Expressions of Self in Chinese Literature

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An Exploration of the Chinese Literary Self

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Self as expressed in literature is an elusive entity; the self in literature is necessarily at some remove from living reality. Mao Tse-tung was apparently laboring under the misconception that writers could capture social phenomena in objective terms when he advised them to create fictional characters "more typical, nearer the ideal" than ordinary mortals. While no product of the human imagination can be other than "human material" (in the words of Welleck and Warren), no literary self is completely like any one person who ever lived. After all, self in literature is a function of the mind reflected in a product of the mind. Literary art is thus a distorting mirror if naked reality is all that one hopes to perceive there. But the study of self in literature can reveal in extreme detail two variants on that primary entity, created selves and revealed selves. The first are those fabricated individuals who people narratives and other literary forms; they embody what their creators considered essential to particular selves. Their study readily reveals, through common features, what writers understood about the self as it should appear in writing. Revealed selves are those features of individual writers'
psyches unwittingly or deliberately manifested as self-expression in their work.

The essays that constitute this volume address the question of self from a wide variety of individual works of all major literary forms from the earliest to the present. None of the articles is an exhaustive survey of literary manifestations of Chinese personal identity. Generalizations of that sort are premature; they must of necessity be based on a much greater number of narrow investigations than could be assembled in a single book. These essays, then, are a contribution toward a better understanding of the self in Chinese literature, the first such collection on this topic. This introduction will explore the question from nonliterary perspectives as well, to provide a background against which to understand the other studies. Readers interested in more detailed historical, philosophical, or sociological elucidations of the Chinese self may wish to consult works cited below.

Some six decades ago modern China’s best-known writer, Lu Hsün (Chou Shu-juen, 1881–1936), began his serialized biography of an Everyman for his age by commenting:

And yet no sooner had I taken up my pen that I became conscious of the huge difficulties in writing this far-from-immortal work. The first was the question of what to call it. Confucius said, “If the name is not correct, the words will not ring true”; and this axiom should be most scrupulously observed. There are many types of biographies . . . but unfortunately none of these suited my purpose. . . . The second difficulty confronting me was that a biography of this type should start off something like this: “So-and-so, whose other name was so-and-so, was a native of such-and-such a place”; but I don’t really know what Ah Q’s surname was. . . . The third difficulty I encountered in writing this work was that I don’t know how Ah Q’s personal name should be written either. . . . My fourth difficulty was with Ah Q’s place of origin.2

Lu Hsün’s purpose here was caricature, a parody of age-old conventions of historical writing in China—a branch of literature in many respects—that identified the relationship of au-

The Chinese Literary Self

thor to subject, format of the work, its intended purpose, and the like through choice of conventional nomenclature in its title, such as lieh-chuan (official biography), tsu-chuan (autobiography), or sai-chuan (unofficial biography). But even within the various formats in which biography could properly be written in China, past or present, there was little latitude in the types of information expected, particularly the subject’s various names and native place, as Lu Hsün observes. What he does not specify is normally the very first element by which a person is identified, the name of the dynasty under which he lived. That Lu Hsün omitted it is no surprise. Clearly he was referring to his own time, when no dynasty reigned; the Manchus had fallen and China did not have a unified government. Nor could he particularize native place, formal name, or even surname and still universalize his protagonist: both writer and intended reader would have shared the traditional wisdom that the Chinese self, one’s personal identity, is inextricably bound up in just such facts of family and geographic origins.3

It was not only through a few details of birth that a Chinese historically was identified, however; biographical accounts in Western society demand this same information. The traditional Chinese accounts also provide data to clarify the individual’s social and cultural context: his male relatives for several generations in both directions, his status as indicated by amount of formally recognized education attained and official positions held, his legacy as identified by his writings and his disciples, his affiliations demonstrated by his literary ties and personal friendships, his personal strengths evinced by anecdotes concerning his youth, and his moral stature exemplified by his success in functioning as a son, as a subject, and as a friend. (I use the masculine pronoun deliberately. Women were infrequently the subject of biographical writing in old China; even then they are most commonly referred to only by surname and by the names of their spouses.) In the People’s Republic today, individuals are still identified by reference to social function—by type of occupation, workplace, and political experience—in addition to the bare-bones data of personal
appellation, home province, and time of birth. It is no exaggeration to say that to a considerably greater extent than in the modern West, the real Chinese individual has been, and still is, identified by reference to the greater human context of his time.

While to a Western perspective human society seems to consist of an infinite number of identifiably different individuals, all peoples agree that many attributes, values, and aspirations are shared by everyone. To the Chinese it has been the common features and not the uniqueness of an individual that draws attention. The period of time during which a person lived reveals something about him; regionally distinguished habits, propensities, and even tastes further clarify the image. In China there have always been a relatively small number of surnames. The family name and the economic, political, and social relationships it entails in a given locality and time can tell a great deal about an individual. Furthermore, historians wrote (and people thought) in terms of widely known, fixed reference points in order to identify individuals, specifically the traditional behavioral models. That is, a person may not have been merely a minister, a father, a son, but instead an upright father, an exemplary father, a filial son—or their converse. Histories were intended as manuals of precedents for Confucian administrators; this explains the tendency to group subjects in terms of their moral function in a particular social role, both roles and functions described in terms congruent with Confucian conceptions of social order intended to facilitate governing.4

Given the holistic cosmological views of traditional China, and their modern analogue in the universalism ascribed to Chinese Marxism, it is only logical to concentrate on roles in society and the proper functioning of the individual therein as a means of identifying the self. Since the cosmic balance, or at least social harmony, depends on the smooth interaction of individuals, social data about a person logically define him, both descriptively and prescriptively, for the reader. In the same way that the cosmos (human society, to the Marxists) is in a state of constant flux, an individual too is hardly a static entity: he changes, must change, as the changes inherent in aging thrust him into one social role after another, whether the roles are in sequence or simultaneous. Complexity in an individual naturally results from playing several roles simultaneously or from shifting from role to role. Deprived of social function, the individual becomes an unknown, perhaps even meaningless, entity. In this regard, China's present demonstrates a high degree of continuity with China's past.5

In a fascinating study Tu Wei-ming contrasts the Western notion of adulthood as completion of growth with the Chinese concept ch'eng-jen, literally "becoming a person." China has viewed the self as imbued with virtually unlimited potential for development; maturation is a lifelong process, the product of the continuous effort needed if genuine humanity is to be attained. To Confucians and Taoists alike, the Tao—whether conceived as the overarching moral structure of the universe or as Ultimate Reality itself—is not separate from one who pursues it. Consequently, there is no absolute but only relative attainment of all that humanity can be;6 self-perfection is the development of that which is both universal and inherent in all individuals. Definitions of the learning process differ among China's philosophical schools, but they agree on one central point: self-cultivation involves the development of selflessness, and therein lies the perfection of the self.

A superficial example is Confucius' statement, "A man of humanity [i.e., highest virtue], wishing to establish his own character, also establishes the character of others, and wishing to be prominent himself, also helps others to be prominent."7 However, this same principle informs the Confucian emphasis on conventionally regulated behavior, ritual, decorum, and the like.

To return to the observance of the rites through overcoming the self constitutes benevolence [e.g., jen, humanity's highest moral quality] . . . the practice of benevolence depends on oneself alone, and not on others.8

Ritual behavior serves several purposes for the Confucian: it regulates the expression of human feelings, it integrates the
individual into the social context, and it provides a continuous
link between the present and the past, from which all “proper
ritual was thought to have been transmitted. In each of these
functions, ritual served to make human behavior predictable
and uniform, more expressive of common social role than of
the temperament and values of any one individual. Ultimately
its observance creates in human society a structure parallel to
the hierarchical order of the cosmos. As we have seen, study-
ing the histories of old China involves constant rehearsal of
normative behavioral categories; Tu Wei-ming has aptly
remarked that for the Confucian, the study of history thereby
presents an “uninterrupted affirmation of the authentic pos-
sibility of humanness in the world.” Especially to later Con-
fucians, study and moral self-cultivation could lead to the ul-
timate degree of self-realization, self-transcendence to a realm
of sympathetic identification with the processes of nature it-
self.10

Early Taoist writings are even more straightforward in iden-
tifying the universality of what is fundamental to
the self. In the Tao-te ching egotism is repeatedly condemned
as “having desires.” The Taoist must exert conscious effort to
rid himself of these impediments to attune to the ultimate Tao,
that which is tsu-jen, “of itself so.” Because the Tao underlies
both nature and man, human society too can be “natural”; the
Tao-te ching offers a utopian vision of simple human life in self-
contained agricultural communities having neither individual
nor collective goals beyond calm subsistence.11 The Taoist classic
Chuang Tzu rejects political activity, confounds logic and nor-
mal mental processes, and makes heroes of those who become
self-contained in the Tao of their own minds. And yet the pri-
mary of basic human relationships is never questioned.

In a brief narrative that has relevance on several levels to
this discussion of self, Chuang Tzu’s wife dies, and Chuang bangs
on a pot and sings. A friend, the logician Hui Shih, questions his
apparent lack of feeling for this person with whom he had shared
his life and had raised children. The character Chuang Tzu
replies: “When she first died, do you think that I didn’t grieve like anyone else?”12 Even in a Taoist

parable, the protagonist’s first response is to identify himself
with conventional behavior relevant to an transmitted social role.
However, his rationale only begins here. He continues with
an antidote for bereavement that clarifies the Taoist notion
of individual identity: he traces his wife’s existence backward
through time.

In the midst of the jumble of wonder and mystery a change took
place and she had a spirit. Another change and she had a body.
Another change and she was born. Now there’s been another
change and she’s dead. It’s just like the progression of the four
seasons, spring, summer, fall, winter.13

To the Taoist perspective, an individual is a transient creature
whose nature it is to change, to develop from the Ultimate
Source and to return thereto at death. Chuang Tzu’s irrever-
ent singing reflects his acceptance of the inevitable, of what
transcends man and is “of itself so.”

Buddhism brought to China a yet more highly re-
fined conception of the conditional existence of the individual.
According to the wisdom scriptures (the Prajna-paramita
tras) of the Mahayana tradition, the self, like all other condi-
tional entities, is comprised of a transitory aggregate of ele-
ments. These elements, the five skandhas (form and matter,
sensations, perceptions, emotional states, and consciousness),
are in a constant state of flux; hence the individual is not to be
considered a permanent entity in any regard. A person should
face this reality by extinguishing all sense of self to become one
with the Unconditioned, the ultimate reality that is Void of all
particular characteristics. This sublime selflessness puts one on
the path to becoming a bodhisattva, the embodiment of wis-
don whose function is to bring all other living creatures to this
realization. However, to the enlightened person or even to one
who grasps this truth in purely rational terms, the uncompro-
mising ontological nondualism in the more intellectual sects of
Mahayana Buddhism offers a poignant paradox. That is, the
Unconditioned is ultimately no different from conditioned ex-
istence; enlightenment is indistinguishable from immersion in
the delusions of the real world. The self is no different from
what the individual perceives it to be from moment to moment. Buddhist-influenced writers could celebrate their momentary hopes, fears, and insights in the bittersweet knowledge that such is the only existence that self can possibly have. Other, less philosophical Mahayana sects saw some reality in material existence which might even lead to salvation, rebirth in the Western Paradise. The negation of Confucian social ties as a basis for self-conception here echoed the more intellectual Buddhist conception of self as conditional and transient.  

Time has been of central concern in all three of these philosophical approaches to the self. James J. Y. Liu has identified several typical attitudes toward time in Chinese verse. Poets “confront” time as they face events streaming toward them from the past; they “concur” with time when they face the same direction as the flow of events, into the future. Liu also comments, perceptively if parenthetically, “I assume that in the case of circular time one would be at the circumference; if one were at the center, one would no longer be in time.”

To the extent that self is based on the past in the Confucian view, Confucian poets must “confront” time to establish a self. Taoists who would follow Chuang Tzu’s example would focus on the forward flow of time; they would “concur” with it. Both indigenous schools of thought posit cyclical time; only philosophical Buddhism does not. Instead, the emancipated self is beyond, or “no longer in” time.

Here Liu has touched upon another facet of the self: its necessary separability from temporal process, often visualized as a stream of water. (Not surprisingly, a conventional metonymy for the poet during the T’ang period was kuo-ch’ou, or “solitary boat,” a symbol of “man’s aloneness in an enlarging world.”) The historiographical demand for designation of dynasty during which a person lived, the dating of poems, even the arrangement of items in an anthology by chronological order presupposes a cosmic, continuing process of change to which the separate (whether real or perceived) self must respond for validation. One might face the past or face the future, in Liu’s terms, but the Chinese self was allowed no freedom to ignore time while asserting its individuality. On the other hand, this view could—and did, in Six Dynasties poets—produce both a morbid fear of death and spiritual and alchemical attempts to transcend or to slow time’s movement. On the other, even a poet having the individual personality and Taoist leanings of T’ao Ch’ien (365–427) expressed his deeply felt concern for the destructive effects of time in his famous “Hsing, ying, shen” (Substance, Shadow, and Spirit):

Earth and heaven endure forever,
Streams and mountains never change.
Plants observe a constant rhythm
Withered by frost, by dew restored.
But man, most sentient being of all,
In this is not their equal.
He is present here in the world today,
Then leaves abruptly, to return no more.

The body goes; that fame should also end
Is a thought that makes me burn inside.

Give yourself to the waves of the Great Change
Neither happy nor yet afraid
And when it is time to go, then simply go
Without any unnecessary fuss.

The loss of self the poet here laments is clearly an individual self, defined in part as the object of time’s destructive effects. T’ao Ch’ien’s reaction to mortality, like that of Chuang Tzu immediately after his wife died, sees the self as an animate physical being, pathetically helpless to forestall time’s depredations. A similar view must have inspired certain Taoists of the Six Dynasties period to fail time with only successful means at their disposal: they committed suicide to achieve immortality, freedom from time’s control.

One remedy proposed by a T’ao Ch’ien persona in the poem cited above is to achieve a measure of immortality through one’s writings. This was a pressing concern for writers in all ages of China’s history; writers’ hopes were generally vindicated by the tremendous bulk of literature preserved in China. Yet some of China’s best-known poems refer to no
explicit self; there is no “I,” nor even an individualized persona, to be found. Wang Wei (701–761) has often been cited as an extreme example of this sort of literary selflessness, a product of his Buddhist inclinations.

Empty hills, no one in sight,  
only the sound of someone talking,  
late sunlight enters the deep wood,  
shining over the green moss again.20

In this brief poem, the poet’s mind is like a mirror—to use the Buddhist image—reflecting reality without comment or other intellectual interference. Wang Wei’s literary self stands at the center of time, unchanging with it and unchanged by it. The poet here becomes, in Yip Wai-lim’s apt phrase, “Nature [Phenomenon] as it is: no trace of conceptualization.”21 The influence of Buddhism on Wang Wei’s conception of self is clear. But its manifestation is two-sided. First, the poet becomes one with the scene, denying separate existence. But on the other hand, the conception of the five skandhas of conditional existence seems to be invoked here. That is, these fleeting perceptions constitute the totality of the poet’s existence, his self at one moment. (After all, the poem only reflects physical reality; regardless of the poet’s mental state at the time of composition, the poem, a literary artifact, exists separate from other elements of external—and internal—reality.) Other poems in this sequence by himself and his friend Pei Ti refer to time and place explicitly.22 By creating a seemingly eternal moment, the poem overcomes time. Wang Wei’s immortality is doubly ensured thereby: no self to lose to time, and a poem celebrating this no-self that has been preserved for more than a millennium.

Self-denial plays a significant role in the ideology of the modern age as reflected in contemporary Chinese literature. However, the purpose is quite different: instead of losing the self in the Eternal, the writer denies the individual self for the specific—and transitory—needs of the mass. China’s Marxist leaders in recent decades have often repeated the slogan, “The masses are the makers of history.” Yet instead of

the collective resilience this approach would imply, recent creative writing and events reveal instead a faith in the ability of man to change with events. Mao Tse-tung interpreted the social function of literature narrowly, seeing it as a necessary means of meeting political needs. As he so clearly revealed in the phrase “more typical, nearer the ideal,” Mao saw literature as didactic by definition. Writing has the power to mold the values of those who read it; writers must therefore imbue their work with only the correct values. The malleability attributed to the individual is to be found at all social levels: China’s working masses should become literate in order that they may be reached collectively by new values, while intellectuals should live and work together with peasants and laborers in order to develop the values of that class and be able to write specifically to meet their needs. These ideas, the motive force behind social movements of totally unprecedented scope (including the “Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution” that began in 1966 and lasted, in important respects, until the death of Mao a decade later), hinge on the premises that a person consists essentially of a set of values and that personal values, hence one’s identity, can change through time. That one’s identity is ostensibly related to socioeconomic class does not negate this conception.23 A Marxist writer must take part in the process of revolutionary social change Bodhisattva-fashion by bringing all others to a higher stage of political consciousness, and hence, in certain regards, to a higher level of being. At this higher level values are less egotistical and more collectivist in orientation. The conscientious writer, then, has two choices: either to present himself as an exemplary character in his writing (one that is “close to the ideal”) or to erase any trace of individuality from his writings, replacing his particular consciousness with the desired ideology of the community, especially during periods of progressive change.24 The goal of self-development in Chinese Marxism is self-transcendence no less than it was in Confucianism. This remarkable parallel reveals a fundamental continuity in the Chinese notion of the self as a fluid entity of not merely material proportions.
China's social history confirms the continuity of this conception of the self through time. The ancestral cults of the Shang kings 3,500 years ago and the religious practices of Taiwan's modern-day peasants share with billions of Chinese throughout the millennia one essential premise. That is, the unseen world is at most an extension of the visible; the two realms of existence are fundamentally interconnected. The deities of Chinese religions have never originated from some transcendent or otherworldly source; for the most part they are simply deceased human beings. Thus Chinese deities past and present have been conceived as needing concern and sustenance from their descendants or followers. In turn, their divine powers can be invoked to meet the needs of the living—which the gods know so well from having experienced mortal existence themselves. Myths are therefore rare in China by Western standards; instead, biographies of gods exist to parallel—or to extend—those of normal human beings.  

While explanations vary with time and social stratum, traditional Chinese religion consistently presents a view of the self as constituted of matter and energy. The former is subject to the depredations of time; the latter is further separable into positive or benevolent elements and others that are negative or malevolent. In its purest form, the first of these spiritual essences is the stuff of divinity; concentrated malevolence forms the ghosts or demons that occasion popular fears and folk rituals. To a degree, then, these beliefs and the practices they require parallel the Buddhist idea that the self lacks integrity; the constituent elements differ, to be sure, but religion as practiced for thousands of years in China presupposes the conception of a self that is voluntarily (in the case of spirit mediums) or involuntarily divisible, may have partial continued existence after death, and is certainly spiritual rather than material at base. This belief accords well with the Chuangtzu account of the plight of the dead woman—she returned to the realm of spiritual energy whence she came—and with the flight of the disembodied mind through meditative trance in certain Taoist schools. It also serves to explain certain peculiarly Chinese treatments of the individual in literature.

First, the divisible nature of the self allows mind and body to separate in narratives of late imperial China. The theater utilizes this idea to allow young female characters apparently to accompany their lovers while their own real bodies lie cold in death or in coma. Second, it allows for characters to function on two planes of existence simultaneously, most prominently in the greatest of all Chinese novels, Hung-lou meng (A Dream of Red Mansions, more commonly referred to as Dream of the Red Chamber), also known as Shih-t'ou chi (The Story of the Stone). The protagonists Pao-yü and Tai-yü are both material and spiritual beings, fated in their attraction for each other and yet free to work out the details of their lives. One is never really certain which level of existence is meant to be more valid in the work; clearly they cannot be separated. Finally, the spiritual nature of the self permits the exploration of dreams in Chinese literature to have an extended range of significance. On the one hand, dream exploits constitute transparent allegories for the reader; they are no less real for the character than are his waking adventures. On the other, dreams in fiction allow the enactment of fantasies that would be impossible in daylight reality—and yet they have as much physical effect on characters as do everyday events.  

The perspective of Chinese religion and some of its literary manifestations reveal a conception of the self varying only in degree from those visions presented in its major philosophical schools. Here again the self is a transient entity, conditional rather than absolute in its existence (although the nature of this conditional existence is not fully in Chinese religion), fluid in its composition, and changeable—in addition to being primarily spiritual in nature. Clearly, the Chinese self is a self-conscious conception, a product of mind with all the characteristics that definition implies.

Thus far I have discussed a few elements of literary identity in the perennial Chinese scheme primarily as presented from nonliterary perspectives. Literature itself differs
Robert E. Hegel

The Chinese Literary Self

from history, philosophy, and religion because no matter how a work may generalize on the human self—as do these other disciplines—it also reveals the self as expressed by an individual self, whether consciously or inadvertently. The studies that follow examine a variety of Chinese literary works, poetry, fiction, and drama, from a 2,400-year span of time. These writings express—and elicit—differing views of self and differing degrees of individual particularity balanced by social custom and literary convention. Implicit in most of the works here discussed is a pragmatic theory of literature, an approach that stresses the social effect of writing (which effect, as Edward Gunn discovers, may actually be minimal). To this end, many of these works present behavioral models explicitly, as type characters in narrative, or implicitly, through conventional modes of expression in verse.

The aspect of self that appears most frequently in these essays is the recognition of the necessary role of duty and its fulfillment in building an individual identity. As society presents many role models to maturing individuals, so too do duties multiply and, in the more interesting Chinese narratives, bring conflicting obligations. Duty to the state is perhaps most obvious, but duty to one’s class, one’s locality, one’s family, and one’s beloved all appear as strong motivation for Chinese heroes and heroines. Likewise, the duty to oneself is separable from the other causes—largely a function of self-preservation, usually in a quite literal sense—makes its demands and must be answered.

Patrick Hanan’s topic is a body of stories compiled during one of China’s most chaotic periods, the Manchu conquest of the 1640s. These stories were written in a version of the vernacular even though designed for the authors’ own class of educated and privileged males; they address directly the duties incumbent upon this class. To such readers, the individual is fully capable of moral choice; the self is to be not only evaluated but defined on the basis of these choices. Moral order being fundamentally indistinguishable from political and social order in the Confucian world view, patriotism presents the challenge to devote oneself heroically and selflessly to the needs of society. Thus the writers Hanan investigates dismiss the possibility of Taoist eremitism, so appealing in other eras, to endorse self-fulfillment through Confucian puritanism and public service. To them, writing is a weak second choice as a means of establishing oneself.

Moral conservatism in the Confucian vein and the establishment of self were interlocked issues among mid-seventeenth-century novelists as well. Chin Sheng-t’an (1610–1661), for example, was a nonconformist who did not sit for the higher-level civil service examinations, preferring instead to read voraciously in a wide variety of areas. He was convinced that he was intellectually superior to his contemporaries and arrogantly flaunted his knowledge at every opportunity. Yet he is best known for his work in editing and writing critical commentary for the novel Shui-hu chuan (Water Margin), a military romance that reached the final stage of its textual evolution in his hands. To Chin, the successes of its bandit-turned-rebel heroes might promote civil disorder and warfare. As a consequence he truncated the novel at the rebels’ triumphant banquet celebrating a final victory over imperial forces—to substitute an ending in which all of them are executed through direct divine intervention. To clarify further his own views on political loyalty, Chin also modified the text to cast doubt on the intentions of the leader of the gang; thus Sung Chiang ostensibly maintains his loyalty to the emperor while rebelling only against his evil ministers. Clearly Chin Sheng-t’an used this novel to establish himself through his moral stance. This was not enough, however; Chin later was a leader of a widespread demonstration in Soochow against a rapacious tax collector. He himself was executed for seeking a higher degree of self-fulfillment: he physically demonstrated his moral standards and his courage to criticize others for not meeting those same traditional behavioral norms. Chin, like Hanan’s authors, perceived self-worth as hinging on fulfillment of his responsibility to the body politic.

Joseph Lau discusses several versions of selfhood, all of which are related to self-justification or even self-esteem by virtue of adherence to duty. Orphan Chao may collapse
when finally told the truth about the gruesome fate of his clan and the role of his "adopted father" in their demise, but his chagrin is only momentary. At once he resolves to destroy the man who raised him in order to avenge the deaths of his relatives by birth. His collapse serves in the play to mark his shift of allegiances and of social roles, from obedient adopted son to his clan's avenger. The widow in "Shih-wu-kuan hsi-ya ch'eng ch'iao-huo" (The Jest That Leads to Disaster) who has been, unwittingly, the faithful wife of her first husband's murderer, also shifts her loyalties—even without obvious physical trauma. The protagonist of the first tale acts for the most straightforward reasons, Lau argues; the Orphan can comprehend no moral complexity in his situation. However, the widow is a different case. She may well be moved to betray her "husband"-captor in part by a guilty conscience; after all, she had insisted on the execution of two innocent people wrongly accused of murdering her first husband.

Lau's example of the young woman who sacrifices all marital happiness for the sake of reputation is extreme but still within the same category of character as these two. She and others in traditional literature, such as Chu Kuei-erh in the novel *Sui Yang-li yen-shih* (The Merry Adventures of Emperor Yang, anon., 1631), embody the paradoxical situation that total self-denial can in fact be an extremely effective means of self-assertion. These characters function quite simply as martyrs for their chosen cause, self-appointed victims on the secular pyre of Confucian morality, confident that their bold actions will be recorded and told to generation after generation of less intrepid souls. Like Christian martyrs in medieval Europe, they expose themselves everlasting fame by apotheosis to the sublime level of behavioral model for all posterity. Many stories and plays resort to divine intervention to rescue such characters, as in the story discussed by Joseph Lau. Other more realistic narratives simply leave them their fame, a cold reward but one sought by various real-life heroes of Chinese tradition.34

However, as Lau observes, there is an unmistakable element of egotism involved in such choices. Chinese tradi-

dition with its "golden mean" tends to see all acts as falling on continua between polar opposites of behavior, for example, that of self-denial. Extremes are to be avoided, according to popular Confucian teachings. Such perverse rejection of this principle not only earns reputation; it is a selfish blow against social convention. A figure who puts this aspect of self in clear perspective is the hilariously ornery protagonist of the early vernacular story "Kuai-tsui Li Ts'ui-lien chi" (Loquacious Li Ts'ui-lien, or "The Shrew" in H. C. Chang's wonderful translation). Ts'ui-lien balks at every suggestion made by her parents: their efforts to marry her off meet with a torrent of abuse from the young lady, whose interests apparently are confined to joining a Buddhist convent. Philosophically her insistence might be rationalized as motivated by her realization of the illogical nature of this world and the need to retreat to the other. But in the context of the story, she refuses to cooperate with others because that is what they want her to do. She simply will do what she wants to do; the prospect of a reputation for chastity pales before her obstinacy.35

The selfish side of an apparently selfless self can be seen even in the romantic exemplars discussed by Richard C. Hessney. He observes their struggles to satisfy both love and morality, but for most this dilemma causes none of the emotional turmoil visited upon such Western heroines as Clarissa Harlowe. They are secure in their resolve: the "beauty" in Ho-ch'iu chuan (The Fortunate Union) handily tricks her vile uncle with never a palpitation for herself; the "genius" T'ieh Chung-yü may raise his voice in self-righteous anger but he does not spend nights sleepless with longing. Sentimental platitudes serve to calm the blaze that we expect to rage in his chest. But in fact his passion does not blaze. In this T'ieh differs profoundly from the selfless Chang Sheng in "Ying-ying chuan" (The Story of Ying-ying) as revealed by Joseph Lau. One might argue that the "comic rise" from disharmony to harmony in these "genius-beauty romances" takes place on the moral foundation of these youths. Appropriately they are gratified by this process, for example when Ping-hsin is vindicated by proof of her virginity in The Fortunate Union and when her in-
individualistic disregard for the rules binding normal society brings the proper results. Hessney is surely justified in describing their ability to discern talent in others as a sign of their self-assurance. (Appropriately Ping-hsin, like her predecessor Ying-ying, urges her lover-to-be to cultivate his moral self, i.e., self-control, even though T'ieh remains so much cooler than Chang.)

Joseph Lau has demonstrated the quickness and apparent ease with which Orphan Chao shifts roles; to Lau the widow of “The Jest That Leads to Disaster” changes position less smoothly, and she reveals a certain self-interest in the process. Often Western readers find characters of the latter propensity in Chinese literature more engaging. They appear to us as more complex in their motivations, hence more realistic. These complexities of motivation, of morality, and of interest, are accomplished in several major ways. Hessney comments that the interplay of types in old vernacular fiction parallels a similar phenomenon in Chinese theater. The shift from role to role can occasion a noteworthy shift in identity. See, for example, the curious humanity Catherine Swatek discovers attributed to Yang Su in the play Hung-fu chi (Red Whisk). At first he is the self-satisfied minister, aloof from the concerns of his underlings; then he becomes the indulgent and paternalistic patron who reunites a serving maid with her husband. The play demonstrates its characters’ capacity for self-transformation, often through inner crisis. Curly Beard in “Ch’iu-jan-k’o chuan” (The Man with the Curly Beard) must shift from being a contender for the throne to patron of those who would help his erstwhile rival Li Shih-min. In the T’ang period ch’uan-ch’i tale this transformation occurs without stress; in the play written centuries later, and with an eye toward revealing inner feelings, the change occasions great tension for him. The self may be presented as dynamic, but substantial role change takes its toll. Aspects of self defined by social function can be crucial to the ego in a Chinese narrative.

Marsha Wagner focuses specifically on social relations as they define the self. Even minor characters, maids and servants, in the immortal Dream of the Red Chamber have inner feelings and complex motivations, in marked contrast to the conventional use of stereotypes for minor roles. Each is individualized, often revealed in the need for self-justification by gaining or recovering face. Li Ma-ma, the wet nurse, follows a pattern similar to that of the maid Ssu-ch’i; the latter hallucinates a reason for her suicide, thus absolving herself of responsibility for moral stain. But it is change in social position that generates intense anxiety in Dream. Self-esteem is never at a more precarious ebb than when a servant is demoted, for example. Mere fear of change may be a factor as well in the young mistresses’ apprehension about marriage away from the Chia household. Indeed, Wagner explains, a character bereft of a supportive social context suffers; self here is in part a psychic state that needs the security of a stable hierarchical structure to survive intact. And as a social entity, each individual self is involved in the stability of all. When social order declines in the Chia household, when individuals step out of their proper roles—whether to carry on illicit amours, to accomplish private business dealings, or to snatch a tidbit fit for a master—the entire edifice is threatened through inevitable chains of causation.

Given the general Chinese preoccupation with social nexus as a means of establishing the self, it is not surprising that this Dream element has a substantial history in Chinese literature. Vernacular narratives in particular put their protagonists on the road, away from ties of family and village, when trouble strikes. This event often occasions a crisis in identity. In the late Ming short story “Wu Pao-an ch’i-chia tu-yu” (Wu Pao-an Ransoms His Friend), the faithful Wu devotes all his energies to saving the money needed to ransom a man he has never met who is a captive of border tribal peoples. His reason is that he vowed to aid him in a military campaign; having so vowed, his self-concept as well as his reputation seem to hinge on fulfilling his commitment. For years he lives apart from his family, depriving himself of all comforts in his self-appointed quest; when finally he dies in obscurity, his son re-
ceives high honors in his stead and a shrine is established in his honor.\textsuperscript{38} His self-worth is established in relation to another person, but it does not hinge on any familiar social setting.

Of the earliest preserved vernacular stories, two bring ego-destructive calamity on heroes who are out of their context. In “Yang Wen Lan-lu-hu chuan” (Yang Wen and the White Tiger Star)\textsuperscript{39} Yang, scion of a line of generals, finds himself shamed by being caught off guard, having his wife abducted, and being deprived of his weapons while away from home. In the more famous story version of the White Snake legend, the hapless young man falls under the spell of the serpent while enjoying the scenery on the Ch’ing-ming festival. Appropriately, he is an orphan; he has only weak relationships with a brother-in-law and his employer. Consequently, he has no resources with which to meet the unprecedented challenge of the lady’s advances. The legal trouble into which he falls requires him to move away from even these ties. Indeed, the monk who saves him constitutes the hero’s only other personal tie.\textsuperscript{39}

Two seventeenth-century novels present this problem in its ultimate form. Sui shih i-wen (Forgotten Tales of the Sui, 1633) leaves its hero, a would-be knight errant, far away from home, friendless, penniless, and with nothing to do. Deprived of all social supports, Ch’in Shu-pao gives up the weapons handed down from his grandfather, symbolizing his family, and even takes on an assumed name. His concept of self has flown away with his social (and financial) resources, leaving only confusion, despair, and emotional depression.\textsuperscript{40} In Hsi-yyu san (Tower of Myriad Mirrors, 1641), on the other hand, the magical Monkey is still able, sporadically, to see and hear his erstwhile companions. But he is alone, unable to touch them. They have become mere figments of his imagination. He too hides his identity in an effort to recover his original relationships, although when events lose all predictability, Monkey loses his self-control, to become a mindless embodiment of frustration and rage.\textsuperscript{41} Indeed, in fiction loss of a familiar social matrix, even temporarily, puts the self in a precarious position.

The Buddhist notion of self also appears in Dream of the Red Chamber: the fundamentally empty product of mind from which each person must be liberated. Several characters do achieve release from their worldly attachments in the novel; to most, loss of ego is a traumatic transition, if it is genuine. However, once this ultimate freedom is achieved, identity becomes a function of self-denial. The Buddhist arhat as a literary device then differs only superficially from the Confucian moral paragon. Again paradoxically, no-self becomes license for self-indulgence for the eccentric Buddhist (and Taoist) characters that appear in much of China’s fiction and drama. The snobbish Buddhist “nun” (actually still a laywoman) Mao-yü in Dream is a case in point. Compare also the sublime self-confidence of the Confucian “genius” T’ieh Chung-yü with more serious portraits, Ni Heng and various Taoist hermits. Ni is an ostensibly Confucian eccentric in the classic historical romance, San-k’o ch’i ko yen-i (Romance of the Three Kingdoms, c. 1400, attributed to Lo Kuan-chung). Unwilling to compromise his integrity, he betrays the would-be usurper Ts’ao Ts’ao for his worldly aims while revealing no fear for himself. Later he removes his clothing in Ts’ao Ts’ao’s court, declaring, “To hoodwink and deceive the emperor, that’s insouciance! I expose the body my parents gave me—that’s showing my purity.”\textsuperscript{42}

The idea of nakedness as symbolizing purity also appears in the following well-known anecdote about the drunken Taoist poet Liu Ling (fl. 250):

On many occasions Liu Ling, under the influence of wine, would be completely bare and uninhibited, sometimes taking off his clothes and sitting naked in his room. Once when some persons saw him and chided him for it, Ling retorted, “I take heaven and earth for my pillars and roof, and the rooms of my house for my pants and coat. What are you gentlemen doing in my pants?”\textsuperscript{43}

Perhaps the legendary Buddhist poet Han-shan (fl. 800) is a clearer example. Unconventional in every way, the unkempt layman would work occasionally in a temple kitchen only to flee with peals of laughter when approached by any-
one in a position of authority. He even refused such mundane items as food and shelter. When a suit of clothing was finally brought to him as he wandered in the mountains, he cursed the bearer for being a thief and then disappeared into a cave. While this account may not be an accurate account of a particular hermit, it does reveal the truth of this image: the most selfless character has a good deal of ego invested in proving how different he is from the common herd. In fact, part of the initial irony in the heroic Monkey Sun Wu-k'ung in the allegorical novel Hsi-yu chi (Journey to the West, ca. 1580, attributed to Wu Ch'eng-en) lies in his repeated attempts to establish longevity, a kingdom, and proper status for himself after he has achieved Buddhist emancipation.

Jonathan Chaves discerns just this sort of "individualism" ultimately based in philosophical mysticism in the Kung-an school of poetry criticism. A poet, he rightly observes, may be utterly free to express self in a Chinese context that sees total identity between the essential self and the Ultimate Reality of the universe. From this perspective, no "self" differs in the slightest from any other, or even from nature in its totality. In marked contrast to the romantic notion of the individual self in Western literature, which stressed the sentimentality and authenticity of personal feelings, Neo-Confucian poets often saw ego as properly transparent and its perceptions of nature uncolored by any shred of individuality. Chaves demonstrates that the Kung-an school claimed for the poet the freedom to roam (the Taoist metaphor) between social and literary roles. While philosophical selflessness does dominate the poetry of these and earlier poets, such as Wang Wei, the literary counterpart is a self defined, in a self-congratulatory way, by its selflessness. Type characters and the high individuality of poetic personas are thereby congruent manifestations of complementary visions of the self.

Specifically Buddhist or Taoist poets were not the only writers of old China to abandon ego and assume the function of mirror for the universe. As Leo O. Lee remarks, the great travel diarists recorded much more of landscape than of self. His characterization of the late Ch'ing novel Lao Ts'an yu-chi (The Travels of Lao Ts'an, by Liu E) as a "spiritual" journey to self-discovery and self-revelation identifies one phase of the accommodation of Chinese literature to Western influences. The romantic traveler created by Yu Ta-fu (1896-1945) contrasts deliberately and sharply with Lao Ts'an; Yu's self seeks to assert the individual personality against chaotic external reality. Liu E had sought to bolster the Confucian world view against Western intellectual incursions; by 1920 Confucianism clearly had been defeated. Yu's May Fourth generation was left with an unprecedented degree of iconoclasm, perhaps in self-defense. It was only appropriate that at the age of forty the patriotic Yu Ta-fu turned to writing traditional travel diaries as a source of cultural security. On the other hand, one of Liu E's contemporaries, Tseng P'u (1872-1935) progressed less dramatically, but more consistently, from defender of traditional values to a writer in the mode of French Romanticism.

The solitary self was a phenomenon of Western-oriented May Fourth writers, Lee observes. The rise of the Communist Party and the Japanese invasion were two factors in the burgeoning nationalism that tempered their iconoclasm significantly. Later travelers, much like their Confucian forebears, again see themselves as part of a social context, an ordered context with hope for stability in which both individual and group are secure. The formal declaration of a "new" China in 1949 typified what was to become the dominant tendency in literary self-expression, a self fulfilled through duty. Edward Gunn developed a questionnaire designed to test the effectiveness of literature in modifying the self-concept of its readers. His literary selections present normative characters in situations that embody dominant values of socialist China. In this there are fundamental continuities with the past. But the ability to discern which values are being presented seems to be a function of experience: readers could identify the relevant values more easily if they had been in the same situation as the protagonist. This observation may suggest a number of conclusions about didacticism in contemporary revolutionary literature; it may suggest too a reason for typical and stereotyped characters in traditional narratives. Like Lu Hsün's Ah
Q. who has been deprived of identifying data, by appealing to a few basic values shared by all traditional character types are more readily comprehensible to their readers. Limited as it often has been to worker, peasant, and soldier heroes, contemporary Chinese fiction has had to embody constant shifts of political line; it may well have lost the empathy and self-projection of many of its readers in the process. The continuity of roles and values that identify personal security with the harmonious organization and functioning of the group may have made traditional narratives, particularly drama and other mass forms, popular through time—their audience could readily identify with the messages inherent in these works.

The nationalism that grew in China over the last century has been in part a reaction to alternative ideologies from abroad. The iconoclasm of the May Fourth era was accompanied, in the field of literary scholarship, by an investigation of China's vernacular fiction and drama that was totally unprecedented in scope. Ostensibly this research was to serve the needs of China's modern writers, as a clear basis upon which to build a new literature comparable to that of advanced Western cultures. The Chineseness of their material served to bolster the collective ego of this generation of intellectuals against the apparent onslaught of Western threats to identity. Significantly, the Japanese-trained Lu Hsun turned to writing Western-style short stories only after a period of intense study of Buddhist texts and old Chinese fiction; Yu Ta-fu, Leo Lee observes, ultimately retreated to traditional literary forms. Some of the best known reaffirmations of Chinese culture among writers occurred during the war years, when Japan occupied most of China's major cities. Lu Hsun's brother Chou Tso-jen (1885–1968) found a new literary self through study of late Ming writers and thinkers; Eileen Chang (Chang Ai-ling, b. 1921) began her writing career after careful study of *Dream of the Red Chamber*. Selfhood for these figures was based firmly on their identity as Chinese despite antitraditionalist elements in their public statements.

A concern for China as a whole is thus an obvious characteristic of the Chinese writer's self-definition in twentieth-century writing. The narrowly defined social responsibil-

ity dictated by Marxist theoreticians had its roots in the patriotism of the May Fourth era, which in turn reflected the Confucian sense of social responsibility. However, even non- and strongly anti-Communist writers who live or publish in Taiwan reveal similar sentiments. Taiwan's writers regularly address the needs of society through the needs of the self; in fact, the self is as much a social entity in the best of Taiwan fiction as it was in the best Confucian fiction of the past. A function of place and of time as well, the most rootless of Tai-

wan's fictional selves characteristically seek to establish an identity through traditional social relationships and through affirmation of elements of Chinese culture. This is despite a nominal romance with Western literature and values that began at the end of the nineteenth century and, unlike on the mainland, has only grown in intensity in Taiwan over recent decades.

Thus far I have addressed only those articles that deal with created visions of self, fictional or fictionalized characters. In poetry, however, the self is projected, or reflected, more directly in the persona of the poet. Frances LaFleur Mochida traces the development of the poet's presentation of self in nature poetry, from the selfless communality of religious ritual through the subjective landscape of Li Ho in the ninth century. Ch'ü Yüan, often called China's first poet, was certainly innovative in presenting a unique and well-devel-

oped persona in his poem; his journey is a deliberately personal pilgrimage having exoneration and glorification of self (albeit in terms of his dedication to his lord) as its dual goal. In this, his "Li sao" (Encountering Sorrow) contrasts sharply with the religious quest for a kind of self-transcendence in the poetry that inspired him. The Ts'ao's of the third century, father and son, Mochida observes, put their personal stamp on their verse within the confines of received tradition. The great poets of the middle T'ang created personal worlds in verse by con-

founding tradition. The dimensions of their worlds aside, this trend clearly demonstrates the conventional use of poetry for self-expression, including the expression of unique experience, insights, and sentiments.

But poetry, like prose narratives, can readily pre-
sent a fictional self. Anne Birrell explores the amazing complexity of the conventionalized view of woman in the courtly poetry of the southern courts of the Six Dynasties period. These women nominally differ in status, ranging from entertainers to officials' wives and palace ladies, but all are alike in romantic sensibilities and passionate longing for an absent lover. In the poems of this genre woman is a victim with whom, presumably, the reader is to sympathize. But can a reader be moved by well-worn sentiments made fashionable?

The self-indulgence in sentiment gave vigor to the trend, Birrell argues; most likely this character type may serve as a model for understanding the parameters of self as viewed in Chinese literature. That is, one need not hypothesize that this image of woman was necessarily an accurate description of woman's position in society, nor even that it fulfills men's wish that woman should be helpless, languid, and passionate. It may constitute no more than a convenient means, conventionalized in its dimensions, of representing an emotion commonly felt by the male poets. Thus the fashion may have used rather incongruous personas (of the opposite sex, etc.), but the expression of frustration through it may be a perfect parallel for the earlier fashion of expressing a morbid fear of death in verse, in the "coffin-puller's songs," for example. 48

If verse was a vehicle for self-expression in Chinese literature, then narrative provided ample opportunity for identification on the part of the reader with various characters. Gunn shows how experience shaped moral comprehension in fiction in his questionaire. Traditionally literary stereotypes were defined largely by social role, but role shifts do appear, with corresponding moral complexity, in characters from old Chinese narratives. Consider, however, the function of multiple and divisible identities in this material. Some years ago, C. T. Hsia perceptively identified pairs of relatively simple characters in several of the classic Chinese novels that constitute a single personality. That is, each "half character" has attributes lacking in the other; neither is complete alone. Li K'uei and Sung Chiang from Water Margin constitute one such pair: Sung Chiang is the nominal idealist mouthing platitudes about loyalty to the throne, while Li K'uei is a pure sensualist who delights in the act of killing, often while stark naked. Nor will the latter countenance capitulation until Sung forces him to do so on threat of execution—which Sung Chiang cannot bear to carry out. 49 The various sides of an individual self represented by the pilgrims of Journey to the West have been widely observed; the oaths of brotherhood that bind the trio of heroes in Romance of the Three Kingdoms likewise denote a composite personality. The complementary way in which such characters work together can be seen in the interaction between Chu-ko Liang and the brothers of Three Kingdoms: Liu Pei goes three times to enlist the aid of the strategist Chu-ko; while the trio has a full complement of bravery, military skill, and charisma, none has the insight needed to plan a campaign either on the battlefield or at court. Chu-ko Liang fulfills them to make a single, fully rounded entity, composite in nature.

One might argue that these characters merely represent different types, but the novelist gives a different impression when he has his characters switch functions. Late in the novel, Liu Pei's sworn brothers Kuan Yü and Chang Pei are killed. Lacking the strategic vision of Chu-ko Liang, the first dies needlessly in battle and the second is killed by his own men. Liu Pei is consumed with a desire for revenge and disregards all words of caution, even though it costs him his state. Yet when blinded by passion this man can still discern the weakness in his adviser. Thus he tempts Chu-ko Liang with his throne. He also foresees Chu-ko's only (and fatal) error of judgment in a total reversal of the characters' usual roles.50 Catherine Swatek demonstrates the shared identity of Li Shih-min and Curly Beard in the T'ang tale and in its later dramatic version; Leo Lee notes the complementary function of Lao Ts'an and Yellow Dragon in The Travels of Lao Ts'an. The "genius" and the "beauty" fit together perfectly; they even look alike, as Richard Hessney observes. Elsewhere Andrew Plaks has explored the significance of the haunting identification of the two major heroines Tai-yü and Pao-ch'ai in Dream of the Red Chamber; he comments on the relative rarity with which a single character dominates a Chinese narrative work. 51 In the short
novel *Tower of Myriad Mirrors*, Tung Yüeh divides the personality of Monkey Sun Wu-k'ung into its component parts for an astonishingly detailed view of his psyche.  

The convention of dividing a single identity into constituent elements has its origins in Chinese philosophy and religion. The primeval yin-yang dualism later appears as two "souls," the hun and the po, that divide at death; it even finds expression as male and female aspects of a personality. But the appearance of characters that exemplify these theories has a significance that transcends expression of conventional perspectives in literature. They represent a deeper level of understanding about the nature of the self, that it is visible in, even created by, one's social function, that it is no-self and yet everything, that it is in constant flux, and that it encompasses mutually contrastive or even contradictory elements. The Chinese self may be expressed in less direct ways than in the West; the mirror of literature does, after all, distort. But the self expressed in Chinese literature is no simple entity. It has been of central importance in writing past and present; students of Chinese literature have heretofore only begun to explore its depth and complexity.

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Part I

Self in Poetry and Criticism
AN EXPLORATION OF THE CHINESE LITERARY SELF

Robert E. Hegel


3. Note Lu Hsün's further explanations of his reasons for not identifying this character in the conventional way: “I thought at the time that if I wrote a story of exposure and described events happening in a specific place, the people of that district would hate me with a deadly hatred, while those of other districts would look on unconcerned at troubles elsewhere, neither group relating the story to themselves...” Lu Hsün, Ch'ing-ch'ien i-ch'ing (1936; rpt. Peking: Jen-min wen-hsueh, 1973), p. 116; trans. Selected Works of Lu Hsün, 4:130; emphasis mine.


12. All sets of texts are included in Taur Haruo, O Mei (Tokyo: Iwanami volumes also present Japanese and English translations, respectively.

13. At the core of these and other policies concerning literature in the economic base of society, its physical reality, on the one hand, and society’s super-


Hegel: The Chinese Literary Self

Wen. But "road-blocking tiger" is a slang term for a highwayman, which Yang Wen decidedly was not. It also refers to the white tiger star, which brings misfortune to Feng Hua, "The Chinese Belief in Baale Stars," in "Facets of Taoism," ed. Welch and Seidel, pp. 193-228, esp. pp. 209-219.


THE DUSTY MIRROR: COURTLY PORTRAITS OF WOMAN IN SOUTHERN DYNASTIES LOVE POETRY

Anne M. Birell

1. Hsi Liang, tsa Hsiao-mu, was the son of Hsi Ch’i-h (472–551), who was tutor to the young prince Hsiao Kang and shaped his development in administrative and literary matters. Hsi Ch’i-h’s lifelong service to Hsiao Kang, in which he saw his young protégé rise from prince to heir apparent and emperor, provided the opportunity for Hsiao Kang, in his time, to occupy a favored position at court. John Marney, Liang Chien-wen Ti (Boston: Twayne, 1976), pp. 20–23. 7. Hsiao Kang, tsa Shih-nuan, was heir apparent to Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty (464–544) at the time the anthology was compiled. He was brought to the capital in 531 and emperor in 549, and was posthumously entitled Ch’en-wen. He was assassinated by Hou Ching. For his biography, see ibid. passim; see also Anne Farrer, trans., New Songs from a Jade Terrace: An Anthology of Early Chinese Love Poetry (London: Allen and Unwin, 1982), pp. 353, 355. 8. When I refer to the Southern Dynasties in this article, I mean the Sung, Ch’i, and Liang dynasties, that is, the literary period from 420 to c. 545 (545 is the approximate date of the compilation of the YTHF). The Southern Dynasties era proper extends to 589 and includes the Ch’en Dynasty.

9. For these terms, see Liao’s anthology is seven and a half centuries, from the late third century B.C. to the mid-sixth century A.D. My article is concerned with the century and a quarter before a.d. 545.


11. This custom did not, of course, originate with the Hsiao royal family. The Teas of the Wei kingdom in the third century, for example, were also royal patrons of literature.

12. See Marney, Liang Chien-wen Ti, pp. 60–75.