-lei*. Therefore, here Tu Mu has placed together two linguistic units whose collocation is not normally permitted. Do this deviation and the one just mentioned have any particular meaning in relation to the poem?

As for the "yellow dust," we may find clues to its meaning in the second line and in a note following it provided by the poet himself. As Tu Mu explained, before An Lu-shan’s revolt, Hsüan-taung had been informed of the
possible conspiracy. Reluctant to credit the report, he sent an emissary to see An at his headquarters in Yü-yang (located northeast of modern Peking), hoping to find out the truth. Unfortunately, he was fooled by the emissary, who, bribed by An, came back to report that the rumor was unfounded. Considered in association with this account, the "yellow dust" appears to be dust rising from a dirt road, suggesting the return of the emissary. But its occurrence after "green woods," which has a connotation of growth, is ominous of an impending change from prosperity to turmoil.

To approach full understanding of "a thousand peaks," it would be almost impossible simply to contemplate the linguistic elements of the words. Instead, we need to remember that sometimes a poem is related to another or other poems; and, therefore, in order to arrive at a full understanding of the poem in question, we need to move from its text to other related texts. In the present case, the full meaning of the line "'The Tune of the Rainbow Skirt' sounds atop a thousand peaks" can be found by reviewing a related poem by Tu Mu's contemporary Po Chü-yi. In the one-hundred-and-twenty-line "Song of Ever-lasting Sorrow" (Ch’ang-hen ko), which centers on the romance of Hsüan-taung and Yang Kuei-fei, lines twenty-seven to thirty-four reveal:
Li Palace's high towers rose into the blue sky; Heavenly music floated in the air, could be heard everywhere.

Slow songs and gentle dances, stringed instruments' sound, all melted into one;

All day long the emperor watched, never tiring of them. From Yü-yang began the war drum, vibrating across the land,

Shattering "The Tune of the Rainbow Skirt and the feathered Jacket."

The multilayered city walls and watchtowers enveloped in smoke and dust;

Thousands of chariots and horses moved toward the southwest.4

Li Palace refers to Hua-ch'ing Palace as it was located at Li-shan Mountain. These lines allude to Hsüan-tsung's extravagant life in the palace, which "rose into the blue sky." They particularly point up his indulgence in music and dance, and his later being forced to flee to the southwest when his enemies attacked from Yü-yang. Viewed in connection with these lines, the phrase "a thousand peaks" becomes clear: it actually refers to the palace which was so grand that Po Chü-yi described it as rising "into the blue sky."

From Po’s poem we further learn that "The Tune of the Rainbow Skirt" was a tune that Hsüan-tsung was fond of listening to. But at a deeper level, it seems also to be reminiscent of all the "heavenly music," "slow songs," "gentle dances," and "stringed instruments' sound," that represent the emperor’s life at the palace. In Po’s poem, music, dance, etc. are mentioned before the war drums from Yü-yang, thus implying the actual consequences of the emperor’s decadent life. In Tu Mu’s poem, however, the emperor’s decadent life style is signified by "The Tune of the Rainbow Skirt" following "Hsien-feng" and "Yü-yang," which both foretell the impending disaster. This sequence suggests the emperor’s blindness to his actual condition and the inevitability of his fall.

The deviations from the norm in the phrase Wu-p’o Chung-yüan should be re-examined in this same light. As Po’s poem indicates, Hsüan-tsung spent all his time in pleasurable pursuits. Therefore, the ungrammaticality of the word wu (dance), normally an intransitive verb but used here as a transitive one may be regarded as a device to emphasize the excessive degree to which the emperor indulged himself in pleasure. As for the linguistic relationship between Wu-p’o and Chung-yüan, the nonconcrete noun Chung-yüan is used in a position which normally requires a concrete noun. This ungrammaticality engenders
a strong reaction in the reader and makes the threatened collapse of the dynasty seem even more pathetic.

While a mimetic explanation of the poem is virtually impossible, our retroactive reading by situating the poem with the related text sheds light on the kernel idea: the emperor's blindness to the approaching turmoil and his decadent life at Hua-ch'ing Palace led to the near ruin of the dynasty. Once this idea is disclosed, the elements which appeared puzzling in the initial reading all fall into their appropriate places in the total structure of meaning.

The text of the third poem opens with the line

\textit{Wan-kuo sheng-ko tsui t'ai-p'ing}, which could be taken to mean "Music and songs everywhere in the country, peace intoxicating." This interpretation, however, is not congruous with the next line, \textit{Vi-t'ien Jou-tie~ yUeh fen-ming} "Lit bright by the moon, the palace soars up to the sky," which seems to relate to Hua-ch'ing Palace only, not "everywhere in the country." In view of Po Chü- yi's utterances quoted before, the first two lines should now be considered as a description of Hsüan-tsung's indulgence in decadence and the palace where the entertainment took place. Thus, the first line of the Chinese text should be interpreted as "Music and songs from everywhere, peace intoxicating." Here, the interpretation "music and songs from everywhere" may be supported by the fact that some of
the music and songs used in the palace were imported from abroad.5 "The Tune of the Rainbow Skirt and the Feathered Jacket," for example, is stated in the Yeh-yu Lan to have been imported from Hsi-liang (northwest of modern Kansu province).6 With Wan-kuo sheng-ko explicated as "Music and songs from everywhere," tsui t'ai-p'ing may be taken to mean "peace intoxicating," referring to the emperor's indulgence in pleasure and his being handicapped by false reports of political realities.

Our mimetic explanation in the initial reading of this poem also faltered on the line "Midst the clouds Lu-shan's dance confuses others' steps": What does "Lu-shan's dance" mean? The phrase "Midst the clouds" does not make any sense if considered to be linguistically representational. But what does it actually mean?

To comprehend the phrase "Midst the clouds," we should be aware that in this poem there are two other celestial terms "sky" and "moon" besides "clouds." Since we already know that "sky" and "moon" signify the soaring palace, "clouds" may be also taken, in the retroactive reading, as a reference to the palace. This consideration is feasible in view of the fact that the latter part of the line touches upon "dance," which takes place in the

5. As Glen W. Baxter (1953) indicates, much of that music was foreign.

6. See Tz'u-hai v. 2:337.
palace. As for "Lu-shan's dance," we have to supply additional information which is lacking because of the elliptical nature of the poetic utterance. As noted in the "T'ang-chi, 31" of the Tzu-chih t'ung-chien (215.6876-6877), An Lu-shan was very good at pleasing the emperor and Yang Kuei-fei. And due to his ostentatious display of loyalty, Hsüan-tsung and the consort often invited him to join them at their parties, never suspecting his treachery. "Lu-shan's dance" in this poem refers to a special dance called "Hu-hsüan-wu." It is said that An was so good at this dance that the emperor enjoyed watching him perform it.7 Our knowledge of this account helps us situate the poem in its total perspective, through which we see the emperor neglecting his official business and retreating to the confines of the palace to enjoy the pleasures that eventually brought his empire to the edge of collapse.

After this interpretation of the individual poems, some general observations of the whole cycle are in order. These poems belong to the quatrain (chüeh-chü) genre. In the Chinese poetic tradition, the term "quartain" usually refers to a form of poetry which contains four penta-syllabic or heptasyllabic lines. A quatrain, in addition to the requirement of following certain tonal patterning and rhyme restrictions, may be formed of either two

7. See Chou Hsi-fu's notes in TMSH, II:8.
antithetical couplets, two nonantithetical couplets, or one
antithetical and one nonantithetical couplet. The com-
ponents in the corresponding positions in the two lines of
the antithetical couplet usually complement or oppose each
other, thus creating a sense of stability. On the other
hand, the nonantithetical couplet is composed of two lines,
one leading to the other, thus giving an impression of
temporal movement. For the poems we have just analyzed,
the poet could have used both antithetical and non-
antithetical couplets. Nevertheless, he chose nonanti-
thetic couplets for all three pieces. The temporal
movement of the lines may be surmised to signal a loss of
stability and a movement toward destruction. Moreover, the
quatrain is said to be constructed on a formula involving
ch'i "start," ch'eng "receive," chuan "turn," and ho
"close." According to this formula, the first line of the
poem should establish the theme; the second continue it;
the third introduce a "turn," a new element; and the fourth
resolve all into a harmonious whole (Yang Tsai 1973b:19,
1973c:92; Hightower 1953:70). In the quatrain, it is also
said, the most important line is the third one. In this
line, the poet must communicate his tenor through incidents
or objects; only then will the "turn" possess strength and
inexhaustible meaning. 8 If this rule is taken seriously in

8. A statement made by Chou Po-pi cited in Wu Na
1965:57.
appraising the quatrain, these three poems should be valued very highly: In the third line of each of these poems the poet lodges an important element that strikes the reader as the evil that led to Hsüan-tsung's fall.

Poems of Historical Contemplation

As indicated above in Chapter 2, the study of history constituted a significant part of Tu Mu's scholarship. He was imbued with a strong sense of history. This fact also finds reflection in his poetry. Furthermore, his poems of historical contemplation often reveal somewhat unorthodox opinions and statements. The following piece is one example:

"Red Cliff"

(Ch'ih-pi)

(Form: chüeh-chü heptasyllabic meter)

A broken halberd sunk in the sand, its iron not yet dissolved;
I polish it, and recognize it belongs to a former reign.

Had an easterly wind not favored Chou-lang,
In deep spring the two Ch'iaos would have been immured in Bronze Peacock Tower. (FCWC:69)

"Red Cliff" (Ch'ih-pi) could be any one of the four mountains in modern Hupeh province (located in Chia-yü district, Huang-kang district, Wu-ch'ang district, and
Han-yang district, respectively), which are all named Red Cliff. Among the four, the first one is the best known. According to Ch’en Shou’s (233-297) San-kuo chih (54.1262-1263), after the Han dynasty collapsed, China was torn into three parts—the states of Wei, Shu, and Wu. In 208, Ts’ao Ts’ao, founder of the Wei, launched a naval attack against Wu. Fearing that his soldiers might be disabled by seasickness, he ordered all the ships chained together to reduce their pitching and tossing. The commanding general of the united forces of Wu and Shu, Chou Yu, acting on the advice of Huang Kai, ordered ten ships filled with dry wood and drenched in oil. When a southeast wind (tung-nan tung) arose, he had his soldiers set fire to the ships and set them adrift. The fire spread to Ts’ao’s ships and finally destroyed his whole army. This famous battle took place at Red Cliff in Chia-yü district. In the poem we are studying, “broken halberd,” “iron,” “easterly wind,” and “Chou-lang” are all reminiscent of this famous battle, and therefore, we can determine that “Red Cliff,” the title of the poem, alludes to this place.

In the initial reading of this poem, equipped with linguistic competence, we attempt a literal interpretation.

9. Perhaps due to length restrictions of the poetic line, Tu Mu used “easterly wind” (tung-feng) in the third line of “Red Cliff.” In San-kuo chih, however, Ch’en Shou claimed the wind to be from the "southeast."
and find that it actually presents no referential difficulty from line one to line three. Yet semantic and pragmatic problems arise when we get to the fourth line, "In deep spring the two Ch’iaos would have been immured in Bronze Peacock Tower." This line presents a conclusion in response to a hypothesis put out in the preceding one, "Had an easterly wind not favored Chou-lang." It is clear that "easterly wind" and "Chou-lang" in the third line are allusions to the battle at Red Cliff. But who are "the two Ch’iaos" and what is "Bronze Peacock Tower" in the fourth line, and what do they have to do with this battle? Their occurrence in the poem do not seem to make any sense. We have a syntactic problem with the third line, too. The easterly wind is a nonhuman object. How can it have such a human attribute as "favor"? In other words, "Had an easterly wind not favored Chou-lang" is an ungrammatical utterance, resulting from the deviant collocation of the nonhuman "easterly wind" and the human attribute of "favor." What does such an ungrammaticality mean?

By taking the language of the text as literally representational, we cannot make any sense out of the last line. Therefore we know that if we are to comprehend this line we must abandon attempts at mimetic interpretations in favor of semiosis; we have to look for a higher level of meaning where the aforementioned elements may be unified with others to signify a single kernel concept. Thus our
difficulty with mimesis urges us to conduct a retroactive reading, and our problems with the interpretation of "the two Ch’iaos" and "Bronze Peacock Tower," and of "easterly wind" and "favor" become keys to the significance of the poem.

While we were perplexed by the last line in our initial reading, we recall the account in the San-kuo chih. According to Ch’en Shou, an important factor in Chou Yü’s victory was the southeast wind (or easterly wind, as indicated in Tu Mu’s poem), which came in time and blew the fire in the direction that Chou Yü desired. Based on this story, we may set up the hypothesis: "If the wind had not risen and blown in the desired direction, Chou Yü would have lost the battle, and Ts’ao Ts’ao would have become the victor." This is the hypothesis Tu Mu poses in the third line of his poem. Therefore, we may assume that the fourth line of the poem is congruent with this hypothesis.

Based on this assumption, in our retroactive reading we conclude that "the two Ch’iaos" who would have been immured belonged to the hypothetical vanquished side, i.e., Chou Yü’s side; and "Bronze Peacock Tower," where the two Ch’iaos would have been immured, belonged to the hypothetical victors, i.e., Ts’ao Ts’ao’s side. Once linked to Chou Yü, the referents of the "two Ch’iaos" become obvious: they are two beautiful sisters of a Ch’iao family, who were, respectively, married to the Wu general
Chou Yü and to Sun Ts‘e, the founder of the state of Wu. “Bronze Peacock Tower,” now that it has been connected with Ts‘ao Ts‘ao, reminds us of a palace that was built on his orders at Yen, his famous base in modern Lin-ch‘ang, Honan province. Containing more than one hundred rooms to house his concubines and sing-song girls, it was surmounted by a large bronze peacock on its roof, and thus called Bronze Peacock Tower. Before his death, Ts‘ao Ts‘ao asked his sons to erect his funeral mound on Yen’s western slopes, facing the palace. He also ordered that after his death, his concubines and singsong girls would have to remain in the palace, and that a special couch had to be set aside for his spirit so that it could continue to enjoy their services. With these pieces of historical information, we approach a better understanding of the fourth line: if an easterly wind had not helped Chou Yü, the states of Shu and Wu would have lost the battle, and the wives of Chou Yü and Sun Ts‘e would have been captured by Ts‘ao and immured in Bronze Peacock Tower as another concubine in his service.

The "easterly wind" is a critical element in the ungrammaticality of the third line: "Had an easterly wind not favored Chou-lang." The easterly wind has the capability to determine the outcome of the battle. Thus the point is made: nature controls human destiny. The victory is purely accidental, for it does not result from human efforts. Thus, even though Chou-lang won the battle,
because of his reliance on the easterly wind, his own success becomes very trivial.

Through the perspective of this kernel concept, the first couplet of this poem can be brought into better focus in the retroactive reading. As disclosed in its first line, "A broken halberd sunk in the sand, its iron not yet dissolved," hundreds of years after the Battle of Red Cliff, only the broken halberd remains. The historical personalities involved in the war, both victors and vanquished, have all perished. This understanding in turn leads to a deeper meaning of the second couplet: Even if Ts’ao Ts’ao had won the battle and captured the two Ch’iao sisters, eventually he, too, and his opponents would have returned to dust. This is a natural law, from which no one, however powerful, can escape.

This poem touches upon the Battle of Red Cliff, wherein Chou Yu defeated Ts’ao Ts’ao. It is a well-known historical episode. But Tu Mu poses a revisionist view, through which we see human achievement trivialized in the presence of nature.

"Garden of the Golden Valley"

(Chin-ku yulan)

(Form: chūeh-chū heptasyllabic meter)
Splendor and glory vanish along with fragrant dust;
The flowing stream has no passion, grass by itself
grows in the spring.
The sun sets, the easterly wind brings the crying
birds' plaint;
The fallen flowers resemble the beauty that jumped
from the tower. (FCPC:345)

This poem names a famous estate, the Garden of the
Golden Valley, which recalls a sad story. Once located
northwest of modern Lo-yang, Honan province, the Garden was
owned by Shih Ch’ung (249-300), a marquis of the Chin
dynasty (265-420). An extremely wealthy and ostentatious
official, Shih Ch’ung enjoyed the display of luxury and
conspicuous consumption. For example, sometimes he would
amuse himself by instructing his concubines to walk on a
bed sprinkled with expensive, fragrant dust, and he
would reward those who did not leave any footprints in the
dust (Wilhelm 1959; Wang Tzu-nien shih-yi chi:9.9b-10a).
He was later executed, because of his refusal to surrender
Green Pearl (Lu-chu), a beautiful concubine, to a more
powerful official, Sun Hsiu. Just before his arrest, Green
Pearl killed herself by jumping from a tower (Chin-shu:33.
1004-1008).

Several features, syntactic as well as phonic,
strike us in our initial reading of this poem. In the
phrase "The flowing stream has no passion" of line two, the
nonhuman entity (the flowing stream) is credited with a human trait (passion). The phrase "grass by itself grows in the spring" of the same line is translated from the Chinese utterance ts’ao tzu-ch’un. This original phraseology also embodies a pathetic fallacy, where the nonhuman ts’ao "grass" is endowed with a human trait signified by the adverb tzu "by itself." A peculiar feature also exists in the last line, "The fallen flowers resemble the beauty that jumped from the tower." Here the nonhuman flowers are compared to a woman. There may be certain purposes for the poet to use the syntactic ungrammaticalities noted above, but what are they?

Another kind of syntactic peculiarity is found in the third line. Although translated "The sun sets, the easterly wind brings the crying birds' plaint," this line originally reads in the Chinese Jih-mu tung-feng yüan t’i-niao. In normal speech, the phrase tung-feng yüan t’i-niao "the easterly wind brings the crying birds’ plaint" would have the word order tung-feng t’i-niao yüan, where the word yüan "complain" or "lament" follows the phrase t’i-niao. In the utterance we actually have, however, the word yüan precedes the phrase t’i-niao. In other words, the utterance used in our poem contains an inverted word order.

This syntactic abnormality is also fused with an irregular tonal pattern. For the purposes of versifica-
tion, Chinese characters were divided into four tonal categories, namely, the level tone (p'ing-sheng), the rising tone (shang-sheng), the parting tone (ch'ou-sheng), and the entering tone (ju-sheng). The latter three categories of tones were assigned to a single "oblique tone" (tse-sheng) class, representing words with pitch modulation and shorter duration, as opposed to the first category, the "level tone" class for words with level pitch and relatively longer duration. Characters belonging to the oblique tone class were alternated with those belonging to the level tone class according to prescribed patterns. For example, the present poem is a heptasyllabic quatrain. The second character of the first line is in the level tone; the final characters of the first, second, and fourth lines are all in the level tone and rhyme. Such a "level-tone starting, level-tone rhyme, first line rhyming" quatrain is supposed to follow the tonal pattern indicated below (+ stands for a level-tone character, - an oblique-tone character, () an optional-tone character, and R a rhyme character at the end of a line):

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(+) + (-) - - + +R
(-) - + + (-) - +R
(-) - (+) + + - -
(+) + (-) - - + +R
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However, the actual tonal distribution of this poem is as follows:
Checking the actual tonal pattern of the poem against the prescribed one, we find two irregularities in line three. These are marked with asterisks. According to the prescribed pattern, the character in the fifth position, line three, should be in the level tone, not the oblique tone as in this case; the character in the sixth position of the same line should be in the oblique tone, not the level tone. Such prosodic irregularities in the same line are called "single irregularities," or tan-ao. However, because a level tone word has been substituted for an oblique tone one in the fifth position, and vice versa in the sixth position, these substitutions actually compensate for each other, and thus this kind of variation is permissible. Nevertheless, we have a question to ask. For the third line of this poem, Tu Mu could have used exactly the same words arranged in the pattern /ŋjet muo t'uŋ f'jug d'i'ii ti'u ?jun/, which would have conformed to the prescribed tonal pattern - - + + + - -. But he chose to put them in the pattern /ŋjet muo t'uŋ f'jug ?jun d'i'ii ti'u/, which involves the transposition of tonal values. What did Tu Mu seek to accomplish by this intentional departure from the prosodical norm?
With these riddles in mind, we discover in the retroactive reading that this poem opens with a line expressing a tragic sense of destruction and evanescence—splendor and glory, like fragrant dust, easily pass into nothingness. In stark contrast with the human situation depicted in the first line, the second line reminds us of the constancy of nature represented by the passionless stream and grass: the stream, indifferent to changes in the human world, flows on without interruption; the grass, growing and withering at regular intervals, comes back to life every spring. Here the flowing stream is turned into a poignant image by the stative verbal phrase "has no passion." The pathetic fallacy, crediting the nonhuman "flowing stream" with human "passion" enhances the sense of the cruelty of nature. Also, the "grass" in the same line is said to "grow by itself in the spring." This phraseology seems to underscore nature's unconcern for the human world.

The second half of the poem is invested with a pervasive feeling of sorrow. In line three, the phrase "The sun sets" signifies a decline of splendor and glory. "The easterly wind," like the flowing stream and the grass, depicts the spring scenery, but it also imparts a chilly, sad feeling through its thermal and tactile imagery. "The crying birds' plaint" also enhances the beauty of the natural scene, which one is loath to leave. On a deeper
level, however, it functions as a symbol of the lament of Green Pearl who died in the garden. Line four presents fallen flowers, recalling the beautiful Green Pearl who jumped from a tower in the garden. Here the simile, "The fallen flowers resemble the beauty that jumped from the tower," seems to have such special effects: on the one hand, since the fallen flowers are endowed with human traits, their withering becomes more pitiful; on the other, since the woman is being compared to the flowers, she becomes even more enchanting.

Considered as a unit, the second couplet seems to focus on the human tragedy of Green Pearl's death: The fallen flowers remind us of her beauty, and the crying birds lament her death; she had enjoyed a life of splendor and glory with Shih Ch'ung, and she chose death to life with another man. But, in view of what is said in the first couplet, toward such human fragility nature always remains apathetic. Just because of nature's unconcern, the crying birds' plaint becomes even more pathetic. This understanding sheds light on our previous question about the unexpected word order of the third line. Here the phrase yüan t'i-niao, which normally would be t'i-niao yüan, has the verb yüan in the front. This reversal makes the crying birds' plaint more pathetic. Likewise, in terms of tonal pattern, Tu Mu could have arranged the third line as /ŋjɛt mʊo tʊŋ fjʊŋ d'ɪki tɛːu ʔjuŋ/ to conform with
the prosodic norm. However, he adopted the pattern /ŋjet muo tuŋ fjuŋ ʔjuʊn d'iizi tiw/, which results in prosodic irregularities. These intentional deviances aptly serve to reinforce the pathos just mentioned.

In the initial reading of this poem, several peculiarities caught our attention as violations of syntax or prosody. When we take the retroactive reading, we realize, however, that, on a superficial level, this poem conveys various vivid images of spring (the stream, the grass, the wind, the birds' singing, the flowers, etc.), which impart variety, color, and unity to the entire discourse. On a deeper level, nonetheless, this poem is permeated with a tragic sense. Line one suggests the vanishing of human glory; line two implies nature's indifference to the human condition; lines three and four signify death and grief. And this tragic sense is made all the more poignant by the abnormalities we encountered in the initial reading.

"Mooring at Ch’in-huai"

(Po Ch’in-huai)

(Form: chūeh-chū)

Mist shrouds the cold water, moonlight shrouds the shore.

Night-mooring at Ch’in-huai close to the wine store.
Singsong girls, not knowing a ruined nation's sorrow,
Across the river still sing "Flowers in the Rear Court." (FCWC:70)

The title of this poem recalls the Ch'in-huai Canal, so named because it was dredged at the order of the Ch'in emperor Shih-huang (r. 221-210 B. C.). It flows from modern Li-shui district, Kiangsu province, through Chin-lung (today's Nanking) into the Yangtse River. And, in ancient times, both banks of the canal in the city of Nanking were lined with pleasure houses.

The poetic discourse first conjures up images of the canal and the nearby pleasure houses in the first couplet. But when we anticipate similar romantic scenes in the following couplet, we are surprisingly led instead into matters concerning a nation's fate. In the Chinese poetic convention, there is a so-called hsing mode, which opens a discourse with natural imagery and then expresses an emotion or idea associated with that imagery. In this poem, the hsing mode seems to have been employed. However, how can the imagery evoked in the first half be yoked to the second half of the poem? How can we overcome this pragmatic problem?

In the initial reading we were also disappointed by a seeming lack of equilibrium of poeticy between the first and the second couplets. When we first read the
poem, we were impressed by the poeticity of the beginning
couplet, particularly line one, "Yen-lung han-shui yüeh
lung she "Mist shrouds the cold water, moonlight shrouds
the shore." This line employs a poetic device called
hu-wen or "reciprocal phrasing," which is a two-part
statement with mutual relevance (Frankel 1976:14). Here
the line comprises two juxtaposed sentences, Yen lung
han-shui "Mist shrouds the cold water" and yüeh lung she
"moonlight shrouds the shore." What is said about the mist
also applies to the moonlight, and vice versa. That is,
although the syntax of this line ostensibly reads Yen lung
han-shui "Mist shrouds the cold water" and yüeh lung she
"moonlight shrouds the shore," in reality, mist also
shrouds the shore, and the moonlight also shrouds the cold
water. Here the rhetorical pattern of reciprocal phrasing
contributes greatly to the enhancement of the poetic
effect: First of all, although the two juxtaposed sen-
tences originally do not have any syntactic connection with
each other, the repeated verb lung ("shroud") bridges the
distance between them and provides a structure for the
whole line; secondly, the repetition of the word lung in
the corresponding positions of the two component sentences
produces a sonorous euphony; finally, while the subjects
yen "mist" and yüeh "moonlight" both elicit a blurry,
misty night scene, the objects han-shui "cold water" and
sha "shore" also combine to invoke an enchanting image of
the river. Thus, the two juxtaposed sentences together evoke an exotic view. Such poeticity, however, does not seem to be matched in the second couplet. Compared with lines one and two, lines three and four, Shang-nü pu-chih wang-kuo hen "Singsong girls, not knowing a ruined nation's sorrow," / Ko-chiang yu-ch'ang Hou-t'ing hua "Across the river still sing 'Flowers in the Rear Court,'" seem too prosaic; they do not contain any novelty in syntax. Then, how does the second couplet contribute to the poeticity of the whole text?

The problems that we noticed in the initial reading all resulted from the fact that we looked at the poetic discourse as linguistically representational. In the initial reading, we did not notice any literal connection between the first and the second couplets; therefore, we suspected that these two couplets did not go well with each other. This suspicion is eliminated in the retroactive reading when we gain a better understanding of the poem through the clues embodied in the utterances Ch'in-huai (line two), wang-kuo "ruined nation" (line three) and Hou-t'ing hua "Flowers in the Rear Court" (line four). As pointed out before, in ancient times many pleasure houses lined both sides of the Ch'in-huai Canal as it flowed through Nanking. Since the third line of our present poem adverts to "singsong girls" and "the wine store," we may assume that the Ch'in-huai we have in line two concerns the
city of Nanking. From our knowledge of Chinese history we know that Nanking was the capital of several dynasties, among them Ch’en (557-588). Moreover, the Hou-t’ing hua "Flowers in the Rear Court" of line four is the title of a song written by the Ch’en emperor Ch’en Shu-pao (r. 583-588), who, according to the Ch’en-shu (7.132), took great delight in sensual pleasures. Even when his empire was collapsing, he continued to indulge himself in women and composed a cycle of poems entitled "The Jade Tree Flowers in the Rear Court." The people of the time regarded this song as an omen of the dynasty’s impending fall. And the fact that Ch’en was soon destroyed led later generations to believe that sensual music and poetry are omens of a nation’s end. With this historical data in mind, in the retroactive reading we are able to establish connections between Ch’in-huai, wang-kuo, and Hou-t’ing hua. This in turn enables us to recognize that the two component couplets are a coherent whole.

The cohesion of this poem is achieved through the poetics of both couplets which we failed to recognize in the initial reading. After links between the first and the second couplets were established in the retroactive reading, it became apparent that the enchanting scenery induced in the first couplet is also tinged with a note of melancholy through such words as yen "mist," lung "shroud," han "cold," and yeh "night." This melancholic note is
further accentuated in the second couplet, Shang-nf pu-chih wang-kuo hen "Singsong girls, not knowing a ruined nation's sorrow," / Ko-chiang vy-ch'ang Hou-t'ing hua '"Across the river still sing "Flowers in the Rear Court."' Here several levels of meaning are compressed: first, the female vocalists are ignorant of the tragic end which the song originally portended; secondly, if the singers are ignorant of the ancient tragedy, they are also ignorant of the consequences of performing this song at this later date; third, the fact that a song which reputedly ruined the Ch'en dynasty is being sung again implies that the decadent life-style of the poet's own day might lead to a similar disaster. Special attention should be paid to the phrase pu-chih "not knowing": for one thing, saying that the singing girls did not know a ruined nation's grief implies that the speaker himself was aware of such grief; and knowing the factor which caused such grief, the poet is anxious that he might witness the disaster again. As a whole, the second couplet comprises sentences that are syntactically prosaic; yet it is charged with profound meaning. In addition, it makes the image of Ch'in-huai, which is introduced in the first couplet, much more intense. This is the pragmatic poeticity that counter-balances the syntactic poeticity in the first couplet.

An understanding of the poeticity in the two component couplets and of the links that pull them together
helps us bring the whole poem into better focus: the discourse invokes a present scene in conjunction with a tragic past; the poet's mooring at Ch'in-huai reminds him of a fallen nation; by alluding to the music that led to a nation's fall, he attempts to suggest a moral lesson in the hope of saving his country from decay and destruction.

"Inscribed at the Water Pavilion of K'ai-yüan Temple, Hsüan-chou; There are Residents on Both Sides of the Wan River Which Flows Under the Pavilion"

(T'i Hsüan-chou K'ai-yüan-ssu shui-ko ko-hsia Wan-hsi chia-hsi chü-1en)

(Form: 14-shih heptasyllabic meter)

Six Dynasties' cultural treasures--grass merging with sky;
Heaven placid, clouds calm--the same,
present or past.
Birds go, birds come, in the mountain scene;
Humans sing, humans cry, midst the water's sound.
Late autumn, curtains, a thousand houses, rain;
Setting sun, balcony, a flute, wind.
Alas, no way to meet with Fan Li;
Tall and short misty trees, east of Five Lakes.

(FCWC:44)
The title of this poem tells us that what we have in the discourse is a verbal description of the view the poet caught in the distance from the water pavilion at K’ai-yüan Temple, Hsüan-chou (today’s Hsüan-ch’eng, Anhwei province). Initially, nonetheless, the text appears to be incomprehensible at several points. In the pragmatic aspect: how could “Six Dynasties’ cultural treasures” emerge in the picture? How could “grass” merge with “sky,” literally? And how could the spatial elements “heaven” and “clouds” be related to the time elements “present” and “past”?

Another pragmatic duplicity is embedded in the second couplet. Here the two component lines, Niao ch’ü niao lai shan-se li “Birds go, birds come, in the mountain scene,” / Jen ko jen-k’u shui-sheng chung “Humans sing, humans cry, midst the water’s sound,” constitute a so-called “arched-jade antithesis” (kung-pi tui), where the first word in each line is repeated in the third position. Both lines also have alliteration in the fifth and sixth words. With such a construction, this couplet possesses some sort of euphony and induces vivid visual as well as exotic audial images. But how does it help advance the poetic theme?

In addition, Fan Li, mentioned in the seventh line, was a minister of the ancient state of Yüeh (which embraced modern Chekiang and Kiangsu provinces and part of Shantung
province) during the Spring and Autumn period (722-481 B.C.). How can he be situated in this poem that is apparently addressed to Hsüan-chou and Six Dynasties' treasures?

Our initial reading is also frustrated by the syntax of the third couplet, Shen-ch’iu lien-mu ch’ien-chia yü "Late autumn, curtains, a thousand houses, rain," / Lo-jih lou-t’ai yi-ti feng "Setting sun, balcony, a flute, wind." Here the two constituent lines are composed of nouns or noun phrases in juxtaposition. Because of the absence of grammatical elements, such as particles which serve to fix relationships between substantive words, multiple interpretations of these are possible. For instance, line five may be interpreted among other ways as: 1) The gloomy atmosphere of late autumn, like a huge curtain, descends upon a thousand houses in the rain; or 2) In late autumn a thousand curtained houses loom in the rain. By the same token, line six may be read in one or another of the following ways: 1) The setting sun shines on the balcony, a flute plays in the wind; 2) At sunset, somebody plays a flute on the balcony in the wind; 3) The setting sun lingers on the balcony, the wind brings the sound of a flute; or 4) At sunset, the wind brings the sound of a flute from the balcony. Among the various readings listed above, which is the appropriate one in relation to the whole poem?
Due to the aforementioned problems, the various parts of this poem initially appear to be a string of trivial items which do not make any coherent sense. In order to make sense out of this poem, we have to look for clues that will lead us away from the purely linguistic signs of the text.

The search for clues is facilitated by our knowledge of history, geography, and the poetic code. First of all, the Six Dynasties (220-588) in the first line of this poem refers to the states of Wu, Eastern Chin (Tung-chin), Sung, Ch’i, Liang, and Ch’en, all of which selected modern Nanking as their capital city. Since Nanking was in the vicinity of Hsüan-chou, when Tu Mu ascended K’ai-yüan Temple, he could possibly recall that ancient city and the six dynasties that were based there. Even though the old reigns could still be remembered, their cultural treasures had mostly vanished. And what the poet saw was a vast expanse of grass, so vast that it almost reached the horizon. In other words, all visible signs of the human accomplishments of the Six Dynasties had utterly vanished. This sense is made evident in the first line Liu-ch’ao wen-wu ts’ao lien k’ung “Six Dynasties’ cultural treasures--grass merging with sky.” In this utterance the treasures resulting from human efforts are equated with ts’ao “grass,” which has the connotation of “worthlessness,” and with k’ung “sky,” which is associated with the
idea of "void" or "nothingness." When grass is linked to
the "sky" (or "heaven"), it also invokes the image of
"clouds." However, while human achievements do not remain
forever, the sky and clouds seem to always appear the
same. This concurs with what is said in the second line of
the poem, T’ien-tan yün-hsien chin-ku t’ung "Heaven placid,
clouds calm--the same, present or past." Thus, a polar
opposition of ideas is established in the first couplet:
whereas human endeavors are ephemeral, nature endures,
indifferent to the transience of the human world.

With this discovery, in the retroactive reading we
are able to see the second couplet as reiteration of the
same polar concept in another shape: The utterance Niao
ch’ü niao lai shan-se li "Birds go, birds come, in the
mountain scene" directly refers to the visible world, but
indirectly signifies the regularity of nature’s cycle;
Jen-ko Jen k’u shui-sheng chung "Humans sing, humans cry,
midst the water’s sound" literally describes different
human moods, yet figuratively suggests changes in the human
world.

By this time, we can see how Fan Li can be situated
in relationship to the poetic theme. The able minister
helped Kou Chien, the king of Yüeh, strengthen the state
and conquer the kingdom of Wu in 473 B.C. But soon
afterward he resigned his position and disappeared.
According to the Wu-yüeh ch’un-ch’iu (The Spring and Autumn
of Wu and Yüeh 10.62a-63a), "he traveled in a light boat in and out of the Three Rivers and the Five Lakes, and nobody knows where he went." And the Shih-chi (129.3256-3257) indicates that he changed his name, settled in the state of Ch'i (parts of today's Shantung and Hopeh provinces), and became a wealthy merchant. "Five Lakes" is sometimes taken to be just another name for T'ai-hu Lake (in modern Kiangsu province), or to mean T'ai-hu and four other lakes, Ko-hu, Yao-hu, She-hu, and Kuei-hu, all located in Kiangsu province. In the fourth couplet of our poem, "Fan Li" and "Five Lakes" are separately integrated in the two component lines, Ch'ou-ch'ang wu-vin chien Fan Li "Alas, no way to meet with Fan Li," / Ts'en-tz'u yen-shu Wu-hu tung "Tall and short misty trees, east of Five Lakes," which also convey an idea parallel to what has been established before, but accompanied by a note of melancholy: it is a pity that the great statesman has long gone; only his old place still exists.

Actually the melancholic note is already very conspicuous in the third couplet, Shen-ch'iu lien-mu ch'ien-chia yiü "Late autumn, curtains, a thousand houses, rain," / Lo-jih lou-t'ai yi-ti feng "Setting sun, balcony, a flute, wind." In our initial reading we found that this couplet may be explicated in various ways, but could not decide which interpretation to adopt. But as we review it in the light of what we have just decoded in the retro-
active reading, we realize that those interpretations all create an aura of sorrow and are all congruous with the rest of the poem. In addition, the multiplicity in meaning seems to further thicken such an aura.

To sum up, when we first read it literally, this poem seemed to be composed of a string of items lacking any sensible relationship to each other. But when we considered it from a higher level in the retroactive reading, we gradually perceived that all its parts center on one single concept: human ephemerality vis-a-vis nature’s permanence. This concept is manifest even in the syntactic progression. The poetic discourse begins with a polar opposition of human and natural worlds in the first couplet, and moves on in the same mode through the second and third couplets. But as it ends in the last couplet, the human world drops out completely: the two final utterances display the "tall and short misty trees, east of Five Lakes," but alas, "Fan Li," who represents the human world, can no longer be seen.

"Ascending Lo-yu Plain Before Leaving for Wu-hsing: A Quatrain"

(Chiang-fu Wu-hsing teng Lo-yu yuán yi-chüeh)

(Form: chüh-chü)

At this peaceful time, I’d like to serve the court, but I’ve no talent.
I love the lone cloud's ease and the monk's quietude.

Before heading for river and sea, a banner in hand,
I gaze at Chao-ling tomb from Lo-yu Plain. (FCWC:39)

Wu-hsing in the title of this poem was also called Hu-chou. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Tu Mu spent several unhappy years in the provinces; and when he received an appointment to return to the capital in 848, he was full of excitement. But by 850, he was requesting to be sent back to the provinces, because, according to a memo submitted to the court, his family was in financial need. Finally, he was granted the prefectship of Hu-chou. In early autumn of that year, he assumed the new post. This poem was apparently written before he left for Hu-chou.

In the heuristic reading, the third line, "Before heading for river and sea, a banner in hand" thwarts us by its obscurity. Since we are aware that poetry tends to express meaning indirectly, we must look for clues that will guide us through the maze. As the title suggests that this poem was composed prior to Tu Mu's departure for Wu-hsing, where there were rivers and seas in the vicinity, "river and sea" may be assumed to be a metonym for his destination. Next, the "banner" has been used in Chinese poetry as a symbol of the prefect, the local government
therefore, the third line figuratively means "before leaving for Wu-hsing for the prefect's position."

However, our trouble does not stop there. In the fourth line, "I gaze at Chao-ling tomb from Lo-yu Plain." Chao-ling tomb was the grave of the emperor T'ai-tsung (r. 627-649), one of the founders of the dynasty and a brilliant administrator. And Lo-yu Plain, situated on a high plateau south of Ch'ang-an, was a famous recreational park. Here a pragmatic puzzle arises: why could the poet not enjoy himself at the park? Why was his mind occupied by a brilliant emperor's death (suggested by the phrase "gaze at Chao-ling tomb")? The answer could be that Tu Mu was reflecting on the former golden years of dynastic vigor as against the deteriorating political situation of his own times. But this explanation would contradict Tu Mu's description of his era (in the first line) as being peaceful.

Another pragmatic question concerns the link between what is said in the second and the fourth lines. In line two, "the lone cloud's ease" suggests purity and freedom of the soul; and "the monk's quietude," solitude and detachment from human affairs. Thus this line conveys a sense of longing for a rustic life free from worldly

10. See Miao Yüeh's annotation in TMSH, II:68.
matters. But how can this be explained against the political concern expressed in the fourth line?

A characteristic feature of poetry is the unity of the text. Unable to obtain such a unity for our poem, we are forced to abandon the mimetic interpretation of the text and seek a higher level in the retroactive reading. First of all, since poetry often says one thing and means another, and since the first line is contradicted by the fourth, we may hypothesize that what the first line says is contrary to the actual current situation. This hypothesis may be substantiated by some other poems Tu Mu wrote. For example, in "After Just Being Appointed to the Post of Assistant Chief, Office of Appointments, and Before Going to Wu-heing ...." (Hain-chuen nan-ch’ao ... ch’u-shou Wu-heing ...), which was also composed at this time, lines seven and eight read, "It’s better to await rabbits by a tree, like the rustic of ancient Sung; / The wine of Lu may incite attacks from all sides." "Await rabbits by a tree, like the rustic of ancient Sung" alludes to a story in the "Wu-tu" section of Han Fei-tzu (19.1040). During the Warring States period (403-221 B. C.), a farmer in the state of Sung once found a dead rabbit lying by a tree. The rabbit had collided with the tree and broken its neck. Hoping to gain some easy profit, the farmer from then on stopped work and foolishly waited by the tree for more rabbits to do the same. This fable originally aimed to
satirize human credulity. But here Tu Mu seems to associate it with his return to the province. "The wine of Lu may incite attacks from all sides" is in reference to a story in the "Ch’U-hsia" section of Chuang-tzu. In the Warring States period, the feudal lords of Lu and Chao brought wine as gifts for the king of Ch’u who had called them to a meeting. The wine from Lu was weak and that from Chao was strong. The Ch’u official in charge of wine asked the lord of Chao for some strong wine for himself, but his request was not honored. Angered, he presented the king the wine from Lu as that from Chao and vice versa. Agitated by the weak wine, the king sent troops to attack Chao. Apparently Tu Mu’s reference to this story was meant to express his concern that disaster would overtake him if he stayed in the capital. Thus, we have reason to believe that the political situation at court was not really as peaceful as described in the first line.

Inasmuch as the phrase "at this peaceful time" is contrary to the real situation, Tu Mu’s statement "I’ve no talent" may also be surmised, in the retroactive reading, as meaning the opposite. In fact, Tu Mu, as mentioned in Chapter 2, had a profound knowledge of state affairs, and several times had proved to have the talent to deal with serious problems. Thus, "I’ve no talent" was just his pretext to get away from court. This is a reasonable interpretation in view of the fact that in 835 he also used
an excuse (illness) to ask for a transfer from the court to Lo-yang, where he was exempted from the actual duties of an investigating censor. In short, the insinuated meaning lying behind the first line is that Tu Mu did not want to stay in the court because it was not peaceful there, not because he did not have any talent.

In Chapter 2 we also learned that Tu Mu longed to remain at court to help solve the several problems that were devastating the nation. But now that he was returning to the provinces, he would not be able to carry out his ambition. This must have disturbed him greatly, and may explain why he loved "the lone cloud's ease and the monk's quietude" in the second line. The word "love" in the pragmatic context we established in the retroactive reading may be taken to mean "envy." That is, tormented by a struggle in his own mind between the dangers of political involvement and his concern for the nation's future, Tu Mu was not able to remain completely detached from the hurly-burly of national politics; therefore, he envied the lone cloud's ease and the monk's quietude.

The discovery of the kernel concept of the poem--the internal struggle--enables us to perceive the second couplet more clearly in the retroactive reading. In fact, the literally different utterances of this couplet now turn out to be manifestations of the same psychological conflict unveiled in the preceding couplet. Tu Mu might have gone
to the recreational park, Lo-yu Plain, intending to have a good time. Yet, instead of enjoying himself, he could not help gazing at the grave of the brilliant T'ai-tsung whose era was marked with peace and stability. His nostalgia for the glorious past was accompanied by a surging sense of responsibility to improve the current political state; but that feeling was immediately dampened by a fear of political turmoil at court and its ultimate consequences. Therefore, his visit to the recreational park aroused within him a profound psychological conflict, even more intense than before.
CHAPTER 4

INTERPRETATION OF TU MU'S POETRY: PART TWO

In this chapter I shall continue the explication of Tu Mu's poems, these on parting as well as landscape and nature, based on the semiotic model.

Poems of Parting

Among Tu Mu's collected poems many touch on the theme of parting: some were written on farewell occasions, some were inspired by chance meetings with friends or acquaintances, some were sent to distant friends or kinsmen to express his longing for a reunion, and some were sent as invitations to pay him a visit.

Before discussing this group of poems, we should take some note of the conventions of Chinese poems of parting. As Professor Hans Frankel (1976:73) has pointed out, the occasion of parting was originally a religious rite involving the saying of prayers for a traveler's safety on the road. After the close of the feudal period, it became a standard social event, often including a farewell banquet, music and dancing, and formal commemorations by those present--the one taking leave as well as those seeing him off--with poetic compositions. Poems
of parting also follow certain established patterns. As Yang Tsai (1973a:10b) has observed, they often refer to a farewell gathering, followed by a description of the places the traveller will pass on his journey, and possibly some comment on the reasons for his trip. They also frequently end on a note of sorrow over the impending separation, words of hope for an early reunion, and expressions of admonition or consolation to the departing guest. The three poems below may serve as examples of the type:

"Song of Wei-ch’eng"

(Wei-ch’eng ch’ü)

by Wang Wei

The morning rain of Wei-ch’eng moistens the light dust; The green willows by the tavern gain a freshened color. Take my advice to drink one more cup of wine-- Out in the west of Yang-kuan Pass, no more bosom friend.1

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"Seeing a Friend Off from Ch’ang-an"

for Hu-nan

(Ch’ang-an sung yu-ien yu Hu-nan )

by Tu Mu

You’re very generous and kind;
I’m too narrow-minded and quick-tempered.
Separated from you in this noisy world,
How can I reduce my faults?
South Ch’u, full of wind and mist;
Hsiang River’s banks, miserably long and
  twisting.
Mountains clot, setting rays abound;
Humans few, grass expands afar.
Green plums cluster, branches hang low;
New shoots of spotted bamboos just come out.
Cry not for the man buried in the fish stomach;
Just sleep and eat after sobering up. (FCWE:12)

"To My Fifth Brother"

(Ti-wu ti Feng tu-tsai Chiang-tso)

by Tu Fu

(Preface: My fifth brother Feng has been wandering in Chiang-tso for three or four years.
Not having heard from him, I found a messenger to carry these two poems to him.)
(Poem II)
Rumors that you lodge in a mountain temple
In Hang-chou, or in Yüeh-chou for sure.
Wind in the dust prolongs our day of parting,
Yangtze and Han have wasted my clear autumn.
My shadow sticks to the trees where gibbons scream,
But my spirit whirls by the towers sea-serpents breathe.
Let me go down next year with the spring waters
And search for you to the end of the white clouds in the East. 2

Having noted the conventions of the poetry of parting, we can now look at a few poems of this genre that are, in my opinion, among Tu Mu's best.

"S"ing"Off the Advanced Scholar K'uai Hsi-yi from Ch'ih-chou in Spring"

(Ch'ih-chou ch'un sung ch'ien chin-shih K'uai Hsi-yi)

(Form: 10-shih penta syllabic meter)
Balmy grass beyond balmy grass;
Broken heart after broken heart--
Enough to move one to tears!

2. The Chinese text is available in Tu Fu 1958 v. 2:569; the English translation is adopted from Graham 1965:47.
Why the further need of a setting sun?
The river banks of Ch'ū, myriad leagues apart;
The swans heading for Yen, two or three rows.
I have a home, yet cannot return;
How can I again raise the farewell cup? (FCWC:47)

It has just been pointed out that Chinese poems of parting often includes a description of the places the traveller will pass on his journey. In our present poem the first, fourth, fifth, and sixth lines are manifestations of this descriptive aspect. There are some puzzles, however, that need to be explained: In the fifth and sixth lines, "The river banks of Ch'ū, myriad leagues apart; / The swans heading for Yen, two or three rows," what do Ch'ū and Yen refer to? Furthermore, these two lines are linked to both the poet's homesickness and to his sadness for the friend's parting. Why do they have such dual functions? Finally, judged from the second through the fourth lines, "balmy grass" and "setting sun" are elements that "move one to tears." How can they do so?

The first two questions raised above concern the pragmatics of the poem. The answers in this case depend on our familiarity with geography and history, as well as our knowledge of the Chinese poetic tradition. The word Ch'ū originally adverts to an ancient state with this name which embraced all or part of modern Anhwei, Kiangsi, Hupeh, and Hunan provinces; in our present case it particularly
concerns the province of Anhwei. As clearly shown in its title, this poem was written in Ch’ih-chou, where the poet was a prefect from 844 to 846. The prefectural headquarters of Ch’ih-chou were in Kuei-ch’ih, situated on the south side of the Yangtze River in modern Anhwei province. It would seem that the departing friend was going to cross the Yangtze River and head for the north, possibly Ch’ang-an, where Tu Mu’s home was located. Therefore, the friend’s departure, for which he was sad, also reminded him of his home and caused his homesickness. Here “the river banks of Ch’u” refers to the banks of the Yangtze River that separated Kuei-ch’ih, where the poet was stationed, from the north, where his departing friend seemed to be going and where the poet’s homeland was situated. And “myriad leagues apart” is a hyperbole signifying the long distance soon to separate the two men, the long trip the departing one had to take, and the hardships he might encounter on the journey. On a deeper level, however, it also implies the poet’s remote separation from home and his difficulty in returning.

In the sixth line, “The swans heading for Yen, two or three rows,” the word Yen is the ancient name for the region covering modern Honan and Hopeh provinces. Like the poet’s homeland, Shensi, Yen was far north of the Yangtze River. Therefore, Yen also reminded him of his homeland. In addition, the swan is frequently used in
Chinese poetry to stand for travelers. For example, in the two lines "The nimble swan plays in the river pool; / The lonely wild goose comes to roost on the island sand bar" of Pao Chao's (c. 466) poem "Presented as a Farewell to Secretary Fu" (Tseng Fu tu-ts'ao pieh), the swan as well as the wild goose are apparently meant to represent Pao Chao himself and Secretary Fu, who were both travelers. On the other hand, swans are migratory birds, which fly south in the fall and back north in the spring. Since this poem was written in the spring when the swans were returning to the north, where the poet was originally from, the thought of the swans could also have aroused a longing for home in the poet. Thus, the line "The swans heading for Yen, two or three rows," in addition to describing the traveler's journey, possesses two levels of meaning: on one level, this line, accentuated by the small number "two or three," suggests the poet's sympathy for the departing friend's loneliness on his journey; on another level, it signifies the poet's craving for home.

The problem about "balmy grass" and "setting sun" involves semantics and syntactics. And to solve it we also need to be acquainted with the Chinese poetic tradition. In Chinese poetry, grass, in addition to being part of the scenery, often represents something lying between the

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person parting and the person staying behind. As the distance between the two individuals becomes greater and greater, the expanse of grass between them becomes wider and wider. Conversely, as the grass expands, the distance between the two individuals does likewise; thus the grief of separation grows deeper and deeper. This is aptly manifested in the first and second lines, "Balmy grass beyond balmy grass; / Broken heart after broken heart." As for "setting sun," besides being an element of the view on a journey, it is associated with a sense of "gloom" or "loss," hence also evoking a feeling of sadness. And in our present poem it has an additional meaning of "end of companionship" or "loss of a friend." Therefore, it is considered as something that can "move one to tears."

In the initial reading, some parts of this poem seemed to be incomprehensible. Nevertheless, utilizing our understanding of the poet's life, our knowledge of history and geography, as well as our familiarity with the Chinese poetic code for further exploration, we finally realize, in the retroactive reading, that all the elements which in the beginning appeared to be puzzling, are in reality well integrated with others on two basic themes: the poet's sorrow for a friend's departure and his own longing to return to his native place. The feeling of sorrow is made specially poignant in the last line, "How can I again raise the farewell cup?" which in the original utterance reads,
"K'uang-chü pieh-chüen shang." The word shang basically means "winecup." But its pronunciation is the same as the shang for "sadness" (as in, for example, shang-hsin). Therefore, this line may be taken as "not to mention one's sadness in having to say farewell to a friend," as an alternative to the rendering "How can I again raise the farewell cup?"

"Presented at Parting"

(Tseng pieh)

(Form: chüeh-chh heptasyllabic meter)

(Poem II)

Our love so strong, yet it seems like none;
Over the cups we just feel it's hard to laugh.
Even the candle has a heart to lament
our parting--
For us it sheds tears until morning. (FCWC:82)

This is the second of the two poems entitled "Presented at Parting." The first couplet presents some surprises: if their love is so strong, how can it seem like none? And if the two people are so impassioned for each other, why is it so hard for them to laugh? The astonishment caused by the second couplet is even greater: how can a candle have a heart and lament a parting? How
can an inanimate candle shed tears? Before approaching full understanding of the poem we have to explain these syntactic ungrammaticalities in the heuristic reading.

Recognizing that poetry sometimes does not express meaning directly, we shift to an indirect approach in the retroactive reading. First, we know that a candle is not human and would not literally shed tears at a lovers' parting. But we can relate it to a parting scene by its providing light for the lovers' tryst before separation. When lit, the candle drips wax droplets, which are thought to resemble the tears shed by a human being. Therefore, the second couplet of this poem, "Even the candle has a heart to lament our parting-- / For us it sheds tears until morning," figuratively reveals that the lovers spend the night together, perhaps in a sleepless state, and that the candle burns until morning, when their passion, like the candle, is spent and the male takes his leave. The identification of these metaphoric associations adds multifold meanings that can be linked with the second couplet of the poem. First, "tears" relate to sadness caused by parting. Second, saying that even a nonhuman object "sheds tears" for the lovers' parting suggests an even deeper sadness we naturally would expect the lovers to be overwhelmed with. Third, referentially commenting on the candle, the utterance "it sheds tears until morning" semiotically describes the two lovers as
being so impassioned that they embrace each other the whole night before separation.

The above exploration reveals the linguistically different utterances of lines three and four of the poem semiotically as a series of images surrounding the same central sense—sadness for parting. This discovery further sheds light on the semioses of the first and second lines, and the questions raised in the initial reading can now be answered on the basis of the messages just raveled. Strong love tends to manifest itself; it scarcely looks like no love. And passionate lovers naturally would smile, laugh, or talk to each other. But in the present poetic discourse, the lovers have such strong passion for each other that they are loath to separate; and they are so overpowered by their intense sorrow at parting that they can neither talk nor laugh—they only cuddle each other all night long in silence and tears. This is why the poem says, "Our love so strong, yet it seems like none; / Over the cups we just feel it's hard to laugh."

"A Broken Mirror"

(P'o-ching)

(Form: chüh-chü) heptasyllabic meter)

A mirror, slipping from a beauty's hand, shatters.

When can she be reunited with her lover again?
This morning over myriad leagues
the autumn wind started to blow;
The entire mountain, north and south,
is covered with clouds. (WC:329)

Since this poem is entitled "A Broken Mirror,"
normally we would expect it to deal with the stated subject. And on first reading, we attempt to interpret everything in the poem literally in relation to this subject. And we actually discover that it presents no referential difficulties up to the end of the first line. A literal reading is perfectly feasible up to that point. But we soon perceive in the lines that follow an incompatibility between the literal discourse and the subject of the broken mirror. That is, except in the first line which does mention the word "mirror," we find no direct reference to the mirror in the other lines. For us, "lover" (line 2), "autumn wind" (line 3), "mountain" and "clouds" (line 4), etc., are just a string of juxtaposed and trivial details, which refuse to yield coherent sense.

Frustrated in the attempt to relate the details of the poem to the broken mirror, we begin a "retroactive" reading. Because the initial literal reading did not result in a coherent interpretation of the poem, the words "broken mirror" must be reexamined as a semantic transfer and be treated as a metaphor. Once that possibility is
explored, we notice the utterances ching ch’u-fen "A mirror shatters" (line 1) and t’uan yüan "to be reunited" (line 2). These remind us of the phrase p’o-ching ch’ung-yüan "rapprochement," which, experience reminds us, is a theme frequently dealt with in Chinese literature. And the two other utterances chia-jen "beautiful woman" (line 1) and chün "lover" or "man" (line 2), which together refer to a man and woman, also seem to point to the subject just mentioned. However, if the poem is meant to describe the reunion of a man and woman, why does it mention the "autumn wind" (line 3), "mountain," "clouds" (line 4), etc., which are stock images in poems of parting or separation?

The problem, however, is not too difficult to solve. Since "autumn wind," "mountain," "clouds," etc. are images linked to separation, let us assume that this poem deals with a broken relationship between a man and woman, instead of a rapprochement. This interpretation seems to be feasible. First of all, the poem is entitled "Broken Mirror," which may symbolize an originally perfect relationship now broken. Secondly, the phrase "A mirror ... shatters" (line 1) and "When can she be reunited ...." (line 2) both seem to refer to two lovers breaking up with each other. Thirdly, all the words or phrases which we first thought pointed to separation can now be easily explained in the same fashion. "Autumn," a season pres-
aging withering, destruction, or even death, may stand for "loss or end of relationship." The "wind," moving and unstable, may signify a "change in the relationship." And "autumn wind" together may stand for a "disastrous and painful change in the relationship." The word "mountain," often signifying obstacles to reunion, may be taken here to mean a barrier preventing the two lovers from achieving a reconciliation or reunion. The "clouds," also a common sign of "change or instability," can be read as another figure of "change in the two lovers' relationship." In addition, because clouds are a misty entity which obstruct the sky from view, they may also be associated with something that prevents the two lovers from reaching a mutual understanding.

Once it is realized that the "broken mirror" symbolizes a broken relationship between two lovers, the remaining puzzles are easily solved. Once we stop thinking of the "broken mirror" as a real object and give it a moral, human interpretation, all other problems in the poem dissolve. When we grasp the "kernel concept"--the broken relationship between a man and woman--suddenly everything falls into place.

Now let us go back and reexamine the poem based upon the kernel concept of a broken relationship. On the pragmatic level, the word "beauty" of the first line stands for the phrase chia-ten. And chia-ten is a conventional
term for a beautiful woman, one not normally used by a woman in reference to herself. Therefore, we may assume that the speaker of the poem is not the woman but a third party. Also, in the first line the utterance "slipping from the beauty's hand" seems to suggest that the breaking up of the relationship was caused by the woman, who might have done or said something that upset the man. This "something" might have been a rather trivial thing. Yet, in any case, this "something" started with the woman, and the man subsequently broke off the relationship and deserted her. This is suggested by the second line, "When can she be reunited with her lover again?" From this reasoning, we now are able to construct a pragmatic situation for the poem: it is a discourse relating to a woman, who has been suddenly rejected by her lover and who is longing for a rapprochement with him, but the obstacles between them seem immense and the relationship may be beyond repair.

The sudden breakup of the relationship and the woman's longing for a reunion may be observed in the semantic patterns. Besides the several words and phrases which we have already pointed out support our interpretation, other words and phrases agree with the same argument, too. "Shatters" (line 1), "started to blow," and "this morning" (line 3) indicate that the disagreement between the two lovers arose quite suddenly. Especially
the word "morning," usually a time of mobility, further suggests a "break" or a "vicissitude." The woman's desire to restore the relationship is revealed in the second line, but then her desire turns to anxiety, which is expressed in the last two lines of the poem. While "autumn wind," as indicated earlier, symbolizes a sudden misfortune, the phrase "over myriad leagues" further emphasizes the seriousness of the situation. Likewise, whereas "mountain" and "clouds" are respectively signs of the obstacles obstructing their reunion and of the misunderstanding between them, the phrases "north and south" and "is covered" separately underscore the sharp conflict between the two, and stress the depth of their misunderstanding.

The theme of a broken love affair is also advanced by the discursive syntax. The first line constitutes a metaphor of a broken relationship; the second expresses her desire for a reunion; the third laments the sudden change in their relationship; and the last closes with images of obstacles almost impossible to overcome, thus restating the theme introduced in the beginning.

This poem has been interpreted briefly by Huang Yung-wu (1976b:234), who considers it as a simple poem of parting. For him, the breaking of the mirror seems only to presage the man's departure on a long journey, and the last two lines "This morning over myriad leagues the autumn wind started to blow; / The entire mountain, north and south, is
covered with clouds" merely serve as a response to the question asked in the second line, "When can she be reunited with her lover again?" In his interpretation, Huang rather literally moves from words and phrases in the poem directly to realities. Therefore, his reading of the poem fails to rise above the superficial level, and he fails to ask the kinds of questions that can elucidate the meaning: Who causes the mirror to be broken? What is its significance? What is the actual relationship between the two lovers? Why does the poetic discourse suddenly shift from a broken mirror to "autumn wind," "mountain," and "clouds"? What do these things have to do with the broken mirror? However, with the semiotic model, we are able to make a coherent sense out of this poem and are able to answer all the above questions.

"To Be Sent Far Away"

(Chi yüan)

(Form: chüeh-chü heptasyllabic meter)

The mountain in front, remote, merges with blue clouds.

In the clear evening, the sound of "White Snow."

I hope to send my distant longing by the moon,
The sun sets by the river, it starts
to rain, rain. (FCWC:83)

According to its title, this is a poem to be sent to some distant person to express the speaker's longing for him or her. The third line of the discourse, however, states that the speaker hopes to send his longing by the moon. This means that the title and the third line contemplate different media for transmitting the message. How can this shift of thought be unified in the conveyance of the poetic theme? Next, the moon is so far away and, as a nonhuman object, so questionable a channel of communication, how can the speaker rely on it for the delivery of his message? Furthermore, in this poem, only the third line expresses the emotion of longing explicitly; other lines merely conjure up natural images. However, these images appear to be so remote from the feeling of longing, how can they be associated with the latter?

In order to solve the pragmatic problems confronting us in the initial reading, we need to look at the discourse semiotically in the retroactive reading. First, we should remember that a poetic text is often connected with other texts and that we can generate the meaning of the poem in question by situating its text among the actual and possible texts to which it can be linked. This semiotic view is helpful to us in unraveling the duplicity with regard to the communication of feeling through the moon.
In a fu poem written earlier by Hsieh Chuang (421-466) entitled "The Moon" (Yueh fu), an utterance says that "Those who are separated by a thousand miles share the same moon." Since the moon is claimed in this fu poem to be something that can be shared by people separated by a long distance, the poet in the poem under study considers it as a medium through which his feeling can be conveyed to someone else far away. Thus, our knowledge of Hsieh Chuang's earlier text leads us to the solution of one of the problems arising in the heuristic reading.

To understand the connection between the natural images that initially appeared irrelevant to the emotion of craving we have to seek clues that will guide us beyond what is said by the purely linguistic text. In the first line of the poem, although the word "mountain" literally constitutes an element of a natural scene, nonetheless it presents the image of an obstacle that separates people. The phrase "in front," in addition to its literal sense, further intensifies the sense of a barrier lying in front of the speaker preventing him from setting out to visit the other person on the other side of the "mountain," or, semiotically, at another place. And the word "remote," besides describing the distance of the referential "mountain," also emphasizes the remoteness of the other person's

location. Unable to see the absent one in person due to the obstacle, the speaker starts to look for some way to convey his yearning—he plans to watch the moon in the evening, hopefully at the same time as the other person, so that he can convey his feelings through the common medium (Hence, line three, "I hope to send my distant longing by the moon.") This plan seems to be feasible as suggested by natural images: the "blue clouds" (line one) foretell good weather; instead of being windy, the evening is so calm, so quiet that even the tune "White Snow" can be heard (line two). All these images are signs promising a fine evening; therefore, the speaker looks forward to seeing the moon.

Unfortunately, however, when "the sun sets by the river," "it starts to rain, rain" (line four). Here the "river" literally refers to part of the natural scene, but also induces the image of a barrier obstructing a reunion; the "rain" although mimetically representing a natural phenomenon that handicaps the appearance of the moon, prefigures the frustration in the speaker's attempt. The frustration, as shown in the Chinese text, is italicized by the last three words, yu fei-fei of the fourth line. The first of these words is the word for rain; the second and the third words contain the same element, which, in conjunction with the phonetic element fei 雨, means "rain heavily." The succession of the two words fei fei 雨雨
provides a phonic pattern that reinforces the lexical meaning. Thus, the phrase yì fei fei gives an impression of the rain falling harder and harder, unceasingly.

Interpreted mimetically, this poem was disconcerting at some points. But when we situated its text with another related text and reviewed it from a semiotic approach, we immediately discovered a thread connecting all its parts with its central theme—thinking of a beloved one at a remote place. Finally, since the speaker’s attempt to “send his longing by the moon” fail, he ends up sending this poem instead. Thus, we answered the question raised in the beginning, namely, why there is a shift of medium from the moon in the third line to the poem in the title.

"In Ch’i-an Chün: A Chance Theme"

(Ch’i-an chün-chung ou-t’i)

(Form: chdeh-chü heptasyllabic meter)

(Poem I)

The setting sun two rods above the creek bridge;
A half thread of light smoke amidst the willow shadows.
How many green lotuses leaning on each other in sorrow,
Suddenly all turn their backs against the west wind.

(FCWC:47)

This is the first of two poems under the title "In Ch’i-an Chün: A Chance Theme." It appears to be a simple
description of nature, devoid of any human elements, that came to the poet's notice quite by chance. But if one attempts to read it purely as such, difficulties arise with the final couplet: the inanimate green lotuses, endowed with human attributes, "turn their backs against the west wind" in sorrow. The ungrammaticalities resulting from the unexpected collocation of inanimate objects and human qualities puzzle us. Why does the poem suddenly shift from inanimate nature to something mixed with animate characteristics? Why are the lotus flowers infused with human attributes? Why are they sad? What does "turn their backs against the west wind" mean in relation to their being sorrowful? How do the last two lines relate to the first two lines? These syntactic questions, which are too palpable to be ignored, cause us to suspect that this poem should not be read solely as a direct reference to inanimate nature, and that, to make sense out of the poem, we should seek a higher level of meaning where a coherent sense may be identified. Thus, the obstacles we encounter in the initial reading become the key to a new reading.

In the retroactive reading, we review all aspects of the poem, checking them against our literary competence, which includes our familiarity with the descriptive systems, themes, codes, etc., existing in Chinese poetry, as well as other texts related to the poem under consideration. At a higher level, the images "setting sun,"
"creek," and "willow" are often used to describe natural scenery in poems of parting. Examples of such usages have been cited earlier, and hence need no elaboration. Their existence in the present poem permits us to assume that this is also a poem on parting. Based on this assumption, the first two lines "The setting sun two rods above the creek bridge; / A half thread of light smoke amidst the willow shadows" may be regarded as a scene suggesting parting. The lotuses in the third line may be taken as a metaphor for a pair of lovers, while the phrase "leaning on each other in sorrow" in the same line may now be understood as lovers embracing each other before parting. The phrase "west wind" in the last line may be taken to mean a third party trying to disrupt the relationship between the lovers. The whole of the last line, "Suddenly all turn their backs against the west wind," may now be read as an angry reaction to the intrusion of the third party. In this second decoding, the individual items in the poem, which in the first reading seemed to be incompatible or ungrammatical, can now be understood as being consistent and coherent with the theme of parting. This is another example of the semiotic process, which integrates signs from the mimetic (literal) level into the higher (semiotic) level of significance. Specifically, such expressions as "setting sun," "creek," "willow," "lotuses," "west wind," etc., stand for something more than simple, natural
realities. When associated with the Chinese poetic tradition, and then with poems of parting, their underlying poetic unity emerges into view, and resolves all the puzzles encountered in the initial reading.

The unity of this poem--the theme of parting--may be observed in the syntactic movement of the discourse. The first line calls up a distant scene, represented by "setting sun," "creek bridge," "light smoke" and "willow shadows." This scene may be looked upon as a physical composition of inanimate objects, but it may also be regarded as a symbolic scene of parting. Then in the second couplet, the focus shifts to the foreground. Here the lotus stalks lean against each other in a still pond, but a sudden breeze sweeps over them, turning their leaves away. In this scene, the poetic discourse claims attention because of the color and the sudden movement of the lotuses. And it gains new significance by the attribution of human feeling and emotional energy to the lotuses, which symbolize the lovers. The bending of the lotuses like lovers embracing each other and reluctant to separate, and the sudden movement of the lotuses away from the intruding west wind are entirely consistent with the sense of parting which is implied in the first couplet.

This poem is annotated in Chou Hsi-fu's Tu Mu shih-hsian (pp. 105-106). Unfortunately Chou's analysis is
far from complete. He concludes that this poem is a
description of a twilight scene in Huang-kang and an
expression of the poet’s depressed feelings. And when
referring to the second couplet, "How many green lotuses
leaning on each other in sorrow / Suddenly all turn
their backs against the west wind," he takes it as a
personal lament for his advancing years and thwarted
ambitions. This interpretation is not convincing. If the
poem only involves the feelings of one individual, the
poet, why does the third line "How many green lotuses
leaning on each other in sorrow" suggest that more than one
person is involved? Moreover, the last line also suggests
the same: "Suddenly all turn their backs against the west
wind." Chou’s contention that the poet is grieving for
his lost youth draws some support from the image of the
"setting sun," but how can "creek bridge," "light smoke,"
and "willow shadows" relate to one’s advancing years? None
of these images can be made to fit Chou’s interpretation.

This poem has also been translated into English, as
shown below, by A. C. Graham in his Poems of the Late T’ang
(p. 135):

The setting sun is two rods high on the bridge
over the brook,

Light floss of mist curls half way up from
the shadows of the willows.
So many green lotus-stalks lean on each other yearning!

... For an instant they turn their heads to the West wind behind them.

However, Graham's translation raises similar questions. Here, without some indication of the poetic theme, it is hard to understand what "yearning" means: why are the lotus-stalks yearning? What are they yearning for? Moreover, how should we relate the lotus-stalks to the west wind? The last line of his translation is especially perplexing: "For an instant they turn their heads to the West wind behind them." Graham adds in a note: "the lotuses, like the poet, look toward the sunset and Ch'ang-an." Apparently influenced by traditional Chinese criticism, which tends to read every poem allegorically, he has had the lotuses turn toward instead of away from the west wind, and thus he has concluded that the lotuses "look toward the sunset," and also westward toward Ch'ang-an.

However, according to the poetic discourse, the lotus flowers turn away from the west wind, and consequently face the east.

These readings of this poem by Chou and Graham both fail to meet the test of a unified structure, in which all the parts are in total agreement and united to advance a common theme. The semiotic model which we have used has, on the other hand, made a coherent reading possible.
Poems on Landscape and Nature

Elements of landscape and nature are often encountered in poems of parting, historical contemplations, or poems on other themes. In such poems, however, these elements are often emblematic of things in the human world. As such, they function symbolically to develop and advance the poetic theme. For example, a poem of parting may evoke a sense of sorrow by a symbolic landscape representing the scene of parting or by the imagined physical features of the destination or places the departing person will pass enroute. And a poem of historical contemplation may evoke a bygone golden age by reference to natural features at a desolate historical site. At any rate, these elements are secondary to the main focus of the poem; they generally occur in the opening lines, and are followed by a discourse of human events or feelings, to which they are related in some way. Furthermore, they are seldom detailed depictions of a given scene or place.

Landscape and nature poems, on the other hand, are those which embody a more meticulous, concentrated description of what the poet actually observes outdoors. In this regard, we may recall T’ao Ch’ien (365-427), Hsieh Ling-yun (385-433), and Wang Wei (699-759), three individuals especially noted for their poetry of this kind. Yet Tu Mu’s landscape and nature poetry differs in key respects from that of his predecessors who established or followed
the eremitic tradition. T'ao Ch'ien often evokes the benignancy of nature and the joy of the simple rural life at his country retreat. Wang Wei's natural world is usually one of tranquility and rustic simplicity in which he is totally submerged. His landscape poems often reveal a broad, generalized view of nature, which seldom contains anything particularly stirring. And Hsieh Ling-yün, a devout Buddhist believing in the association of landscape with enlightenment, often climbed high mountains, penetrated deep forests, and roamed among rivers and lakes to seek out the wonders of untamed nature. His poems often contain lush and diffuse descriptions of natural splendors and often conclude with a philosophical note intended to "enlighten" the reader. These individual characteristics can be illustrated as follows:

"Home to Farm"

(Kuei t’ien-yüan chü)

by T’ao Ch’ien

(First of five)

Out of tune with the crowd since young;

My instinct: love of mountains.

Chance mistake: fall into world's net.

One fall costs thirty long years.

Caged birds miss their home forest.

Pooled fish long for the deep.
I till the waste on the south side.
Still unhewn, I return to my farm.
Circling my house, some acres of land.
Thatched houses, eight or nine.
Elms, willows shade the rear eaves.
Peach, plum line out the front hall.
Hardly visible, distant villages.
Cloud-soft, smoke from hamlets.
Dogs bark in deep lanes.
Cocks crow above mulberries.
My house: not a speck of dust.
Empty rooms: much quiet leisure.
Too long in the shut cage.
Now given to return to nature.6

"Passing the Temple of Teeming Fragrance"
(kuo hsiang-chi ssu)
by Wang Wei

Where is the temple of teeming fragrance?
Miles and miles into cloud-peaks.
Ancient trees: no man's path.
Deep in the mountains: where, this bell?
Fountain sob, swallowing perilous rocks.
Sun's color chills green pines.

Dusk. At an empty pool's bend.
Meditation exorcises heart's virulent dragon.7

"Scene from South Hill to North Hill
Passing the Lake...."
(Yü Nan-shan wang Pei-shan
ching hu-chung chan-t'iao)
by Haieh Ling-yün
Dawn: off from the south cliff.
Sundown: rest on the north peak.
Boat left ashore, to pore into
distant islands.
Staff laid aside, to lean on a
thick pine.
Sidewalk lean and long.
Round islets bright and clear.
Looking down: tips of tall trees.
Harkening above: water rushes from
large valleys.
A crisscross rock splits the stream.
A dense forest blocks all paths.
Sky thaws: thundering rains: how
about them?
Vegetation rises up in profusion.

First bamboo-shoots wrapped in
green sheaths.
New reeds hold purple fluffs.
Seagulls sport on spring shores.
Pheasants play in mild winds.
Cherish Transformation: mind will
be unbound.
Embrace things: love will deepen.
One need not regret that men of past
are distant.
Sad it is to find no one of like mind.
To roam alone is not emotional relief:
Appreciation now abandoned--cosmic
scheme: who knows? 8

T'ao Ch'ien, Wang Wei, and Hsieh Ling-yün had been
influenced by Taoist concepts regarding the unity of all
life in the universe and man's submission to nature or by
Buddhist teachings emphasizing the search for enlightenment.
The acceptance of these Taoist concepts or a belief
in Buddhist teachings frequently led to a retreat to
nature. Even Confucianism, in which Tu Mu was steeped,

exalted a simple life\textsuperscript{9} and encouraged retirement from human society in times of turmoil or political misrule.\textsuperscript{10} But Tu Mu never became a hermit. Perhaps this may be partly attributed to his sense of responsibility for the support of his family as well as the families of his brothers and sister. The most important reason is, however, linked to his family background. Coming from a family known for its distinguished government service, feeling obligated to continue the family tradition, he aspired to a brilliant official career. Therefore, even when he was alarmed by the factional struggles at court, he did not retire but only requested transfer to regional offices.\textsuperscript{11} It might have sometimes occurred to him that he should retreat to the mountains, but he responded, "People say it's better to

\textsuperscript{9} For example, Confucius praised his pupil Yen Hui, a poor scholar of unquestioned integrity, for being able to subsist on "a handful of rice to eat, a gourdful of water to drink, living in a dilapidated alley, to show at the same time cheerfulness of disposition." (\textit{Lun-yü} 6.58; translation quoted from Waley 1938:117-118).

\textsuperscript{10} For example, \textit{The Analects} also applauds Po-yi and Shu-chʻi, two brothers who fled to the mountains to live on thorn-ferns rather than eat the grains of the new dynasty of Chou. They later starved to death. See \textit{Lun-yü} 18.187.

\textsuperscript{11} His poems "\textit{Li Kao shih}" (FCWC:10-11), "\textit{Chun-chai tu-cho}" (FCWC:7), and "\textit{Hsin-chuan pan-taʻao ...}" (FCWC:52) reflect the unsettled conditions of the times and his requests for transfer to Lo-yang and Hu-chou. And in the second poem, he clearly states that the reason why he did not go into seclusion was that he wanted to help the emperor to educate the people, regain lost territories, and improve the common welfare.
return to the green hill; / How many have ever really
done so?"12

As a secular poet, Tu Mu's landscape poems do not
derive from a purposeful search for scenic wonders or
mountain fastnesses. Although he sometimes visited famous
scenic spots, his landscapes usually arise from chance
observations. And, unlike Hsieh Ling-yün, he did not lodge
any calculated philosophical meanings in the poetic
discourse. Even when he tries to convey a certain feeling,
it is usually subtle and implicit. He treated landscape
and nature, not because he was looking for enlighten-
ment, but because he was fascinated by the joys of nature
that are fleeting and ephemeral, as he says in the poem "An
Invitation to the Candidate Li Ying ....":

"Seize the moment, enjoy life,"
yet already the moment's gone.
"Facing wine, one should sing,"
but no song will come out.
...
Look at the duckweeds--
they're about to bud.
Brave the snow, come visit by boat--
more worthy than a stroll. (FCWC:61)

12. See his poem "Reflections on Tzu-ko Mountain"
(Huai Tzu-ko shan) in FCSPY:324.
Tu Mu is also different from T’ao Ch’ien and Wang Wei. Although sometimes he also deals with the less specialized aspects of nature, the more generalized view, as in the following poem:

"An Autumn Scene in Ch’ang-an"

(Ch’ang-an ch’iu-wang)

The tower soars above the frosted trees;
In the mirror-like sky, no traces of cloud.
South Mountain and the autumn view
Exalt each other in spirit and aspect.

(FCWC:36)

he often concentrates on something that strikes him as particularly appealing, and he often singles out specific subjects for the titles of his poetic compositions. Thus, we see poems such as the following:

"The Crane"

(Ho)

With a pure note he welcomes the evening moon,
With sad thoughts he stands on cold bulrush.
Red head and cheeks like Hsi Shih’s;
Frosty feathers and beard all white like the Four Venerable Old Men’s.
Beneath jasper clouds, moving and stopping restlessly;
To him the spirit of the white egret is coarse.
All day long without the companionship of a flock,
By the side of the gully he laments his shadow's solitude.  (FCWC:57)\(^13\)

"Egrets"

\((\text{Lu}-\text{asu})\)

Snowy cloaks, snowy crests, and blue-jade beaks,
In flocks they hunt for fish, their reflections in the creek.
Startled, they fly afar, casting shadows on the green mountain,
Like all the blossoms of a pear-tree falling off in the evening breeze.

\(\text{(FCWC:58)14}\)

Tu Mu is also different from T'ao Ch'ien and Wang Wei in that his landscape poems seldom show him totally submerged in nature. Even in a poem where he does not mention a single human being but concentrates exclusively on the natural scene, we can almost hear a voice secretly directing us to a fascinating movement or being in nature which otherwise would not have caught our attention. An example can be found in the following poem:

"In Ch'i-an Chun: A Chance Theme"

\((\text{Ch'i-an ch'un-chung ou-t'i})\)

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13. The translation is that by John M. Ortinau in Liu & Lo 1975:239.

14. The translation is that by Irving Y. Lo (Liu & Lo 1975:239), although I have made changes in line 4.
(First of two)

The setting sun two rods above the creek bridge;  
Half thread of light smoke amidst the willow  
shadows.

How many green lotuses leaning on each other in  
sorrow,

Suddenly all turn their backs against the west wind.

This poem seems to define a "selfless" world, yet here,  
too, we sense a person calling our attention to the sudden  
movement of the green lotuses which were originally resting  
quietly in a serene surrounding. Perhaps because he  
focuses on the small and subtle aspects of nature, he  
frequently takes notice of movement, the active elements,  
which can be found in such poems as "Egrets" and "In  
Ch’i-an Chun: A Chance Theme." In addition, he often  
calls our attention to natural colors, the reds, whites,  
blues, and greens, as in "The Crane," "Egrets," and "In  
Ch’i-an Chun: A Chance Theme." An even more striking  
example is the use of color in the following poem:

"Wild Pomegranates"

(Shan shih-liu)

Wild pomegranates glow like fire on the  
small hill.

Clustering and slender; enchanting and  
unrestrained.
The one on the jade hairpin of the beauty,
Almost sets her black chignon afire.  (FCWC:55)

A more detailed examination of his poems belonging to the landscape and nature genre will focus on several poems which are among his best of this kind.

"Spring in Chiang-nan: A Quatrain"

*(Chiang-nan ch’un chüeh-chü)*

*(Form: chüeh-chü heptasyllabic meter)*

Over a thousand leagues the orioles sing,
red glows upon green.
Villages by the river, towns in the mountain,
wine shop banners in the wind.
Southern Dynasties: four hundred and eighty monasteries;
How many towers, balconies loom in the misty rain?! (FCWC:44)

This whole poem depicts the spring scenery in Chiang-nan, the region south of the Yangtze River. But in the initial reading we are struck by an obvious contrast between the scenes described in the first and the second halves of the poem. In line one of the first couplet, the utterance "a thousand leagues" is a large number figuratively indicating the vastness of the Chiang-nan region permeated with the breath of spring. The remainder of this line consists of two juxtaposed clauses: "The orioles sing" and "Red glows upon green." In the first clause,
"orioles" presents a merry visual image which is accompanied by delightful music represented by the word "sing."

The musical effect of the birds' singing is strengthened by the sound of the word t'î, which, according to its T'ang pronunciation /d'iːi/, has a long, resonant level tone. In the second clause, "red" and "green" are metonyms (using one word for another that it suggests) of trees and flowers, which are not only beautiful, but also emit fragrant odors. Therefore, the clause "Red glows upon green" induces charming visual as well as pleasant olfactory images of springtime. Furthermore, the color word hung (red), pronounced /ruŋ/ in T'ang times, has a sonorous nasal-final sound and a prolonged resonant level tone. These qualities add a lingering musical effect to the scene depicted, which with the fragrant air, combine to create a delightful spring atmosphere.

In the second line, the word "river" of the phrase "villages by the river" and the word "mountain" of the phrase "towns in the mountain" are matched to form a conventional static scene. The next utterance "wine shop banners in the wind" presents a visual image of the wine shop and its streamers. Furthermore, the transformed predicate fēng (a noun used as a verb) "flutter in the wind" lends the scene a sense of motion, produces sound, and carries the fragrant smell of wine upon the air.
While the first half of the poem (lines one and two) intimates a delightful scene full of life and spirit, the second half (lines three and four) displays lifeless buildings looming in a hazy, gloomy atmosphere. Does this peculiarity in semantics and syntactics mean anything in relation to the poetic theme? If so, what does it specify?

The semantic and syntactic contrast is accompanied by phonic inconsistency. That is, although the first couplet adheres to the prescribed tonal distribution, the second couplet harbors some deviances. This is an "oblique-tone starting, level-tone rhyme, first line rhyming" heptasyllabic quatrain. In the third line, the words in the fifth and sixth positions are required to be in the level tone. But the words we actually have, /p électrique/ (pa "eight") and /szep/ (shih "ten"), are in the oblique tone. In other words, in the even-number positions only one is occupied by a level-tone word, thus producing an irregularity called ku-p'ing "lone even." Although this irregularity is compensated by the level-tone word /?iin/ (yen "mist") in the fifth position of line four, for which an oblique-tone word could otherwise have been used, the deviance results in the extraordinary third line, wherein the last five words are all in the oblique tone. Another irregularity is also found in this same line: the fourth, fifth, and sixth words, /p électrique/ (pai "hundred").
"eight"), and /ʃjep/ (shih "ten"), all have a final stop, /k/, /t/, or /p/, which suggests gloom or depression. How should we account for these unusual phonetic features?

The clues lie in the historical implication embodied in the term Southern Dynasties. This term alludes to Sung (420-478), Ch’i (479-501), Liang (502-556), and Ch’en (557-588). With their capitals located at Chin-ling (today’s Nanking) in the region of Chiang-nan, these four dynasties were noted for the flourishing of Buddhism. All their rulers, it is said, were Buddhist votaries and subsidized the building of many monasteries in the hope that Buddha would protect their political positions. However, these dynasties all proved to be short-lived. With this understanding, we may conclude that the third line, "Southern Dynasties: four hundred and eighty monasteries," operates on two levels. On one level, it portrays buildings which constitute part of the spring scenery. On a deeper level, by mentioning the building alone, it implies the perishing of the human spirit: the four dynasties are all gone; only the monasteries are left behind. Likewise, the fourth line, "How many towers, balconies loom in the misty rain," means more than it

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16. See Teng To 1958:82.
literally says. Apparently referring to the physical buildings of towers and balconies, this utterance seems to point up the irony that so many shrines which in the past were so enthusiastically cared for are now left in a desolate state. Reading the whole poem in this context, we immediately discover the significance represented by the semantic and syntactic differences between the first and the second couplets: while the images conjured up in the first couplet signify the life and spirit of the current state, those displayed in the second couplet connote the death of past reigns. On the same ground, the first couplet's conformity with the prescribed tonal distribution implies the existence of the normal order of the current regime, whereas the irregular phonic pattern in the second couplet signals the collapse of the normal order of previous dynasties, i.e., the downfall of Southern Dynasties. As for the final stops that occur in a row of three consecutive words, /pːk/, /pːt/, and /çːep/, in the third line, which intitate a scene of depression, they can be interpreted as apt signs to lament the destruction of the four dynasties.

Treated on the mimetical level as a pure description of spring scenery in Chiang-nan, this poem initially appears to be inconsistent phonically as well as semantically and syntactically. However, reviewed from a historical perspective in the retroactive reading, the
discourse unfolds itself as an organic whole: it strikes a balance between two opposing tendencies. In the first couplet, there is life and motion; in the second, stillness and death. Hence, this poem possesses a palpable aura of tension between its two major components resulting from the contrasting features.

"Climbing the Heights of Mt. Ch’i on the Ninth Day"

(Chiu-jih Ch’i-shen tenq-kao)

(Form: liu-shih heptasyllabic meter)

The river embraces autumn shadows, and wild geese begin to arrive.

Clasping the wine-pot, I ascend the green hill with guests.

In the dusty world it’s hard to find an open-mouthed laugh.

Before returning, we must put chrysanthemums all over our heads.

Let’s just get drunk to match the auspicious day;

No need to climb a height and lament the setting rays.

The past went away, the present came along-- it’s been always like this;
Why should one alone wet his robe with tears on Bovine Hill? (FCWC:46)

Mt. Ch’i in the title of this poem is located southeast of today’s Kuei-ch’ih, Anhwei province. As mentioned in Chapter 2, from 844 to 846 Tu Mu served as prefect of Ch’ih-chou with headquarters at Kuei-ch’ih. Therefore we know that this poem was written sometime during this period.

The reference to climbing the heights on the ninth day in the title of the poem, along with several expressions in the text, such as “autumn shadows,” “chrysanthemums,” and “the auspicious day,” bespeak the occasion of this poem as the festival of the Double Ninth, September 9 of the lunar calendar, which falls in autumn. Our assumption is derived from the account of the origin of the Double Ninth festival as explained by Wu Chüü (469-520) in his Haü Ch’i-haish chi, which states:

Huan Ching of Ju-nan was a companion of Fei Chang-fang in his studies for many years. Chang-fang once said to him: “On the ninth day of the ninth month there will be a great disaster in your household. You should hurry and order the persons of your household each to make red bags, fill them with dogwood, and hang them on their arms. If you climb a hill and drink chrysanthemum wine, this disaster can be avoided.” Ching did as he said, and with all his household climbed a hill. In the evening they returned home and saw that the fowls and dogs, the oxen and sheep had died violently, all at once. Chang-fang said: “They took your place.” This is why men of the present day on the Ninth Day always climb a hill and drink chrysanthemum—
mum wine, and the women carry dogwood bags. 17

Wu Chün's account establishes the date of the festival and all the basic associations of the Double Ninth—the climbing of a height, the drinking of chrysanthemum wine, both of which are referred to by Tu Mu in the poem we are studying, as well as the dogwood and the idea of the preservation of life (Davis 1968:45).

The first couplet of the poem unfolds a scene typical of the Double Ninth and shows the poet doing what people usually do on this occasion. Yet the second, third, and fourth couplets each strike us with an unexpected mode of thought. According to custom, chrysanthemums were supposed to be used to flavor wine which would dispell the bad luck of death. They would be used for ornamental purposes as well, but by women rather than men. However, in the second couplet Tu Mu, a male poet, indicates that he should "put chrysanthemums all over his head."

The deviation in the third couplet has to do with the traditional treatment of the Double Ninth in Chinese poetry. In the poems written on this occasion by poets before Tu Mu's time, we see, among other things, a particular theme which occurs again and again—the theme of lament for the passage of time. For example, the utterances which are preceded by an asterisk in the following

17. Quoted from Davis 1968:45.
poems express regret for the brevity of life, a desire to arrest the passage of time, or sorrow for man's aging and physical decline: 18

"Living in Retirement on the Ninth Day"

(Chiu-jih hsién-chü)  
by T'ao Ch'ien

*Life is short but desires are always many;
*We men delight in living long.
*The day and month come at due time.
Every common man delights in the day's name.
The dews are chill, the genial breezes cease;
In the clear air the heavenly signs are bright.
*Of the departed swallows not a shadow remains,
From the arriving geese there is abundance of noise.
*Wine can drive out manifold cares,
*Chrysanthemums may arrest declining years.
How is it with the rustic hut scholar?
*In want, he watches the season passing.
The dusty cup shames the empty wine-jar;
The cold flowers vainly display themselves.
Adjusting my robe, alone I sing a song at leisure;
In my brooding arise deep feelings.

18. The Chinese texts of these poems are available in Davis 1968:45-64. The translation of these poems are by Davis.
At rest, truly there are many joys:
My lingering is surely not without achievement?

"The Ninth Day of the Ninth Month
of the Year Chi-yu [Oct. 3, 409]"
(Chi-yu sui chiu-yueh chiu-jih)
by T'ao Ch'ien

Slowly the autumn has come to its close;
Chilly the wind and dew mingle.
*The creeping plants no longer flower,
*The garden trees, bare, have lost their leaves.
The clear air is cleansed of the last murkiness,
Dimly seen, the bounds of heaven are high.
*Of the sad cicada there is no lingering sound,
But flocking geese cry among the clouds.

Ten thousand transformations follow on one another:
*Man's life, how should it not be laborious?
*From of old all have had to die:
*When I think of it, my heart within me burns.
How shall I accord with my feelings?
With cloudy wine let me gladden myself.
A thousand years I shall not know;
*Let me with it prolong this morning.

"A Poem for K'ung, Presiding Minister
of the Department of Ministries"
When the wind comes, winter clothes are given out:
When the frost descends, all crafts are stopped.
*From the luxuriant wood are taken its summer colors;
*In the close-growing garden thinned are the flower clumps.

Nesting in the tent, there remain no swallows;  
Flying along the islets, there are arriving geese.
Light clouds cover the autumn sun,
A rushing autumn wind reaches the blue sky.
The Saintly Man's heart delights in the fair season;
Setting in motion his carriage bells, he comes to the traveling palace.
The mats on every side are wet with fragrant wine;
In the central hall there arises the sound of the lute.
*The sun's light hurries to its western limit;
*While joy abounds, the banquet has its end.
He must go, the guest who is returning home!
Nourishing his original nature, he will achieve a proper end.
At the water's edge I grieve not to follow;
My festive heart sighs for the flying down.
"The Ninth Day in Ch’U-chiang"

(Chiu-jih Ch’U-chiang)

by Tu Fu

We put together our mats, while the dogwood is fair;
We set drifting our boats, while the lotus withers.
*Of my hundred years’ autumns half are already past;
*The Ninth Day’s thoughts are doubly sad.
The River’s waters in this clear spring’s curving,
Ching-men on this road I seem to see.
*Of late my high spirits have failed,
*And I am troubled by chrysanthemum time.

"At Ts’ui’s Estate in Lan-t’ien

on the Ninth Day"

(Chiu-jih Lan-t’ien Ts’ui-shih chuang)

by Tu Fu

Although, aging, I grieve at autumn, I forced
myself to be easy,
And gladly came this day to taste your pleasures to
the full.
*I should be ashamed, with my short hair, if still
my hat should blow away,
And laughingly I trouble a companion to set it
straight for me.
Lan River from afar through a thousand gullies
falls;
Yu-shan, rising as high as the twin peaks, is cold.
*Next year for this gathering who will be hale?
Drunk, I take the dogwood and peer at it closely.

"Double Ninth"
(Ch’ung-chiu)
by Po Chü-i

Last year I climbed the heights to the north of Ch’i-hsien,
Today I am again on the banks of the Fu River.
*Sadly I face my white hairs’ inevitability,
*With shame I see the yellow flowers’ unlimited renewal.
In the disorder of the times I am sad always to depend on others.
When the feast is ended I still think on the events of these ten years,
Heartbroken at the dust on the pure road to Li-shan.

All the above poems express a note of melancholy or a strong sense of despair in response to the Double Ninth.
Yet Tu Mu deviates from this tradition and refuses to "lament the setting rays" in the third couplet.

To understand the unexpected mode of thought in the fourth couplet we must be familiar with the story alluded to by the mention of "Bovine Hill" in the second line of this couplet. Included by Han Ying (b. ca. 157 B. C.) in his Han-shih wai-chuan (10.419), this story goes:
Once Duke Ching of Ch‘i (Ch‘i Ching-kung, 7th century B. C.) took an excursion to Bovine Hill [in today’s Lin-tzu district, Shantung province, where was located the capital of the state of Ch‘i]. Gazing northward at the territory of Ch‘i, he sighed, “What a magnificent country! The trees are all so exuberant! If since antiquity humans had never had to die, why would I be willing to leave this world and go somewhere else?” Then he started to weep, soaking his lapel with tears. . . .

Here we see the shedding of tears for the fear of death, which later became a stereotyped response to the climbing of a height. But Tu Mu’s poem deviates from this response by saying, “The past went away, the present came along— it’s been always like this; / Why should one alone wet his robe with tears on Bovine Hill?”

Having discovered the above violations of the social or poetic norms in the initial reading, we are compelled to ask a pragmatic question: what do these deviations mean in relation to the poetic theme? In the retroactive reading we realize that the violation of the social norm embedded in the second couplet is intended to induce laughter, which would otherwise be hard to find. Nevertheless, this seems to suggest the pathos of the poem: if the poet had anything to be happy about, such desperate measures as bedecking his head with chrysanthemums would not be necessary. A similar mood can also be detected in the violation of the poetic norm embodied in the third couplet. In these utterances even if Tu Mu tries to depart from the tradition and negates the need for people to regret the passage of time, their deteriorating
physical condition or thwarted political ambitions, his urge to "get drunk" discloses his attempt to forget things, and, hence, implies his despondence. Just as the third couplet couches a feeling opposite what is said literally, the fourth couplet contains an emotion quite contrary to what we read in the words. Although Tu Mu appears, in these lines, to be criticizing Duke Ching's lachrymose fear of death, what is revealed is his own dismay. At the time of the writing of this poem, he had been stationed in the provinces, where he felt frustrated in his ambition to achieve a brilliant official career. The passing of time and the lack of official recognition must have stirred great anxiety in him. But even if he had cried out, the court would have ignored him. Since tears were useless, there was no need to lament his fate. Thus, the seemingly objective suggestion--not to cry--pathetically points up a deep sense of despair.

In this poem we see, in the beginning, a delightful scene on the Double Ninth. The anomalies that are lodged in the rest of the discourse also seem to express an open-minded, carefree attitude. However, a closer reading unveils a sense of despair that haunts the poetic lines. Even the first line, which initially appears to present a joyful picture, embodies a tone of sorrow. The word "autumn" signifies the passage of time, in opposition to the poet's unfulfilled ambition to serve the imperial
court. The "wild geese" which arrive again also painfully remind him of his separation from home: while they are able to fly freely to the south when autumn comes, the poet is detained in Ch’ih-chou, not allowed to return to the capital.

"Willows: A Quatrain"

(Liu chüeh-chü)

(Form: chüeh-chü heptasyllabic meter)

Several willows have just sprouted,
their green shade is uniform.
On the wind they lean in a posture
as if charmed by the spring.
Alas, my native land Fan-ch’uan-
I was loath to leave it!
The willows there must be half-covering the village bridge, half-brushing the creek. (FCWC:56)

In reading this poem, our attention is quickly caught by the phrase "green shade" in the first line. Normally the shade of trees is described in terms of shape, size, or movement; but here it is given a color. Does this synesthesia (describing one kind of sensation in terms of another) contribute to the expression of the poetic theme at all? Also, why does the speaker mention his native land after describing the willows? How can these two apparently unrelated elements be linked to each other?
To answer these questions we must examine the image of willows in the Chinese poetic tradition. The willow is a common sight in the towns and villages of China. With its drooping branches and flying catkins, it enjoys frequent mention in poems of parting. An example can be found at the end of the following poem by Tu Mu:

"Inscribed on Floating Cloud Temple, An-chou:

Sent to Bureau Director Chang of Hu-chou"

(T‘i An-chou Fu-yün ssu lou
chi Hu-chou Chang lang-chung)

Last summer, after a few sprinkles,
We leaned on the balustrades and talked.
Where's the water gone today
That once flowed under the tower?
My dolor grows deep as spring grass;
Hopes are gone with the lonely geese.
On the banks of Ch‘u are countless willows--
Sorrows of parting as many as their catkins.

(FCWC:15)

The willow has been used as a symbol of parting since the times of the Book of Odes (1100-600 B.C.). For example, it figures in the following poem:

When we left
The willows were lush;
As we come back
Snow is falling.
We walk on the road slowly,
We are thirsty, we are hungry.
Our hearts are pained,
No one knows our suffering.¹⁹

Here the willow marks the time when the speaker leaves home. Later, in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.), it became customary for residents of the capital, Ch‘ang-an, to accompany parting guests as far as Pa Bridge, when they broke off a willow branch as a farewell gift (Frankel 1976:96). One possible reason for using the willow when taking leave of a friend is that its drooping branches were thought to resemble the hands of friends beckoning the traveler to return (Huang Yung-wu 1979:40-41). Another possible explanation for this practice is because the Chinese word for "willow," liu, is homonymous with liu "to keep, detain" (Frankel 1976:96). At any rate, ever since the Han Dynasty the willow and the bridge have become standard fixtures in poetry of parting. That being the case, it becomes clear that the willow in this poem is not just an emblem of spring but a symbol of separation, specifically, the poet’s separation from his home in Fan-ch‘uan. This explains why the line "Alas, my native

¹⁹. The Chinese text entitled "Ts’ai-wei" is available in Ma Ch‘ih-yıng 1971:245; English translation is quoted from Frankel 1976:95.
land Fan-ch'uan--I was loath to leave it," follows the reference to willows.

The question about "green shade" is also related to the concept of separation. Although this poem ostensibly depicts beautiful willows, it also intimates a theme in the third line of the original in the phrase Fan-ch'uan hen "sorrow over Fan-ch'uan." If the willow reminds the poet of separation, "spring" and "green shade" make the pain even sharper. Spring is the season of growth; the willow begins to acquire new leaves at this time. However, this change in the natural world, although normally a welcome, joyful time, only serves to deepen his grief, because it contrasts powerfully with his personal situation--another year has gone by, yet he is still far from home. Here the new willow leaves are enhanced by "green shade." As we said before, the shade cast by the tree is usually depicted in terms of its shape, size, or movement, but in this poem it is endowed with the color of green. This motivated deviation from the reader's habitual mode of perception makes the green even more conspicuous--green, so green, even the shade of the tree is green. This overwhelming sense of green includes the willow, which, because of its symbolic significance, arouses a sense of sadness in the speaker. As the exuberant willows are exalted by the spring wind, they appear even more lovely, and contrary to expectation, cause the poet more pain. Their swinging
posture not only evokes his feelings of homesickness but also reminds him of the willows at home. And perhaps there is even some momentary confusion in his own mind: are the willows he sees in front of him those on the family estate in Fan-ch’uan? When he wakes from his bewilderment and realizes the cruel truth that he is not back home, he becomes even more depressed than before. This same process may recur again and again. Every time he looks at the green willows, they induce a sense of longing for home and remind him of the reality of his being absent from Fan-ch’uan.

"An Excursion to the Mountains"

(Shan-hsing)
(Form: chüeh-chü heptasyllabic meter)

Far up the chilly mountain a stony path slants;
Nestled where white clouds rise is someone’s house.
I halt my carriage, enchanted by the twilit maple grove.

Redder than March\textsuperscript{20} blossoms are the frosted leaves. (WC:322)

The most conspicuous problem in this poem lies in the fourth line, "Redder than March blossoms are the frosted leaves." The word "frosted" in the phrase "frosted

\textsuperscript{20} The term erh-yüeh refers to February in the traditional Chinese (lunar) calendar, which is about March in the Western (solar) calendar.
leaves" creates an impression of white hoar frost. Consequently "frosted leaves" is perceived as leaves covered with white frost. But in this line we are confronted with the observation that the frosted leaves are red, so red as to be compared to red flowers. Our next problem occurs in the third line of the Chinese text, T’ing-ch’è tao-ai feng-lin wan. Here the phrase tao-ai literally means "sit and like." And if we were to accept this sense, the whole line would mean "I stop my carriage, sit and like the twilit maple grove." Nonetheless, interpreted this way the poem would sound very prosaic. To unravel the syntactic puzzles involved here requires that we go beyond the text of the poem.

In regard to "frosted leaves" we may assume that this phrase occurs in Tu Mu’s poetry in the same time frame as another similar phrase, "frosted trees." The latter often appears in association with autumn. For example, in the following poem which contains this phrase, the time is specified by the phrases "autumn scene" in the title and "autumn view" in the third line:

"An Autumn Scene in Ch’ang-an"

(Ch’ang-an ch’iu-wang)

(Form: chuah-chü pentasyllabic meter)

The tower soars above the frosted trees;
In the mirror-like sky, no trace of clouds.
The Chung-nan Mountains and the autumn view
Exalt each other in spirit and aspect. (FCWC:36)

If "frosted leaves" is used in the same time frame as "frosted trees," it should also be associated with autumn. This points to the time when maple leaves turn an exquisite red hue after being stricken by the early frost. Then we realize that what appears to be a palpable anomaly in the heuristic reading is actually an apt image. In fact, the frosted leaves' being compared with March red flowers is just a special way utilized by the poet to bring the maple leaves' brilliant color to the foreground. As mentioned earlier, in his landscape and nature poetry, Tu Mu often stresses color and movement. What we have here is just another example involving the former.

As for the problem involved in the Chinese phrase tso-ai, we suspected in the initial reading that interpreting it as "sit and like" might not suit the context of the whole poem. And indeed, the Grand Chinese Dictionary (Chung-wen ta tz'u-tien) defines this as "subsequently became fond of" (v. 2:1164). This explication seems to be more fitting than the previous one in view of the significance just derived from the phrase "frosted leaves." This will be clear if we re-examine the whole discourse. The first line "Far up the chilly mountain a stony path slants" evokes the sensation of a chilly, gloomy atmosphere with the phrases "far up the chilly mountain" and "stony path" which are linked to the ideas
of height and cold. The second line "Nestled where white clouds rise is someone’s house" expands the effect by the images of white clouds and the lone house. The "twilight" in the third line also introduces the elements of gloom and darkness. In short, all the signs just unveiled seem combined to presage an aura of desolation likely to depress the sightseer. But this is simply a background prepared for a special purpose. When the viewer stops his carriage, he sees a resplendent grove of maple trees, and he is immediately enchanted by the glowing leaves which are "redder than March blossoms." This is why "subsequently became fond of" better catches the meaning of the phrase tso-ai in the third line.

Our initial reading of this poem was handicapped by the refusal of "frosted leaves" and tso-ai to yield any suitable literal sense. Nevertheless, our linking "frosted leaves" to Tu Mu's other poems on landscape and nature made us realize, in the retroactive reading, that this phrase embodies a key element which the poet attempts to highlight and that tso-ai should be interpreted as drawing attention to that element.

"The Rear Pond in Ch’i-an Chūn: A Quatrain"

(Ch’i-an chūn hou-ch’ih chūeh-chū)

(Form: chūeh-chū heptasyllabic meter)
Water chestnuts poke through floating duckweed,
greening the brocade pond.
Summer orioles sing a thousand times,
dallying with the roses.
All day long, alone, I watch the drizzling rain;
Mandarin ducks, facing each other, bathe their
red gowns. (FCWC: 47)

This poem, while apparently describing a lovely
scene, presents a mimetic hurdle in the third line of the
original text, Chin- jih wu- jen k’an wei- yu. Because of the
lack of grammatical particles to specify the relationships
among the parts, this utterance may be cut into the two
constituents Chin- jih and Wu- jen k’an wei- yu or the two
constituents Chin- jih wu- jen and K’an wei- yu, and may
consequently mean either "All day long nobody watches the
drizzling rain" or "All day long, without a companion, I
watch the drizzling rain." Which reading should we
take? The choice does not seem hard to make. When it
rains, most people stay indoors. They might watch the rain
from inside or they might not, we cannot really say that
"nobody watches the drizzling rain?" Therefore, the first
reading may be discarded. However, if we take the second
reading, "All day long, without a companion, I watch the
drizzling rain," we would face another problem. This
utterance involves a static scene and uses the verb
"watch," which does not result in anything or cause any
reaction. In contrast, all the other lines invoke a rather different kinds of views, which are charged with vivid images of motion, reaction, color, and sound. How should we explain the syntactic inconsistency in relation to the poetic theme? This question leads us to a retroactive reading.

Going through the discourse again, we discover some clues in lines three and four. While the former utterance presents a single person watching the drizzling rain, the latter depicts Mandarin ducks bathing together. Here the image of Mandarin ducks, which are always seen in mated pairs, seems to underscore the loneliness and boredom of the speaker. And since lines one and two, as pointed out before, also contain images contrasting with those in line three, they may likewise be assumed to have the purpose of intensifying the speaker's sense of forlornness.

Based on the above hypotheses we are now able to see all the poetic lines as an organized entity instead of incoherent parts. In the first line, the water chestnuts are described as so vigorous that they poke through the ubiquitous duckweed and turn the whole pond into a magnificent green (the word 功 functions as a verb and not only serves to define the color of the plants but also animates the otherwise inanimate water chestnuts). In the second line, the singing orioles are made to dally with the roses, as if flirting with charming beauties. By way of
contrast, the speaker, as revealed in line three, sits alone all day long looking at the monotonously drizzling rain. His weariness is mocked by the vivacity introduced again in the last line. Here the Mandarin ducks are symbolic of conjugal love. The expression "facing each other" also carries a similar connotation; and the phrase "red gowns," representing the Mandarin ducks' feathers, is associated with wedding gowns or brides' sleepers, both of which are red, according to Chinese custom. All the images in this line relate to companionship, togetherness, or conjugal love and make the speaker's solitary state seem even more poignant. As a whole, this poem conjures up a lovely natural scene composed of motion, color, and harmony. But behind its literal form it also hides an unspoken feeling of boredom and forlornness, which can only be discerned through the contrast of the speaker's ennui with the vivacious surroundings.

"Ch’ing-ming"

(Form: chHmeh-chH heptasyllabic meter)

In the Ch’ing-ming season it drizzles, drizzles;
People on the road dispirited, as if overpowered by grief.
I ask, "Where can I find a wine shop?"
The young shepherd points to the apricot-blossom village afar. (CCS: 69)
Ch’ing-ming, which is often translated as Spring Festival, is one of the twenty-four solar periods of the year, and it customarily falls on April 5 or 6 when people visit their ancestral tombs. In this poem, however, this term is followed by the word "season," which indicates a period of time rather than just one day. In addition, the people in the poetic scene are dispirited by the ceaseless rains instead of the deaths of their ancestors. Therefore, we may conclude that Ch’ing-ming in this poem is concerned, not with the festivity of a special day, but with weather: usually around this time the rainy season begins. If this is the case, however, why does the text mention "a wine shop" in the third line? What does the "wine shop" have to do with the weather? And how can the "apricot-blossom village" relate to the poetic theme? Before approaching any understanding of the poem, we have to surmount these semantic hurdles.

In phonics, this poem also puzzles us with an extraordinary pattern, which is indicated below:

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| ts’ji | mjä | zi  | tsait | yj juo | f’juøn | f’juøn |
| luo   | zja | yé  | njen | øjuok | d’uøn | yuøn |
| tsja  | mjøn | tsøu | kø  | yu  | tç’juo | y_ju |
| mjuk  | d’uø | jøu | tçjøi | yøj | xøa  | ts’uøn |
```

In line one, the first and second words have the similar finals /jøj/ and /jøj/; the sixth and seventh words are re-duplicates. These words all have a nasal final (-jøj/,
This pattern is repeated, though not completely, in line two: here the second and third words have the similar finals /-jaŋ/ and /-jà/; the sixth and seventh words have the similar finals /-uän/ and /-uän/; and the second, third, fourth, sixth, and seventh words all have a nasal final (/-jaŋ/, /-jà/, /-uän/, or /-uän/). Lastly, the fifth words of both lines have the like finals /-juo/ and /-juok/. These phonic similarities and repetitions create a fast tempo. In lines three and four, on the other hand, such sonal resemblances are missing and, hence, the tempo slows. How can the difference in the phonic patterns between the two components of the poem be accounted for?

The two questions mentioned above force us to undertake a retroactive reading. At this stage we try to go beyond the literal representations of the poetic text and to seek out the connection between the wine shop and the weather of the Ch'ing-ming season. A hint seems to lie in the different effects of rain and wine. The second line of the poem indicates that the incessant rain disheartens the people on the road; opposed to the depressing rain, wine has the power of cheering up a person. This seems to be the reason why the speaker, one of the travelers, asks, in the third line, where he can find a wine shop. This clue suggests that the poem, although literally depicting a vivid natural and human scene, implicitly conveys two
opposed ideas: depression caused by rain and a wish to find relief from depression.

Reexamined in the light of this clue, all the elements in the discourse, including those which puzzled us in the initial reading, become meaningful. Line one portrays a scene of endless rain. In line two, the downcast mood of travelers results, apparently, from the unceasing drizzle. When the speaker in the third line, who is also traveling on the road, asks the way to a wine shop, he is frustrated by the young shepherd's response in line four, for he is made to understand that the nearest wine shop is not only far away, but also located in an apricot-blossom village. Here the apricot-blossom village is a general term referring to a village where many apricot trees are in bloom.21 Because apricot trees usually bloom in the rainy season of Ch'ing-ming, an apricot-blossom village naturally elicits an image of incessant rain. This makes one point clear: although the speaker is seeking shelter from the rain, he is confronted with even more rain. Throughout the discourse, there is a sense of the ubiquitous rain at Ch'ing-ming. One may wish to seek relief from the weather, yet there is no escape.

The sense of depression and anxiety may explain the peculiar phonic structure unfolded previously. The fast

tempo in the first couplet created by the sonal similarities and repetitions serves to signify the incessant drizzling of the rain and its continuous distressing effect on travelers. In contrast, the slower tempo in the second couplet resulting from the lack of phonic resemblances suggests the difficulty of reaching a wineshop and the enquirer's frustration. Thus, the phonic features which appears in the initial reading to be incongruous, converge, in the retroactive reading, on the opposed ideas we already pointed out.

In Sau-ming Poetry Talk (Ssu-ming shih-hua 1.15), Hsieh Chen (1495-1575) stated that the style of this poem is inelegant and suggests that the last two lines, Chieh-wen chiu-chia ho-ch’u vu / Mu-t’ung yao-chih hsing-hua ts’un "I ask, 'Where can I find a wine shop?' / The young shepherd points to the apricot-blossom village afar," be changed to Jih-hsieh yen ts’e-ma / Chiu-ssu hsing-hua hsi "The sun slants, a man whips the horse / A wine shop on the west side of the apricot-blossoms." Hsieh considered his version better than the original, for the former is rid of the "trouble" of the dialogue contained in the latter. The contemporary critic Huang Yung-wu (1976a: 150) supports
Hsieh, saying that his version uses fewer empty words than the original and thus sounds stronger than the latter. He even goes so far as to fault the first couplet of this poem, Ch’ing-ming shih-chieh yù fen-fen / Lu-shang hsing-jen yù tuan-hun "In the Ch’ing-ming season it drizzles, drizzles; / People on the road dispirited, as if overpowered by grief." His argument is that yù fen-fen "it drizzles, drizzles" in the first line already relates to rain, therefore the term "Ch’ing-ming," which refers to a rainy season, is redundant and should be deleted from this line. Likewise, since hsing-jen "pedestrians" of the second line is already associated with "the road," the two words lu-shang "on the road" should also be deleted.

Apparently both Hsieh and Huang are only concerned with the diction of the poem and their suggestions are mainly aimed at increasing the textural density. Yet diction and textural density are not the whole story of poetic creation and interpretation. Without considering other aspects of the poem, these remarks by Hsieh and Huang inevitably become trivial, even meaningless, and, hence, obstruct our understanding of the original poem.

22. In classical Chinese, which is the medium of traditional poetry, words are divided into two categories: full words, which refer to substantives, verbs, and adjectives; and empty words, which include personal pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, words of comparison, particles, etc.
This poem depicts a scene during the Ch’ing-ming season, and even more importantly, it conveys a feeling of depression and frustration, instead of the usual family rituals and celebrations. Viewed in this light, all parts of the poem are indispensable in the advancing of the poetic theme. Even the speech-gesture dialogue embodied in the second couplet, which Hsieh and Huang considered to be too vulgar, is a necessary element in the special effects of the entire poem. Here we see a traveler asking a young shepherd where he can find a wine shop, hoping to obtain some relief from the depressing rain, but the latter disappointing him by responding that the nearest wine shop is located in a distant village full of blooming apricot trees, which are also associated with incessant rain. Clearly, a very significant effect lies in the anxious anticipation of the traveler and the negative answer from the shepherd. If we eliminated the dialogue, the special effect of this passage would be lost. Likewise, if we changed the other parts of the text as suggested by Hsieh and Huang, the poem would become a contrived string of words expressing ideas alien to the original poem.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This dissertation follows the semiotic consideration that a poem is an elliptic, open text to be completed by the active participation of the reader. It agrees with the argument that, to understand a poem properly, the reader must have, in addition to linguistic skills, literary competence, which includes familiarity with other texts related to the poem, knowledge of the literary and critical tradition, descriptive systems, themes, mythology, religion, and philosophy belonging to the culture in which the poem is written. It also concurs with the claim that poetry possesses the characteristic of implicity and that to interpret a poem is to make its meaning as explicit as possible through the analysis of its pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and phonic structures. Based on these premises, this dissertation has sought to establish an interpretive model for Chinese poetry involving two stages, an initial reading and a retroactive reading. In the initial reading, the reader supplies all of the elements missing in the text. But because he tries to read the discourse literally, he encounters problems in pragmatics, semantics, syntactics, or phonics, which
prevent him from obtaining a coherent sense of the poem. These difficulties prompt him to undertake a retroactive reading. At this second stage, he seeks a higher level of understanding where a unity of meaning can be identified. And by decoding clues in the text on the basis of his linguistic and literary competence, and revising his understanding of the discourse in the light of his new discoveries, he finally arrives at a kernel concept, on which the whole discourse can be perceived as a single unit, and in relation to which every element that previously appeared to be puzzling has a significative purpose.

Emphasizing the fact that the poem is an indirect and circuitous expression of something, this model urges the reader to examine all relevant clues in the discourse and to bring together all of the meanings he can link to the text. This often enables him to ravel poems obscure in meaning. The exegesis of Tu Mu's "In Ch'i-an Chünn: A Chance Theme" in Chapter 4 is a good example.

According to this model, a poem is the exfoliation of a seed or a kernel that determines its unity, and interpreting a poem is a process of exploration, analysis, and setting and proving hypotheses, in an attempt to identify this kernel and to show how it determines the lines and images of the discourse. Application of such processes to poetic interpretation may cultivate inter-
pretive sensitivity in the reader. By following these procedures, the reader also comes to better appreciate the discourse and experience greater pleasure from his encounter with the poetic text. Especially when he discovers the poetic unity and the whole discourse suddenly ceases to be a random collection of puzzling items and becomes a more or less unified structure wherein all or most elements refer to one symbolic focus, he is thrilled by the exercise of interpretation.

The model's insistence on the principle of poetic unity not only pushes the reader to continue exploring the poem in order to unveil its secret, in terms of which all the words, phrases, or sentences in the discourse can be explained, it also compels the reader to examine the poetic discourse and seek the pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and phonic structures which are unified and serve to advance the kernel concept of the poem. Such a procedure results in more logical and more convincing holistic interpretations and safeguards against whimsical readings. This has been demonstrated in Chapter 4 in the explications of Tu Mu's "A Broken Mirror" and "Ch'ing-ming."

The semiotic model has been proven to be immensely fruitful in the explications of Tu Mu's poems, as has been pointed out above. In this final chapter, we will demonstrate how some of the ideas advocated by the semiotic
model can also serve as principles for the translation of poetry.

In interpreting a poem, the semiotic model requires a search for unified pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and phonic patterns, which convey the kernel concept. In translating a poem, the translator should also try to re-create in the target language the unified pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and phonic patterns of the original poem. It is on this principle that we fault A. C. Graham's rendition of "The Rear Pond in Ch'i-an Ch'un" in the following:

Pond-chestnuts poke through floating chickweed
on the green brocade pool:
A thousand summer orioles sing as they play
among the roses.
I watch the fine rain, alone all day,
While side by side the ducks and drakes bathe
in their crimson coats.¹

Tu Mu's original text of this poem (analyzed in Chapter 4), in addition to depicting a lovely natural scene of motion, color, and harmony, suggests a feeling of boredom and forlornness by the contrast between the speaker's ennui and his vivacious surroundings. This contrast is well manifested in the unified semantic and syntactic patterns

¹. See Graham 1965: 130.
of the poem. However, it is blurred in Graham’s translation. In the original text, the water chestnuts (Graham has "pond-chestnuts") are depicted as vigorously poking up through the ubiquitous duckweed (Graham has "chickweed"), turning the whole pond into a magnificent green. The Chinese word 色 functions as a verb, which not only defines the color of the plants but also animates the otherwise inanimate water chestnuts. But the vigor suggested by this word is totally lost in Graham’s line "Pond-chestnuts poke through floating chickweed on the green brocade pool." In the second line the orioles are described as singing a thousand times while dallying with the roses (ch’ien-chuan nung ch’iang-wei). Graham’s line "A thousand summer orioles sing as they play among the roses" also misses the sense of virility infusing the original. The fourth line of the original describes Mandarin ducks facing each other while bathing in the pond (hsiang-tui 單 hung-vi). The symbolic meaning of conjugal love, companionship, or togetherness represented by the phrase hsiang-tui "facing each other" can hardly be felt in Graham’s rendition “While side by side the ducks and drakes bathe in their crimson coats.” In contrast with the motion and vivacity of the surrounding, the third line of the original text reveals another picture, wherein all day long alone the speaker watches the drizzling rain (Chin-ji wu-jen k’an wei-vi). By putting the phrases chin-jih "all
day long" and *wu-jiè* "no companion" or "alone" in the beginning, this line underscores the speaker's boredom and loneliness. On the other hand, Graham's translation "I watch the fine rain, alone all day," which has the phrase "alone all day" at the end, does not seem to be as effective as the original in stressing the speaker's solitary state.

In some poems the phonic pattern assumes an extraordinarily significant function. In such cases, the translator should try as much as he can to re-create the phonic pattern so that the translation will carry the same poetic effect. For example, in the following poem by Tu Mu (explicated in Chapter 4):

"To Be Sent Far Away"

The mountain in front, remote, merges
with blue clouds.

In the clear evening, the sound of "White Snow."

I hope to send my distant longing
by the moon,

The sun sets by the river, it starts to rain, rain.

the speaker is looking forward to seeing the moon in order to convey his yearning to his beloved in the distance. Unfortunately, he is frustrated by the rain, which starts to fall heavily when "the sun sets by the river." The
frustration is italicized in the original text by the last three words yǔ fei-fei 雨霏霏 of the fourth line. In lexicology, the first word is the radical of rain; the second and third are reduplicates, each consisting of a rain radical 雨 and a phonetic element 非 to mean "rain heavily." The succession of the two words霏霏 provides a phonic pattern that reinforces the lexical meaning. In the translation, therefore, this phrase is rendered as "it starts to rain, rain," instead of something like "the rain starts to pour heavily," which would not reflect the phonic pattern of the original. Another example can be found in "Ch’ing-ming." As pointed out in Chapter 4, the first couplet of this poem has a fast tempo which signifies the endless drizzle of the Ch’ing-ming season and its continuous distressing effect on travelers. The rapidity results partly from the use of the phrase yǔ fen-fen 雨霏霏 at the end of the first line. The word yǔ means "rain"; the second and third fen-fen is a reduplicate indicating "incessant." Here the lexical meaning is reinforced by the repetition of the sound fen. Since this phonic pattern has a special impact on the kernel concept of the poem, it should be re-created in the translation. This justifies our rendition of the first line of the poem as "In the Ch’ing-ming season it drizzles, drizzles" and our objection to that of T’ing-kan Ts’ai (1932: 53) as shown below:
"All Souls' Day"

The rain falls thick and fast on All Souls' festive day,
The men and women sadly move along the way.
They ask where wineshops can be found or where to rest--
And there the herdboy's fingers Almond-Town suggest.

One more notion that may serve as a rule for translation is associated with the semiotic model's stress on the implicity of poetry. For semioticians, art exists to make us feel things, to help us recover the sensation of life. In poetry, such artistic effects largely rely on indirection or ungrammaticality, as illustrated several times in our interpretations of Tu Mu's poems in Chapters 3 and 4. A good poem often challenges the reader to look for clues leading to intended meanings or for ways to explain utterances which violate normal modes of speech, perception, or thought. To translate a poem is to try to reproduce in another language the verbal structure of the original, so that the reader of the translation will respond to it much as he would to the original discourse. Therefore, if a poem embodies indirect or "ungrammatical" expressions, the translation should attempt to preserve them; otherwise, the reader will not respond to them as actively as he would to the original. For example, in the
well-known line *Shuang-yeh hung-yu erh-yüeh hua* "Redder than March blossoms are the frosted leaves" of Tu Mu's "An Excursion to the Mountains," which has been studied in Chapter 4, the term *erh-yüeh* refers to the second month in the traditional (lunar) calendar, or March or April in the Western calendar, which falls in spring. But poetry is implicit, and the link between *erh-yüeh* and "spring" should be left for the reader to make. Therefore, we rendered it as "March" instead of the more explicit, more explanatory "spring." As for the whole line, it compares *shuang-yeh* with red flowers. Here *shuang-yeh* refers to the maple leaves that turned red with autumn. However, poetry says something that is not immediately apparent, and this implicit sense should be left for the reader himself to seek out. For this reason, we chose to render *shuang-yeh* as "frosted leaves" rather than such more prosaic phrases as "frost-stricken leaves," "frost-touched leaves," or "frozen leaves." Our rendition preserves the implicit originally created by the poet. Frost is usually white, and "frosted leaves" would normally be perceived as "leaves covered by frost and looking white." But, in our translation, "frosted leaves," patterns after the original utterance and points up the peculiarity of the maple leaves which is endowed with an exquisite red hue after early autumn frost. Through such a detour the red maple leaves are brought to the foreground as a magnificent object so
attractive to the reader. Any translation of the line Shuang-veh hung-ydl erh-ydeh hua that does not preserve this feature will lose much of the poeticity of the original, as can be seen in the renditions by Wen-kai Kung (1976: 54):

"A Mountain Excursion"

Far up the cold mountain the stony path slopes,
Some houses are there, where the white clouds appear.
I stop the carriage and sit [awhile]
to enjoy the maple wood at dusk,
The frost-touchied leaves are more brightly red
than the second month’s flowers.

and by Robert Kotewall and Normal L. Smith (1962: 25):

"Travelling in the Mountain"

After I climb the chill mountain’s steep stone paths,
Deep in the white clouds there are homes of men.
I stop my carriage, and sit to admire the maple-grove at nightfall,
Whose frozen leaves are redder than the flowers of early spring.

Another instance of implicity can be found in the line La-chu yu-hsein hai hai-pieh "Even the candle has a heart to lament our parting" of Tu Mu’s “Presented at Parting,” which has also been translated and studied in Chapter 4. For the reader, the candle is a nonhuman
object; it does not have a real heart. Therefore, the phrase la-chu yu-hsin "the candle has a heart" violates the reader’s habitual mode of thought. But the candle has a wick in the center. When lit, the wick burns the melting wax. Because of its being in the middle and appearing red, the burning wick looks like a human heart. Thus, the phrase la-chu yu-hsin "the candle has a heart" not only makes sense, but, because of its deviation from the normal mode of thought, also deepens the sadness of the parting (it is so sorrowful that even a nonhuman object can feel it). Any translation missing this ungrammaticality will lose the poeticity created by the poet. This is why Graham’s line, which does not involve the word "heart," sounds so prosaic in the translation below:

"Farewell Poem"

Passion too deep seems like none.
While we drink, nothing shows but the smile
    which will not come.
The wax candles feel, suffer at partings:
    Their tears drip for us till the sky
    brightens.2

APPENDIX A

CHINESE TEXTS OF TU MU'S POEMS
INTERPRETED OR REFERRED TO

(Arranged alphabetically by English title)

"After Just Being Appointed to the Post
of Assistant Chief, Office of Appointments ...."

新轉南曹未敘朝散 初秋暑退出守吳興
書此篇以自見志

1. 捧詔汀洲去 2. 全家羽翼飛
3. 賜拋新錦帳 4. 樗借舊朱衣
5. 且免材為累 6. 何妨拙有機
7. 宋株聊自守 8. 魯酒怕旁圍
9. 清尚寧無素 10. 光陰亦未晞
11. 盃寬席幕 12. 五字弄珠璣
13. 越浦黃甘嫩 14. 吳溪紫蟹肥
15. 平生江海志 16. 佩得左魚歸

244
"Ascending Lo-yu Plain Before Leaving for Wu-hsing"

將赴吳興登樂遊原
一絕

1. 清時有味是無能
2. 開閰孤雲靜愛僧
3. 欲把一麾江海去
4. 樂遊原上望昭陵

"An Autumn Scene in Ch’ang-an"

長安秋望

1. 樓倚霜樹外
2. 鏡天無一毫
3. 南山與秋色
4. 氣勢兩相高
"A Broken Mirror"

破鏡
1. 佳人失手鏡初分
2. 何日重圓再會君
3. 今朝萬里秋風起
4. 山北山南一片雲

“Ch’ing-ming”

清明
1. 清明時節雨紛紛
2. 路上行人欲斷魂
3. 借問酒家何處有
4. 牧童遙指杏花村
"Climbing the Heights of Mt. Chi on the Ninth Day"

九日齊山登高

1. 江涵秋影雁初飛
2. 與客携壺上翠微
3. 座世難逢開口笑
4. 菊花須插滿頭歸
5. 但將酩酊酬佳節
6. 不用登臨恨落晖
7. 古往今來只如此
8. 牛山何必獨霑衣
"The Crane"

鶴

1. 清音迎晚月
2. 愁思立寒浦
3. 丹頂两施頰
4. 霜毛四皓髥
5. 碧雲行止躁
6. 白鷺性靈粗
7. 終日無群伴
8. 淇邊弔影孤

"Early Spring Thoughts: Sent to Assistant Office Chief Hsing in She-chou"

初春有感寄歙州邢員外

1. 雪漲前溪水
2. 啼聲已繞灘
3. 梅衰未減態
4. 春嫩不禁寒
5. 跡去夢一覺
6. 年來事百般
7. 開君亦多感
8. 何處倚欄干
"The Early Wild Geese"

早雁
1. 金河秋半虜弦開
2. 雲外驚飛四散哀
3. 仙掌月明孤影過
4. 長門燈暗數聲來
5. 須知胡駑紛紛在
6. 豈逐春風一一回
7. 英厭瀟湘少人處
8. 水多菰米岸莓苔

"Egrets"

驚鶯
1. 雪衣雪髮青玉嘴
2. 群捕魚兒溪映中
3. 驚飛遠映碧山去
4. 一樹梨花落晚風
"An Excursion to the Mountains"

山行
1. 途上寒山石径斜
2. 白雲生處有人家
3. 停車坐愛楓林晚
4. 霜葉紅於二月花

"Expressing my Thoughts"

感懷詩

87 蒼然太行路
...
92. 誰其為我聽
101. 往往念所至
103. 韶華辱壯心
104. 鸣闐無助聲

...

88. 落花驚繢帶
91. 請教係虞事
...
102. 得醉愁蘇醒
雪中書懷

1. 膽雪一尺厚
2. 雲凍寒傾癡
3. 孤城大澤畔
4. 人踪煙火微
5. 惶悚欲誰語
6. 夏溫不能持
7. 天子號仁聖
8. 任賢如事師
9. 凡稱曰治具
10. 小大無不施
11. 明庭開廣敞
12. 才俊受謫維
13. 如日月恒昇
14. 若鸞鳳葳蕤
15. 人才自升下
16. 葉去亦其宜
17. 北虜壞亭障
18. 開屯千里師
19. 轉連久不解
20. 他盜恐旁竊
21. 匹實有長策
22. 彼可除鞭笞
23. 如蒙一召議
24. 食肉寢其皮
25. 斯乃廟堂事
26. 尔微非爾知
27. 向來臚等語
28. 長作陷身機
29. 行當臚欲破
30. 酒齊不可遲
31. 且想春候暖
32. 窩閣傾一危

"Garden of the Golden Valley"

金谷園
1. 繁華事散逐香塵
2. 流水無情草自春
3. 白薔東風怨啼鳥
4. 落花猶似殤樓人
“Ho Huang”

河湟

1. 元載相公曾借箸
2. 懷宗皇帝亦留神
3. 旋見衣冠就東市
4. 忽遺弓劍不西巡
5. 牧羊驅馬雖戎服
6. 白髮丹心盡漢臣
7. 唯有凉州歌舞曲
8. 流傳天下樂閩人
“In Ch‘i-an Chun: A Chance Theme”

齊安郡中偶題

(1)

1. 雨笠落日溪橋上
2. 半縷輕煙柳影中
3. 多少綠荷相倚恨
4. 一時回首背西風

“Inscribed at the Water Pavilion of K‘ai-yüan Temple, Hsüan-chou ....”

題宣州開元寺水閣閣下宛溪

失溪居人

1. 六朝文物草迷空
2. 天邊雲開今古同
3. 鳥去鳥來山色裡
4. 人歌人哭水聲中
5. 深秋簾幕千家雨
6. 落日樓台一笛風
7. 惆悵無因見范蠡
8. 參差煙樹五湖東
"Inscribed on Floating Cloud Temple,
An-chou ...."

題安州浮雲寺樓寄湖州張郎中
1. 去夏餘雨餘  2. 同倚朱欄語
3. 當時樓下水  4. 今日到何處
5. 恨如春草多  6. 事與孤鴻去
7. 楚岸千萬里  8. 別愁紛若絮

"An Invitation to the Candidate Li Ying ...."

湖州正初招李郎秀才
1. 行樂及時時已晚  2. 對酒當歌歌不成
3. 千里暮山重疊翠  4. 一溪寒水淺深深
5. 高人以飲為忙事  6. 浮世除詩盡強名
7. 看著白蘋牙欲吐  8. 雪舟相訪勝開行
"Lady Tu Ch’iu"

杜秋娘詩

1. 就江水清清 2. 生女白如脂

3. 見間杜秋者 4. 不勝朱粉施

5. 盼歸獨依依 6. 肩裙見天子

11. 鏡台蟻成蟻 12. 低鬟認新織

16. 金釵復巋巋 17. 竹杖復疎疎

23. 放故鄉歸 24. 葉影三十載

30. 遞首尚遲遲 31. 古橋草菲菲

37. 就來四鄰改 38. 莫苑草菲菲

44. 似夢復非夢 45. 影裡復相顧

51. 望後復相迎 52. 新酒復相顧

58. 就來四鄰改 59. 故事復相顧

65. 莫苑草菲菲 66. 影裡復相顧

73. 新酒復相顧 74. 就來四鄰改
61. 清血灑不盡

63. 女子固不盡

62. 仰天知問谁

65. 我昨金陵過

67. 因古皆一貫

68. 變化安能推

84. 士林亦難期

"Mooring at Ch’in-huai"

泊秦淮

1. 煙籠寒水月籠沙

2. 夜泊秦淮近酒家

3. 商女不知亡國恨

4. 隔江猶唱後庭花
"Mu-chou: Four Rymes"

睦州四韻

1. 州在釣台邊
2. 溪山實可憐
3. 有家皆掩映
4. 無處不潺湲
5. 好樹鳴幽鳥
6. 晴樓入野煙
7. 殘春杜陵客
8. 中酒落花前
"Passing by Hua-ch’ing Palace"

過華清宮絕句

(Ⅰ)

1. 長安迴望繡成堆
2. 山頂千門次第開
3. 一騎紅塵妃子笑
4. 無人知是荔枝來

(Ⅱ)

1. 新豐綠樹起黃埃
2. 數騎漁陽探使還
    帝使中使輔與琳探蝮山
    反者，輔與琳受蝮山金，言
    蝮山殺人。
3. 霹靂一曲千峰上
4. 舞破中原始下來
(Ⅳ)

1. 萬國笙歌醉太平
2. 倚天樓殿月分明
3. 雲中亂拍祿山舞
4. 風過重巒下笑聲

"Presented at Parting"

(Ⅴ)

1. 多情卻似總無情
2. 唯覺尊前笑不成
3. 蠟燭有心還惜別
4. 替人垂淚到天明
"The Rear Pond in Ch‘i-an Chun"

齊安郡後池絕句

1. 菱透浮萍綠錦池
2. 夏蟬千轉弄蔷薇
3. 畫日無人看微雨
4. 鴛鴦相對浴紅衣

"Red Cliff"

赤壁

1. 折戟沈沙鐵未銷
2. 自將磨洗認前朝
3. 東風不與周郎便
4. 鍾雀春深鎖二喬
"Reflections on Tzu-ko Mountain"

懷紫閣山

(Ⅱ)

1. 百年不肯疏榮辱
2. 雙鬢終應老是非
3. 人道青山歸去好
4. 青山曾有幾人歸

"Releasing my Feeling"

遺懷

1. 落魄江南載酒行
2. 楚腰腸斷掌中輕
3. 十年一覺揚州夢
4. 占得青樓薄倖名
"Seeing a Friend Off from Ch’ang-an for Hu-nan"

1. 子性劇弘和
2. 意衷深偏狷
3. 相捨異箇中
4. 吾適何由鮮
5. 楚南饒風煙
6. 湘岸若榮菀
7. 山密夕陽多
8. 人稀芳草遙
9. 青梅繁枝低
10. 班箑新稍短
11. 莫哭莽魚人
12. 酒醒且眠飯

"Seeing Off the Advanced Scholar K’uai Hsi-i from Ch’ih-chou in Spring"

1. 芳草復芳草
2. 斷腸還斷腸
3. 自然堪下淚
4. 何必更殘陽
5. 楚岸千萬里
6. 燕鴻三兩行
7. 有家歸不得
8. 况舉别君腸
"Spring in Chiang-nan"

江南春絕句

1. 千里鶯啼綠映紅
2. 水村山郭酒旗風
3. 南朝四百八十寺
4. 多少樓台煙雨中

"To Be Sent Far Away"

寄遠

1. 前山極遠碧雲合
2. 清夜一聲回鴈微
3. 欲寄相思千里月
4. 淵邊殘照雨霏霏
"Wild Pomegranates"

山石榴
1. 似火烧山榴映小山
2. 繁艳能薄艳中开
3. 一朵佳人玉钗上
4. 只疑烧却翠云鬟

"Willows: A Quatrain"

柳绝句
1. 数树新開翠影齊
2. 侍風情態被春迷
3. 依依故國樊川恨
4. 半掩村橋半拂溪
APPENDIX B

CHINESE TEXTS OF POEMS BY OTHER POETS CITED
(Arranged alphabetically by English titles)

"At Ts’ui’s Estate in Lan-t’ien
on the Ninth Day"
by Tu Fu

九日蓝田崔氏庄
杜 甫
老去悲秋强自宽
興来今日盡君歡
羞将短髮還吹帽
笑倩旁人為正冠
蓝水遠從千涧落
玉山高並雨峰寒
明年此会知谁健
醉把茱萸仔细看

"Chung-tzu, Please"
from Book of Odes

將仲子
詩經

將仲子兮，無踰我里，無折我樹杞。
誰敢愛之？畏我父母！
仲可懷也，父母之言，亦可畏也。

將仲子兮，無踰我牆，無折我樹桑。
誰敢愛之，畏我諸兄。
仲可懷也，諸兄之言，亦可畏也。

將仲子兮，無踰我園，無折我樹檀。
誰敢愛之，畏人之多言。
仲可懷也，人之多言，亦可畏也。
"Climbing the Terrace of Yu-chou"
by Ch’en Tzu-ang

登幽州台
陳子昂
前不見古人，後不見來者，
念天地之悠悠，獨愴然而涕下。

"Double Nnith"
by Po Chü-yi

重九
白居易
去年登高郪縣北
今日重在涪江濵
苦遭白髮不相放
羞見黃花無數新
世亂鬱攸久為客
路難悠，常傍人酒獨却憶十年事
腸斷驪山清路塵

"The Empty Ground of the East Gate"
from Book of Odes

東門之墳
詩經

東門之墳，茹藘在阪。
其室則邇，其人則遠。
"Home to Farm"
by T'ao Ch'ien

歸田園居
陶濵

少無適俗韻
性本愛丘山

誤落塵網中
一去三十年

羁鳥思故林
池魚思故淵

開荒南野際
守拙歸田園

方宅十餘畝
草屋八九間

榆柳蔭後莓
桃李羅堂前

暧暧遠人村
依依墟里煙

狗吠深巷中
雞鳴桑樹顛

戶庭無虛棄
虛室有餘閒

久在樊籠裡
復得返自然
"Living in Retirement on the Ninth Day"

by T'ao Ch'ien

九日閒居
陶潛

世短意常多 斯人樂永生
日月依辰至 舉俗各異名
露凄暄風息 氣澈天象明
往燕無遺影 來雁有餘聲
酒能祛百慮 菊解制頹齡
如何遂塵土 空視時運傾
塵爵耻虛罍 寒華徒自榮
斂衽獨悵詠 絲馬起深情
棲遲固多娛 沧留豈無成
"The Ninth Day in Chü-chiang"

by Tu Fu

九日曲江
杜甫

緵席茱萸好浮舟菡萏衰
百年秋已半九日意兼悲
江水清源曲荆门此路疑
晚来高興盡摇蕩菊花期

"The Ninth Day of the Ninth Month of the Year Chi-yu"

by T’ao Ch’ien

己酉歳九月九日
陶潜

靡有秋已夕凄凉风露交
蔓草不復榮園木空自凋
清氣澄餘滓，杳然人界空。哀蟬無留響，叢雛鳴雲霄。萬化相尋繒，人生豈不勞。從古皆有沒，念之中心焦。何以稱我情，濁酒且自陶。千載非所知，聊以永今朝。

“Passing the Temple of Teeming Fragrance”

by Wang Wei

過香積寺

王維

不知香積寺，數里入雲峰。古木無人徑，深山何處鐘。泉聲咽危石，日色冷青松。薄暮空潭曲，安禪制毒龍。
"A Poem for K'ung, Presiding Minister of the Department of Ministries"

by Hsieh Chan

九日從容公戲馬台集送孔令詩
謝瞻

風至授寒服 霜降休百工
繁林收陽彩 密苑解華叢
巢幕無留燕 逆渚有來鴻
輕霞冠秋日 迅商薄清穹
聖心眷嘉節 揚鶴戾行宮
四筵露芳醴 中堂起絲桐
扶光迫西汜 歡餘宴有窮
逝哭將歸客 歡心歎飛蓬
臨流怨莫從
"Presented as a Farewell to Secretary Fu"

by Pao Chao

贈傳都曾別
鲍照

1. 軽鴻戲江潭  2. 孤雁集洲沚
3. 邂逅兩相親  4. 綠韜共無已
5. 風雨好東西  6. 一隔頓萬里
7. 追憶宿時  8. 鼻容滿心耳
9. 落日川渚寒  10. 愁雲繞天起
11. 短翮不能翔  12. 徘徊煙霧裏
"Scene from South Hill to North Hill
Passing the Lake ...."
by Haieh Ling-yün

於南山往北山經湖中瞻眺
謝靈運

朝旦發陽崖 日落憩陰峰
含舟眺迥渚 停策依柯松
側遙玩窮荒 環洲亦玲瓏
徃視喬木杪 仰聆大壑濤
石横水分流 林密蹊絕跡
解作竟何感 升長皆豐容
初篁苞絲繹 新蒲含紫葦
海鷗戲春岸 天離弄和風
撫化心無厭 覽物眷彌重
不惜去人逺 但恨莫與同
孤遊非情嘆 賞發理誰通
"Seven-pace Poem"
by Ts'ao Chih

七步詩
曹植
煮豆燃豆萁，豆在釜中泣
本是同根生，相煎何太急

"Since you, my Lord, Left me"
by Chang Chiu-ling

自君之出矣
張九齡
自君之出矣，不復理殘機
思君如滿月，夜夜減清輝
"Song of Everlasting Sorrow"
by Po Chü-ying

長恨歌
白居易
節錄
驪宮高處入青雲，仙樂風飄處處聞。
緩歌慢舞凝絲竹，盡日君王看不足。
漁陽鼙鼓動地來，驚破霓裳羽衣曲，
九重城闕煙塵生，千乘萬騎西南行。

"Song of Wei-ch’eng"
by Wang Wei

渭城曲
王維
渭城朝雨浥輕塵
客含青青柳色新
勸君更盡一杯酒
西出陽關無故人

“Song of Wu Ch’u”
by Fu Hsuan

吳楚歌
傳玄

燕人美兮趙女佳，其室則逼兮限層崖。
雲為車兮風為馬，玉在山兮蘭在野。
雲無期兮風有止，思多端兮誰能理？

“Summit Temple”
by Li Po

題峯頂寺
李白

夜宿峯頂寺，舉手撼星辰。
不敢高聲語，恐驚天上人。
"To my Fifth Brother"

by Tu Fu

第五弟豈獨在江左近三四載寂無消
息竟使等此二首 第二首

杜甫

聞汝依山寺 杭州定越州
風塵淹別日 江漢失清秋
影著啼猿樹 魂飄結屓樓
明年下春水 便盡白雲求

"Ts'ai-wei" (IV)

from Book of Odes

采薇 第六章
詩經

昔我往矣 楊柳依依
今我來思 雨雪霏霏
行道遲遲 戴渴載餓
我心傷悲 莫知我哀
"Yen and Chao Aboung with Beauties"

anonymous

燕趙多佳人
無名氏

燕趙多佳人，美者顏如玉。
被服羅裳衣，當垆理清曲。
音響一何悲，絃急知柱促。
馳情整中帶，沈吟聊躅躅。
思為雙飛燕，銜泥巢居屋。
GLOSSARY OF CHINESE CHARACTERS

Those titles of Chinese and Japanese works which are not listed here may be found in the "List of References."

"Ah-fang-kung fu" 阿房賦
An-jen li 安仁里
An Lu-shan 安祿山
ch’æ-yüan 察院
"Chan-lun" 戰論
Chang Chiu-ling 張九齡
Chang Hao-hao 張好好
"Chang Hao-hao shih" 張好好詩
Chang Hu 張祜
"Chang-nan ... tz’u yüeh ..... Pieh-sheng erh-nan ... yi nü ....." 長男...次女...别生二男...一女...”
chang-shu-chi 掌書記
Ch’ang-an 長安
Chao Ku 趙嘏
Chao-ying hsien 昭應縣
Chen-chiang 鎮江
Chen-hai 鎮海
Ch’en Shu-pao 陳叔寶
Ch’en Tzu-ang 陳子昂
cheng 正
Cheng Chu 鄭注
ch’eng 城
Ch’eng-te 成德
“Chi Chou hsiang-kung wen” 祭周相公文
“Chi ... Li shih-chün wen” 祭李使君文
“Chi Niu hsiang-kung” 祭牛相公
chi-p’o pao-lei 擊破倭堡
“Chi-shih Huang-chou” 即事黃州
“Ch’i-an chün wen ch’iu” 齊安郡晚秋
Ch’i Ching-kung 齊景公
Ch’i-chou 齊州
Ch’i-ch’un 齊春
Ch’i-kuo kung 齊國公
“Ch’i-pu shih” 七步詩
chia-pu yüan-wai-lang 駕部員外郎
Chiang-chou 江州
“Chiang Chung-tzu” 將仲子
“Chiang-fu ... Ch’en-chih ssu” 將赴 ... 襄習寺
“Chiang-fu Wu-hsing teng Lo-yu-yüan yi-chüeh” 將赴吳興登樂遊原
Chiang-hsi kuan-ch’a shih 江西觀察使
“Chiang ... Tu Yüan-wai” 將 ... 杜員外
chieh 階
chieh-tu-shih 節度使
chien-ch’a yü-shih 監察御使
chien-ch’a yü-shih li-hsing 監察御使脕行
chien-chün 監軍
chien nan-tzu 賤男子
Chien-te 建德
“Ch’ien-huai” 遺懷
Ch’ien Hui 錢徽
chih-chih-kao 知制誥
chih-chu 制舉
“Chih-kuan chih” 職官志
“Ch’ih-chou sung Meng Ch’ih hsien-pei” 池州送孟池先輩
“Ch’ih-chou tsao k’o-lou chi” 池州造刻漏記
chin-chun 禁軍
Chin-ling 金陵
chin-shih K’o 進士科
“Chin-T’ang hsiao-shuo ch’ang-kuan” 晉唐小說暢觀
Ching-chao fu 京兆府
Ching-chao yin 京兆尹
Ching-k’ou 京口
Ching-tsung 敬宗
Chiu-chiang 九江
“Ch’iu Hang-chou ch’i” 求杭州敘
“Ch’iu Hu-chou ....” 求湖州 ....
Ch’iu-pu 秋浦
Ch’iu Shih-liang 仇士良
chou 州
Chou Ch’ih 周墀
“Ch’ou Chang Hu ....” 酬張祐 ....
Chu Ch’uan-chung 朱全忠
Chu-ni 祝祈
"Chu Sün-tzu hsü" 注孫子序
Chu K'o-jung 朱克融
Chu-p'o 朱坡
"ch'ü-hsia" 髑篤
ch'ü-sheng 去聲
chüeh-chü 絕囀
chün 幕
"Chün-chai tu-cho" 齋齋獨酌
chung-shu-ling 中書令
chung-shu she-jen 中書舍人
chung-shu shih-lang 中書侍郎
Fan-ch'uan 樊川
Fan-yang 范陽
Fei Chang-fang 費長房
Fen-shui 分水
fu-ping 府兵
han-lin hsüeh-shih 翰林學士
Heng-hai 横海
Ho-chou 和州
"Ho p'ing Tse-lu ch'i" 賀平澤潞啟
"Ho Tu Mu-chih ...." 和杜牧之....
"Ho ... Tu yüan-wai" 和 ... 杜員外
"Ho Yen Yün ...." 和嚴憲 ....
Ho-tung 河東
"Hsi shih Wen huang-ti san-shih-erh yün" 順帝三十二年
hsia 下
Hsiang-yang 襄陽
Hsieh Chuang 謝莊
Hsieh Fang-te 謝枋得
hsien 縣
hsien-liang fang-cheng chih-yen chi-chien k'o 縣令方言志簡銘科
hsien-ling 縣令
"Hsien-shih ch'i" 奉詩啟
Hsien-tsung 憲宗
"Hsien-chuan nan-te'ao ... ch'ü-shou Wu-hsing ....." 新鑿而昔
... 出守吳興 ..... 
hsing 興
Hsing Ch'ün 邢郡
hsing-pu 刑部
Hsü Ch'i-hsieh chi 繼齊諧記
Hsüan-ch'eng 宣城
"Hsüan-chou sung P'ei T'an ....." 宣州送裴坦 ..... 
Hsüan-she kuan-ch'ā-shih 宣歙觀察使
Hsüan-tsung 玄宗
"Hsüeh-chung tso" 雲中作
Hsün-yang 涓陽
"Hu-chou ... chao Li Ying ....." 湖州 ... 招李郢 ..... 
"Huai Chung-ling ....." 懷錮陵 ..... 
Huai-nan 淮南
"Huai Tzu-ko shan" 懷紫閣山
Huan-ch'ún

"Huang-chou chu-ching" 蘭州竹徑

"Huang-chou tz'u-shih hsieh-shang piao" 蘭州刺史謝上表

Huang-kang 黃岡

Huang-p'o 黃陂

hung-wen kuan chiao-shu lang 弘文舘校書郎

"Jen-ssu liu-pieh" 忍死留別

Ju-nan 汝南

ju-sheng 入聲

Jun-chou 漣州

"Kan-huai shih" 懷懐詩

Kan-lu chih-pien 甘露之愛

Kao Li-shih 高力士

Kao-tsung 高宗

Kao Yüan-yü 高元裕

k'ao-kung lang-chung 考功郎中

Kou Chien 句踐

Ku-kung po-wu-yüan 故宮博物院

Ku-wen kuan-chih 古文觀止

kuan-chün-jung shih 觀軍容使

Kuei-ch'ih 貴池

kung-tz'u 宮詞

Kuo-yü 國語

Lan 蘭

Lang-chou 朗州
Li 里
Li-chi 礼记
Li Chi-fu 李吉甫
Li Chung-min 李中敏
"Li fu-chün mu-chih-ming" 李府君墓志铭
Li Fu-kuo 李辅国
Li Hsün 李训
Li Kan 李甘
"Li Kan shih" 李甘诗
Li Lin-fu 李林甫
Li-pu shih-lang 礼部侍郎
Li-pu shih-lang 吏部侍郎
Li-pu yüan-wai lang 吏部员外郎
Li Shih-tao 李师道
Li Te-yü 李德裕
Li Tsung-min 李宗闵
Li T'ung-chieh 李同捷
Li Ying 李郢
Lin-t'ung 臨潼
Lin-tzu 臨淄
Ling-hu Ch'ü 令狐楚
Liu Chen 劉稹
"Liu hui shih-ts'ao teng shih" 留诲wei師曹等詩
Liu Ts'ung-chien 劉從諫
Liu Wu 劉悟
Lu Hung-chih 虞弘止
Lu Lun 虞綸
Lu-lung 虞龍
Lu P’ei 虞鼐
LU-chu 綠珠
"Lun yung-ping shu" 論用兵書
Lung-wu chün 龍武軍
Ma-ch’eng 麻城
Mao-shih 毛詩
men-hsia sheng 門下省
Mu-chih 牧之
Mu-chou 衛州
Nan-ch’ang 南昌
Nan-yang 南陽
"Nien hai-yu" 念昔遊
Niu Seng-ju 牛僧孺
"Pa Chung-ling" 落鍾陵
"Pa-yüeh ... te-t‘i hou ...." 八月...得替後....
"Pai-kuan chih" 百官志
Pai Min-chung 白敏中
P’ei T’an 裴坦
P’ei Yen 裴偃
P’ei Yen-han 裴延翰
pi-pu yüan-wai lang 比部員外郎
p’in 品
ping-pu 兵部
P’ing-lu 平盧
p’ing-sheng 平聲
p’o-ching ch’ung-yuan 破鏡重圓
shan-pu yuàn-wai lang 腰部員外郎
shang 上
"Shang Chao-yi Liu ssu-t’u shu" 上昭義劉司徒書
"Shang chih-chi wen-chang ch’i" 上知已文章啟
"Shang Ch’ih-chou Li shih-chün shu" 上池州李使君書
"Shang ... ch’iu Hu-chou ti-erh ch’i" 上...求湖州第二啟
"Shang Chou hsiang-kung ch’i" 上周相公啟
"Shang Chou hsiang-kung shu" 上周相公書
shang-hsin 傷心
"Shang Li chung-ch’eng shu" 上李中丞書
"Shang Li shih-chün shu" 上李使君書
"Shang Li ssu-t’u lun yung-ping shu" 上李司徒論用兵書
"Shang ... lun chiang-tse shu" 上...論江賊書
"Shang ... lun pei-pien shih ch’i" 上...論北邊事啟
shang-sheng 上聲
Shang-shu 尚書
"Shang tsai-hsiang ch’iu Hang-chou ch’i" 上宰相求杭州啟
"Shang ... Ts’ui hsiang-kung shu" 上...崔相公書
"Shang ... Ts’ui shang-shu chuang" 上...崔尚書狀
"Shang Tu she-jen ch’i" 上社會人啟
Shen Ch’uan-shih 沈偉師
Shen Shu-shih 沈述師
Shen-wu chūn 神武軍

shīh 使

"Shīh chiang-chūn" 史將軍

Shīh-chīng 詩經

Shīh Ch'ung 石崇

Shīh Hsien-ch'ēng 史憲成

shīh-liu wei 十六衛

Shīh-shuo hsin yǔ 世說新語

shīh ta-li p'īng-shīh 試大理評事

shīh tāo-wu-wèi pīng-ts'ao tā'n-chūn 試左武衛兵曹參軍

Shou-ch'ang 壽昌

"Shou-lun" 守論

shōu-t'i 守提

shōu-wū tsu-tao 手舞足蹈

"Shu-huai chi chung-ch'āo wāng-hūn" 書懷寄中朝往還

Shun-taung 順宗

su-hūn yūan-wài-lăng 司勳員外郎

su-nung shāo-ch'āng 司農少卿

Su Shīh 蘇軾

Sui-an 遂安

"Sui-t'i liu" 隋堤柳

Sun Hsiu 孫秀

"Sung Shēn ch'ū-shīh fu Su-chou ....." 送沈處士赴蘇州...

Ta-li hsiēn 大荔縣

Ta-T'āng liu-tien 大唐六典
ta tu-tu 大都督
Ta-t'un 大同
t'ai-fu 太傅
t'ai-haih po-shih 太学博士
t'ai-wei 太尉
tan-ao 單挢
Tan-t'u 丹徒
Tan-yang 丹陽

"T'ang ... Chou-kung mu-chih ming" 唐...周公墓誌銘
"T'ang ... Hsing-ch'un mu-chih-ming" 唐...邢君墓誌銘
"T'ang ku Huai-nan ... Tu-chün mu-chih-ming" 唐故淮南...
杜君墓誌銘
"T'ang ... Li-ch'un mu-chih ming" 唐...李君墓誌銘
"T'ang ... Li-fu-ch'un mu-chih-ming" 唐...李府君墓誌銘
"T'ang ... Lu hsiao-ts'ai mu-chih ming" 唐...盧秀才墓誌銘
"T'ang ... Niu-kung mu-chih-ming" 唐...牛公墓誌銘
"T'ang ... Shen-kung hsing-chuang" 唐...沈公行狀

tao 道
Te-tsung 德宗
teng 頎
"Teng ... chi Chang Hu" 登...寄張祜
"Teng Yu-chou t'ai" 登幽州台
"T'i ch'ang-yuan" 題禪院
"T'i Ch'i-an ch'eng lio" 題齊安城樓
"T'i Feng-ting ssu" 題峰頂寺
"T'i Shang-shan Sau-hao miao" 題商山四皓廟
"T’i Wu-chiang t’ing" 題鳥江亭
"T’i Yang-chou ch’an-chih ssu" 題揚州納智寺

T’ien-chung shih yu-shih nei-kung-feng

Ts’ai-hsiang 幽相
Ts’ao Chih 曹植
Ts’e-sheng 讀聲
Tao-chuan 左傳

Ts’o pu-ch’üeh 左補闕

"Tsui-yen" 罪言
Ts’ui Hsuan 崔銑
Ts’ui Tan 崔鄯
Ts’ui Yen 崔駰

Ts’ung 從
Tu Ch’iu-niang 杜秋娘

"Tu Ch’iu-niang shih" 杜秋娘詩
Tu Mu 杜牧
Tu ssu-hsun 杜司勲
Tu Ts’ao 杜 Evel
Tu Ts’ung 杜悰
Tu Ts’ung-yü 杜從郁

"Tu... Tu Ch’iu-niang shih" 讀...杜秋娘詩
Tu Yi 杜顗
Tu Yu 杜佑

"T’u-chung yi-chüeh" 途中一絶

T’uan-lien hsün-kuan 團練巡官
T’uan-lien p’an-kuan 團練判官
T’ui-kan 推官

"Tung-chih lih chi ... Ah-yi shih" 冬至日祭阿宜詩
Tung Chung-chih 董重質
"Tung-men chih-shan" 東門之塚
"Tung-ping ch’ang ch’u" 東兵長句
T’ung-chou 同州
T’ung-lu 桐廬
T’ung-tien 通典
Tzu-ch’ing 洙青
"Tzu-chuan mu-chih-ming" 自撰墓誌銘
"Tzu chün chih ch’u yi" 自君之出矣
"Tzu Hsüan-chou fu-kuan ju-ching" 自宣州赴官入京

Tz’u-shih 刺史
Wan-nien hsien 萬年縣
Wang T’ing-ts’ou 王庭湧
Wang Yi-chien 王易簡
Wei Fu 魏扶
Wei-po 魏博
Wei Tan 韋丹
Wen-chang kuei-fan 文章軌範
Wen fu 文賦
Wen T’ing-yün 溫庭筠
Wen-tsung 文宗
Wu-ch’ang 武昌
Wu-chiang t’ing 馬江亭
“Wu Ch’u ko” 吳楚歌
Wu Ch’u-ts’ai 吳楚材
Wu Chun 吳均
Wu-hu 蕭湖
“Wu-tu” 五蠹
Wu Wu-ling 吳武陵
Wu Yuan-chi 吳元濟
Yang Ssu-hsiu 楊思紀
“Yen Chiao to chia-ten” 燕趙多佳人
Yen Yun 嚴愷
“Yi yu Chu-p’o ssu-yun” 憶遊朱坡田韻
Yin 陰
Ying-wu Chun 英武軍
“Yu Che-hsi Lu ta-fu shu” 興浙西盧大夫書
Yu-lin Chun 羽林軍
Yu-shih ta-fu 御史大夫
Yu-shih-t’ai 御史台
Yuan-chou 袁州
“Yuan shih-liu wei” 燕十六衛
“Yuan Tsai chuan” 元載傳
“Yueh fu” 月賦
Yün-chou 雲州
LIST OF ABBREVIATED BOOK TITLES

CCS  Ch‘ien-chia shih (annotated by Hsi-shu chai-chu)
CCTC Chi-ch‘i t‘ing chi (by Ch‘u’an Tsu-wang).
CHS  Ch’en-shu (by Yao Ssu-lien).
CHTS Ch‘u’an T‘ang-shih (ed. by P‘eng Ting-ch‘iu).
CS  Chin-shu (by Fang Ha’an-ling).
CTCTW Ch’in-ting ch‘u’an T‘ang-wen (ed. by Tung Kao).
CTS  Chiu T‘ang-shu (by Liu Ha).
FCCY Fan-ch‘uan chi-yi shou-shih pu-lu.
FCPC Fan-ch‘uan pieh-chi.
FCSCC Fan-ch‘uan shih chi-chu.
FCSPY Fan-ch‘uan shih pu-yi.
FCWC Fan-ch‘uan wen-chi.
HPCSH Hung Pei-chiang shih-hua (by Hung Liang-chi).
HSWC Han-shih wai-chuan (by Han Ying).
HTS  Hsin T‘ang-shu (by Ou-yang Hsiu & Sung Ch‘i).
JCHP Jung-chai had-pi (by Hung Mai).
JCSSP Jung-chai ssu-pi (by Hung Mai).
KYTK Kai-yü ts‘ung-kao (by Chao Yi).
LHMC Liang-hsi man-chih (by Fei Kun).
LTSH Li-tai shih-hua (by Wu Ching-hstǔ).
MHPPT Meng-hai pu pi-t’an (by Shen K’uo).
PSS  Pen-shih shih (by Meng Ch‘i).
SC  Shih-chi (by Ssu-ma Ch‘ien).
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<td>SFCS</td>
<td>Shih-fa chia-shu</td>
<td>(by Yang Tsai)</td>
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<td>SFYL</td>
<td>Shih-fa yüan-liu</td>
<td>(by Yang Tsai)</td>
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<td>SKC</td>
<td>San-kuo chih</td>
<td>(by Ch'en Shou)</td>
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<td>SMSG</td>
<td>Ssu-ming shih-hua</td>
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<td>SPPY</td>
<td>Ssu-pu pei-yao</td>
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<td>SPTK</td>
<td>Ssu-pu ts'ung k'an</td>
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<td>SS</td>
<td>Sui-shu</td>
<td>(by Wei Cheng)</td>
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<td>T'ang che-yen</td>
<td>(by Wang Ting-pao)</td>
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<td>THY</td>
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<td>Tu Mu shih-hsüan</td>
<td>[I] (annotated by Miao Yüeh)</td>
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<td>T'ang-shih chi-shih</td>
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<td>Ta-T'ang liu-tien</td>
<td>(by T'ang Hsüan-tsung)</td>
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<td>TTTT</td>
<td>T'ang ts'ai-tzu chuan</td>
<td>(by Hsin Wen-fang)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WC</td>
<td>Fan-ch'uan wai-chi</td>
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<tr>
<td>WH</td>
<td>Wen-hsüan</td>
<td>(ed. by Hsiao T'ung)</td>
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<td>WTNSYC</td>
<td>Wang Tzu-nien shih-yi chi</td>
<td>(by Wang Chia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>YHCHTC</td>
<td>Yuan-ho chün-hsien t'ü-chih</td>
<td>(by Li Chi-fu)</td>
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