

The Social Life of Texts:
Reading Zhuang Chuo's 莊綽 (*fl.* 1126) *Jilei bian* 雞肋編 (Chicken Rib Chronicles)

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation argues that scholars need to re-evaluate the place of miscellany in the textual tradition. Through a dynamic close-reading of Zhuang Chuo's 莊綽 (*fz.* 1126) *Jilei bian* 雞肋編 (Chicken Rib Chronicles), using its preface as a guide, this project demonstrates that the value of this text lies not in its historical truth, but in the author's analyses of historical themes, spoken word, and personal experiences alongside his engagement with the textual tradition and intellectual discourses in the wider scholarly community. Rethinking the way that Song dynasty authors of miscellany create meaning and also the purpose of this corpus allows readers to approach them holistically and creates the potential for multiple readings.

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INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS MISCELLANY: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

This dissertation is about Song dynasty miscellany, which is, generally speaking, a genre of anecdotal literature commonly referred to as *biji* 筆記.¹ I began this project in response to what I see as a curious paradox: that miscellany are widely utilized by modern scholars, mainly through data mining, yet the parameters of this genre remain unclear, and rarely are individual miscellany the focus of scholarly analysis.² The assumption has been that miscellany are records of “things that have been seen and heard” (*suojian suowen* 所見所聞), and therefore, the entries have been scrutinized against a historical standard. Whatever does not align with the accepted historical narrative is dismissed as a mistake of memory or a result of a corrupted text or transmission error.

My dissertation’s aim is to encourage scholars to reconsider the corpus of miscellany using a holistic approach. I suggest that the inclination to evaluate miscellany solely through a historiographical lens ignores other possible readings. Authors of miscellany created webs of meaning through commentary and juxtaposition of anecdotes within the text.

¹ Throughout this study I will use the term “miscellany” to refer to works that later came to be known as *biji* 筆記. First, because to use the moniker *biji* for this genre is anachronistic for the Song dynasty. During this time, works that were later categorized together as *biji* were generally called *xiaoshuo* 小說 (petty talks), *yeshi* 野史 (unofficial history), *zazhuan* 雜傳 (miscellaneous records), or something similar. Second, I want to distance these works from the modern use of *biji* as “notes,” which imply an immediacy that most Song dynasty miscellany lack.

² Hong Mai’s *Yijian zhi* has been studied in great detail, yet this collection differs from the majority of miscellany in its singular focus on supernatural tales (*zhi guai* 志怪).

Gang Liu has taken an important first step in reformulating the way that scholars think about miscellany.³ Liu argues that the miscellaneous arrangement of miscellany was intended for a “less conventional but more versatile way of reading, which fits better not only the complexity of the texts themselves but also to the special kind of literariness of the genre.”⁴ Miscellany resist definite, determined readings, but instead they depend on the participation of the reader to make connections and to create meaning. The tension between the text’s “artful construction” of its “apparent miscellaneousness and its implicit structure” is what makes the experience of reading miscellany pleasurable.⁵

This style of reading was not new to the Song. Michael Nylan, in her study of the dialogue form in Han dynasty philosophical texts observes that Yang Xiong 楊雄 (53 B.C.E.–18 C.E.), in his *Fa yan* 法言, employed a “‘dialectical montage,’ which juxtaposes successive images that require the reader to discover their inherent relations...threading through the cosmic, sociopolitical, and individual realms.”⁶ The goal of this structure is to illustrate that certain principles do not exist in isolation.

³ Other scholars have hinted at this way of reading miscellany, such as Stephen Owen who posited that Ouyang Xiu’s 歐陽修 *Linyi shihua* 六一詩話 was a sample of Ouyang’s way of thinking and suggested that it was intended to be read as a whole work (*Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* [Cambridge, Mass. and London: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University: Harvard University Press, 1992], p. 361). Mark Halperin also reads Sun Guangxian’s 孫光憲 *Beimeng suoyan* 北夢瑣言 in this way, but couches his conclusions against accepted ideas about the “diversity and randomness” that characterize the miscellany genre (“Heroes, Rogues, and Religion in a Tenth-Century Chinese Miscellany,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 129.3 [Jul.–Sep. 2009]: 414).

⁴ “The Poetics of Miscellaneousness: The Literary Design of Liu Yiqing’s *Qiantang Yishi* and the Historiography of the Southern Song,” unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2010, p. 6. Liu’s method of reading miscellany is detailed in his second chapter, pp. 83–128.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 85. Liu’s approach to reading miscellany is based on Linda Chance’s study on Yoshida Kenkō’s 吉田兼好 (1283?–1350?) *Tsurezuregusa* 徒然草 (Essays in Idleness) (*Formless in Form: Kenkō, Tsurezuregusa, and the Rhetoric of Japanese Fragmentary Prose* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997]).

⁶ “Han Classicists Writing in Dialogue about Their Own Tradition,” *Philosophy East West* 47.2 (Apr., 1997): 137. For a more in-depth discussion about how Yang structures his work, see *Ibid.*, pp. 148–55.

My central argument is that, while miscellany lack a unified structure, when read in a holistic manner, individual miscellany reveal themes and lend themselves to interpretations beyond what can be gleaned from reading entries in isolation. Gang Liu has made a convincing case in his study of *Qiantang yishi* 錢塘遺事. This dissertation represents another case study by providing a close-reading of Zhuang Chuo's 莊綽 (*fl.* 1126) *Jilei bian* 雞肋編 (Chicken Rib Chronicles).

Since miscellany, by their very nature, resist generic classification,⁷ and our understanding of the role miscellany played in the lives of Song dynasty intellectuals—how they were read and used—is still insufficient, it can be difficult to know how best to approach them. This introduction analyzes common themes among prefaces of Song miscellany in order to provide insight into how miscellany were conceived of by authors and

⁷ The generic classification of miscellany has been the focus of numerous book-length studies, including: Chen Wenxin 陳文新, *Zhongguo biji xiaoshuo shi* 中國筆記小說史 (Taipei: Zhiyi chubanshe, 1995); Liu Yeqiu 劉葉秋 (1917–88), *Gudian xiaoshuo biji luncong* 古典小說筆記論叢 (Tianjin: Nankai daxue chubanshe, 1985) and *Lidai biji gaisu* 歷代筆記概述 (Reprint; 1980. Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 2003).

their contemporaries, determine the role they played in the lives of Song intellectuals, and suggest a method of analysis.⁸

The preface (*xu* 序), as the “threshold for interpretation” of a work, is a paratextual narrative device through which the author can mediate the text to his readers.⁹ The main purpose of the preface is to “narrate the author’s intention” 叙作者之意. Without the guiding principles outlined by the preface, “it would be difficult to fully understand the character (*qing*) of a work” 難以曲得其情.¹⁰ Beyond elucidating the intention and purpose

⁸ For this study, I have read and analyzed more than fifty prefaces from the Northern and Southern Song dynasties. I have used the prefaces printed in the following: *Tang Song Lidai shiliao biji congkan* 唐宋歷代史料筆記叢刊 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979–2012); *Quan Song biji* 全宋筆記, Zhu Yi’an 朱易安, et al., eds. (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2003–13); and *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo xuba jilu: wenyan biji xiaoshuo xuba busen* 中國歷代小說序跋輯錄：文言筆記小說序跋部分, Huang Qingquan 黃清泉, ed. (Changsha: Huazhong shifan daxue chubanshe, 1989). A number of scholars have published research on the preface in Chinese literature. Recently, Ellen Cong Zhang has published a study of prefaces for Song dynasty miscellany (“To Be ‘Erudite in Miscellaneous Knowledge’: A Study of Song [960–1279] *Biji* Writing,” *Asia Major* 25, part 2 [2012]: 43–77). Alister Inglis offers complete translations and analyses of all surviving prefaces for the *Yijian zhi* 夷堅志, as well as Zhao Yushi’s 趙與時 (1175–1231) summaries of lost prefaces (*Hong Mai’s Record of the Listener and Its Song Dynasty Context* [Albany: SUNY Press, 2006], pp. 23–67). Robert Hymes has also analyzed the numerous prefaces for *Yijian zhi* in “Truth, Falsity, and Pretense in Song China: An Approach Through the Anecdotes of Hong Mai,” *Chūgoku shigaku* 15 (Sept., 2005), pp. 14–7. Antje Richter provides a close reading of the preface to *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 in “Empty Dreams and Other Omissions: Liu Xie’s *Wenxin diaolong* Preface,” *Asia Major* 1.25 (2012): 83–110. For a discussion of the increased importance of the preface and other paratextual devices in the context of Ming–Qing printing see Kai-wing Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), esp. pp. 13–5.

⁹ Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 196–236.

¹⁰ Kong Anguo 孔安國 (ca. 156 B.C.E.–ca. 74 B.C.E.), cited in Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661–721), Zhao Lüfu 趙呂甫, *Shitong xin jiaozhu* 史通新校注 (Chongqing: Chongqing chubanshe, 1990), p. 207. Kong Anguo’s comment refers specifically to the prefaces for the *Shangshu* and the *Shijing*. The phrase *qu de qi qing* 曲得其情 comes from the *Huainanzi* 淮南子: “Idols of the sages can be likened to viewing a shape in a mirror; you can clearly see its character” 聖人之偶物也，若以鏡視形，曲得其情 (17.19). Liu Zhiji comments that the *Shiji* and the *Hanshu* only sometimes include prefaces to their chapters “because they take recording events as their aim” 以記事為宗 (Zhao, *Shitong xin jiaozhu*, p. 207).

of a work, the preface outlines the author's credentials,¹¹ and is also an invaluable source for understanding literary theory and received cultural values as they relate to the author's work.¹²

This chapter consists of three sections. The first section identifies shared lexicon and themes among prefaces and discusses their meanings within traditional cultural frameworks and coeval intellectual trends. The second section examines discursive techniques that intellectuals employed in their prefaces to reframe gossip as an ideal vehicle for the transmission of intimate knowledge, and gossipers as a group of people with special access to this knowledge and a unique understanding of its value. The final section looks at the relationship between miscellany and history and highlights concerns about the reliability of oral sources and the desire to expand the scope of history to include contemporary, local, and competing truths.

SHARED LEXICON: CULTURAL TRADITIONS AND COEVAL TRENDS

This section examines four common characteristics described in the majority of prefaces for Song dynasty miscellany: that they contain “what is seen and heard” (*jianwen* 見聞), that they are comprehensive (*bo* 博), that they are works of memory, and that they have the potential to function as “chatting aids” (*tanhu* 談助). Together these claims show that

¹¹ Sima Qian 司馬遷 (139 B.C.E.–86 B.C.E.) was the first to use the preface to describe his and his father's credentials. Later authors followed this precedent (Wang Minglin 王明琳, “‘Taishigong zixu’ de wenti tezheng yu yiyi” 《太史公自序》的文體特徵與意義, *Xinya luncong* 9 [1997]: 192).

¹² Stephen Owen, *Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 9.

these works reflect a desire to gather, recollect, expand, and share one's knowledge; represent the subjective, individual worldview of an intellectual; and propose a *raison d'être* for this corpus of writings.

Jianwen 見聞: *Experiential Knowledge*

Perhaps the main characteristic of miscellany is that they are records of what is seen and heard (*jianwen*). The term *jianwen* can be found in numerous titles for miscellany, and appears in the majority of prefaces in one form or another. Zhang Qixian 張齊賢 (942?–1014; *jinsbi* 977), for example, wrote that his work was a compilation of “recollections of what the gentry said in former times and of what I saw and heard personally” 追思曩昔縉紳所說及余親所見聞.¹³ Yue Ke 岳珂 (b. 1183) also wrote: “If I heard or saw something during [my interactions with] the gentry, I would return, weary from paying attention, [pick up my] lead and board, and record them on [my endtable]” 余或從搢紳間聞聞見見歸，倦理鉛槧，輒記其上。¹⁴

While *jianwen* literally means what is seen and heard, in early China, this term was intimately linked with the attainment of knowledge (*zhi* 知/智). Mengzi, for example, warned men to not become confounded by modern customs and popular opinions, but to

¹³ “*Luoyang jinsben jiuwen ji xu*” 洛陽縉紳舊聞記序 (Preface to *Records of Stories of the Luoyang Gentry*), *Zhibuzhu zhai* ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 161. The “personally” (*qin*) here suggests that *jianwen* need not exclusively refer to one's own experiences.

¹⁴ “*Ting shi xu*” 程史序 (Preface to *Endtable History*), Zhonghua shuju ed., p. 1.

seek the true way from the ancients. The way to do this is to follow the tradition begun in the time of Yao and Shun: to learn from observing the proper behavior of the sages (*jian er zhi zhi* 見而知之) and from hearing about the proper behavior of the sages (*wen er zhi zhi* 聞而知之).¹⁵ This is, in essence, how knowledge is transmitted from teacher to pupil, beginning with Yao and Shun, the ancestral teachers. In this example, the object of *jianwen* is moral teachings either through direct observation or, indirectly, through listening to didactic stories. The difference between observing (*jian*) and hearing about (*wen*) is temporal and spatial proximation. While seeing for oneself might take precedence over hearing from others, both are perceived as legitimate methods of learning.¹⁶

The eyes and the ears were conceived of as “gateways” (*men* 門) to the heart-mind (*xin* 心). The heart-mind receives information from the external world through the eyes and

¹⁵ *Mengzi*, 7B.37. For Xunzi, even aiming toward the ways of the sage-kings can be beneficial: “Even if one approximately takes previous kings as models, yet does not understand their cohesiveness (*tong*), still one’s ability can be intense and one’s will be great; one’s experiential knowledge (*wenjian*) can be diverse and comprehensive 略法先王而不知其統，猶然而材劇志大，聞見雜博” (*Xunzi*, 6.7).

¹⁶ The supremacy of seeing over hearing (*wen bu ru jian* 聞不如見) was an intellectual trend in the Han dynasty. Its most outspoken proponents were Wang Chong 王充 (27–ca. 97) (*Lunheng*, 83:359) and Liu Shao 劉邵 (3rd c. C.E.) (Licia Di Giacinto, “The Art of Knowing Others: The *Renwu zhi* and Its Cultural Background,” *OE* 43.1/2 [2002]: 154–5). Zhang Duanyi 張端義 (1169–after 1248) expresses the opposite opinion in his preface to the upper facsimile of *Gui er ji* 貴耳集 (Compilation of Esteemed Ears): “For people, ears are the most esteemed. Words enter them through sound, and matters are heard through words. The ancients had the teaching that [words] entered the ears and were written on the heart.’ There is also the saying of ‘esteemed ears and base eyes’” 耳為人至貴，言由音入，事由言聽。古人有入耳著心之訓，又有貴耳賤目之說 (Jindai mishu ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 265). Zhang’s first example comes from *Xunzi*: “As for the learning of gentlemen, it enters their ears, is written in their hearts, spreads to their four limbs, and takes form in their action or stillness” 君子之學也，入乎耳，著乎心，布乎四體，形乎動靜 (1.13). Zhang’s second example is from Zhang Heng 張衡 (78–139), “Rhapsody of the Eastern Capital” (*Dongjing fu* 東京賦), and is usually understood in a negative sense: “If it is as you, my guest, has said, then superficial learning is an example of esteeming the ears and devaluing the eyes” 若客所謂，末學膚受，貴耳而賤目者也 (in Xiao Tong 蕭統 [501–31], *Wenxuan* 文選, *Zhongguo gudian wenxue congshu* 中國古典文學叢書 [Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1986]: 3.93).

the ears, where it is stored, processed (through thinking [*si* 思]), and finally understood (*zhi* 知) guided by principles of the *Dao*. In this model, the heart is envisioned as both a container for knowledge and as a mirror that reflects the principles of the external world. The notion that once something has been observed it has been or has the potential to be transformed into knowledge is supported by the meaning of *wen* 聞 as “to know” or “knowledge.”¹⁷ To have “seen and heard things” (*wenjian* 聞見) or to have “lots of things heard” (*duowen* 多聞) is to be very knowledgeable. Thus, *jianwen* is the first step in changing the perceptual into rational knowledge. The information is universal/objective; the process is individual/subjective.¹⁸ Theoretically speaking then, the object of *jianwen* could be anything in the physical world.¹⁹ *Jianwen* is perhaps best thought of as “experience” or “experiential knowledge”; as any knowledge that passes through the eyes or ears, including book learning, observation, hearsay, and personal action. In this sense, then, experience is not strictly

¹⁷ The close relationship between seeing and knowing in Chinese can be observed in the mapping of physical eyesight onto mental capability and of physical eye-range onto mental capacity (Ning Yu, *From Body to Meaning in Culture: Papers on Cognitive Semantic Studies of Chinese* [Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2009], pp. 193–202). Refer also to Yu’s study of metaphors of thinking as seeing (*Ibid.*, pp. 92–102).

¹⁸ For other traditional views on the connection between the eyes/ears and the heart see *Guanzi*, 35A.4; and *Zhuangzi*, 11.3. Cf. Ning Yu, *The Chinese Heart in a Cognitive Perspective: Culture, Body, and Language* (Berlin and NY: Mouton de Gruyter, 2009), pp. 38–53.

¹⁹ This model of the relationship between the eyes/ears and the heart-mind influenced the Rationalist (*lixuejia* 理學家) principle of “investigating things” (*gewu* 格物). While Ellen Cong Zhang defines the meaning of *jianwen* in the Song as the authors’ “real-life experience and hands-on investigation” as separate from book-knowledge (“Song *Biji* Writing,” pp. 44–5), an examination of the contents of miscellany shows that *jianwen* does not exclude textual knowledge.

individual, but is formed through making connections between individual and collective memory, as well as cultural traditions.²⁰

Bo 博: *Comprehensive Knowledge*

Hand-in-hand with *jianwen* is the notion of comprehensiveness. Authors boast that their works are products of their “comprehensive experience” (*bowen* 博聞), “comprehensive learning” (*boxue* 博學), or “comprehensive interviewing” (*bofang* 博訪). Ellen Cong Zhang writes that erudition (her translation of *bo* 博) in “miscellaneous knowledge” (*zashi* 雜識) came to be a sought after quality in oneself and in others during the Song dynasty. Scholars were able to transform the “extensive travel, social gathering(s), and personal exploration” that was part of official life in the Song into an emerging literati ideal.²¹ She argues that “miscellaneous” (*za* 雜) and similar words were used in titles, not to describe lack of formal structure, but rather to highlight the broad learning of the author.²² Indeed, Li Faxian 李發

²⁰ Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), *Illuminations*, transl. by Harry Zohn (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955), pp. 159–62). Benjamin draws from Henri Bergson’s (1859–1941) theory of experience presented in *Matière et mémoire*. With regards to storytelling, Benjamin writes: “It is not the object of the story to convey a happening *per se*, which is the purpose of information; rather, it embeds it in the life of the storyteller in order to pass it on as experience to those listening” (p. 161).

²¹ Zhang points out that this scholarly ideal of comprehensive learning (*bo*), which she sees as distinct from book- and examination-based learning, made it possible for men of lower classes to distinguish themselves. Although they held lower-ranking positions, they were knowledgeable in topics of a more local variety (“Song *Biji* Writing,” p. 45). See also Ellen Cong Zhang, *Transformative Journeys: Travel and Culture in Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2011), pp. 1–68.

²² “Song *Biji* Writing,” p. 57. For a different understanding of *za*, as the deliberate overturning of audience expectations of genre, style, and content, see Carrie Reed, “Motivation and Meaning of a ‘Hodge-Podge’: Duan Chengshi’s *Yonyang zazhi*,” *JAO* 123.1 (Jan. – Mar., 2003): 121–45.

先 (*jinsbi* 1238), in a colophon for *Youhuan jiven* 游宦紀聞 (Records of Official Trips) by Zhang Shinan 張世南, writes that “comprehensive knowledge about a variety of things is a scholar’s duty” 博物洽聞，儒者事也。²³

Authors of miscellany highlighted the comprehensiveness of their works by creating a semblance of totality through prefatorial claims. One method was to assert that one’s work includes experiences covering a wide expanse of time and space. Wang Dechen 王得臣 (1036–1116; *jinsbi* 1059), for example, writes:

I received official orders that sent me running around, traversing north and south, until three decades had passed. Thus if there was something to be attained from the extraneous chats of my teachers and friends or from the dinner conversations of my colleagues or from whatever reached my eyes and ears, then I recorded them all. Later, as I went beyond the age of sixty *sui*, I finished my career as minister of agriculture (*damong*) and retired.²⁴

宦牒奔走，轍環南北而逮歷三紀。故自師友之餘論，賓僚之燕談，與耳目之所及，苟有所得，輒皆記之。晚踰耳順，自大農致為臣而歸。

Here Wang portrays himself as a man in constant observation of and in engagement with the world around him and with those who reside within it. He indicates that his miscellany includes knowledge gleaned from different social networks: teachers and friends, guests and

²³ “*Youhuan jiven ba*” 游宦紀聞跋 (Colophon for *Records of Official Trips*), Zhonghua shuju ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 250.

²⁴ *Zhu shi xu* 塵史序 (Preface to *Elk-Hair-Whisk History*), *Zhibuzhu zhai* ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 198. In 1097, Wang retired from his post as vice-minister of Court of National Granaries (*sinong shaoqing* 司農少卿) due to illness (Li Tao 李燾 [1115–84; *jinsbi* 1138], Shanghai shida gujisuo 上海師大古籍所, *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004], 491.11646).

colleagues, and personal. He also identifies three different forms of knowledge in his miscellany: extraneous discourse (*yulun* 餘論),²⁵ chats (*tan* 談), and personal experience (*ermu suo ji* 耳目所及). Each of these contain valuable insight or interesting viewpoints, but lie beyond the purview of the court and academies.

Another way to alert readers to the comprehensiveness of their miscellany was to draw a correlation between distance traveled and depth of knowledge. Sun Guangxian 孫光憲 (895?–968) points to his extensive travels as evidence of his erudition in the preface to *Beimeng suoyan* 北盟瑣言 (Trivial Words from North of [Lake] Meng[ze]): “I was born in Sichuan, and served as an official in Jingying.²⁶ I was ashamed of my lack of learning about old stories from the capital, and whether roaming or staying somewhere, I invested my time solely in extensive interviewing” 僕生自岷峨，官於荊郢。咸京故事，每愧面牆，游處之間，專於博訪。²⁷ The equation of travel to knowledge is an influence of Sima Qian 司馬遷 (139 B.C.E.–86 B.C.E.), who was commonly held as a model for historical writing.²⁸ Sima

²⁵ A *lun* is a formal topic; “a critique of political culture through historical analogy, a persuasion of rhetorical argument rather than historical scholarship” (*A Sung Bibliography*, p. 286). That it is “extraneous” (*yu*) suggests that it was not included in official documents.

²⁶ This is an archaic reference to the capital of Chu, located near modern Jiangling County 江陵縣, Hubei.

²⁷ *Beimeng suoyan xu* 北盟瑣言序 (Preface to Trivial Words from North of [Lake] Meng[ze]), Zhonghua shuju ed., p. 15.

²⁸ Sima’s historical methodology was criticized by some in the Song dynasty, most notably Ouyang Xiu, for his lack of critical attention to sources (James T.C. Liu, *Ou-yang Hsiu: An Eleventh-Century Neo-Confucianist* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967], p. 101).

based much of the *Shiji* 史記 on oral interviews that he conducted during the course of his travels.²⁹

Finally, authors of miscellany claim that they practice non-exclusion when it comes to their sources. That is, they claim to value experiences of all people, regardless of station or rank. As we saw above, Wang Dechen claims that his work is the fruit of thirty years' worth of conversations with men of all walks of life. Shen Kuo's 沈括 (1031–95) preface of *Mengxi bitan* 夢溪筆談 (Chats with My Writing Brush at Dreams Creek) similarly claims to include stories from all social spheres, as long as they do not involve the emperor and the inner court, or slanderous accounts.

Remembering and Forgetting: Recalled Knowledge

Another preoccupation of authors of miscellany is the fear that events of the past are being forgotten and will be forever lost to history. For instance, Li Faxian, in a colophon for *Youhuan jiwén* by Zhang Shinan, wrote that Zhang “was afraid that he would forget [the things he experienced in his travels] and so he casually jotted them down (*suibi*)” 懼遺忘而隨筆之.³⁰ Zhang himself confirms that he sought out his memories (*zhuisi* 追思) and wrote

²⁹ Ellen Cong Zhang provides Su Zhe's 蘇轍 (1039–1112, *jinsbi* 1057) *Luancheng ji* 樂城集 (Anthology from Luancheng) and Zhang Shinan's 張世南 (fl. first half of the thirteenth century) *Youhuan jiwén* 遊宦紀聞 (Records of Official Trips) as examples of miscellany written after travel, a precedent set by Sima Qian and his *Shiji* (*Transformative Journeys*, pp. 162–7).

³⁰ Zhonghua shuju ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, pp. 250–1.

about true events (*shishi* 事實) in *Youbuan jinwen* in order to “guard against forgetting” (*beiyiwang* 備遺忘).³¹

Zhang uses the phrase *zhuisi* (lit. to trace one’s thoughts) to describe the act of remembering. *Si* 思, according to *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字, means “to contain” (*rong* 容). “To use the term *si* as a designation is because it can make deep connections” 謂之思者，以其能深通也。³² The Yuan dynasty rime book, *Gujin yunhui* 古今韻會 explains the character *si* “as if a string was connecting without break from the top of the head to the heart-mind” 自囟至心如絲相貫不絕也。³³ As discussed earlier, the heart-mind (*xin*), imagined as a container that stored and processed information received from the external world, was the

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

³² Wang Yun 王筠 (1784–1854), *Shuowen jiezi judu* 說文解字句讀 (1988; Reprint. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998), pp. 399–400; 20.16b–17a. Whether this character should be *rong*, *jun* 容 (to dredge), or *rui* 睿 (to connect) is a matter of debate. The line on which the *Shuowen* definition is based comes from the *Shangshu* 尚書 description of five matters (*wu shi* 五事): “One’s appearance should be courteous; one’s words should be logical; one’s eyesight should be discerning; one’s listening should be perceptive; one’s thoughts should make connections (*rui*)” 貌曰恭，言曰從，視曰明，聽曰聰，思曰睿 (*Shangshu jiaoshi yilun* 尚書校釋譯論, Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛 [1893–1980] and Liu Qiyu 劉起鈞 [1917–2012] [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005], 3.1155–8). Gu and Liu have changed the last character to *rui*, following Duan Yucan’s 段玉裁 (1735–1815) opinion that since this final character appears as *jun* in “Annal on the Five Elements” in *Hanshu*, and since *jun* and *rui* were interchangeable, Zheng Xuan’s 鄭玄 (127–200) comment on this line in the *Wuxing zhuan* 五行傳—that it should be *rui*, meaning “to connect”—is the correct reading. Qian Daxi 錢大昕 (1728–1804), however, argues that since *gong*, *cong*, *ming*, *cong*, and *rong* in the *Shangshu* passage rhyme, *rong* should be the correct reading (These arguments are summarized in Gu and Liu, *Shuowen jiezi judu*, p. 1157, n. 7). Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179 B.C.E. – 104 B.C.E.) also follows this reading in *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露. He explains these lines as follows: “‘One’s thoughts should be capacious.’ The *rong* means that there is nothing [the heart] cannot contain.... If a king’s heart is expansive such that there is nothing it cannot contain, then he is proficient (*sheng*) in his dealings, and in all affairs he will attain a suitable outcome” 思曰容，容者言無不容.....王者心寬大無不容，則聖能施設，事各得其宜也 (Dong Zhongshu, Lai Yanyuan 賴炎元, annot., *Chunqiu fanlu jin zhu jin yi* 春秋繁露今註今譯 [Taipei: Taiwan shangwu, 1987], 64.2).

³³ Cited in Wang Yun, *Shuowen jiezi judu*, p. 400; 20.17a. While this might be a case of false etymology, it demonstrates Yuan beliefs about the process of thinking.

site of all mental and psychological activity, including remembering.³⁴ Cognitive linguistic studies have shown that Chinese language uses the metaphor system “the mind is a body,” and that thinking is conceived of in terms of “seeing” or “moving.” These conceptual metaphors are “grounded in our common bodily experiences of spatial movement and vision.”³⁵ The analogy of spatial movement implies a need for a starting point, path, and end point.³⁶ In the Yuan dynasty understanding of the character *si*, for example, the string implies the path of thought from the perceived event at the ears and eyes, into the heart, where the information can then be processed.

Zhang does not just think (*si*) about the past, however, he “traces” or “tracks down” his memories of them (*zhuisi*). Many compounds associated with memory are modified with “to trace” (*zhui* 追), such as: *zhuivei* 追惟, *zhuiji* 追記, *zhuinian* 追念, *zhuixiang* 追想, *zhuijin* 追舊, and *zhuyi* 追憶. *Hui* 回 (also *hui* 迴; to return) is also a commonly used morpheme for expressions of remembering, including *huigu* 迴顧, *huisi* 迴思, and *huiyou* 回游. These memories must be traced or returned to “because, in Chinese as much as in English, the past is conceptualized as being behind us and...as moving farther and farther away from us.”³⁷

³⁴ Yu, *From Body to Meaning in Culture*, pp. 102–5.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 83. Yu’s study is based on the research of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).

³⁶ Yu, *From Body to Meaning in Culture*, p. 86.

³⁷ Yu, *From Body to Meaning in Culture*, p. 89. See also Ning Yu, *The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor: A Perspective from Chinese* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1998); and George Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” A. Ortony, ed., *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 202–51. Whether the “objects” of the past are at a fixed temporal/spatial point or are moving behind us, as in the case of *zhui*, is unclear with the use of *hui* (Yu, *From Body to Meaning in Culture*, p. 100). See also Ning Yu, “Spatial Conceptualization of Time in Chinese,” M.K. Hiraga, C. Sinha, and S. Wilcox, eds., *Cultural, Psychological and Typological Issues in Cognitive Linguistics* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1999), pp. 69–84.

One implication of the need to chase (*zhu*) one's memories is that what is sought out might not necessarily be caught (*de* 得). This at once describes the elusive nature of the past as well as conveys a sense of urgency that what happened in the past might fade from sight and become lost. This sense of urgency is compounded with the onset of old age and during times of separation from friends and family because of war, exile, or other circumstance beyond one's control.³⁸

Most authors of Song miscellany recorded their memories of events many years, sometimes decades, after they were first experienced. The passage of time before ultimately retrieving or reliving memories allows for reflection on their greater cultural and historical significance. This active process is similar to what Edward Casey has termed “memory expansion,” in which a primary memory is filled in by secondary memories of such things as personal experiences, texts, and gossip.³⁹ With the benefit of hindsight, meaning is ascribed to memories that might not previously have been understood in a larger, social context, and connections among common experiences and texts are drawn. This act of remembering resembles the structure of miscellany.

³⁸ Ellen Cong Zhang remarked that men sought to leave their intellectual legacy within the pages of miscellany. Zhang Duanyi 張端義 (active late-twelfth to mid-thirteenth c.) commented that he considered this to be an obligation of the older generation (“Song *Biji* Writing,” pp. 59–60).

³⁹ Edward Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp. 38–9.

Many titles and prefaces for Song miscellany make repeated reference to conversations and storytelling, such as “humorous sayings” (*xiaoyu* 笑語), “old stories” (*jiuhua* 舊話), “chats” (*tan* 談), and “words” (*yan* 言).⁴⁰ Shen Kuo, for example, emphasizes the conversational aspect of his work in the preface of *Mengxi bitan*:

I have retired to reside beneath the forest [canopy], where I live in seclusion, cut off from any passerbys. I think about things said to guests in the past, and frequently jot a story down with my writing brush. Then, it is as if we were [again] talking face to face. Passing my days in an empty room. Yet, the ones with whom I have chatted are only my writing brush and ink stone.

Thus I have named my work *Chats with my Writing Brush*...⁴¹

予退處林下，深居絕過從。思平日與客言者，時紀一事于筆，則若有所
所晤言，蕭然移日，所與談者，唯筆硯而已，謂之《筆談》。

Shen frames his work as consisting of memories of chats with his friends, which he relived as he remembered and wrote them down. Through the act of writing, Shen was able to bring past events back to life, to the extent that Shen felt he could walk again in his memories.

⁴⁰ For a more complete list refer to Endymion Wikinson, *Chinese History: A New Manual*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 84 (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 651. Out of the 256 total titles in the *Quan Song biji* collection published by Daxiang chubanshe, 22 (8.5%) include the word *tan* 談/譚, 10 (3.9%) the word *yu* 語, 9 (3.5%) the word *hua* 話, and 8 (3%) the word *yan* 言 (19% in total).

⁴¹ “*Mengxi bitan xu*” 夢溪筆談序 (Preface to *Chats with my Writing Brush at Dreams Creek*), Xuejintao ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 168. For a translation of this preface in its entirety see Ronald Egan, “Shen Kuo Chats with Ink Stone and Writing Brush,” in Chen and Schaberg, *Idle Talk*, p. 135.

Using his work as a substitute space for chats with his friends, Shen erases the distance between himself and his memories. This erasure temporarily assuages his loneliness, yet, in a bitter twist, Shen again finds himself alone after he is finished writing, and realizes that it was only his brush and inkstone with whom he had just been chatting.

Miscellany's emphasis on chatting is reflected in the organization of the entries themselves, which, as Ellen Cong Zhang has pointed out, "resemble the flow of a casual conversation, with its focus moving from one topic to another, covering familiar material as well as topics strange to the participants."⁴² This flow is, of course, not without interruptions, just as conversations include lulls and breaks. Stephen Owen has also made a similar observation in his discussion of *Linyi shibua* 六一詩話 (Remarks on Poetry from the Retired Scholar with Six Single Things).⁴³ Owen posits that Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–72) intentionally arranged his work in a loosely organized manner to give the reader the impression of a relaxed conversation on literary topics, a style that had been popular since the late eighth century. He concludes that Ouyang's work is less a manual on poetry, than it is a guide to poetic thinking.⁴⁴

Collecting and reading interesting tidbits to aid in conversation appears to have been a popular pastime in the Song,⁴⁵ and a number of authors expressed in their prefaces that

⁴² "Song *Biji* Writings," p. 63.

⁴³ In the early stage of the remarks on poetry genre (*shibua* 詩話), content, style, and form were practically indistinguishable from miscellany (Egan, *The Problem of Beauty*, pp. 60–80; Owen, *Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 361).

⁴⁴ *Chinese Literary Thought*, pp. 360–2.

⁴⁵ Ellen Cong Zhang writes that Song dynasty scholars were preoccupied with the art of conversation, and actively sought out ways to be entertaining and engaging during social events ("Song *Biji* Writings," pp. 62–5).

they hope their miscellany will serve as a chatting aid (*tanzhu* 談助) or as a chatting handle (*tanbing* 談柄). Chao Zaizhi 晁載之 (b. 1066) even used “chatting aid” to title his miscellany.⁴⁶

Many of these textual “chats,” intended for the literate elite, represent part of an effort to correct and verify the written and spoken word. Certainly, juicy tidbits about the lives of men of reknown were also topics of these chats, as we see in an entry in *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑒長編 (Continuation of the Long Version of the *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Governance*) by Li Tao 李燾 (1114–83), in which he rejects gossip about Wang Qinruo’s 王欽若 (962–1025) alleged Daoist eccentricities, and declares that “the gentry pass [gossip] along quickly, and have taken these stories as chatting aids” 縉紳傳快，以為談助焉。⁴⁷ However, Li’s intention is not to further spread gossip about Wang, but rather to rectify the misinformation being spread by chatty elites.⁴⁸

The topics of chats found in miscellany were not necessarily frivolous, and in fact, were often what we would consider academic in nature. Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123–1202) provides an example of this type of chat in *Rongzhai suibi* 容齋隨筆 (Casual Writing Brush from Rong Studio):

⁴⁶ *Tanzhu* 談助 (Chatting Aids) and *Xu Tanzhu* 續談助 (Continuation of Chatting Aids). For a brief history of these compositions, see Zhang Jian 張劍, “Songdai Chanzhou Chaoshi zhuzuo kaoshu” 宋代澶州晁氏著作考述, *Xinya luncong* 7 (2005): 224. The *Xu Tanzhu*, in five fascicles, was completed in 1106. Some scholars refute the attribution to Chao Zaizhi (Etienne Balazs and Yves Hervouet, *A Sung Bibliography = Bibliographie des Sung* [Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1978], p. 317).

⁴⁷ 88.2030.

⁴⁸ This is, of course, not the only function of miscellany. Entries for some miscellany also heavily lean toward *zhiguai* (records of the strange), such as Hong Mai’s 洪邁 *Yijian zhi* 夷堅志. This work has drawn much scholarly attention, in part, because of this unique, single-minded attention to the unusual.

Now the “Big Suite” passed on as *yuefu* all originated in the Tang.⁴⁹ Among them there are five that are named after prefectures: Yin, Liang, Xi, Shi, and Wei. Liangzhou 涼州 has now been changed to Liangzhou 梁州. In the Tang, people had already begun to make this mistake. In actuality, it came from Xiliangfu 西涼府.⁵⁰ Of all of these arias, Yin and Liang are the most frequently mentioned in Tang poetry and lyrics. I’ve noted ten or so couplets as material for chatting aids.⁵¹

今樂府所傳大曲，皆出於唐，而以州名者五，伊、涼、熙、石、渭也。
。涼州今轉為梁州，唐人已多誤用，其實從西涼府來也。凡此諸曲，
唯伊、涼最著，唐詩詞稱之極多，聊紀十數聯，以資談助。

We can see that Hong is interested in clarifying the origins of these common terms, and that he has recorded them in the hope that others will use them in conversation.

Hong’s desire to share his knowledge, to pass it on as a chatting aid, can be contrasted with the earliest instance of “chatting aid” (*tanxihu*), which appeared in relation to the *Lunheng* 論衡: “When Cai Yong (133–92) entered Wu and had just obtained the *Lunheng*, he played with it in secret in order to use it as an aid to conversation” 蔡邕入吳，始得之

⁴⁹ *Daqu* is a musical performance that combines song lyrics (*ci* 詞) set to music and accompanied by a dance performance. These five arias are *biandi daqu* 邊地大曲 (frontier *daqu*). For a detailed study see Xiaojing Sun, "The Sound of Silence: *Daqu* 大曲 ('big-suite') and Medieval Chinese Performance," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California-Berkeley, 2012.

⁵⁰ Located in modern Gansu province. In the late Tang it became Turfan (*Tufan* 吐蕃) territory, followed by Uyghur (*Huigu* 回鶻), then Tangut (*Xi xia* 西夏).

⁵¹ Daxiang chubanshe ed., Series 5, 5:186.

，祕玩以為談助。⁵² Yang Wenchang 楊文昌 in his preface to a print edition of the *Lunbeng*, dated March 17, 1045, explains this anecdote as follows:

Therefore, people of the time suspected that Bojie had obtained an extraordinary book. When someone searched for the place he had hidden it in his tent, he found, as expected several fascicles of the *Lunbeng*, which he carried away. Yong warned him, “Only you and I will share it. Do not distribute it.” Later, when Wang Lang (d. 228) came to govern Kuaiji, he also obtained this book. When it came time for him to return to Xu[chang], his contemporaries praised him for the advance of his talent.⁵³

故時人嫌伯喈得異書。或搜求其帳中隱處，果得論衡數卷持去。邕丁寧之曰：「惟我與爾共之，勿廣也。」其後王郎來守會稽，又得其書。及還許下，時人稱其才進。

Yang’s effort to advertise the *Lunbeng* as a chatting aid centers on the well-known anecdote about Cai Yong keeping his copy of this book hidden. Yang suggests that it was not hidden out of shame, in an effort to keep the source of his knowledge a secret, but

⁵² Ge Hong 葛洪 (283–343 or 364), *Baopuzi* 抱朴子, cited in *Lunbeng jiaoshi* 論衡校釋, Huang Hui 黃暉, comp. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), p. 1237; and Yuan Shao 袁紹 (154?–202), *Yuan Shansong shu* 袁山松書, cited in *Lunbeng jiaoshi*, p. 1238. Gao Sisun 高似孫 (1158–1231) repeats this story in *Zilüe* 子略, then concludes: “the phrase ‘chatting aid’ sums up this book” 談助之言可以了此書 (cited in *Lunbeng jiaoshi*, p. 1241).

⁵³ “Preface to the Song Qingli Carved Edition” (*Song Qingli Yang keben* 宋慶歷楊刻本) (cited in *Lunbeng jiaoshi*, pp. 1313–4). Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 (1551–1602) thought that the reason Cai kept it hidden was because it was unofficial history 稗官野史之流 (*Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢, juan 28 [cited in *Lunbeng jiaoshi*, p. 1244]). Sun Ce 孫策 (175–200) attacked and defeated Kuaiji in 196, when Wang was still governor. Sun did not harm Wang because he respected his erudition. Many years later, Cao Cao called Wang to serve his court. Wang finally managed to return to Xuchang in 213 (*Sanguo zhi* 三國志, Chen Shou 陳壽 (233–97), Pei Songzhi 裴松之 (372–451), annot., Yang Jialuo 楊家駱, ed., *Zhongguo xueshu leibian* 中國學術類編 [Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1980], 13.406–8).

rather because the book (and the knowledge contained therein) was coveted by many. The possession of such a chatting aid was beneficial because it could lead to career advancement. What made *Lunheng* so valuable—its subject matter, rhetoric, or something else entirely—is unclear.

For another example, take an entry in *Rongzhai suibi* 容齋隨筆 entitled “Making Notations for Books is Difficult” (*Zhu shu nan* 注書難),⁵⁴ which emphasizes the communal nature of scholarship. In this entry, Hong Mai begins with an anecdote in which Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–86) wrote a new explication of the *Shi jing* 詩經 (Book of Poetry), but was confounded by one line that was difficult to understand because of an unusual use of the word *bo* 剝. Wang had rejected three earlier explications, but remained unsure until one day when Wang had a chance encounter with a commoner. Hong Mai then presents a similar anecdote about Hong Xingzu 洪興祖 (1090–1155) who has a sudden realization after conversing with a sojourner from Shu. Finally, Hong Mai relates a story about a scholar who had locked himself away in his study for ten years while making notations for Su Shi’s 蘇軾 poetry, and had no contact with anyone 不與人往還.⁵⁵ One day Qian Shen 錢紳 (*jinsbi* 1109) pointed out a lacunae, the scholar was so upset that he immediately burned his manuscript. Hong writes that Qian Shen always told this story as a warning to the younger generation of scholars 伸仲每談其事，以戒後生.⁵⁶ It is unclear against what, exactly, Qian was warning them, but we might assume, taking the previous two stories into account, that it was against

⁵⁴ 15.393–4.

⁵⁵ 15.394.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

working alone. Although the main thrust of Hong Mai's argument is to be more diligent about what types of evidence one chooses to include in notes, we can see that scholars who were interested in annotating, correcting, and verifying texts valued and sought out the knowledge of others, even when they came from unexpected sources.

The term “chatting handle” (*tanbing*) originally referred to the horsetail duster that Buddhist monks held while expounding on Buddhist doctrine. The duster symbolizes brushing away the mundane that clouds our minds and causes ignorance. Monks would often begin their lectures with a story to illustrate the meaning of that day's lesson. This story also came to be known as *tanbing*.

By the Song dynasty, the term is used regularly in miscellany to refer to enlightening knowledge that could serve as conversation starters. Zhou Mi 周密 (1232–98), for instance, wrote that he often saw things that amused him in the former capital (*gudu* 故都), but now they are rarely seen. “Therefore, I have written them down here, to serve as chatting handles” 故書於此，以資談柄云。⁵⁷ This knowledge was often described as indispensable: “Now I have bequeathed this to elites (*shidajifu*) as a chatting handle. It is necessary knowledge” 至今遺士大夫談柄，不可不知。⁵⁸

The term “handle” also connotes that what is attached to it is easily under one's complete control. Beginning in the eleventh century, book reading began to be described in

⁵⁷ *Guixin zhasi bouji* 癸辛雜識後集 (Latter Collection of Miscellaneous Knowledge from Guixin [Street]), Zhonghua ed., p. 82. Zhou Mi also uses this phrase to describe his motivation in *Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語 (Wild Talk from the East of Qi), Zhonghua ed., p. 297.

⁵⁸ Cai Tao 蔡條 (d. 1126; *jinsbi* 1125), *Tieweishan cong'an* 鐵圍山叢談 (Collected Chats from Mount Tiewei), Daxiang chubanshe ed., Series 3, 9:206. Cai remarks in another entry that “people at the time used this as a chatting handle” 時以為談柄 (*Ibid.*, p. 248).

negative terms, as painful (*ku* 苦), in part due to the increasing pressure to be widely read (*bo* 博) in a time of extraordinary book production.⁵⁹ In order to compete in the literary world, one had to both have breadth and depth (*jing* 精) of knowledge.⁶⁰ That is, by referring to their works as handles, authors of miscellany suggest that the contents of their works can be wielded by readers, thereby giving them power over conversations.

REFRAMING “GOSSIP” AS DIDACTIC AND MORALISTIC SOURCE

In the previous section, we saw how the prefaces of many Song dynasty miscellany frame their accounts as memories of the past, which largely are informed by personal experience and orally related stories of others’ experiences. We also see a complicated picture emerge of the kinds of knowledge contained within miscellany. While, *jianwen*, as the main focus of miscellany, can be best thought of as experiential knowledge, it does not exclude textual knowledge. In fact, many prefaces include canonical references, and the majority of miscellany include philological and other discussions of canonical works, poetry, history, and other texts. *Jianwen* includes knowledge transmitted from teacher to pupil, but can also include knowledge passed on through informal storytelling. Moreover, many authors of miscellany express the desire to have their works function as chatting aids.

⁵⁹ Wang Yugen posits that this shift was rooted in the appropriation of the term *kuyin* 苦吟 to refer to the painstaking composition of poetry that began in the Late Tang (*Ten Thousand Scrolls: Reading and Writing in the Poetics of Huang Tingjian and the Late Northern Song*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 76 [Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Asia Center: Harvard University Press, 2011], pp. 137–8; cf. Stephen Owen, *The Late Tang: Chinese Poetry of the Mid-Ninth Century [827–860]* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006], p. 93).

⁶⁰ Wang, *Ten Thousand Scrolls*, pp. 148–58.

This section focuses on how authors of Song dynasty miscellany deal with the problem of this intersection between controlled oral transmission of teacher-sanctioned information, and uncontrolled transmission of gossip. After a brief introduction to traditional views of gossip, this section examines two strategies for providing legitimation for their reliance on gossip. First, by seeking affirmation in the Canon for their stated goal to find meaning and value in seemingly insignificant things. Second, by creating a special community of readers who identify themselves as transcending beyond outmoded views of the gossipier as a negative category.

Xiaoshuo as Gossip: Negative Views of Oral Transmission in Early China

In early China, actions were preferred over words, yet words were understood as necessary to communicate. Confucius exhorts us to be circumspect with our words: “A gentleman is judged to be knowledgeable or not by one word, [thus] we must be cautious in our speech” 君子一言以為知，一言以為不知，言不可不慎也。⁶¹ From this we can see that Confucius views speech as a construct separate from actual knowledge. As words have the power to shape opinion, one can create an impression of knowledge through the judicious selection of words.

Yet, as Jack Chen has discussed, certain forms of oral communication were valued over others. Lexicon such as *xianhua* 閒話 (idle stories), *xiantan* 閒談 (idle chats), *liuyan* 流言

⁶¹ *Lunyu*, 19.25.

(rumor), *wangshuo* 往說 (gossip), and *yeyu* 野語 (wild talk) emphasize the non-productive, fluid, and speculative nature of certain types of communication that we would call “gossip”:

Often the presence of gossip is simply evoked by reference to communal speech, such as the terms *renyan* 人言 and *shiyen* 世言, or to the hearing (*wen* 聞) and transmission (*chuan* 傳) of such speech. Anecdotes are variously referred to as *yishi* 逸事 or 軼事 (“uncollected matters”), *yiwén* 遺聞 (“uncollected news”), or sometimes simply *gushi* 故事 (“old tales”). From these terms, one can clearly see an emphasis on the oral nature of gossip, which is passed on by word of mouth and as such belongs vaguely to the discursive community, rather than to the individual.⁶²

It might be useful here to draw a comparison to poetry, which is treasured as the oral expression of a poet’s feelings.⁶³ Poetry was chanted, sung, and passed along freely, yet it was appreciated as an extension of an individual’s mind. Even when the author of a certain poem was unknown, the language, register, and formal qualities of the poem indicated the moral superiority of its creator.

⁶² Jack W. Chen, “Introduction,” Jack W. Chen and David Schaberg, eds., *Idle Talk: Gossip and Anecdote in Traditional China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), p. 4.

⁶³ The oral nature of poetry in China is well-documented. For example, Christopher Nugent, *Manifest in Words, Written on Paper: Producing and Circulating Poetry in Tang Dynasty China*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 70 (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Asia Center: Harvard University Press, 2010); and Colin S.C. Hawes, *The Social Circulation of Poetry in the Mid-Northern Song: Emotional Energy and Literati Self-Cultivation* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005).

In the case of *xiaoshuo* 小說 (petty talk), a vehicle for transmitting gossip, since the source is often unidentified, the moral quality cannot be ascertained.⁶⁴ Ban Gu's 班固 (32–92) influential appraisal of *xiaoshuo* touches on the issues of authenticity and social status, both of which are unknowable in the case of gossip:

The *xiaoshuo* school probably evolved from the office of petty officials. As street talk and alley gossip, they were fabricated by those who engaged in gossip along the roads and walkways. Confucius said: “Even lesser ways surely have something observable in them. But if they are pursued too far, one could get bogged down. This is why gentleman do not engage in them.”⁶⁵ Still, [*xiaoshuo*] has not disappeared. Even that which was touched upon by those of lesser knowledge in hamlets and villages were ordered to be compiled and not forgotten. Even if [*xiaoshuo*] contains one useful phrase, it is still culling weeds from the discourses of eccentrics and rustics.⁶⁶

小說家者流，蓋出於稗官。街談巷語，道聽塗說者之所造也。孔子曰：「雖小道，必有可觀者焉，致遠恐泥，是以君子弗為也。」然亦弗

⁶⁴ In the Tang and early Song, most works that are now thought of as miscellany were categorized under the *xiaoshuo* bibliographic category.

⁶⁵ *Lanyu*, 19.4.

⁶⁶ *Hanshu* 漢書, “Yiwen zhi” 藝文志. Translation slightly modified from Laura Hua Wu, “From *Xiaoshuo* to Fiction: Hu Yinglin’s Genre Study of *Xiaoshuo*” *HJAS* 55.2 (Dec., 1995): 338. See also Robert Ford Campany, *Strange Writing: Anomaly Accounts in Early Medieval China* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996), pp. 132–3. According to Ban’s preface to “Yiwen zhi,” his categorization was based on Liu Xin 劉歆 (d. 23 C.E.) and Liu Xiang’s 劉向 (77–6 B.C.E.) system of categorization in “Seven Abstracts” (*Qilüe* 七略) (Wang Rumei 王汝梅 and Zhang Yu 張羽, *Zhongguo xiaoshuo lilun shi* 中國小說理論史 [Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2001], p. 19).

滅也。閭里小知者之所及，亦使綴而不忘。如或一言可采，此亦芻蕘
狂夫之議也。

To Ban, the main problem with *xiaoshuo* is its potential for fabrication (*zao*). Ban views *xiaoshuo* as the textual extension of gossip. Gossip is problematic because it is in a constant state of motion, and therefore, the source is unknown and the knowledge is unverifiable.⁶⁷

Also at issue here is the social status of gossipers, described as “eccentrics and rustics” (*kuangfu*), and the location of the gossip, in streets and alleyways (*jietan xiangyu*), which suggests that the information can neither be trusted nor be controlled. Yet, this inferior, untrustworthy material is still ordered (*shi*) to be collected. Ban puzzles out that this must be for the benefit of the uneducated masses who live away from the capital. Why else would time be wasted on collecting “weeds”? This negative attitude toward gossip and *xiaoshuo*, at least for some, did not change much by the Song dynasty.

Finding Support for Oral Transmission in the Canon

Chen Zhensun 陳振孫 (1183?–1262?), in his criticism of Hong Mai’s *Yijian zhi* 夷堅志 (Record of the Listener), lists “petty talk of minor officials” (*baiguan xiaoshuo* 稗官小說) and literary games (*youxi biduan* 遊戲筆端) as examples of chatting aids, and considers them nothing more than a frivolous pastime:

⁶⁷ Jack Chen, “Blank Spaces and Secret Histories: Questions of Historiographic Epistemology in Medieval China,” *JAS* 69.4 (Nov., 2010): 1072.

There have certainly been ancients who have made “petty talk of minor officials.” It is fine to play literary games in order to aid one’s chats; “it is better than doing nothing.”⁶⁸ Yet there has not been one containing as many chapters as this to date. Indeed, isn’t this a ridiculous use of one’s mind?!⁶⁹

稗官小說，昔人固有為之者矣。遊戲筆端，資助談柄，猶賢乎已可也，未有卷帙如此其多者，不亦謬用其心也哉！

Despite the negative attitudes of many about gossip and *xiaoshuo*, Song miscellany identify oral sources as the basis of their compilations. As such, we find that authors tried to legitimate the oral origins of their works through various methods in their prefaces.⁷⁰ One way that they did this was to turn to canonical texts to demonstrate that miscellany were in line with models laid out by ancient worthies. The most common argument used in support of gossip by writers of miscellany is, ironically, any number of variations on the line from the *Lunyu* that was quoted in Ban Gu’s preface: “Even lesser ways surely have something observable in them. But if they are pursued too far, one could get bogged down. This is why gentleman do not engage in them” 雖小道，必有可觀者焉。致遠恐泥，是以君子弗為也。⁷¹ While Ban quotes Confucius to devalue *xiaoshuo* as a dangerous, lesser path that gentlemen should not participate in, authors of miscellany put emphasis on the first half of

⁶⁸ *Lunyu*, 17.22: 子曰：「飽食終日，無所用心，難矣哉！不有博弈者乎，為之猶賢乎已。」

⁶⁹ *Zhizhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解體, *juan* 11.

⁷⁰ Ellen Cong Zhang argues that these justifications are for writing in the miscellaneous knowledge category, not for the inclusion of their oral sources (“Song *Biji* Writing,” p. 61).

⁷¹ *Lunyu*, 19.4.

the statement: Confucius taught us that lessons can be found even in seemingly insignificant things.

Writers of miscellany who use this argument include Wang Dechen in his preface of *Zhu shi* 塵史 (Elk-Hair-Duster History) and Zeng Zao 曾慥 in his preface of *Leishuo* 類說 (Categorized Stories). Sun Guangxian in his preface of *Beimeng suoyan* draws on Confucius to convey a similar sentiment, and solidifies it with *Zuo zhuan*: “Although ‘trivial’ [is used to] describe the words [within my miscellany], if they are great then they should be known. Although this is not a canonical work...it is still ‘grasses among the silk and hemp’” 瑣細形言，大即可知也。雖非經緯之作……亦絲麻中菅蒯也。 This is a reference to the *Zuo zhuan*, which cites the *Shijing* as saying: “Although there is silk and hemp, we do not discard the grasses” 雖有絲麻，無棄菅蒯。⁷² The title, *Beimeng suoyan*, also is derived from the *Yugong* 禹貢 and the *Zuo zhuan*.

The title for Hong Mai’s miscellany, *Yijian zhi*, was also derived from an account in the *Liezi* 列子 about Yijian 夷堅 who compiled an account of the sage-king Yu’s deeds. Alister Inglis writes that the title “set the tone for the collecting of anomaly accounts due to Hong Mai’s self-professed ‘love of the strange.’ It furthermore placed the *Record* in an ancient tradition of collection and recording the unusual, while at the same time linking it to the respected sage-king Yu—perhaps apologetically, given orthodox Confucian disdain for speaking of anomalies.”⁷³

⁷² Chenggong 9. This line is not in the received *Shijing*.

⁷³ *Hong Mai’s Record of the Listener*, p. 1. Inglis places *Record* in the *zhiguai* 志怪 category because many entries discuss the supernatural.

Shao Bowen 邵伯溫 (1056–1134), in his preface to *A Record of Mr. Shao's Experiences* (*Shaoshi wenjian lu* 邵氏聞見錄; dated 1132) creates new meanings for canonical texts through careful placement. He writes:

The *Yijing* says: “A gentleman knows a lot about former words and previous actions, and thereby cultivates his virtue.”⁷⁴ *Mengzi* says: “He hears about it and thus knows about it; he sees it and thus knows about it.”⁷⁵ I, on the precedent of former gentlemen...have obtained many [examples of] “former words and previous actions.” Yet I do not dare to claim that I have “thereby cultivated my virtue.”⁷⁶

《易》曰：『君子多識前言往行，以畜其德。』《孟子》曰：『則聞而知之，則見而知之。』伯溫以先君子之故……得前言往行為多。以畜其德則不敢當。

Shao uses lines from the *Yijing* to demonstrate that in antiquity a gentleman became virtuous (*de*) by acquainting himself with positive and negative examples of speech and behavior. Shao places a quotation from *Mengzi* directly following this, which due to its proximity, is made to clarify the vehicles through which the gentleman attains this knowledge—through hearing (*wen*) and seeing (*jian*)—it also identifies virtue as the object of what becomes known through sight and sound. Through the juxtaposition of these two quotations, Shao unites

⁷⁴ “Daxu” 大畜, *Xiangzhuan*.

⁷⁵ *Mengzi*, 7B.37.

⁷⁶ “*Shaoshi wenjian lu xu*” 邵氏聞見錄序, *Song Yuan biji xiaoshuo daguan* ed., p. 1697.

these originally disparate lines together, with the purpose of redefining *jianwen* as a road to virtue.

Haosizhe 好事者: *Rehabilitating the Gossiper*

In a similar fashion, authors of miscellany challenge readers to rethink classic tropes of gossipers. In Zhou Mi's preface of *Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語 (Wild Talk from the East of Qi), an anonymous interlocuter accuses Zhou of writing wild-talk, and says that he must "truly be a man of Qi" 野哉言乎，子真齊人也。⁷⁷ The idea that people from Qi are gossips comes from *Mengzi*: "This is not the speech of a gentleman; it is the talk of an uncultivated man from the east of Qi" 此非君子之言，齊東野人之語也。⁷⁸ To this accusation, Zhou, a native of Qi, responds:

You do understand words! I am originally from Qi.⁷⁹ Even if I wanted to be not from Qi it would be impossible. Since it is so, what other words can I have? All words are still words; whether something is said or nothing. Alas, words!⁸⁰

客知言哉。余故齊，欲不齊不可。雖然，余何言哉。何言，亦言也，無所言也，無所不言，烏乎言。

⁷⁷ Zhonghua shuju ed., p. 4.

⁷⁸ *Mengzi*, 5A.4.

⁷⁹ Zhou Mi is from Ji'nan.

⁸⁰ Zhonghua shuju ed., pp. 4–5.

Instead of taking his guest's comments as an insult, Zhou uses humor to question the implication that the value of a man's words could be determined based on his place of birth. Words are words regardless of their origin; it is how one uses them that matters.⁸¹ To solidify his stance, Zhou even takes *Wild Talk from the East of Qi* as the title for his work.

Another gossiping figure rehabilitated by writers of miscellany is the “dilettante” (*baoshizhe* 好事者).⁸² Many authors of miscellany identify *baoshizhe* (those who are fond of matters or events) or *haoqizhe* 好奇者 (those who are fond of spectacle) as their intended readership. For convenience I will refer to both types of men as “dilettantes.”

Dilettantes as readers first make their appearance in the preface to Gan Bao's 干寶 (d. 336) *Soushen ji* 搜神記 (Record for the Search for the Supernatural): “I hope that, in the future, dilettantes will come along, note the bases of these stories, and find that there are things that set their minds wandering and fill their eyes. And I will be fortunate as well to escape reproach for this book” 幸將來好事之士，錄其根體，有以遊心，寓目，而無尤焉。⁸³ Later authors echo Gan's hope in their prefaces; such as Zheng Qi 鄭擘 (d. 899) in his preface to *Kai Tian chuanxin ji* 開天傳信記 (Records of Reliable Transmissions about Kai[yuan] and Tian[bao] Reigns),⁸⁴ Zhang Ji 張洎 (933–96) in his preface to *Jiashi Tanlu* 賈氏

⁸¹ This echoes Jia Yi's 賈誼 (200–168 B.C.E.) “Zhi an ce” 治安策 (Document on Governance and Peace) (*Han shu*, 48.2232–58).

⁸² This term is sometimes translated as “busybody” or “the curious.”

⁸³ 1931; Reprint. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1957, p. 1. This translation is slightly modified from Kenneth J. DeWoskin and J.I. Crump, Jr., trans., *In Search of the Supernatural: The Written Record* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. xxvii.

⁸⁴ *Kaiyuan Tianbao yishi shizhong*, Shanghai guji chubanshe ed. (1985), in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 140.

譚錄 (A Record of Mr. Jia's Sayings),⁸⁵ and Yang Yu 楊瑀 (1285–1361) in his preface to *Shanju xinyu* 山居新語 (New Stories from a Mountain Home).⁸⁶

The *locus classicus* of the dilettante as gossip appears in *Mengzi*, in which Wan Zhang 萬章 enquires of Mengzi about various rumors that he had heard. Mengzi concludes that in each case these rumors were simply “fabrications by dilettantes” 好事者為之也, implying a direct connection between dilettantes and the creation of and spread of misinformation.⁸⁷

Xu Shen 許慎 (ca. 58–147), in his preface to *Shuowen jiezi*, goes as far as to warn us against dilettantes, whom he views as threats to the stability of language and society in pursuit of self-serving interests. Xu writes that they are nothing more than “common scholars and lowly men.... They think the old ways are strange and excel at wild talk. They think that what they know is secret and mysterious; that they have researched and uncovered the subtle teachings of the sages.... Is it not erroneous to leave their mistakes unclarified?” 俗儒鄙夫.....怪舊執而善野言，以其所知為秘妙，究洞聖人之微旨.....其迷誤不諭，豈不悖哉。⁸⁸ This negative opinion of dilettantes, in some circles anyway, continued for another thousand years; at least through the Song.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Daxiang chubanshe ed., Series 1, 2:136.

⁸⁶ *Zhibuzhu zhai congshu* ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 277.

⁸⁷ *Mengzi*, 5A.8–9; Yang Bojun, *Mengzi yi zhu*, 1:227–31.

⁸⁸ Wang Yun, *Shuowen jiezi judu*, pp. 605–6; *juan* 29, pp. 8b–9b.

⁸⁹ For example, see Huang Zhen's 黃震 (1213–80) *Huangshi richao* 黃氏日抄 (Mr. Huang's Daily Copies), in which Huang ridicules and debunks numerous rumors and misinterpretations spread by dilettantes (*SKQS* ed., 4.44a–b, 7.59a–b, 8.15a–b, 32.5a–b, 35.18a, 42.2a–b, 46.66a–67a, 51.16b–17a, 56.14a, and 60.8a).

What is it about dilettantes that critics like Mengzi and Xu Shen do not like? Mengzi viewed the rumors spread by dilettantes as an attack on men who were being upheld as moral exemplars. Thus, dilettantes were a direct threat to the stability of the moral model championed by Mengzi. Xu Shen's qualm with this type of man is in a similar vein. He considered them threats to the textual authority of the sages and worthies. Xu is chagrined that these men question the canons by interpreting language following their own observations, or by using what has been passed down from father to son.

Despite the negative opinion of dilettantes held by many—or perhaps in virtue of this view—some authors indicate dilettantes as their targeted readership and also portray them in a positive light throughout the body of their works. Dilettantes featured in anecdotal literature, primarily as a generic character type, are represented as protectors of local and cultural history, storytellers, and recorders. Sometimes they simply recorded unusual events in nature, such as the appearance of a lotus with three flowers growing on a single stem. But for the most part, we find that, in anecdotes, dilettantes attached themselves to interesting ‘characters’ of the day, and later passed on the poetry and other writings by these men, and of course, stories of the men themselves. Indeed, dilettantes are identified as the sources for many anecdotes. The final line of an anecdote about Zhang Ci 張辭 in *Guiyuan cong'an* 桂苑叢談 (Gathered Conversations in the Cassia Garden), for example, reads: “Even now [this tale] is told by the dilettantes of Jianghuai” 至今為江淮好事者所說.⁹⁰ Although this role of dilettantes as witness and storyteller in anecdotal literature tends toward literary device, their function is crucial to the narrative.

⁹⁰ Yan Zixiu 嚴子休 (ca. 890), cited in Li Fang 李昉 (925–96), *Taiping guangji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), 75.473.

As such, we find that in the Song dynasty a conflict exists about the judgment of dilettantes as threats to society through the spread of rumor, and the continuation of non-institutionalized, non-canonical educational practices on the one hand; and as unsung, mostly anonymous heroes who enrich society through their investigation into matters concerning men and natural events that occurred beyond the scope of the ordinary, and their attention to matters affecting the cultural lives of men on a local, grassroots level on the other. Authors of miscellany, by identifying dilettantes as their ideal readership, position themselves in the latter category of men.

Social Cohesion: Creating a Discursive Community

As we have already seen from the prefaces to many Song dynasty miscellany, one motivation for penning these works was to participate in intellectual discussion. This section, building on the assertion by some authors of Song miscellany that their works are intended to be used as “conversation aids” (*tanzhu* 談助), outlines the theory of the existence of a community of miscellany readers.⁹¹ As already discussed, authors of miscellany framed their works as “conversational,” thereby creating an imaginary space in which they could be free to test out theories and note observations. Readers can then eavesdrop on renowned thinkers, and later participate in or extend these conversations in an oral setting or on the written page. Fu Daiwie introduces the idea of an “imagined *biji* community” that

⁹¹ The existence of an “imagined community of *biji* readers” has been forwarded by Fu Daiwie in “The Flourishing of *Biji* or Pen-Notes Texts and its Relations to History of Knowledge in Song China (960–1279),” *Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident*, hors série (2007): 113–6.

participates in scholarly debate via the medium of miscellany.⁹² Using *Mengxi bitan* 夢溪筆談 as an example, Fu shows that some readers of miscellany were not passive, but affirmed or countered theories presented in miscellany in their own miscellany.⁹³

Scholars of gossip and anecdote comment that the circulation of gossip helps to create social cohesion.⁹⁴ As Jack Chen has noted, “One can participate in gossip only if one belongs to the social network through which the gossip circulates—a tautological condition that might also be expressed by saying that gossip and the network along which it travels are mutually constitutive, that gossip in a sense creates the network along which it is circulated.”⁹⁵ Can we say the same of miscellany as written accounts of gossip? Is this why, if many people of the Song harbored negative opinions about gossip, authors of miscellany conscientiously selected titles that highlighted their origins in gossip; such as *Beimeng suoyan*, *Jiashi tanlu*, *Luoyang jinsben jiuwen ji* 洛陽縉紳舊聞記 (Records of Stories of the Luoyang Gentry), *Mengxi bitan*, *Shengshui yantan lu* 澗水燕談錄 (A Record of Chats at Shengshui) and so on?

We find that authors use the trope of gossip to create a space in which they can speculate about men of renown, test out theories, and record their archaeological, anthropological, and other findings, among other subjects. As a conversational space,

⁹² “The Flourishing of *Biji*,” pp. 113–6.

⁹³ Fu Daiwie counted thirteen follow-up discussions in other Song dynasty miscellany of a single entry in *Mengxi bitan* (*Ibid.*, p. 115).

⁹⁴ For example, Nicholas DiFonzo and Prashant Bordia, *Rumor Psychology: Social and Organizational Approaches* (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2007), cited in Jack W. Chen, “Introduction,” Jack W. Chen and David Schaberg, eds., *Idle Talk: Gossip and Anecdote in Traditional China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), p. 2.

⁹⁵ Chen, “Introduction,” Chen and Schaberg, *Idle Talk*, p. 3.

arguments need not be fully articulated, nor even consistent.⁹⁶ Framing their works as gossip gives authors and readers a sense of freedom—from adherence to genre-dictated style, from avoidance of taboo subjects, from the finality of conclusions, and so on.

The use of *gai* 蓋 to express tentative conclusions or to assign potential meaning to an event or literary work is indicative of this trend. A common way that authors seek meaning in miscellany is by offering explanations for a character's motivation, the appropriate context for an utterance, or an appraisal of veracity. For example, Xu Du 徐度 provides an anecdote about Liu Anshi 劉安世 (styled Qizhi 器之; 1048–1125), who used to sit in complete silence when he had guests. Someone asked him about this practice, and Liu replied: “Whoever is able to [sit in respectful silence for a long period of time] is certainly a superior man” 其能之者，必貴人也. After this Xu comments: “It is probably that he once used these words to test him; this is believable” 蓋嘗以其言驗之，誠然.⁹⁷ Since Liu was a

⁹⁶ I use the word “conversation” for a number of reasons. First, because it appears frequently in titles, and readers are reminded time and again in prefaces and throughout the texts that miscellany are based on conversations had or overheard. Second, some miscellany suggest that their works would serve well as conversational aids. Third, as noted by Stephen Owen and Ellen Cong Zhang, the fluidity of the internal structure of miscellany resembles the flow of conversations. Finally, framing miscellany in conversational terms helps make sense of the informality and tentativeness of the subject matter of miscellany that many later scholars have noted. Michael Nylan similarly observes, in regard to the appeal of the dialogue form in Han dynasty philosophical texts, that “the dialogue need not seek to prove a single proposition; it can tolerate greater ambiguity. Thus, the dialogue is free to suggest complex relations between certain phenomena (as much by proximity or parallelism in the dialogue as by didactic exposition)” (“Han Classicists Writing in Dialogue about Their Own Tradition,” *Philosophy East West* 47.2 [Apr., 1997]: 136).

⁹⁷ *Quesao bian* 卻掃編, *Song Yuan biji xiaoshuo daguan*, p. 4481.

player in factional politics during the Shaosheng reign 紹聖 (1094–8), Xu must have attached historical significance to this sketch of Liu’s behavior.⁹⁸

Authors frame this space as an intimate and exclusive setting through their choice of titles and through their prefaces. For example, Wang Pizhi 王辟之 (b. 1031) introduces his miscellany with the following lines: “*Chats at River Sheng* consists of idle conversations (*xianyan*) and chats (*tanshuo*) between me and the farmers and woodcutters, after I, a native of Qi, returned to the River Sheng and repaired my ancestor’s former hut” 《澗水談》者，齊國王闢之將歸澗水之上、治先人舊廬與田夫樵叟閒燕而談說也。⁹⁹ With this description, Wang paints himself as a wise recluse, living an idyllic, bucolic life among other recluses, such as the legendary woodcutter. Wang, of course, does not really retire among the farmers, but using symbols from the cultural imagination of the wise recluse, indicates his own elevated status as a retired man of knowledge, and promises readers insights that only come from the wisdom of age and withdrawal from social and political life.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, later in the preface he identifies the true source of his accounts as “worthy educated elite men” (*xian shidaiju* 賢士大夫).

⁹⁸ This sketch does indeed contribute to the romanticization of Liu in cultural memory as a martyr who fell victim to factional politics. Cf. Shao Bowen’s 邵伯溫 characterization of Liu: “Alas! Sima Guang had many disciples, who, like Qizhi, were able to maintain their composure. Regardless of life or death, fortune or misfortune, he did not change. He was a true man of the Yuanyou. Qizhi enjoyed reading *Mengzi* throughout his life, thus his greatness of integrity and air of restraint were like this” 嗚呼，溫公門下士多矣，如器之者所守凜然，死生禍福不變，真元祐人也。器之平生喜讀《孟子》，故其剛大不枉之氣似之 (*Shaoshi wenjian lu* 邵氏聞見錄 [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983], pp. 140–1).

⁹⁹ “*Shengshui yantan lu xu*” (Preface to *Record of Conversations at River Sheng*), Zhonghua shuju ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 170.

¹⁰⁰ For a detailed study of the recluse in cultural imagination, see Alan J. Berkowitz, *Patterns of Disengagement: The Practice and Portrayal of Reclusion in Early Medieval China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

While Wang's description cannot be considered autobiography *per se*, it does bear resemblance to pre-modern Chinese textual constructions of self found in the impressionistic autobiographical form, "in which the writer attempts definition [of self] through identification with an atemporal, intertextual tradition that suppresses reference to the temporally and spatially organized world of ancestry and position [as one would find in a circumstantial style autobiography], substituting instead references to the leisured life of the literati."¹⁰¹ The mode a writer chooses, whether circumstantial or impressionistic, posits a "definition of the intellectual self and its role in society."¹⁰² Wang's presentation of his constructed self as wise-recluse also suggests to readers that his miscellany offer access to the more personal, private aspects of his intellect.

Other miscellany promise an exclusive peek into the minds of renowned intellectuals, men to whom the author has special access. Li Jian's 李薦 (b. 1059?) *Shiyou tanji* 師友談記 (Record of Chats with My Teacher and His Friends), which consists of sayings (*yan* 言, *wei* 謂), discussions (*lun* 論), and lectures (*jiang* 講) by Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101; *jingshi* 1057) and his friends, mainly Fan Zuyu 范祖禹 (1041–98; *jingshi* 1063), Qin Guan 秦觀 (1049–1100; *jingshi* 1085), and Chao Buzhi 晁補之 (1053–1110; *jingshi* 1079) is an example of this.

Gossip delineates a divide between in-group and out-group, which creates a desire to become a member of the privileged in-group. In the case of miscellany this desire to belong is compounded by the perceived social standing of the author and his promise to provide access to famous men. By reframing dilettantes (*haoshizhe*) as a desirable group, or claiming

¹⁰¹ Wendy Larson, *Literary Authority and the Modern Chinese Writer: Ambivalence and Autobiography* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), pp. 11–2.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

to hope that “like-minded men” would appreciate and understand their works, authors of miscellany take pushing past traditional boundaries as part of the identity of this in-group.¹⁰³

MISCELLANY AND HISTORY

History was a subject of great interest to Song intellectuals. Four historical projects that would later be adopted as standard histories—*Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書, *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書, *Jiu Wudai shi* 舊五代史, and *Xin Wudai shi* 新五代史—were all written in the Song, as well as the *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑, the first comprehensive history since the *Shiji*.¹⁰⁴ Countless other historical works of different genres were also produced during this period; including veritable records (*shilu* 實錄), national histories (*guoshi* 國史), gathering of essentials (*buiyao* 會要), gazetters (*difang zhi* 地方誌), and private histories (*sishi* 私史; *yeshi* 野史). Meditations on history were also common topics for poetry and essays.

Authors of miscellany were also deeply concerned about historiographical issues: what was included, what was omitted, what was erroneous, and how to interpret and use history. The contents of miscellany are presented as *hua* 話 (stories) or *shi* 事 (matters, events,

¹⁰³ Many questions remain about this miscellany community: If miscellany were really used as handbooks for conversation, transforming any reader into the owner of privileged information, did this gain him access to a community previously inaccessible to him? By spreading gossip beyond the original nexus of core individuals, does this transform the information contained within these anecdotes into common knowledge, thus rendering it no longer special?

¹⁰⁴ For more on the composition of the *Zizhi tongjian* see On-cho Ng and Q. Edward Wang, *Mirroring the Past: The Writing and Use of History in Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), pp. 147–51; Wilkinson, *Chinese History*, pp. 615–7.

things), *qianshi* 前事 (previous matters), *gushi* 故事 (old matters), *shishi* 事實 or *shishi* 實事 (true matters), and *shilu* 實錄 (true records).¹⁰⁵

While authors of prefaces for miscellany do not generally refer to their works as histories (*shi* 史), those who mention history in their prefaces commonly measured their works against the historical standard. Zhang Qixian, for example, writes about his *Luoyang jinsben jiuwen ji*:

I have selected the stories of the elders of the past, which have certainly been inspected for veracity. They are approximately the category and principles (*leili*) of previous histories, which actively seek to encourage [proper behavior] and warn against [inappropriate behavior]. I omit the minor debates of country bumpkins. And in cases when there are differences from the standard histories, I record them side-by-side. Thus it is comparable to separate (*biezhuan*) or outer histories (*waizhuan*).¹⁰⁶

摭舊老之所說，必稽事實；約前史之類例，動求勸誡。鄉曲小辨，略而不書，與正史差異者，竝存而錄之，則別傳、外傳比也。

Here Zhang outlines his methodology. The stories he selected have all been scrutinized (*ji*) against the standard histories and judged to be accurate. Yet, while he compares his noble didactic aim to histories of the past, he also promises to do what these histories cannot: to

¹⁰⁵ While *shilu* 實錄 (veritable records) are the historical accounts on which standard histories are based, Wang Dechen's usage of *shilu* in his "Zhu shi xu" 塵史序 (Preface of *Elk-Hair Duster History*) appears to refer to other records that the author deems reliable.

¹⁰⁶ "Luoyang jinsben jiuwen ji xu" 洛陽縉紳舊聞記, in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 161.

provide transparency in the problematic selection of source material by listing discrepancies side-by-side.

Zhang's preface demonstrates an emerging historical consciousness that was characteristic of the Song dynasty. On Cho Ng and Q. Edward Wang state that "a sense of anachronism, an awareness of evidence, and an interest in causation," all hallmarks of a modern historical sensibility, were emerging intellectual perspectives in the Song dynasty.¹⁰⁷ After the Qingli 慶曆 period (1041–49), scholars began to question the authority of the Han-Tang exegesis, and even to question traditional attribution of authors of canonical works:

What is remarkable about these criticisms is the importance attached herein to "author-based" authority in texts—that is, authority deriving from claims of original authorship made for various classics or their components—and the corresponding debasement of textual authority derived from traditional transmission and embodied by the orthodox versions endorsed by the imperial government. The denial of the authorial origins of various details of the classics provides a sanction for textual revisions, and such revisions are carried out with the goal of restoring an authorial text. Textual authority has not been lost, but rather transferred from a tradition-based model to a model in which individual readers may assert their own rights to determine authorial intent in the classics, independent of tradition.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ *Mirroring the Past*, p. 135.

¹⁰⁸ Susan Cherniack, "Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China," *HJAS* 54.1 (Jun., 1994): 24.

This marked the beginning of the destabilization of the notion that government-sanctioned texts were the absolute authoritative text.

At the same time, *Daoxue* 道學 ideas about culture and governance were coming to the fore: “the mid-Northern Song literati sought to employ history as a way to clarify and advance their Confucian visions, in the process defining themselves as conscientious *shi* who strove to realize their conceptions of the Confucian culture through practicing their learning.”¹⁰⁹ We can see evidence of this trend of embodying the *Dao* in writing (*wen dao he yi* 文道合一) in miscellany through a great number of prefaces who claim didacticism as one of their aims.

This section examines how authors of miscellany created a place for their works within the historical tradition. First we will discuss two factors that contributed to the authors’ perceived need to supplement history: the destruction of books due to war and an emerging awareness of the subjective nature of truth. These factors, combined with a growing respect for contemporary voices, resulted in an explosion of miscellany. Second, we will look at how authors, aware of their problematic reliance on oral sources, addressed the issue of reliability in their prefaces.

¹⁰⁹ Ng and Wang, *Mirroring the Past*, p. 140. For more on the ancient prose (*guwen* 古文) movement in the Song, see Yu-shih Chen, “The Literary Theory and Practice of Ou-yang Hsiu,” in *Chinese Approaches to Literature from Confucius to Liang Ch’i-Ch’ao*, Adele A. Rickett, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 68–9.

The relationship between miscellany and history begins with early anecdotal histories.¹¹⁰ David Schaberg has discussed the illustrative function of anecdotes in early philosophical and historical texts, most notably the *Hanfeizi* 韓非子, *Chunqiu* 春秋, *Zuozhuan* 左傳, *Shiji* 史記, and *Hanshu* 漢書.¹¹¹ Using anecdotes “tie[d] the claims of the speaker or writer closely to common knowledge and its sturdy truisms about the ways of the world.”¹¹²

Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661–721) opined that early miscellany from the Wei-Jin period, such as *Yulin* 語林, *Xiaolin* 笑林, *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語, and *Sushuo* 俗說, negatively affected the compositional standards of imperially sanctioned histories. Liu states that although miscellany only recorded inconsequential, unimportant things, people began to cherish their humorous and clever narrative style. Soon writers of standard histories followed in kind, and the focus of historical writing gradually shifted from praise-blame to entertainment. Yet, it was not the narrative style that Liu took issue with, but rather that “historians sought out preposterous stories and recorded queer sayings, without separating

¹¹⁰ The relationship between historical narrative and prose, especially prose-fiction, has been thoroughly studied and discussed. Most notably, Anthony C. Yu, “History, Fiction and the Reading of Chinese Narrative,” *CLEAR* 10 (1988): 1–19; Andrew H. Plaks, “Towards a Critical Theory of Chinese Narrative,” *Chinese Narrative: Critical and Theoretical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

¹¹¹ “Word of Mouth and the Sources of Western Han History,” in Chen and Schaberg, *Idle Talk*, especially pp. 19–23. See also Michael Nylan regarding the use of the dialogue form in Han dynasty philosophical texts (“Han Classicists Writing in Dialogue,” esp. pp. 135–7).

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

the true from the false or distinguishing between right and wrong” 史官征其謬說，錄彼邪言，真偽莫分，是非無別。¹¹³

In the age of printing, particularly in the Southern Song, authors and printers might have emphasized the entertaining nature of miscellany in order to encourage sales. A common complaint at the time was that histories were too numerous, repetitive, and difficult to read and therefore it was impossible to gain a comprehensive view of the past.¹¹⁴ The preface of *Xu Shishuo* 續世說 (A Continuation of *Stories of the World*), for example, writes:

Historical books transmit the truth (*xin*), yet they are plentiful and varied and difficult to read. The small talk of the hundred schools and of various masters truly are capable of pleasing the eye, yet they often lose their value in their slander of others. Essential and not overly complex, yet reliable (*xin*) and worthy of reference. Is this not the form of [*Continuation of*] *Stories of the World*?¹¹⁵

史書之傳信矣，然浩博而難觀。諸子百家之小說，誠可悅目，往往或失之誣。要而不煩，信而可考，其《世說》之題歟。

¹¹³ *Shitong*, pp. 514–5. Endymion Wilkinson writes that the *Shitong* was “known (in the Song) for its sharp criticism of official historical writing and questioning of the classics” (*Chinese History*, p. 605). Liu also “adopted a historical approach toward various narrative materials and basically regarded them as marginal forms of history,” placing them under the history category in his *Shitong* (Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu, *From Historicity to Fictionality: The Chinese Poetics of Narrative* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994], p. 93).

¹¹⁴ Wilkinson, *Chinese History*, p. 638. Egan notes that the *Zizhi tongjian* was praised for making the past intelligible again (“To Count Grains of Sand on the Ocean Floor: Changing Perceptions of Books and Learning in the Song Dynasty,” Lucille Chia and Hilde de Weerdt, eds., *Knowledge and Text Production in an Age of Print: China 900–1400* [Leiden: Brill, 2011], p. 47). Cf. Sima Guang’s memorial on the objectives of *Zizhi tongjian*, translated in Ng and Wang, *Mirroring the Past*, p. 147.

¹¹⁵ Qin Guo 秦果, *Xu Shishuo xu* 續世說序 (Preface to *Continuation of Tales of the World*), written in Shaoxing 27 (1157), Guoxue jiben congshu ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 179. This is the preface to the fine print edition by Li Minde 李敏得. According to Qin, the original only circulated as a manuscript, and as a result, was riddled with errors (*Ibid.*).

In this passage we can see that readability and reliability were critical issues of concern for readers.

Bu shi 補史: *Supplementing History*

A number of authors of Song dynasty miscellany state in their prefaces that they intend for their works to “supplement history” (*bu shi* 補史). Song Minqiu 宋敏求, for instance, writes: “Each time I would retire (from court) to eat, I would read writings from well-known authors from the Tang to the present dynasty in order to supplement what was left out of history” 每退食，觀唐人自本朝名輩撰著以補史遺者。¹¹⁶ Because of examples such as this, modern scholars commonly assume that the main purpose of miscellany is to supplement standard histories. As such, scholars tend to approach miscellany from a historiographical point of view. How can anecdotes about Su Shi, Ouyang Xiu, or Wang Anshi verify other textual records about their lives? What can anecdotes tell us about institutions, religious or cultural practices, or politics of the Song? While these are certainly worthwhile questions, scholars who utilize miscellany to answer such questions are then faced with issues of authenticity and subjectivity that are at odds with modern historiographical standards. This, in turn, gives rise to miscellany being relegated to a supplemental/inferior position in comparison to standard historical accounts. In other words, “facts” and “data” taken from these accounts can only appear in historical studies as

¹¹⁶ “*Chunming tuichao lu xu*” 春明退朝錄序 (Preface of *Record of Returning from Court in Chunming*), *Baichuan xuehai congshu* ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 167.

colorful anecdotes when they support the view presented in the standard histories, or in footnotes as conflicting accounts.

While it is undeniable that some miscellany do make the claim that their works serve as supplements to history, we need to consider what is meant by this assertion. Our first impulse, of course, is to assume that what these men are supplementing are facts or empirical truths. This has given rise to a genre of articles that point out factual errors in miscellany.¹¹⁷ Yet, if supplying factual data were the main purpose of miscellany, we must ask ourselves *why* there are so many factual errors. Why would highly educated scholars, many of whom had worked on imperially sponsored histories, and with an interest in developing more stringent historiographical standards, not consistently apply these standards to their own miscellany and choose to present historical “facts” in such an informal way?

Another common theory is that miscellany intended to supplement standard histories with information about subjects that do not fit into imperially sponsored histories, such as information about the lives of commoners or local customs or the personal lives of the imperial family. And we find that most miscellany do just this. However, we must then also ask why, if these works were intended as histories of lesser subjects, do they lack the internal structure and order found in standard histories, and are presented in such an informal manner.

And, finally, some modern scholars have described miscellany as notebooks wherein scholars have jotted down events that could be included in future histories. There is some scholarship that lends support to this theory. For example, recent scholarship has shown

¹¹⁷ For example, Deng Qihui 鄧啟輝, “Du *Jilei bian* zhong biji yi ze xianyi” 讀《雞肋編》中筆記一則獻疑, *Wenjian ziliao* (2012) 26: 122; and Deng Qihui, “*Jilei bian* biji zheng wu er ze” 《雞肋編》筆記正誤二則, *Wenxue jie* 12 (2012): 224–5.

that large portions of standard histories written in the Song were taken directly from miscellany.¹¹⁸ Not surprisingly a great number of men who worked on state histories also wrote miscellany. Fan Zhen 范鎮 (1008–89; *jinsbi* 1038), for example, wrote that his encounters with Tang miscellany while working on the *New Tang History* affected his way of thinking about history: “When I was writing the history of the Tang, I saw that Tang literati wrote books to relate contemporary affairs. For several hundred years after [they were written], there were many that could be used to verify and correct [other sources], yet from recent times on they are rare” 予嘗與修唐史，見唐之士人著書以述當時之事，後數百年有可考正者甚多，而近代以來蓋希矣。¹¹⁹ This suggests that before Fan began working on writing the *New Tang History*, it had not occurred to him that one should write a contemporary history.¹²⁰

The other compilers for the *Xin Tang shu* must have been similarly affected while working on this project, for nearly all of them have written one or more miscellany. In addition to Fan Zhen, Ouyang Xiu wrote *Guitian lu* 歸田錄 (Record of Returning to the Farm); Song Qi 宋祁 (998–1061; *jinsbi* 1024) wrote *Song Jingwen gong biji* 宋景文公筆記

¹¹⁸ For example, Denis Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History Under the T'ang* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Jack Chen, “Blank Spaces and Secret Histories: Questions of Historiographic Epistemology in Medieval China” *JAS* 69.4 (Nov., 2010): 1071–91; and Meghan Cai, “Stuck in the Middle: A Comparison of Accounts of Gao Pian’s 高駢 (821–887) Life in the *Monograph on the Chaos of Sorcerers in Guangling* (*Guangling yaoluan zhi* 廣陵妖亂志) and the Official Tang Histories” (unpublished paper presented at University of Toronto, March 11, 2006).

¹¹⁹ “*Dongzhai jishi zixu*” 東齋紀事自序 (Personal Preface of *Records of Stories from the Eastern Studio*), punctuated and collated by Ru Pei 汝沛 (1980; Reprint. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), p. 1.

¹²⁰ Anna Shields also points out the value of using anecdotes to assess contemporary opinions (“Gossip, Anecdote, and Literary History: Representations of the Yuanhe Era in Tang Anecdote Collections,” in Chen and Schaberg, *Idle Talk*, p. 107).

(Song Jingwen's Brush Notes) and Song Minqiu 宋敏求 (1019–1079; *jinsbi* 1039) wrote *Chunming tuichao lu* 春明退朝錄 (Record of Retiring from Court while [Living in] Chunming [District]). Other Song dynasty officials who wrote miscellany include: Sima Guang,¹²¹ Chao Yuezhi 晁說之 (字 Yidao 以道; 1059–1129; *jinsbi* 1082),¹²² and Ye Mengde.¹²³ These scholars understood the value of multiple sources and the repercussions that the loss of documents had on the later creation of history.

Perhaps the earliest example of supplementing history can be found when Sima Qian hailed Confucius's efforts to supplement history in his description of the development of the *Chunqiu*, which was, in Sima's opinion, Confucius' greatest achievement: "[The *Chunqiu*] preserves lost states, continues severed genealogies, supplements the neglected, and raises up what had been cast aside. It is a great example of the kingly way" 存亡國，繼絕世，補敝起廢，王道之大者也。¹²⁴ In this short statement, Sima does not indicate what it is that has been neglected and cast aside, only that they are great examples of the kingly way.

In the Tang, Li Zhao 李肇 (*fl.* 813) wrote in his *Guoshi bu xu* 國史補序 (Preface of *Supplementing History*), which Ouyang Xiu later adopted as a model for his *Guitian lu* 歸田錄 (Record of Retirement to the Farm):

¹²¹ *Shushui jiwén* 涑水記聞.

¹²² *Chaoshi keyu* 晁氏客語.

¹²³ *Bishu lubua* 避暑錄話 and *Shilin yanyu* 石林燕語.

¹²⁴ *Shiji*, 130.3297. Translated in Stephen Durrant, "Self as the Intersection of Traditions: The Autobiographical Writings of Ssu-ma Ch'ien," *JAO* 106.1 (Jan. – Mar., 1986): 38.

The *Gongyang zhuàn* says: “What is seen is expressed differently [by people who see it]; what is heard is expressed differently [by people who hear it].” Everyone brings old events (*gushi*) to completion through what they have seen and heard. In the past, Liu Su compiled a *xiaoshuo* that covered the time from the Northern and Southern Dynasties to the Kaiyuan period, and called it *Chuanji*.¹²⁵ From the Kaiyuan period to the Changqing period I have written *Guoshi bu*, thinking that historians will perhaps lack something then I will supplement it. I will continue *Chuanji*, but there are some things I will not do: I will excise talk about retribution, narratives about ghosts and spirits, verifications of dreams and prognostications, and that which approaches the bedchamber. But I will write about records of true events, investigations of the principles of things, debates about suspicious and confounding matters, reveal encouragements and admonishments, gathered regional customs, and aides for conversation and laughter.¹²⁶

《公羊傳》曰：“所見異辭，所聞異辭。”未有不因見聞而備故實者。昔劉餗集小說，涉南北朝至開元，著為《傳記》。予自開元至長慶撰《國史補》，慮史氏或闕則補之意，續《傳記》而有不為，言報應，

¹²⁵ It is unclear whether *Chuanji* is an independent work or an alternative title for another work by Liu, most likely *Sui Tang jiabua* 隋唐嘉話. *Leishuo* and *Ganzhu ji* both include citations from Liu Su’s *Chuanji*, *Guoshi yizuan* 國史異纂, and *Sui Tang jiabua*. Yet, an anecdote cited in *Taiping guangji* as being excerpted from *Guoshi yizuan*, is found in *Sui Tang jiabua*. However, neither *Jiu Tang shu* nor *Xin Tang shu* have a record of *Sui Tang jiabua*.

¹²⁶ In Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 112.

敘鬼神，徵夢蔔，近帷箔，悉去之；紀事實，探物理，辯疑惑，示勸戒，採風俗，助談笑，則書之。

The line Li cites from *Gongyang zhuàn* in its entirety reads: “What is seen is expressed differently [by people who see it]; what is heard is expressed differently [by people who hear it]; what is passed on is expressed differently [by those who pass it on]” 所見異辭，所聞異辭，所傳聞異辭。¹²⁷ In other words, historians encounter different narratives of the same event depending on the memory and experiences of the teller. This is an early articulation of the notion that historical narratives are subjective. It also draws attention to the issue of limits of individual knowledge and perception. As an individual cannot experience all sides of a story, his or her expression of it can only be a partial version of the truth. As such, can such a thing as comprehensive histories (*tongshi* 通史) exist? This query is especially relevant in the Song, an era that valued the ideal of comprehensiveness.

It is likely, then, that authors of Song dynasty miscellany, aware of the limits of individual knowledge, recorded their own experiences and sought out the experiences of others in order to contribute to the creation of a comprehensive account of the past. If we consider the question of supplementation in this way, it is not necessarily facts that are being filled in by Song authors, but rather different perspectives, interpretations of history, or applications of history to current events.

¹²⁷ Yingong 1.7. This is the explanation for why no day is given for when “Gongzi Yishi (d. 722 B.C.E.) passed” 公子益師卒. The *Gongyang zhuàn* is one of the three commentaries on the *Chunqiu* (*Chunqiu sanzhuàn* 春秋三傳). Traditional scholars believed that the *Gongyang zhuàn* was the “result of a continuous oral tradition” originating with Tzu Hsia 子夏, one of Confucius’ disciples. It was eventually transmitted to Gongyang who wrote it down (*Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide*, Michael Loewe, ed. [Berkeley: The Society for the Study of Early China: The Institute of East Asian Studies, 1993, p. 68).

As discussed above, authors of miscellany became interested in collecting and transmitting experiential knowledge culled mainly from oral sources, in part, because their experiences working in the office of history revealed that, while standard histories presented a single version of events, this was often one of multiple, often contradictory accounts. The problem faced by authors of miscellany, which relied on knowledge obtained through personal and second-hand observation, was the burden of proving authenticity—or at least giving the appearance of authenticity.

Methodology to determine the reliability of sources was starting to emerge at this time. Sima Guang's 司馬光 (1019–1086; *jinsbi* 1038) critical commentary on his *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑, *Kaoyi* 考異 (Investigation of Discrepancies), has been described as the first history to openly discuss how to deal with often contradictory source materials.¹²⁸ Sima and his team examined anywhere from 220 to 322 works.¹²⁹ In *Kaoyi*, Sima contends that historical accounts should follow direct evidence. In cases in which direct evidence was lacking, historians should use critical judgment based on “judicious historical imagination—considering the motives of historical actors, examining the circumstances surrounding events, and probing the probable causes of actions.”¹³⁰ Ng and Wang conclude that:

¹²⁸ Egan, “To Count Grains of Sand,” p. 50.

¹²⁹ Ng and Wang, *Mirroring the Past*, p. 148.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

In spite of its elegant narrative flow and rigorous use of evidence, the work is not, in the end, a history. It is a chronicle that treats events in isolation without contextual interconnection with related and circumstantial happenings. ...Nevertheless, within the format of a chronicle and guided by his conception of authentic history, Sima strove to shape the past with impartiality and arrive at truth on objective grounds.¹³¹

Despite modern criticism of *Zizhi tongjian*, Sima's attention to the problematic nature of oral source was groundbreaking at the time and likely stemmed from the critical reception of Ouyang Xiu's *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (New History of the Tang). Although *Xin Tang shu* was praised by some for its comprehensiveness and readability, critics complained that Tang documents originally recorded in *Jiu Tang shu* had been edited or deleted, and that the veracity of sources were not held to strict standards.¹³² Wu Zhen 吳縝 (fl. 1080s) dedicated an entire book to the correction of the errors in *Xin Tang shu*.¹³³ Accordingly, Sima, in the compilation of *Zizhi tongjian*, chose to use the sources from *Jiu Tang shu* rather than from *Xin Tang shu*.¹³⁴

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

¹³² Zhuang Chuo is one example, as will be discussed in further detail in chapter 4. Ouyang apparently disliked the ornate language of the Tang documents, so he edited or omitted them (James Liu, *Ouyang Hsiu: An Eleventh-Century Neo-Confucianist* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967], p. 108).

¹³³ *Xin Tang shu jiumiu* 新唐書糾謬 (Corrected Errors in the New History of the Tang), completed in 1089. Ng and Wang note that Wu might have been motivated by revenge because Ouyang did not include him in this history project. Wu also wrote another book criticizing a different history project by Ouyang, *Xin Wudai shi jiumiu* 新五代史糾謬 (Corrected Errors in the New History of the Tang) (Ng and Wang, *Mirroring the Past: The Writing and Use of History in Imperial China* [Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005], p. 137).

¹³⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the composition and reception of *Xin Tang shu* and its influence on Sima Guang's *Zizhi tongjian* see Ng and Wang, *Mirroring the Past*, pp. 137–8.

Yet it would be inaccurate to say that Ouyang was not conscious of issues of veracity. In fact, one of the reasons that he preferred terse language over the ornate style of *Jiu Tang shu* was in imitation of Confucius and the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (Spring and Autumn Annals), neither of which included details that could not be corroborated.¹³⁵ In fact, Ouyang insisted on the exhaustive collection of historical evidence, especially archaeological, bibliographical, genealogical, and contemporary sources, mostly for the benefit of future historians.¹³⁶

While *Kaoyi* is perhaps the longest and most formal treatise to discuss historical sources of a single history at its time, early writers of miscellany were certainly aware of the problems of using unofficial written, and especially oral, sources. Robert Hymes has argued that “in a number of different spheres in the Song saw a proliferation of contending claims and propositions, spoken and written, and that this proliferation raised new concern over how to tell which claim was true and which was not. Commercialization, both in general and in the area of religious services, was one such sphere; new printed media of communication such as newspapers, the bitter factional and intellectual conflicts of middle Northern Song and after; and increasing litigiousness in society at large may have been three others.”¹³⁷ Even Hong Mai stresses in his prefaces to *Yijian zhi* that he strives to give factual accounts of

¹³⁵ Ouyang criticized the three commentaries for including too many uncorroborated details (Liu, *Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp. 100–1; cf. Ng and Wang, *Mirroring the Past*, p. 145).

¹³⁶ Liu, *Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp. 101–2 and 112; cf. Ronald Egan, *The Problem of Beauty: Aesthetic Thought and Pursuit in Northern Song Dynasty China* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Asia Center: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 23–8.

¹³⁷ “Truth, Falsity, and Pretense in Song China,” p. 23.

actual events. Hong is concerned with the issue of reliability to the extent that he interrogates (*jie* 詰) his sources in an attempt to verify (*yan* 驗) their accounts.¹³⁸

As we saw above, Zhang Qixian uses transparency to deal with the issue of multiple records, listing contradictory sources for side-by-side comparison. This places authority in the hands of the reader. He can rely on his own knowledge to decide which account makes the most sense. Yang Wanli 楊萬里 (1127–1206), in his preface to Zeng Minxing's 曾敏行 (1118–75) *Duxing zazhi* 獨醒雜誌 (Miscellaneous Monograph of the Only Sober One), determines the accuracy of Zeng's accounts first by comparing them against his own experience, and second by concluding that if those accounts were in accord with his experience, then the others that he did not experience must also be true:

This [miscellany] consists of the words of wise elite gentlemen of recent ages, or of what is passed along by the elderly in the provinces and villages. It contains some things that I have seen or heard about, and it also contains some things I do not know about. Since the accounts of those things I have heard about are all trustworthy (*xin*), I know that the accounts of those things I do not know are all trustworthy. How could later readers not draw from this book?¹³⁹

是皆近世賢士大夫之言，或州里故老之所傳也，蓋有予之所見聞者矣，亦有予之所不知者矣。以予所見聞者無不信，知予之所不知者無不信也。后之覽者，豈無取于此書乎？

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17.

¹³⁹ *Zhibuzhu zhai* ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, pp. 234–5. Partial translation in Zhang, “Song *Biji* Writing,” p. 64.

Of course, in order for this line of reasoning to work, readers must be aware of Yang's standing as a man of intellectual integrity. Yang also assures readers of the accuracy of the accounts by identifying the sources as either elites (i.e., having the appropriate education and elevated social status) or as elderly (i.e., being temporally proximate to the original event).

Many other writers state that they check stories, either against other stories or against the textual record. Sun Guangxian 孫光憲 (895?–968), for example, writes that while the majority of his work is based on interviews (*zhuān yú bó fāng* 專於博訪), he did not rely solely on whether or not he trusted it, but only dared to write it down after “cross referencing it thrice” 未敢孤信，三復參校，然始濡毫。¹⁴⁰

Others deal with the problem of source by identifying their sources, either in the preface, as is the case with works recording stories from a single source, such as *A Record of Mr. Jia's Stories* (*Jiasbi tanlu* 賈氏談錄), or within the text, such as: “I heard from so-and-so....”¹⁴¹ As discussed in an earlier section, the source is often the author himself, and as such, he must make sure to present himself as a man of extraordinary knowledge, gained from texts, travel, and close relationship to other men of knowledge.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This project has begun by examining how authors of miscellany situate their works within the larger context of intellectual discourses about knowledge and its transmission. We

¹⁴⁰ “*Beimeng suoyan xu*.” See also I. Alimov, “More about Sun Guang-xian and *Beimeng suoyan*,” *Manuscripta Orientalia* 12.4 (Dec., 2006), p. 43.

¹⁴¹ Ellen Cong Zhang also makes this point (“*Song Biji Writing*,” pp. 57–8).

can see that, while miscellany was still an emerging genre in the Song dynasty, authors identified similar features that characterized their works. True to the miscellaneous nature of these texts, many of these claims are contradictory. Authors of miscellany created a semblance of comprehensive experiential knowledge by claiming that their records include knowledge gathered from multiple time periods, various locales, and people from all walks of life, demonstrating a desire to understand the world from multiple perspectives. Yet they also conveyed a sense of exclusivity by intimating that only the best has ultimately been selected for inclusion in their works.

Many authors of miscellany compared the didactic value and reliability of their works against the historiographic standard. Yet, at the same time, miscellany are, at their very essence, works of memory. The remembered experiences within the pages of miscellaneous texts are framed as belonging to the individual, and are called upon, sought out, and augmented with details culled from the textual record, second- and third-hand accounts, and material objects. As such, reliability and significance also appeared as issues of concern in prefaces to Song dynasty miscellany.

Authors addressed these issues in a number of ways. First, they responded to moral concerns over their reliance on oral accounts by appropriating canonical texts to show the sages' approval of seeking greater meaning in seemingly insignificant things. Second, they build authority by providing their own credentials, identifying their sources, and by assuring readers of the care with which they weighed the reliability of their sources. The most valuable credential is proximity to famous men. Finally, authors of miscellany cultivated a community of miscellany readers who identified themselves as an elite group of intellectuals with access to privileged information and modes of thinking. Discussion of these recorded

events was intended to continue beyond the pages of the original text, in both oral and textual mediums.

Finally, preface writers shared concerns about the place of miscellany in relation to gossip and history. We can see that although authors frame their works as chats, it is not the same back-alley gossip criticized by Ban Gu. This is the artifice of gossip re-appropriated by literati as a means to break from generic convention. It demonstrates a mode of thinking about the principles of the world through illustrative examples, similar to the way early philosophers used anecdotes.

Chapter 1 offers an introduction to the life of Zhuang Chuo and the various editions of his miscellany, *Jilei bian*. Zhuang was a self-identified northerner who later migrated to the south to join family after the fall of the Northern Song. This chapter provides a sketch of Zhuang's extensive network of blood, affinal, and social relationships, which included such influential men as Ouyang Xiu, Su Shi, Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅, Chao Buzhi 晁補之, Qin Guan 秦觀, and Wang Anshi.

Chapter 2 identifies the central themes to *Jilei bian* using the author's preface as a guide: the power of spoken word and the role of chance in the creation and preservation of history. This chapter also shows how Zhuang demonstrates the dangerous potential of the spoken word when removed from the circumstances of its original utterance.

Chapter 3 explores the theme of chance in *Jilei bian*. Placing Zhuang's notions about how fate and chance work together within the context of coeval debates about these issues, this chapter shows that it is Zhuang's struggle to reconcile his experiences with traditional views of fate (*ming* 命) and retribution that leads him to conclude that it is ultimately chance (*xing* 幸) that decides what will be handed down through history.

Chapter 4 is an exploration of Zhuang's ideas about history and how he applies these ideals to his own writing. This chapter shows that, to Zhuang, *Jilei bian* is a conscientious break from standard history writing. Zhuang takes pains to include those things that “the elders would not record.”

CHAPTER 1: ZHUANG CHUO AND HIS *JILEI BLAN*

In the introduction we discussed how authors of Song miscellany used concepts such as experiential knowledge (*jianwen* 見聞), chats, and supplemental history (*bu shi* 補史) to frame the various knowledges of experience in their works through their prefaces. In the following chapters, this study will focus on a single Song dynasty miscellany, Zhuang Chuo's 莊綽 (*fl.* 1127–39) *Jilei bian* 雞肋編 (Chicken Rib Chronicles). This chapter begins by contextualizing *Jilei bian* within the history of the Song dynasty, the author's family history and connections, and the life experiences of the author. Finally, it provides a brief introduction to the textual history and circulation of *Jilei bian*.

ROOTS AND LEAVES: ZHUANG CHUO'S FAMILY

Zhuang indicates in his preface that he is a native of Qingyuan 清源, located in the central plain of China, long thought to have been the cradle of Chinese civilization.¹ Yu Jiayi 余嘉錫 (1884–1955), in *Siku tiyao bianzheng* 四庫提要辯證, determined that this refers to Zhuang's ancestral home, Hui'an 惠安, Fujian, which during the Song, belonged to Qingyuan Commandery 清源郡.² Xiao Luyang 蕭魯陽, however, has found that he was

¹ Zhuang's preface to *Jilei bian*, p. 1. For biographical information I rely, for the most part, on Xiao Luyang's 蕭魯陽 research (*Jilei bian*, pp. 1–3; 133–57). Unless otherwise specified, all cited page numbers correspond to the Zhonghua edition. Qingyuan was located approximately fifteen miles southwest of Taiyuan 太原, in modern Hebei (Tan Qixiang, 6:16).

² Hui'an was a county administrative seat in Quanzhou 泉州, located approximately fifty miles northeast of present-day Quanzhou, Fujian (Tan Qixiang, 6:32).

probably born in Yingchangfu 穎昌府.³ Zhuang likely spent his formative years in this area, and was unable to visit his ancestral home until he migrated south in the Jianyan 建炎 period (1127–30).

Father: Zhuang Gongyue

The *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 editors have identified Zhuang's father as Zhuang Gongyue 莊公岳 (styled Xizhong 希仲; *jinsbi* 1059).⁴ Historical records only provide a brief chronology of offices that Gongyue served.⁵ In Xining 西寧 7 (1074), he was appointed aide to the administrator of the court of the national granaries (*sinongsi cheng* 司農寺丞) along with Cheng Zhicai 程之才 (*jinsbi* 1057).⁶ In Xining 10 (1077), Gongyue was assistant

³ Xiao draws this conclusion based, in part, on various Song dynasty sources, including Huang Yanping 黃彥平 (d. 1139; *jinsbi* 1119), *Sanyu ji* 三餘集; Cheng Ju 程俱 (1078–1144), *Beishan xiaoji* 北山小集; Chen Zhensun 陳振孫 (1183?–1262?), *Zhiqizhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解題; and Zhao Yanwei 趙彥衛 (*jinsbi* 1163), *Yunlu manchao* 雲麓漫鈔. Xiao also observes that Zhuang's comments about southern customs suggest that he was a northerner. Moreover, he sometimes used Yingchuan colloquialisms (*Jilei bian*, pp. 136–7). Yingchangfu 穎昌府 was located in present-day Xuchang 許昌, He'nan. It was also called Xuzhou 許州 (Tan Qixiang, 6:13).

⁴ *Songren zhuanji ziliao suoyin* 宋人傳記資料索引 (Index to Biographical Materials of Song Figures), Chang Bide 昌彼得, et al., ed. (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 2001), p. 2729.

⁵ English translations of official titles follow Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in China* (Taipei: Southern Materials Center, Inc, 1985).

⁶ Li Tao 李燾 (1115–84; *jinsbi* 1138), Shanghai shida gujisuo 上海師大古籍所, *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑒長編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), pp. 6296 and 6572. Cheng was Su Shi's estranged brother-in-law (Yutang Lin, *The Gay Genius: The Life and Times of Su Tungpo* [1947; Reprint. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1971], pp. 354–6); cf. Shao Bo 邵博, *Shaoshi wenjian boubu* 邵氏聞見後錄, punctuated and collated by Liu Dequan 劉德權 and Li Jianxiong 李劍雄 (Reprint; 1983. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), p. 159.

director of the palace library (*bishu cheng* 秘書丞).⁷ He then served as judicial commissioner in Chengdu (*Chengdu ti[dian]xing[yu gongshi]* 成都提[點]刑[獄]公事).⁸

In Yuanfeng 3 元豐 (1080), Gongyue was put under evaluation (*mokan* 磨勘) for a period of three years.⁹ The following year (1081), he was appointed fiscal commission administrative assistant for Hedong (*Hedong zhuanyun panguan* 河東轉運判官).¹⁰ Two accounts in *Sushui jiwén* 涑水紀聞 describe Gongyue's role in the campaign against the Xia 夏, launched in 1081, led by Chong E 种諤 (1027–83)¹¹ Successful at first, Song troops ran out of supplies soon after entering Tangut territory and, for this reason, had to flee in defeat. Before this campaign, Gongyue had expressed concerns about the amount of supplies that the eunuch general Wang Zhongzheng 王中正 (Styled Xilie 希烈) had requested, but Wang refused to listen. Before this, all orders in this office had been delivered orally, but Gongyue, suspicious of Wang, insisted that all orders be given and received in writing. Later, when Gongyue was blamed for causing this defeat, he sent a memorial stating that it was not his fault that the troops ran out of food; it was Wang Zhongzheng who had requested only half a month's rations. In fact, Gongyue and the others had secretly prepared and delivered an extra eight days' worth of rations. The emperor had originally wanted to send Gongyue to

⁷ *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian*, p. 6877.

⁸ *Songren zhuanyuanji ziliao suoyin*, p. 2729. The seat of Chengdu fu was located in modern Chengdu (Tan Qixiang, 6:29).

⁹ *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian*, p. 7440.

¹⁰ The seat of Hedong circuit was located in Taiyuan (Tan Qixiang, 6:16).

¹¹ For a brief account of this campaign, see *Cambridge History of China*, 5:472–6.

jail, but upon reviewing the written evidence, ended up only demoting him one rank.¹² If true, this episode likely influenced Zhuang Chuo's insistence on accurate written accounts and circumspection in spoken exchanges.

In Yuanfeng 5 (1082), Gongyue was appointed court gentleman-consultant (*fengyilang* 奉議郎) for Chen Anshi 陳安石 (d. 1094; *jinsbi* 1061), who was the newly appointed vice-minister of the Ministry of Revenue (*Shangshu hubu shilang* 尚書戶部侍郎).¹³ Entries in *Jilei bian* tell us that Gongyue was a secretarial court gentleman (*shangshulang* 尚書郎) during the Yuanyou 元祐 period (1086–94). It was likely during this time that he met Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045–1105; *jinsbi* 1067);¹⁴ Su Shi 蘇軾 (1036–1101; *jinsbi* 1057);¹⁵ Shen Kuo 沈括 (1031–95; *jinsbi* 1063); and Mi Fu 米芾 (1051–1107).¹⁶ In Shaosheng 紹聖 2 (1095),

¹² Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–86; *jinsbi* 1038), *Zhonghua* ed., pp. 277–9. According to Xu Song 徐松 (1781–1848), Zhuang was sentenced on October 17, 1082 (Yuanfeng 5) (*Song hui yao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 [NP: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, 2008]: 66.19).

¹³ *Song hui yao jigao*, 49:20–21. Gongyue held this position until at least 1084 (*Ibid.*, 66.3). However, according to *China Biographical Database Project (CBDB)* (*Zhongguo lidai renwu zhuanyuan ziliao* 中國歷代人物傳記資料庫), Chen only served in this office from 1082–3 (<http://sites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k16229>). *Fengyi lang* was a prestige title (*sanguan* 散官) for rank 8a civil officials (Hucker, p. 214). Prestige titles were used to fix one's rank and status and indicated one's seniority within a particular rank category. However, in 1080, these were redesignated as rank offices (*ji guan* 階官) and became the basis on which salaries were paid (Hucker, p. 398).

¹⁴ *Jilei bian*, p. 36.

¹⁵ According to *Jilei bian*, when Zhuang Gongyue was transport commissioner in Huainan, he helped to arrange transportation for Su on his exile to Huizhou 惠州 in 1094. Su wrote “Four Poems for Zhuang Xizhong” (*Yu Zhuang Xizhong sishou* 與莊希仲四首) to express his thanks. Chao Buzhi 晁補之 (1053–1110) later added a colophon to this praising Zhuang Chuo (*Jilei bian*, pp. 36–7).

¹⁶ *Jilei bian*, p. 36; cf. *Siku quanshu zongmu*, *juan* 141. Gongyue was transport commissioner (*caoyunshi* 漕運使) while Mi Fu was working at the Lianshui Army (*Lianshui jun* 漣水軍) (*Jilei bian*, p. 7). Although Mi's biography in *Song shi* lists his appointment at the Lianshui Army, it does not provide any time frame for his tenure there (444.13123). Lianshui Army was located in Eastern Huainan Circuit 淮南東路, approximately 90 miles north of present-day Yangzhou 揚州, Jiangsu (Tan Qixiang, 6:23).

Gongyue served in the capacity of vice commissioner of the Huainan Fiscal Commission 淮南轉運司副使.¹⁷ After this he was promoted to right vice minister for the Bureau of Appointments (*Libu youshilang* 吏部右侍郎).¹⁸

Marriage Ties: Zhuang's Family Network

The Zhuang family was related by marriage to a number of influential families, stemming from Bian Su 邊肅 of the Chenliu Bian clan 陳留邊氏.¹⁹ (See Appendix A). Xiao Luyang has identified Zhuang Chuo's mother as the youngest daughter of Sun Mian 孫沔 (996–1067; *jinsbi* 1019).²⁰ Sun's father-in-law was Bian Tiao 邊調, Bian Su's son. It is unclear how Zhuang Gongyue became acquainted with Sun, a Kuaiji 會稽 native who later moved his family to Fenghua 奉化.²¹ We know that Sun corresponded with Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹

¹⁷ *Song shi*, 176.4289; cf. *Song hui yao jigao*, 5:1517. The Tax Transport Bureau was also known as *Zhuanyunsi* after the reorganization of the Salt and Iron Monopoly Bureau (*Yantiesi* 鹽鐵司), but according to Hucker, it was disbanded in 1080.

¹⁸ *Songren zhuanji ziliao suoyin*, p. 2729.

¹⁹ Bian Su is from Chuqiu 楚丘, located approximately sixty miles north of Shangqiu 商丘, He'nan (Tan Qixiang, 6:14). Xiao Luyang includes an abbreviated family tree in Appendix 2 of *Jilei bian* (p. 139). The relationship networks outlined in the following pages has been greatly aided by the *China Biographical Database Project* (CBDB) (*Zhongguo lidai renwu zhuanji ziliao ku* 中國歷代人物傳記資料庫), a collaboration by Academia Sinica, Harvard University, and Peking University (<http://sites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k16229>).

²⁰ Sun has a biography in *Song shi*, 288.9686–90. Sun descended from the Fuchun Sun clan 富春孫氏.

²¹ Fenghua was located in the economically flourishing area of Mingzhou, near present-day Ningbo. For more on the economic development of this area in the Song, see Yoshinobu Shiba, *Commerce and Society in Sung China* (*Michigan Abstracts of Chinese and Japanese Works on Chinese History*, No. 2), trans. Mark Elvin (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Center for Chinese Studies, 1970) and Richard L. Davis, *Court and Family in Sung China, 960–1279: Bureaucratic Success and Kinship Fortunes for the Shib of Ming-chou* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986).

(989–1052; *jinsbi* 1015), Fu Bi 富弼 (1004–1083), Han Qi 韓琦 (1008–1075; *jinsbi* 1027), Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), and Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–1086; *jinsbi* 1042), via letter, and Su Shi wrote a building inscription for him.²² Since Zhuang Chuo links his father to Su Shi and mentions the other men in *Jilei bian*, it is possible that Gongyue met Sun through one of them.

When Gongyue's brother-in-law, Hu Zongyao 胡宗堯, son of Hanlin scholar, Hu Su 胡宿 (996–1067; *jinsbi* 1024), unsuccessfully sat for the exams, Ouyang Xiu advocated on his behalf and was subsequently accused of favoritism to Hu Su.²³ Ouyang was going to be dismissed, but Wu Chong 吳充 (1021–1080; *jinsbi* 1038) stood up for him.²⁴ It is not known what happened to Zongyao, but this anecdote demonstrates a close relationship between Ouyang Xiu and the Hu family.²⁵

Zhuang Chuo's uncle, Bian Xun 邊珣 (d. 1095), son of Bian Tiao, moved his lineage to Suzhou, possibly because his cousin, Bian Qiu 邊球, had moved his lineage there after marrying the daughter of Zhang Mian 張沔 (983–1060; *jinsbi* 1008), a member of the powerful Fanyang Zhang clan 范陽郡張 (See Appendix B).²⁶ Zhang Mian was also not a Suzhou native, but moved there later in life, perhaps after marrying Wei Yu's 魏羽 (944–1001) daughter. Before that time, he had lived in Kaifeng with his sister and brother-in-law,

²² *China Biographical Database Project (CBDB)*, <http://db1.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/cbdb/cbdbkmeng?@8^695204348^107^^^2^1@@@723107468>, accessed on Mar. 9, 2016, 2:48 p.m. In 1044, Fan Zhongyan, Fu Bi, Han Qi, and Ouyang Xiu were accused of forming an alliance (*pengdang* 朋黨) (James Liu, *Ou-yang Hsin: An Eleventh-Century Neo-Confucianist* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), pp. 52–4; cf. “Pengdang lun” 朋黨論).

²³ Hu Zongyao married Sun Mian's eldest daughter. Hu Su has a biography in *Song shi*, 318.10366–9.

²⁴ *Song shi*, 312.10239.

²⁵ Nothing of note can be found on Zhuang Gongyue's other brothers-in-law, Sun Zhimin 孫之敏, Sun Mian's son who married the daughter of Chen Xiang 陳襄, and Su Bing 蘇炳, who married Sun Mian's second daughter. According to “Chenliujun furen Bianshi muzhiming” 陳留郡夫人邊氏墓誌銘, (Lu Dian, *Taoshan ji* 陶山集), Sun Mian only had one son, Sun Zhimin. The *China Biographical Database (CBDB)* lists another son, Sun Zhiwen 孫之文. However, *wen* 文 is likely a haplographic error for *min* 敏. This *muzhiming* also gives the title secretarial drafter to the Heir Apparent (*taizi zhongshe* 太子中舍) for Su Bing. Beyond this, no other biographical information is available.

²⁶ It is unclear who Bian Qiu's father is. We only know that Bian Qiu is Bian Su's grandson (*Songren zhuanji ziliao suoyin*, p. 4289).

Yang Yi 楊億 (974–1020; *jinsbi* 992), who took him in after Zhang’s father died when he was eight.²⁷

It is through this branch of the family that Zhuang Chuo has an affinal relationship with the Juye Chao clan 鉅野晁氏.²⁸ Zhang Yuanbi 張元弼, Zhang Mian’s grandson, married Chao Duanyou’s 晁端友 (1029?–75?; *jinsbi*) daughter. Zhang Yuanbi was thus the brother-in-law of Chao Buzhi 晁補之 (1053–1110; *jinsbi* 1079) and Chao Chongzhi 晁沖之. Moreover, Zhang Mian’s brother-in-law was Wei Guan 魏瓘, who married his granddaughter to Chao Zaizhi 晁載之 (*fl.* 1059).²⁹

It is fair to speculate that Zhuang especially admired Chao Buzhi, who was one of Su Shi’s four famous students 蘇門四學士.³⁰ Chao had titled a collection of his writings *Jilei ji* 雞肋集 (Chicken Rib Collection).³¹ While it is uncertain whether Zhuang had read this collection, he likely was at least aware of its existence, for these are the only two collections from the Song dynasty with “chicken ribs” in their titles.

Multiple members of the Chenliu Bian clan were Buddhists, including Bian Xun and his daughter, who became a Buddhist nun. Zhuang’s maternal grandmother (Bian Tiao’s daughter) was also a devout Buddhist who did not eat meat after having a dream that

²⁷ Yang Yi has a biography in *Song shi*, 305.10079–84.

²⁸ Zhang Xingwu 張興武 identifies this clan as being from Zhaode 昭德 (*Liang Song wangzu yu wenxue* 兩宋望族與文學 [Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2010], p. 275). According to Zhang, this clan specialized in knowledge relating to the canon, Buddhism, and Daoism, beginning with Chao Jiong 晁迥 (951–1034). The Chao clan has garnered much scholarly attention. For more information on the extensive Chao clan, Peter Bol provides a list of “The Ch’ao Family of the Northern and Southern Sung” in “*This Culture of Ours*”: *Intellectual Transitions in T’ang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), pp. 345–54. See also, Zhang Jian 張劍, *Songdai jiazhu yu wenxue: yi Chanzhou Chaoshi wei zhongxin* 宋代家族與文學--以澶州晁氏為中心 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 2006).

²⁹ *Songren zhuanji ziliao suoyin*, p. 1954. Huang Tingjian once recommended Chao Zaizhi to Su Shi.

³⁰ Chao Buzhi met Su Shi when he was twenty or twenty-one. At the time, Buzhi had accompanied his father Chao Duanyou, who was then governor (*ling* 令) of Xincheng 新城, when Su Shi passed through (Yi Chaozhi 易朝志, “Chao Buzhi nianpu jianbian” 晁補之年譜簡編, *Yantai shifan xueyuan xubao* 3 [1990]: 29–30). Chao Buzhi was known for his *Chu ci* studies and Buddhist inclinations. According to *Song Yuan xue’an* 宋元學案, Chao was also a recipient of Sima Guang’s teachings on the canon 深湛經術, 親得司馬光之傳 (cited in Zhang Xingwu 張興武, *Liang Song wangzu yu wenxue* 兩宋望族與文學 [Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2010], p. 281).

³¹ *Song shi*, 208.5356; Chen Zhensun, *Zhibizhai shulu jieti*, 17.26a.

Bodhisattva Guanyin was inside of a fish that was being prepared for a meal.³² Perhaps because of these influences, Zhuang often visited Buddhist temples and made frequent observations about Buddhist statues, monks, and sutras in *Jilei bian*. Zhuang also mentions participating in certain devotional practices, such as the printing and distribution of more than 10,000 copies of the *Jingxing pin* 淨行品 chapter of the *Huayan Sutra* (*Huayan jing* 華嚴經) to be pasted on the roofbeams of houses for protection.³³

The Chenliu Bian and Wujun Lu 吳郡陸氏 clans also seem to have been quite close. Bian Tiao's other daughter, Bianshi 邊氏 (1025–1093), was married to Lu Gui 陸珪 (1022–76). They had four sons: Lu Bi 陸泌 (d. 1070),³⁴ Lu Dian 陸佃 (1042–1102; *jinsbi* 1070),³⁵ Lu Zhuan 陸傳 (*jinsbi* 1073), and Lu Yi 陸倚. Bian Tiao's son, Bian Xun, married his third daughter to Lu Zhuan, further strengthening their affinal relationship.

Lu Dian was a prominent political figure who studied with Gong Yuan 龔原 (1043?–1110; *jinsbi* 1063) under Wang Anshi while he was in Jinling 金陵.³⁶ Yet, once Dian went to

³² *Jilei bian*, p. 113; cf. Xiao Luyang's discussion, p. 140.

³³ *Jilei bian*, pp. 55–6. It was thought that through the production and distribution of Buddhist sutras one could gain spiritual merit and protection would be granted. In this entry, Zhuang proves the efficacy of this *Huayan Sutra* for the protection from fire. See Robert H. Sharf, "The Scripture on the Production of Buddha Images," *Religions of China in Practice*, Donald S. Lopez, Jr., ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 261–7; and John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 52–80.

³⁴ Lu Bi married twice. His first wife was Yu Lihua 虞麗華, Yu Yu's 虞昱 daughter. His second wife was the daughter of Wu Jue 吳? of Longquan 龍泉 (CBDB, <http://db1.iuh.sinica.edu.tw/cbdb/cbdbkmeng?@4^1113114275^107^^2^1@@1449438477>, accessed on Mar. 10, 2016, 2:47 p.m.).

³⁵ Married fourth daughter of Zheng Dunzhong 鄭惇忠 (1027–87). They had five sons—three of whom are known by name, Lu Zai 陸宰 (1088?–1148?), Lu Zhi 陸寘, and Lu Bao 陸寔—and one daughter, who married Li Zhigang 李知剛 (1071–1095; *jinsbi* 1090). Lu Dian has a biography in *Song shi*, 343.10917–20.

³⁶ *Song shi*, 343.10917; 353.11151.

the capital, he opposed the way that Wang intended to put his new ideas into practice.³⁷ Dian was friends with Su Shi. Dian's son, Lu Zai 陸宰 (1088?–1148?), built the library, *Shuangqing tang* 雙清堂 (Dual Clarity Hall) and governed Lin'an fu in 1131.³⁸

Bian Su's daughter married Pang Ji 龐籍 (988–1063; *jinsbi* 1015) from Chengwu 成武.³⁹ Their daughter married Chen Qi 陳琪 (d. 1076), the eldest son of Chen Ji 陳洎 (d. 1049), an historian from Pengcheng 彭城.⁴⁰ Chen Qi's third son was Chen Shidao 陳師道 (1053–1101).⁴¹ One of Chen Qi's daughters married Zhang Shunmin 張舜民 (*jinsbi* 1066).

From this genealogical sketch, we can see that Zhuang Chuo was related through marriage to a fair number of powerful families and influential men, who in turn, had close connections to other men of renown, including Ouyang Xiu, Su Shi, Huang Tingjian, Chao Buzhi, Qin Guan 秦觀, and Wang Anshi. Anecdotes about these men are, not surprisingly,

³⁷ According to his biography, even though he often fought with Wang Anshi about his New Policies, Lu Dian wept and performed sacrifices after his teacher passed. Later, while working on the *Shenzong shilu* 神宗實錄 (Veritable Records of Shenzong's Reign), Lu often fought with Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 and Fan Zuyu 范祖禹 (1041–1098) to try to obscure Wang's misdeeds. Huang accused Lu of writing "revisionist history" (*ningshi* 佞史), to which Lu replied, "In all things I use a gentleman's intention. [If I were to include Wang's misdeeds,] wouldn't this be a book of slander!" 盡用君意，豈非謗書乎 (*Song shi*, 343.10918).

³⁸ *Songren zhuanji ziliao suoyin* gives the dates 1088–1148 for both Lu Zai and Li Dian's fifth son, Lu Bao.

³⁹ Located near present day Heze 荷澤, Shandong (Tan Qixiang, 6:14). Pang Ji has a biography in *Song shi*, 311.10198–200.

⁴⁰ Located in present day Xuzhou 徐州, Shandong (Tan Qixiang, 6:14).

⁴¹ Chen Shidao has a biography in *Song shi*, 444.13115–6. Chao Chongzhi was one of Chen's students.

included in *Jilei bian*. We can also note that many of Zhuang's relatives and associates were included on the list of members of the Yuanyou clique (*Yuanyou dang ji* 元祐黨籍).⁴²

Life on the Road: Zhuang Chuo's Official Career

Zhuang Chuo's life and career are no better documented than his father's, but we can piece together a rough timeline from accounts in *Jilei bian*, colophons, and historical records. Zhuang was known by his style name Jiyu 季裕. The exact dates of his birth and death are uncertain, but it is possible that he was born the same year as Cheng Ju 程俱: 1078.⁴³ The contents of *Jilei bian* indicate that Zhuang traveled to seventeen of the twenty-three circuits (*lu* 路) that made up the Song empire between the reigns of Emperors Shenzong 神宗 (Zhao Xu 趙頊; 1048–85, r. 1067–85) and Gaozong 高宗 (Zhao Gou 趙構; 1107–87, r. 1127–62). Zhuang would have been a child during Emperor Shenzong's reign, so we might assume that he traveled during this time with his father, or that his records from this period were not things personally seen. Assuming that Zhuang did not begin his official career until at least capping age (twenty *sui*), we can surmise that the earliest he began his career would have been 1098–1100. The latest entry in *Jilei bian* is dated 1139, so we could purpose active dates from 1098–1139.

⁴² Relatives: Lu Dian; Chen Shidao and his student Chao Chongzhi; Zhang Shumin and his son, Zhang Ju 張居 (*jinsbi* 1091); Chao Buzhi; and Hu Zongyao's cousin, Hu Zongyu 胡宗俞 (*jinsbi* 1059). Associates: Su Shi, Wang Gu 王古 (d. 1094), Gong Yuan, Qin Guan, and Huang Tingjian.

⁴³ Qian Jianzhuang 錢建狀 and Wang Zhaopeng 王兆鵬, "Song shiren Zhuang Chuo, Guo Yin, Lin Jizhong he Cao Xun shengzu nian kao bian" 宋詩人莊綽、郭印、林季仲和曹勛生卒年考辨, *Wen xian* 1 (Jan., 2004): 100–1.

The early years of Zhuang's career were spent as acting commandant (*she yu* 攝尉) in Xiangyang 襄陽⁴⁴ and in an unknown position in Shunchang 順昌 (refer to map in Appendix C).⁴⁵ Xiao Luyang surmises from the entries in *Jilei bian* that, as it was the beginning of Zhuang's career, his time spent in Xiangyang was relatively relaxed. Zhuang was able to take time to visit local historical and scenic sites.

Sometime in the Dagan 大觀 reign (1107–10), Zhuang served as a lower-level official in Lizhou 澧州.⁴⁶ From after Xuanhe 宣和 4 (1122) to approximately Xuanhe 7 (1125), Zhuang served as assistant prefect (*cui* 悴) in Linjing 臨涇, near the border of Xi Xia 西夏 territory.⁴⁷ While there he often visited the Yaocejiu Temple 要冊湫廟 in Zhenning County 鎮寧縣.⁴⁸ We do not have any record of what Zhuang was doing in the time between his tenure in Lizhou and his office in Linjing, except that he had been in the eastern

⁴⁴ Cf. *Jilei bian*, p. 7. *Yu* could also be variant for district defender (*xianyu* 縣尉) or commandery defender (*junyu* 郡尉) (Hucker, p. 564). Xiangyang was provincial administrative seat of Xiangzhou 襄州, Southern Jingxi Circuit 京西南路, located approximately eighty miles south of present-day Nanyang 南陽, Hubei (Tan Qixiang, 6:12). As a number of entries in *Jilei bian* describe events that occurred in Ruyin County 汝陰縣, it is very likely that Zhuang also served in Ruyin County in some capacity (Xiao Luyang, *Jilei bian*, p. 141). Ruyin was the provincial administrative seat of Yingzhou 潁州, Northern Jingxi Circuit 京西北路, located near present-day Fuyang 阜陽, Anhui (Tan Qixiang, 6:13).

⁴⁵ Shunchang was a county administrative seat in Nanjian Province 南劍州, located approximately forty miles northwest of Nanping 南平, Fujian (Tan Qixiang, 6:32).

⁴⁶ Lizhou was the provincial administrative seat of Lizhou 澧州 in Northern Jinghu Circuit 荆湖北路, located about forty miles northwest of Lake Dongting in present-day Hubei (Tan Qixiang, 6:27). Dengzhou was the provincial administrative seat of Dengzhou, Southern Jingxi Circuit 京西南路, located about thirty-five miles southwest of Nanyang, Hubei (Tan Qixiang, 6:12).

⁴⁷ Linjing was the provincial administrative seat of Yuanzhou 原州, Qinfeng Circuit 秦鳳路, located near present-day Zhenyuan 鎮原, Ningxia (Tan Qixiang, 6:18).

⁴⁸ Xiao Luyang surmises that the customs of the northwest region recorded in *Jilei bian* must have been memories from this period (*Jilei bian*, p. 141).

capital when he was appointed to Linjing, and that he stopped in Guanxi 關西 along the way.⁴⁹

The Fang La 方臘 rebellion had broken out in the winter of 1120, in response to a tribute of exotic plants and stones intended for the imperial gardens (*huashi gang* 花石綱).⁵⁰ The area in Muzhou 睦州 from which Fang La hailed relied on the production of tea, lacquer, lumber, and oil—all items that the court desired highly. This tribute request, on top of heavy taxation and levies, stirred up local resentment. Seizing this opportunity, Fang La led his followers to rebel against the Song.⁵¹ It apparently was not Fang's ambition to usurp the throne, but rather to exact revenge on greedy officials, to cause the downfall of the Song, and to become king of Southeastern China.⁵²

For the most part, the fighting was centered in Hangzhou, but most of modern Zhejiang and parts of Anhui, Jiangsu, and Jiangxi provinces were affected.⁵³ In order to pursue the rebels, the Song government was forced to break its promise to assist the Jin with

⁴⁹ Guanxi was located a few miles east of Huayin 華陰, Huazhou 華州, in Yongxingjun Circuit 永興軍路 (Tan Qixiang, 6:18).

⁵⁰ Information on the history of the Fang La Rebellion is mostly drawn from Kao Yu-Kung, "A Study of the Fang La Rebellion," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 24 (1962–1963): 17–63. The Fang La Rebellion was named after its leader, Fang La, a native of Jiecun 竭村 in Muzhou 睦州.

⁵¹ Fang amassed a large group of followers by providing financial support to vagabonds and by transforming himself into a religious leader. His religious beliefs drew from elements of various religions, including Manichaeism (Kao, "A Study of the Fang La Rebellion," pp. 29–30). This is one reason for the proscription of Manichaeism in the 1130s (Barend J. ter Haar, *The White Lotus Teachings in Chinese Religious History* [Leiden: Brill, 1992], pp. 49–52). Zhuang Chuo also makes this connection (*Jilei bian*, pp. 11–12; 64).

⁵² Kao, "A Study of the Fang La Rebellion," p. 32.

⁵³ Kao notes that the Song used about 150,000 troops to quell this rebellion and that approximately two-million people died in the fighting (*Ibid.*, pp. 28; 37).

their attack on the Liao, and instead sent their troops to the south.⁵⁴ The rebellion was finally quelled in the summer of 1121, although all of the rebels were not executed until the summer of 1122.

Meanwhile, Song relations with the Jin were becoming more and more strained. Emperor Huizong had allied with the Jürched 女真 in 1119 (1120?), a Liao tribe that had formed the Jin dynasty under the leadership of Aguda 阿骨打 (Wanyan Min 完顏旻, Jin Emperor Taizu 金太祖; 1068–1123; r. 1115–23) in 1115.⁵⁵ The Jin had previously captured the Liao Eastern Capital in 1116, and went on to seize the Liao Northern Capital in 1120 and the Liao Central Capital in 1122. The Liao Emperor Tianzuo 天祚帝 (Yelü Yanxi 耶律延禧; 1075–1128 or 1156; r. 1101–25) fled to his Western Capital 西京 and then to edge of the Ordos Desert.⁵⁶

In 1120 the Jin had formally agreed to return a portion of the previously acquired northern lands, known as the Sixteen Prefectures (*Shilun zhou* 十六州), to the Song, in exchange for the Song's assistance in defeating the Liao Southern Capital, but the Song

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁵⁵ Wanyan Aguda began his conquest of the Liao in 1114. He led troops in the defeat of more than one hundred thousand Liao troops and conquered the Eastern Liao Capital of Liaoyang in 1116 (Ari Daniel Levine, "The Reigns of Hui-tsung and Ch'in-tsung," in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 5, part 1, p. 628). For more on the Jürchen conquest of the Liao, see Denis Twitchett and Klaus-Peter Tietze, "The Liao," in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 6: *Alien Regimes and Border States, 907–1368*, Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, eds. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁵⁶ Located in present-day Datong 大同, Shanxi (Tan Qixiang, 6:10).

troops failed in both 1122 and 1123.⁵⁷ As such, the Jin took matters into their own hands, sacking the Southern Capital, and only returning it to the Song after enslaving most of its residents and looting its material goods.

Aguda was succeeded by his younger brother Wuqimai 吳乞買 (Wanyan Sheng 完顏晟, Jin Emperor Taizong 金太宗; 1075–1135; r. 1123–35) in 1123. The following year, the Jin made an alliance with the Xi Xia. In the second month of 1125, after four years of fighting, the Jin army finally captured the Liao Emperor Tianzuo. In the tenth month of that year, the Jin declared war on the Song, and launched a two-pronged attack. Prince Wanyan Zonghan 完顏宗翰 (orig. name Nianhan 黏罕; 1080–1137) led the Western Army to the provincial capital, Taiyuan 太原, from the Western Capital; while the Eastern Army, led by Prince Wanyan Zongwang 完顏宗望 (Wolibu 斡離不; d. 1127) attacked Yanshan 燕山 from the Southern Capital.⁵⁸ With much of the Song's army still tied up trying to quell the Fang La Rebellion, the Song state found itself unable to adequately protect its borders against this threat.

Around this time, Zhuang Chuo was transferred from Linjing to Dengzhou 鄧州, possibly to work in Zhang Shuye's 張叔夜 (1065–1127) regimental headquarters (*mufu* 幕府).⁵⁹ On January 27, 1126, the day after the Jin Eastern Army crossed the Yellow River,

⁵⁷ This agreement was known as *Haishang zhi meng* 海上之盟. The sixteen prefectures were You 幽 (燕), Jing 薊, Ying 瀛, Mo 莫, Zhuo 涿, Tan 檀, Shun 順, Yun 雲, Ru 儒, Gui 媯, Wu 武, Xin 新, Wei 蔚, Ying 應, Huan 寰, and Shuo 朔. They made up the area of present-day Beijing, Tianjin, Shanxi, and the northern part of Hebei (*Cambridge History of China*, 6:148–9).

⁵⁸ One of Aguda's sons.

⁵⁹ In 1126, Dengzhou became the chief area command (*duzong guanfu* 都總管府) of the southern circuit (*nandao* 南道), headed by Zhang Shuye (Xiao Luyang, *Jilei bian*, p. 142).

Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (Zhao Ji 趙佶; 1082–1135; r. 1100–26) gave his eldest son, Zhao Huan 趙桓 (Qinzong 欽宗; 1100–56; r. 1126–7), the throne.⁶⁰ Not long after, Huizong fled to the Yangtze River. Despite objections by numerous officials, Qinzong agreed to settle for peace under terms that were humiliating to the Song: the Song emperor agreed to call himself “nephew” and the Jin emperor “uncle,” to pay increased tributes, and to give up claim to the Sixteen Prefectures once and for all.⁶¹

In March 1126, however, on the western front the Song defenders at Taiyuan held strong, and Prince Zonghan claimed that the Song was not upholding the terms of the treaty. The Jin retreated to Datong, leaving just a small force at Taiyuan. At the end of the summer, the Jin again launched the two armies. The Western Army took Taiyuan in September 1126, then joined the Eastern army at the Song capital, Kaifeng. The city was in siege for the next several months, until Emperor Qinzong surrendered on January 16, 1127. This was followed by the capture of former Emperor Huizong. The two emperors, the imperial household, their servants and retainers were taken north as hostages in May 1127, along with valuables looted from the palaces.⁶²

In the third month of the second year of the Jingkang reign 靖康 (1127), the Jin enthroned Zhang Bangchang 張邦昌 (1081–1127) as the Emperor of Chu 楚. He was to

⁶⁰ Frederick Mote, *Imperial China: 900–1800* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 196.

⁶¹ Before this, Emperor Qinzong had dismissed Cai Jing 蔡京, Tong Guan 童貫, and others in their faction. Then appointed Li Gang 李綱 (1083–1140; *jinsi* 1112) to face the Jin threat. However, he quickly dismissed Li and sought peace with the Jin (Shen Songqin 沈松勤, *Nan Song wenren yu dangzheng* 南宋文人與黨爭 [Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005], pp. 4–6).

⁶² *Cambridge History of China*, 5.1:228–9.

rule the lands south of the Yellow River that had been conquered by the Jin. Not a month later, Zhang fled and begged the Song for forgiveness. He was denounced a traitor and sent into exile. The Jin set up another regime in 1130, the Qi 齊, that lasted until 1137. The Jin eventually fixed their southern border along the Huai River 淮河.

Zhuang Chuo fled south from Dengzhou in 1127 (Jiayuan 1), intending to head to Songcheng 宋城, ostensibly to report to Emperor Gaozong who had arrived there in the fourth month of 1127, and had become emperor the following month.⁶³ Zhuang also looked for his relatives who lived there, but when he arrived he found that they had already fled to the Shancai Temple 善財寺 in Yangdi 陽翟.⁶⁴ After a brief stint in Yangdi, Zhuang travelled along various water routes until reaching Qinchuan 琴川, where he stopped to recover from an illness.⁶⁵ Zhuang most likely stayed in Qinchuan from the autumn of Jiayuan 1 (1127) to the spring of Jiayuan 3 (1129).

In the summer of 1129 Zhuang moved to Changzhou 長洲, the provincial administrative seat of Pingjiangfu 平江府, where Bian Xun and his kin had settled.⁶⁶ In the

⁶³ *Cambridge History of China*, 6:647. Songcheng, also known as Yingtianfu 應天府, was located in present-day Shangqiu 商丘, He'nan (Tan Qixiang, 6:14). Zhao Gou took the throne in the fifth month of the second year of Jingkang (1127). After this, Empress Dowager Yuanyou 元祐太后 (later Empress Dowager Longyou 隆祐太后) and those high-ranking officials who were not taken hostage began to head south to Nanjing. Emperor Gaozong began to rebuild Nanjing, and moved the imperial households to Jiangning 江寧 (Nanjing), Zhenjiang 鎮江, and Yangzhou 揚州.

⁶⁴ Cf. *Jilei bian*, pp. 21 and 99. Yangdi was located about fifteen miles northwest of Yingchangfu (Tan Qixiang, 6:13).

⁶⁵ Cf. Zhuang Chuo, “*Gaohuang shuxue jinfa ba*” 膏肓腧穴灸法跋, cited in Xiao Luyang, *Jilei bian*, Appendix 2, pp. 143–4. Qinchuan, also known as Changshu 常熟, was located approximately twenty-five miles north of Suzhou (Tan Qixiang, 6:25).

⁶⁶ Changzhou was located on the eastern bank of Lake Taihu 太湖 (Tan Qixiang, 6:60).

eighth or ninth month Zhuang crossed the river into Zhedong. Zhuang was appointed controller-general (*tongpan* 通判) for Jianchangjun 建昌軍 in Shaoxing 紹興 1 (1131).⁶⁷

Xiao Luyang, however, thinks that he never served in this position, placing Zhuang in Lin'an instead.⁶⁸

In Shaoxing 3 (1133) Zhuang was appointed a position working for the military commissioner (*anfu zhi zhi shi* 安撫制置使) in Western Jiangnan Circuit 江南西路. From approximately Shaoxing 6 to 7 (1136–7), Zhuang governed (*shou* 守) Nanxiongzhou 南雄州.⁶⁹ From there, Zhuang was governor in Wuchang 武昌 from Shaoxing 8–10 (1138–40).⁷⁰ Zhuang would have been in his mid-sixties in Shaoxing 11 (1141) or 12 (1142) when he served in his last official position in Yunzhou 筠州.⁷¹

Zhuang was a prolific writer. In addition to *Jilei bian*, he wrote a number of treatises on medicine, including *Gaohuang yuxue jiu fa* 膏肓腧穴灸法 (Method for Moxibustion of the

⁶⁷ According to Li Xinchuan 李心傳 (1167–1240), Zhuang, a newly appointed controller-general for Jianchangjun (新通判建昌軍), submitted a proposal to change the names of several locations on May 6, 1131 (*Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu* 建炎以來繫年要錄 [Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1983], 43.602b; cf. *Song huiyao jigao*, fangyu yi'er zhi yijiu 方域一二之一九). Jianchang jun was located along the Jiangxi-Fujian border (Tan Qixiang, 6:61). According to Richard L. Davis, Northern officials who fled south to join the new emperor were rewarded with good government positions. Their presence help lend legitimacy to the new regime (*Court and Family in Sung China*, p. 29).

⁶⁸ Xiao Luyang, *Jilei bian*, p. 145.

⁶⁹ The provincial administrative seat was located in Baochang 保昌, approximately fifty miles northwest of present-day Shaoguan 韶關, Guangdong (Tan Qixiang, 6:66).

⁷⁰ Zhuang Chuo, *Gaohuang yuxue jiu fa* (Taipei: Xin wenfeng chuban gongsi, 1987), p. 83. Wuchang was the county administrative seat of Ezhou 鄂州, located about forty miles east of present-day Wuhan, Hubei (Tan Qixiang, 6:63).

⁷¹ Huang Yanping, *Gao'an jun men ji* 高安郡門記 (Record of the Gate at Gao'an Commandery), cited in Appendix I, *Jilei bian*, p. 150.

Gaohuang Acupoint),⁷² *Ming tang jiu jing* 明堂灸經 (Mingtang Moxibustion Canon),⁷³ *Ben Cao jieyao* 本草節要 (Essentials from *Materia Medica*),⁷⁴ and *Maifa yaolie* 脉法要略 (Brief Essentials of Pulse-Taking Methods). And, despite his distrust of diviners, he also wrote a manual for milfoil divination, *Shifa xinyi* 筮法新儀 (New Rites for Milfoil Divination Methods). He also wrote *Du ji yuan zheng* 杜集援證 (Assistance and Evidence for Du [Fu]’s Collected Works). His interest in Du Fu 杜甫 (712–70) is also apparent from multiple entries in *Jilei bian*. Zhuang also wrote a family history, *Zhuangshi jia zhuan* 莊氏家傳 (Zhuang Family Record). By the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), however, only four survived: *Jilei bian*, *Du ji yuan zheng*, *Gaohuang yuxue jiu fa*, and *Shifa xinyi*. Today, only *Jilei bian* and *Gaohuang yuxue jiu fa* are extant.

JILEI BLAN: EDITIONS AND CIRCULATION

Jilei bian consists of three chapters and a preface written by the author. The Upper Chapter has ninety-two entries, the Middle Chapter has ninety-three entries, and the Lower Chapter has 115 entries. Although the preface of *Jilei bian* is dated March 17, 1133, Zhuang continued to edit and make entries until at least 1139 (Shaoxing 9).⁷⁵ There were no

⁷² *Song shi*, 207.5318; *Zhizhai shulu jieti*, 13.5a.

⁷³ *Zhizhai shulu jieti*, 13.5a.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ An example of an edited entry can be found in *Jilei bian*, pp. 12–3. Following a long entry about Manichaeism, Zhuang adds another anecdote about Manichaeism that begins with: “It hasn’t yet been a year since I began writing this...” 余既書此未一歲. See also pp. 14, 49, and 76. Entries regarding events of Shaoxing 9 can be found on pp. 111–3.

published editions of *Jilei bian* during the Song, only manuscript copies.⁷⁶ It is unclear how widely *Jilei bian* circulated. I have only found one instance of *Jilei bian* being cited within another Song dynasty text: *Wengyou xian ping* 甕牖閒評 (Casual Critiques from the Broken-Pot Window) by Yuan Wen 袁文 (1119–90).⁷⁷ In this passage, Yuan cites a long entry by Zhuang about two lines in Su Shi’s lyric about plums that would have been difficult for Northerners to understand.⁷⁸

The earliest edition available to us is one that Jia Sidao 賈似道 (1213–75) copied, punctuated, set (*dianding* 點定), and included in his collectanea, *Yueshengtang suichao* 悅生堂隨鈔 (Casual Copies from the Hall of the Happy Scholar). According to the colophon for that edition, written by Chen Xiaoxian 陳孝先 in 1279, it was riddled with mistakes, which he corrected in his own edition.⁷⁹ The extant edition of *Yueshengtang suichao* is fragmented and does not contain any trace of *Jilei bian*. There is also a xylograph of a manuscript edition from the Yuan dynasty and a manuscript edition dating from the Ming dynasty, from the Xueyan Studio 穴研齋.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Information regarding the various editions comes from Xiao Luyang’s introduction to *Jilei bian*, unless otherwise noted (pp. 2–3).

⁷⁷ *SKQS* ed., 5.10b. Chen Zhensun only included Zhuang’s medical texts in his *Zhibizhai shulu jieti*, 13.5a. As *Jilei bian* was not published it is unclear how Yuan obtained his copy. Since Yuan Wen’s grandson-in-law was Bian Yingshi 邊應時 of Kunshan 昆山 (Suzhou), it is possible that Yuan was close with this branch of the Bian clan (whose origins are in Chenliu [Xiang Gongze 項公澤, *Chunyou Yufeng zhi* 淳祐玉峰志 (completed in 1252), *Song Yuan fangzhi congkan* 宋元方志叢刊 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), p. 1096b]) and received a copy from one of them, but this is speculation.

⁷⁸ *Jilei bian*, p. 131.

⁷⁹ Cited in Appendix I, *Jilei bian*, p. 133.

⁸⁰ Xiao Luyang was unable to view this Ming edition, currently housed in the National Library 國家圖書館, Beijing.

The *Siku quanshu zongmu* 四庫全書總目 (Catalogue for the Complete Library of the Four Branches) includes a Qing dynasty xylographic reproduction of a Yuan manuscript of *Jilei bian*, but much of it was edited and censored according to Qing publishing regulations when it was included in the *Siku quanshu*.⁸¹

In 1853, Hu Ting 胡珽 (1822–61) wrote that his copy of *Jilei bian* was based on a manuscript edition of *Jilei bian*, which had been copied from the Wenlan ge 文瀾閣 (Hall of Billowing Culture) and had belonged to the family library of the wife of his former teacher, Lu Yinzhai 盧寅齋.⁸² Hu then used a xylographic reproduction of a Yuan manuscript of *Jilei bian* to collate the Wenlan ge manuscript edition. The resulting text was included in *Linlang mishu congshu* 琳琅秘室叢書 (Collectanea from the Gem Library), which was printed using moveable type print. This included one fascicle of collation notes (*jiaoji* 校記). It was reprinted during the Guangxu reign (1875–1909), along with an additional fascicle of collation notes by Huang Jinjian 黃金鑿. In 1919, Xia Jingguan 夏敬觀 (1875–1953) used Shao Yichen's 邵懿辰 (1810–61) manuscript edition from the Wenlan ge to collate the *Linlang mishu congshu* edition, and published it through the Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館,

⁸¹ On the extensive selection and editing process of the *Siku quanshu*, see R. Kent Guy, *The Emperor's Four Treasures: Scholars and State in the Late Ch'ien-lung Era* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987).

⁸² Hu wrote this in the eighth month of the third year of the Xianfeng reign (9/3–10/2/1853). See Appendix I to *Jilei bian*, p. 133. The Wenlan ge is currently attached to the Zhejiang Provincial Library in Hangzhou (Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A New Manual, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 84* [Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute: Harvard University Press, 2012], p. 946).

as the Hanfen lou 涵芬樓 edition.⁸³ This edition is currently housed in the Shanghai Library 上海圖書館.

The Zhonghua shuju 中華書局 edition and the Daxiang chubanshe 大象出版社 edition are the two critical editions today. The Zhonghua edition was first published as part of its *Lidai shiliao biji congkan* 歷代史料筆記叢刊 (Miscellany of Historical Value Throughout the Ages) in 1983. It was the first book punctuated and collated by Xiao Luyang 蕭魯陽 (b. 1942). He recalls receiving corrections after it was published from the linguist Lü Shuxiang 呂叔湘 (1904–98) and from the Song scholar James T.C. Liu 劉子健 (1919–93).⁸⁴ These corrections were included in the revised printing.

The Zhonghua edition includes a useful biography of Zhuang Chuo, as well as supplemental primary source materials. It uses the Hanfen lou edition as a base text, collated with a xylographic print of a Yuan dynasty manuscript housed in the Beijing Library 北京圖書館, which had been collated with handwritten notes by Fu Zengxiang 傅增湘 (1872–1949); a supplemented Wenlange manuscript edition housed in the Zhejiang Library 浙江圖書館; and a *Linlang mishu congshu* edition housed in the Shanghai Library.

The Daxiang chubanshe edition, included in the collection *Quan Song Biji* 全宋筆記, was edited by the Shanghai Normal University Research Institute of Ancient Books 上海師範大學古籍整理研究所 led by Zhu Yi'an 朱易安, Fu Xuancong 傅璇琮, Zhou Changlin

⁸³ For a brief history of Hanfen lou see Fu Xuancong 傅璇琮, *Zhongguo cangshu tongshi* 中國藏書通史 (Ningbo: Ningbo chubanshe, 2001), pp. 1283–95.

⁸⁴ Xiao Luyang, “Degao wangzhong xuezhe fengfan: huainian Lü Shuxiang Xiansheng” 德高望重學者風範：懷念呂叔湘先生, *Pingyang daxue xuebao* 52 (Dec., 1998): 88–9.

周常林, and Dai Jianguo 戴建國, and arranged (*zhengli* 整理) by Xia Guangxing 夏廣興. It uses the *Linlang mishu congsbu* edition as its base text, and collates it with the xylographic reproduction of a Yuan dynasty manuscript housed in the Beijing Library, the Wenlange *Siku quanshu* edition, and other texts.⁸⁵

Both editions include notes in the body of the text in a smaller font size.⁸⁶ It is unclear who made these notes. Some notes appear to have been written by Zhuang: such as “I forgot his name” 忘其名.⁸⁷ Other notes have clearly been added by later editors: such as “The preceding twenty-three characters have been added from the Yuan ms. edition” 以上二十三字從元鈔補,⁸⁸ and “This entry was attached to the [Wenlan]ge edition. The Yuan ms. edition is different from this. Now the attached entry is to the left” 此條係閣本。元鈔與此互異，今附錄於左。⁸⁹ This is followed by an entry set in a lower register, usually reserved for Zhuang’s emendations. The Zhonghua edition places its collation notes at the end of each chapter. The Daxiang chubanshe edition places its notes in the margin above the text.

The Zhonghua shuju edition included a table of contents, assigning titles roughly based on the apparent subject matter of the entries in *Jilei bian*.⁹⁰ A table of contents for *Jilei*

⁸⁵ *Jilei bian*, Daxiang chubanshe ed., Series 4, 7:3–7.

⁸⁶ Pages 4–5, 26, 45, 46, 55, (64), 71, (76), 82, 90, 102–3, and 117–8. The same annotations appear in the Daxiang edition, with the exception of the note on p. 64 of the Zhonghua edition.

⁸⁷ *Jilei bian*, p. 21.

⁸⁸ *Jilei bian*, p. 64.

⁸⁹ *Jilei bian*, p. 76.

⁹⁰ Many thanks to Sarah Allen and Natasha Heller for encouraging me to examine the paratexts of the modern editions of *Jilei bian*.

bian does not appear in the *Siku quanshu* edition, nor does the modern Daxiang chubanshe edition include one.⁹¹ A table of contents functions as a means to impose order on a body of information, and to allow for convenient access to this information. The text is viewed as a repository of facts that can be accessed, understood apart from its original context, and applied to new contexts. Ordering the text in this way highlights the Zhonghua editors' vision of *Jilei bian* as a supplemental resource for scholarly, historical research. In other words, to the editors, the value of *Jilei bian* lies only in the historical accuracy of its recorded events.⁹² To date, this text has not been considered beyond its perceived function of serving as a container for facts. The literary elements of the text have been ignored completely by modern scholars, and any information that does not concur with sanctioned historical accounts is dismissed as a mistake of memory.

The current critical editions of *Jilei bian* have passed through numerous collation efforts. While we might never be certain of the original format of *Jilei bian*, we can see that editors have taken pains to maintain a certain degree of structural integrity by, for example, retaining authorial notes and notes from earlier editions. This tells us that, while the reasoning behind the way authors organized miscellany collections might not be fully

⁹¹ I have not been able to view the various rare editions. Although *Jilei bian* did not order its contents, some Song dynasty miscellany did include a table of contents. Wang Dechen 王得臣 (1036–1116; *jinsbi* 1059), for example, writes that his entries are intended to instruct (*xun* 訓), and to serve as models (*fa* 法), mirrors (*jian* 鑒), and warnings (*jie* 誡). As he intended his miscellany to be used as a sourcebook, in which readers can seek out information to study (*taojin* 討究), he “organized his entries into categories and divided them into forty-four sections” 逐類以相從，別為四十四門 (“*Zhu shi xu*” 塵史序 [Preface to *Fly Whisk History*], in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 198).

⁹² This editorial decision is not surprising considering that *Jilei bian* is included in the “historical miscellany” (*shiliao biji* 史料筆記) series.

understood, the miscellaneous nature of the miscellany form, understood to be the defining characteristic of this genre, has been left intact.⁹³

CONCLUDING REMARKS

From this brief introduction of *Jilei bian* and its author, Zhuang Chuo, we can see that this is a miscellany written by a self-identified northerner with extensive family and social connections, many of who make an appearance in this work. Yet, beyond familial relationships and what appears in *Jilei bian*, we find no other concrete evidence of a friendship or sustained relationship between Zhuang and these men. Nevertheless, we can infer from the number of entries in *Jilei bian* about these men that Zhuang felt an affinity with them and considered himself an insider.

⁹³ Editors have not, for instance, re-ordered the entries in a chronological order where one did not exist previously.

CHAPTER 2: STRUCTURE AND THEMES: INTRODUCTION TO *JILEI BIAN*

In this chapter, we will take a closer look at Zhuang Chuo's 莊綽 (*Jl.* 1126) preface as a guide to reading *Jilei bian* 雞肋編. As discussed in the introduction, traditional criticism described the function of prefaces as a guide to readers by outlining the meaning or intent (*yi* 意) of an author's work. The first section of this chapter, then, begins the process of close-reading *Jilei bian* by analyzing the themes outlined in its preface. The second section compares Zhuang's statements about spoken word in his preface to the first handful of entries about language in the Upper Chapter of *Jilei bian*. By emphasizing the powerful effect of words, these entries challenge the assumptions about the inferiority of the spoken word.

CHICKEN RIBS AND EMPTY WORDS: ZHUANG'S PREFACE TO *JILEI BIAN*

This section focuses on reading Zhuang's preface to *Jilei bian*. Zhuang uses his preface, in part, to explain why he chose "chicken ribs" to name his miscellany:

In the past, Cao Cao (155–220) had just pacified Hanzhong, and wanted to take the opportunity to attack Shu. However, he could not advance, and keeping it would also be difficult to accomplish. So Cao went out, and only said: "chicken ribs." Of his men outside, no one was able to understand.

Yang Xiu (175–219) alone said: "Now, as for chicken ribs, if you eat them then you don't get much, but if you discard them then it's really lamentable.

The noble one has decided on a plan to return.”¹ None of Cao Cao’s achievements can be seen in history, yet his empty words were, in the end, written down for posterity. Is this not dried-up chicken ribs? Even so, if one is starving, rooting around for swamp grasses between the inner and outer walls, he is lucky to obtain [these dried-up ribs]. Though they are not as good as rabbit shoulder, they are better than ox bones. This book of mine is of a similar category to this. Thus I have taken “Chicken Ribs” to name it.

昔曹孟德既平漢中，欲因討蜀而不得進，守之又難為功，操出教唯曰“雞肋”而已，外莫能曉。楊修獨曰：“夫雞肋食之則無所得，棄之則殊可惜。公歸計決矣。”阿瞞之績無見於策，而其空言竟著於後，是豈非雞肋之腊邪？然方其擷蘆葍、晷苳而餓於墻壁之間，幸而得之，雖不及於兔肩，視牛骨為愈矣。予之此書殆類於是，故以“雞肋”名之。

Zhuang laments the dearth of historical records in his preface and states that people are starving from the lack of historical documentation. In their search for any sort of spiritual sustenance, they easily obtain gossip (i.e., swamp grasses)² and feel fortunate to stumble upon an authentic historical story or private history (i.e., chicken ribs). They might hope for official records (i.e., rabbit shoulder), but even verifiable gossip is better than nothing (i.e., ox bones). Zhuang here creates a hierarchy of historical materials, with standard histories at the top tier, private histories at the second tier, and oral sources at the lowest tier.

¹ This anecdote can be found in Pei Songzhi’s 裴松之 (372–451) notes for *Sanguo zhi* 三國志 (1.52), which cites *Jiuzhou chunqiu* 九州春秋 (Spring and Autumn [Annals] of the Nine Lands) as its source.

² Weeds and grasses is a common way to refer to oral sources.

The Song was a time of textual reconstruction and extraordinary production of historical writing. Historical documents were lost or destroyed during the chaotic period between the late-Tang and the Five Dynasties periods. Yet the historians that were tasked to write the standard histories of the Tang and Five Dynasties were faced with the problem of lack of source materials. Canonical and other texts that described important rituals were also lost, so Song officials needed to rely on the memories of older officials and other secondary sources (i.e., poetry) to reconstruct these texts. These painstakingly reconstructed texts were lost again at the end of the Northern Song dynasty, and the process of reconstruction began anew.

Many authors of miscellany mention the destruction of books due to war as an impetus for compiling their miscellany. Sun Guangxian 孫光憲 (895?–968), for instance, sets *Beimeng suoyan* 北盟瑣言 (Trivial Words from North of [Lake] Meng[ze]) against the backdrop of the chaotic late-Tang period: “In the Tang, since the chaotic Guangming (880–1) period, precious and rare books have been scattered and lost. And after Emperor Wuzong (r. 814–47), it was lonely with no news. No one got reports on the glorious deeds of the court and provinces” 唐自廣明亂離，秘籍亡散。武宗已後，寂寞無聞，朝野遺芳，莫得傳播。³ Therefore, Sun set out to remedy this situation with his *Beimeng suoyan*. The preface of *Nan Tang jinshi* 南唐近事 (Recent Events of the Southern Tang) also paints a picture of the destruction of war, and the necessity for miscellany: “From the abodes of lords and ministers, to the documents of the court; in the aftermath of the fires of war,

³ *Beimeng suoyan xu* 北盟瑣言序 (Preface to Trivial Words from North of [Lake] Meng[ze]), Zhonghua shuju ed., p. 15. Also translated in I. Alimov, “More about Sun Guang-xian and *Beimeng suoyan*,” *Manuscripta Orientalia* 12.4 (Dec., 2006), p. 42.

historical annals were lost; it's a pity that not even one out of ten [records of] previous events/stories exists” 南唐烈祖、元宗、後主三世，共四十年，起天福丁酉之春，終開寶乙亥之冬。君臣用舍，朝廷典章，兵火之餘，史籍蕩盡，惜乎前事十不存一。⁴

Spurred by this unending cycle of loss and reconstruction, scholars feverishly collected rubbings, wrote private histories, and began to think deeply about historical sources.⁵ As discussed in the introduction, many authors of miscellany during the Song were concerned with issues of authenticity, and turned a critical eye toward their own sources and the veracity of earlier accounts. We can see from his preface that Zhuang was also moved by the loss of documents to make his own contribution to historical knowledge. We will explore Zhuang's ideas about history in a later chapter.

While Zhuang laments the lack of historical documentation and expresses a desire to remedy this situation, Zhuang claims that the guiding principle of his miscellany will be to focus on so-called “empty words” (*kongyan* 空言). Zhuang's choice to use the phrase “empty words” in the context of history writing recalls Sima Qian's account of Confucius' composition of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. In the words attributed to Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179 B.C.E.–104 B.C.E.):

When the way of the Zhou had deteriorated and abandoned, Confucius was the minister of justice (*sikou*) of Lu. The various feudal lords (*hou*) harmed

⁴ Zheng Wenbao 鄭文寶, Shanghai jinbu shuju ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 153.

⁵ The private practice of collecting rubbings of stone inscriptions seems to have begun with Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–72) (Ronald Egan, *The Problem of Beauty: Aesthetic Thought and Pursuits in Northern Song Dynasty China*, Harvard East Asian Monographs 271 [Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Asia Center: Harvard University Press, 2006], p. 14). On Ouyang's anxiety over the loss of historical knowledge, see *Ibid.*, pp. 43–50; and Wang, *Ten Thousand Scrolls*, pp. 165–8.

him, and the grandmasters (*daijun*) obstructed him. Confucius knew that the [correct] words were not being used, and that the [correct] way was not being carried out. The rights and wrongs of 240 years are the righteous banner of the world. [Now men] cheapen the Son of Heaven, demote the various feudal lords, and cater to the grandmasters, simply in order to accomplish kingly matters. Confucius said: “I intend to record their empty words,⁶ but they are not as profound or clear as seeing them performed through deeds.”⁷

周道衰廢，孔子為魯司寇，諸侯害之，大夫壅之。孔子知言之不用，道之不行也，是非二百四十二年之中，以為天下儀表，貶天子，退諸侯，討大夫，以達王事而已矣。子曰：我欲載之空言，不如見之於行事之深切著明也。

In this story of the creation of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, Confucius acknowledges that reading about history is secondary to the observation of an event. Yet, while words (*yan*) are subordinate to deeds (*xing*), they are necessary to communicate and to make others understand the rights and wrongs of the past.

In his preface, Zhuang acknowledges the deficiency of writing by using the unflattering phrases “chicken ribs” and “empty words” to refer to his work.⁸ Cao Cao’s

⁶ *Kongyan* here was understood by Sima Zhen 司馬貞 to mean “to praise and blame right and wrong” (*baobian shifei* 褒貶是非) (*Suoyin* 索隱 cited in *Shiji*, 130.3298).

⁷ “Self-Introduction by the Grand Historian,” *Shiji*, 130.3298.

⁸ Sun Guangxian 孫光憲 (900–68) also uses “empty words” to refer to the contents of his *Beimeng suoyan* 北盟瑣言: “I do not only leave empty words. I also want to use these stories to encourage and dissuade” 非但垂之空言，亦欲因事勸戒 (“*Beimeng suoyan xu*” 北盟瑣言序, Zhonghua ed., p. 15). Here we can see that Sun understands “empty words” as those devoid of didactic significance.

words when spoken were already just chicken ribs, but now, surviving as mere records far removed from the original utterance, they are “dried-up chicken ribs” (*jilei zhi la* 雞肋之腊). Yet, while words are insufficient to relate the full historical experience—they are the ribs minus the whole chicken; the words without the achievements—they are necessary if history is to survive. Throughout *Jilei bian*, Zhuang struggles to reconcile the deficiency of words to fully describe experience.

Yang Wanli 楊萬里 (1127–1206), in his preface to Zeng Minxing’s 曾敏行 (1118–75) *Duxing zazhi* 獨醒雜誌 (Miscellaneous Monographs of the Only Sober One), offers a thoughtful discussion about the endurance of oral transmission, and the interdependency of written and spoken word. He writes:

In ancient times books have perished, but spoken words have never perished. Confucius took the sayings of southerners. Yanzi recited the words of Xia proverbs. Yet Confucius was not a southerner, nor did Yanzi live during the Xia. The north and south are different places, and the Xia and Zhou are different time periods, yet their words still circulate, not necessarily in books, but through oral transmission. This is why the fires of the Qin could reach the lacquered bamboo strips, but could not reach the mouth of Fu Sheng.⁹

⁹ *Han shu*: “What remained whole, though it encountered the Qin, was due to their being recited. The reason does not solely lie in bamboo and silk” 遭秦而全者，以其諷誦，不獨在竹帛故也 (20.1708). Fu Sheng was a scholar who specialized in the *Shangshu*. Yang here is following an account which says that Fu Sheng had lost his copy but that he was able to recite it from memory (Kong Anguo 孔安國, “*Shangshu xu*” 尚書序, *Quan Han wen* 全漢文, *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Linchao wen* 全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文, Yan Kejun 嚴可均 (1762–1843), ed. [Reprint. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991]: 13.196a). Another account says that Fu Sheng hid a copy of the *Shangshu* in the wall of a building to save it from being burned during the Qin proscription and pulled it from the wall in the early years of the Han dynasty (*Shiji*, 121.3124–5; *Han shu*, 88.3603).

As such, then which is more durable, words or books? Even so, words are truly odd, as those who speak them are alive or dead. If the speaker perishes, then words also have a time limit and are not durable. Moreover can books be discarded? If books exist, then men will recite them; if people recite them, then spoken word exists; and if spoken word exists, then books can either perish or not perish. The existence of books and spoken word depends on their interactions with one another.¹⁰

古者有亡書，無亡言。南人之言，孔子取之。夏諺之言，晏子誦焉。而孔子非南人，晏子非夏人也。南北異地，夏周殊時，而其言猶傳，未必垂之策書也，口傳焉而已矣。故秦人之火能及漆簡，而不能及伏生之口。然則言與書孰堅乎哉？雖然，言則怪矣，而言者有在亡也，言者亡則言亦有時而不堅也。書又可廢乎。書存則人誦，人誦則言存，言存則書可亡而不亡矣，書與言其交相存者歟。

Yang makes three points here. First, Confucius and Yanzi both felt that the sayings of other areas and of other times were important enough to record. Second, although it is essential to write down information, oral transmission is equally important, because while a physical book might be destroyed, the knowledge it contains would be difficult to destroy if it is transmitted to enough people. Third, Yang acknowledges that education, through memorization and voiced reading, is the aim of books. Also, by recognizing that many of the received books in his day were written down from memory, Yang touches on the issue of textual stability.

¹⁰ *Zhibuzhu zhai* ed., Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 234.

Zhuang's preface also foreshadows a pervasive theme throughout *Jilei bian*; the role of chance in our lives. In a time in which scholars are all rooting around for grasses, it is luck or chance (*xing* 幸) that causes them to stumble across verifiable historical information. While the original anecdote about Cao Cao was surely intended to stress the importance of a ruler surrounding himself with capable advisors who understand him, when considered in the context of the rest of *Jilei bian* another reading becomes clear: the account of Cao's famous words works only because Yang Xiu was there to understand them. If there had not been a Yang there to understand Cao's code, this story might never have been written down. This reading is supported by the final entry of the upper chapter of *Jilei bian*, which discusses another saying of Cao Cao's that is now only remembered in connection to Wang Xianzhi 王獻之 (344–86).¹¹ The theme of chance will be explored in detail in a later chapter.

THE POWER OF EMPTY WORDS: EXPLORING THE COMPLEXITY OF LANGUAGE

Zhuang's preface presents an assumption about the inferiority of oral sources. By labeling spoken words as “chicken ribs” and “empty words,” he suggests that they are intrinsically lacking—without deeds what purpose could these words possibly have? Yet, a

¹¹ *Jilei bian*, p. 37. The saying in question is “peeking at a leopard through a tube” (*guan zhong kui bao* 管中窺豹) (i.e., missing the forest for the trees), which was attributed to an anonymous student of Wang Xianzhi's father in *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 (Richard B. Mather, transl. and comm., *Shih-shuo Hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World, Michigan Monographs in Chinese Studies, Vol. 95* [Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies: The University of Michigan, 2002], p. 186; *Shishuo xinyu jiao jian* 世說新語校箋 [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006], vol. 1, p. 190).

close-reading of *Jilei bian* shows that Zhuang understands that words are neither empty nor simple. This section argues that Zhuang included the first handful of entries in the Upper Chapter of *Jilei bian* in order to complicate the notion that words are empty, by demonstrating the complexity, value, and power of words.

The first entry in *Jilei bian* responds to a theory Zhuang had heard in his youth about the identity of “Mr. Ministry” (*shibu* 吏部) in the poem “Zeng Jiefu” 贈介甫 (Presented to Wang Anshi 王安石 [1021–86]) by Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–72):

Ouyang Xiu has a poem, “Presented to Wang Anshi,” that says:

Mr. Hanlin has three-thousand poems about scenery;

Mr. Ministry has two-hundred years of essays.

When I am old and gone, I shall pity myself that my heart still remains;

Later who will compete with you to be first?

Wang replied:

On another day if I could peek at Mengzi;

For the rest of my life how could I dare to gaze at Han Yu (768–824)?¹²

When I was young I heard people say that Mr. Ministry was Shen Yue (441–513), not Han Yu; that Han Yu did not have three-thousand poems. It was also not Li Bai (701–62). Later I read the “Biography of Shen Yue.” Although he was once a Gentleman of the Ministry, he praised Xie Tiao (464–99) saying: “For two-hundred years there has not been such

¹² This is an allusion to a passage in *Lamyu* in which Shu Sunwu comments that Zigong is more of a worthy than Confucius. Zigong responds by drawing a comparison between their worthiness and the height of outer walls. Whereas one is able to peek over his walls to see him, one could not see beyond Confucius’ walls unless he was invited in (19.23).

poetry as this.”¹³ He meant that from the Jian’an period (196–220) to the Yuanjia reign of the [Former] Song (424–54) it had been more than 230 years—he was just giving a round number. From the Jiayou reign (1056–64) to the Yuanhe reign (806–21) of the Tang dynasty, it was more than 250 years; even farther than [the Jian’an period was] from the Yuanjia reign. Then Mr. Ministry should be referring to Han [Yu].

Zheng Gu (848–911) has a “Poem on the Topic of Taibai’s Collection” that says:

How can we serve the Literary Star and the Wine Star?

They are at once given to Mr. Li.

Chanting to the heights and getting really drunk, three-thousand poems;

*They remain among men to accompany the moon’s brightness.*¹⁴

As for what Ouyang Xiu quoted; he only used Shen’s words “two-hundred years” and applied them to Han Yu in order to match Mr. Hanlin’s “three-thousand poems,” and that is all. As for the number of poems and years, how can they exist like “writing horse and counting horses”?¹⁵

¹³ This quote appears in Xie Tiao’s biographies in *Nan Qi shu* (47.826) and in *Nan shi* (17.533). Although Shen Yue has biographies in *Liang shu* (13.232–43) and in *Nan shi* (57.1403 ff.), this quote does not appear in them.

¹⁴ This poem does not appear in *Quan Tang shi*.

¹⁵ *Jilei bian*, p. 1. This might be a reference to *Shiji*: “When [Shih] Chien had been the Prefect of the Gentlemen-of-the-Palace, he reported a matter [to the emperor] by letter. After the matter had come back down [from the emperor], [Shih] Chien read it [again] and said, ‘I made a mistake in writing! The horse together with its tail should have five [dots]; now there are only four [dots] and it is short by one. Had the Sovereign condemned me, I could have died!’ He was extremely terrified. His being circumspect and cautious was like this in all other [matters]” 建為郎中令，書奏事，事下，建讀之，曰：‘誤書！“馬”者與尾當五，今乃四，不足一。上譴死矣！’……萬石君少子慶為太僕，禦出，上問車中幾馬，慶以策數馬畢，舉手曰：六馬。慶于諸子中最高簡易矣，然猶如此 (130.2766; translation by Wang Jing in *The Grand Scribe’s Records*, William H. Nienhauser, Jr., ed. [Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008], 8:378–9).

歐陽文忠有《贈介甫》詩云：“翰林風月三千首，吏部文章二百年。老去自憐心尚在，後來誰與子爭先？”王答云：“它日若能窺孟子，終身何敢望韓公。”余少時聞人謂吏部乃隱侯，非文公也；翰林詩無三千，亦非太白。後見《沈約傳》，雖嘗為吏部郎，及稱謝朓云：“二百年來無此詩。”謂由建安至宋元嘉二百三十余年，舉其全數耳。自嘉祐上至唐元和，余二百五十年，去元嘉則遠矣。則吏部蓋指韓也。鄭谷有《題太白集》詩云：“何事文星與酒星，一時分付李先生。高吟大醉三千首，留著人間伴月明。”永叔所引，但用沈二百年之語，加於退之，以對翰林三千首耳。詩年之數，安在如書馬數馬乎？

Here Zhuang explains that one cannot read poetry in the same manner that one reads history or official documents. Poets follow rules of prosody and do not worry about the small details.

This is followed by an entry offering a brief history of character riddles and examples of Wang Anshi's riddles:

Chopstick and Clogs riddles have been recorded in previous histories. Bao Zhao's (ca. 414–66) Collection also has them.¹⁶ Such as the [family name riddle] type: 'one-earth' (=Wang), 'bow-long' (=Zhang),¹⁷ 'white-spring'

¹⁶ “Zimi san shou” 字謎三首 (Three Character Riddles), *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nan-Bei Chao Shi* 先秦漢魏晉南北朝詩 (Poems from Pre-Qin, Han, Wei-Jin, and Northern and Southern Dynasties), Lu Qinli 遼欽立 (1910–73), ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983): 9.1312.

¹⁷ *Nan shi*: “‘One cannot get close to One-earth, Bow-long shoots and kills people.’ One-earth is the character Wang, referring to Jingwen. Bow-long is the character Zhang, referring to Zhang Yong” 一土不可親，弓長張字。一土王字，指景文，弓長張字，指張永 (23.634). Cf. *Song shu*, 85.2181.

(=Quan), ‘not-clothes’ (=Pei), ‘early-morning-metal-knife’ (=Liu), and ‘thousand-mile-grass’ (=Dong). They originally came from ‘reversing-correctness’ (=lack [fa]) and ‘ceasing-halberds’ (=martial [wu]).¹⁸ And later people took the opportunity to make character riddles.

Wang Anshi made a character riddle that said:

There are four brothers, older and younger; two of them are big.

One stands on the ground; three sit.

In their home there are one or two mouths (lit. one and two mouths).

Even if it is an afflicted year, they can still get by.¹⁹

He made another riddle that said:

It constantly follows and manages great officials.

Its belly is filled with words and patterns and Confucian elegance.

Sometimes its entire face is made up with red.

It loves to face in front of the wind (homonymous with ‘seal [of envelope, etc.]’) and under the moon (also means ‘month’).²⁰

When he is at wine parties he specializes in using language and characters for games. He once made a drinking game saying: “There was a

¹⁸ ‘Reversing correctness’ seems to have been an early example of graph play. The “Zhengbu” section of *Shuowen jiezi* gives the following entry for 乏: “The *Chunqiu [Zuo] Tradition* says: ‘Reversing 𠄎 makes 乏.’” 《春秋傳》曰：反正爲乏。The form for the character 𠄎 has changed over time, but originally resembled an inverted 乏. Many thanks to Young Kyun Oh for his assistance with this riddle. ‘Ceasing halberds’ seems also to have come from the *Chunqiu Zuo Tradition* (12th year of Duke Xuan).

¹⁹ Answer: 儉 (frugality).

²⁰ Answer: 印章 (seal).

merchant named Ren Ren who sold metal and brocade. When he reached the pass, the pass officer reported saying: ‘Ren Ren is allowed to enter, but there are strict prohibitions on metal and brocade (*Ren Ren ren ru, jin jin jin ji*).’”

He also said:

Brothers: Sun, Speak, and Prosperous;

Temple brothers: Eye, Wood, and Mutual;

Brothers: Fire, Fire, and Flame;

Temple brothers: Metal, Contemporary, and Stamp.²¹

He also said:

Dig in the ground to get rid of the earth;

Add water to make a pond.

In all of these cases, no one was able to match him.

He also made a riddle about the dot in characters that said:

If it's cold, then it piles up layer upon layer;

If it's hot, then it flows in all directions (lit. splits into four and flows separately).

Four elder and younger brothers go down to the county;

Three men enter the prefecture.

When it's in the village, it's only in the village;

When it's at the head of the market, it's only at the head of the market.

²¹ ‘Prosperous’ 昌 is composed of a ‘sun’ 日 on top of ‘to say’ 曰; and ‘Flame’ 炎 is composed of one ‘fire’ 火 on top of another 火. These two groups are referred to as ‘brothers,’ because their top-down composition illustrates the patrilineal relationship. ‘and’ 相 and ‘Stamp’ 鈐 from the other group, ‘temple brothers,’ are constructed by juxtaposing ‘eye’ 目 and ‘tree’ 木; and ‘metal’ 金 and ‘contemporary’ 今, respectively. This illustrates the lateral relationship of temple brothers.

He also made a riddle about the two dots under a repeated word that said:²²

“An elder and younger brother have the same first and last name. If you want to know me, then first get to know my brother from the same family. If you don’t know my brother from the same family, how will you know who I am?”

Also a riddle on the character for woman (*fu*):

Turn a seven to the left, turn a seven to the right;

Put a mountain on its side, flip upside down ‘to go out’ (chu).

A riddle for ceramic steamer basket (*jing*):

A general’s body, this is the essence of the five elements;

Day after day Mount Yan gazes at Stonewall.²³

Waiting for successful completion before he retreats;

Empty, he gives his heart and stomach to the common people.²⁴

箸屐之謎，載於前史，《鮑昭集》中亦有之。如一土、弓長、白水、非衣、卯金刀、千裏草之類，其原出於反正止戈，而後人因作字謎。王介甫作字謎云：“兄弟四人兩人大，一人立地三人坐。家中更有一兩口，任是兇年也得過。”又作謎云：“常隨措大官人，滿腹文章儒雅。有時一面紅妝，愛向風前月下。”至於酒席之間，亦專以文字為戲。

²² In calligraphy a repeated character was represented by two dots. This is now indicated with the character: 𠂇.

²³ Steamed bread is represented as Mount Yan, gazing day after day at Stonewall (i.e. the sides of the ceramic basket).

²⁴ *Jilei bian*, p. 1.

常為令云：有商人姓任名飪，販金與錦。至關，關吏告之曰：“任飪任入，金錦禁急。”又云：“親兄弟日曰昌，堂兄弟目木相，親兄弟火火炎，堂兄弟金今鈐。”又云：“擻地去土，添水成池。”皆無有能酬者。又為字中一點謎云：“寒則重重疊疊，熱則四散分流。兄弟四人下縣，三人入州。在村裏只在村裏，在市頭只在市頭。”又為疊字下兩點謎云：“兄弟二人，同姓同名。若要識我，先識家兄。不識家兄，知我為誰？”又婦字謎云：“左七右七，橫山倒出。”甌字謎云：“將軍身是五行精，日日燕山望石城。待得功成身又退，空將心腹為蒼生。”

Here we see an example of the value placed on linguistic skill during the Song dynasty. Poetic games served an identity-building function in their playing, and, in the records of these games, “the group’s members demonstrated to outsiders that they were relaxed, witty, and appreciative of life’s pleasures...while being literate and erudite, worthy transmitters of the Chinese cultural tradition.”²⁵ Zhuang’s examples of Wang Anshi’s unparalleled skill at creating riddles also demonstrate that language can be manipulated, and that power can be attained through the masterful use of language.

In the third and fourth entries, Zhuang shows that in the competitive atmosphere of the literary scene, men took every opportunity to display their wit, sometimes at the expense of others:

²⁵ Colin S.C. Hawes, *The Social Circulation of Poetry in the Mid-Northern Song: Emotional Energy and Literati Self-Cultivation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), p. 48.

In the capital when they sell fresh fruit, it is common for them to snap off the stems of plums. But they do not dare to touch the fruit. They must leave on its ‘coat’ to make it appear fresh. People think that just-picked is good. When it comes time to eat it, then they must wipe off its coat.

During the Yuanyou reign (1086–94) there was a Rescriptor-in-Waiting, Li Kang, who was styled Ziguang.²⁶ In the court people would tease him with a riddle saying: “Those who sell don’t know (bushi); those who buy do know (shi).” This was probably using “to know” (shi) for “to wipe” (shi).

京師賣生果，凡李子必摘其蒂，不敢觸其實，必留上衣令勃勃然，人方以新而為好，至食者須雪去之。元祐中，有李閱待制，字子光，朝中戲以為謎云：“賣者不識買者識。”蓋以“識”為“拭”也。

While this is a relatively tame example, Li Kang was targeted at court for the sake of exhibiting people’s wit. The entry that follows continues the thread of using personal names to make jokes during a craze for making palindromes:

During the Yuanfeng reign (1078–86), there were those who took the names and surnames of contemporary scholars and made matches with them, such as: Cui Du and Cui Gongdu (d. ca. 1094–8), and Wang Shao (ca. 1050–1081 or 1082) and Wang Zishao.²⁷

²⁶ His alternative name, then, would have been: Li Ziguang 李子光 “Shiny Plum.” Li Kang is otherwise unknown.

²⁷ Cui Du is otherwise unknown. Cui Gongdu has a biography in *Song shi*, 353.11152-3. His treatment in history is wholly unflattering. He is represented as an uneducated stutterer who toadied Wang Anshi. See also an anecdote in *Song shi*, 443.13102. Wang Shao has a biography in *Song shi*, 338.10579-82. Wang Zishao has a biography in *Song shi*, 320.10612-3.

Moreover, there was a Jiang Ge whom people also teased saying: “Jiang Ge, separated by a river, asked Wu Maqi: ‘Have you ridden a horse or not?’ (*Jiang Ge ge jiang wen Wu Maqi qima wu*).”²⁸ No one was yet able to make a match with it.

During the Yuanyou reign (1086–94) there was “Shi Wanshi who received the position of Magistrate of Lishi County in Shizhou.” People were shocked at his distant office, and said: “[It is because] they want to make it so that in later generations there will be no match.”

During the Yuanfeng reign there was also the sentence “Ma Zishan rode his mountain horse (*Ma Zishan qi shanzhi ma*).” Coincidentally there was someone surnamed Qian who was the County Magistrate of Hengshui, so people matched it with “Qian [of] Hengshui stole money from Parks and Water Office (*Qian Hengshui dao Shuibeng qian*).” When that person heard of it he was greatly angered, and wanted to debate this matter, but the one that made a match apologized saying: “Even though you really haven’t done this, I just wanted to make a pair with “rode his mountain horse.”

元豐中，有以當時士人姓名為對者，如“崔度崔公度，王韶王子韶”。

又有江鬲，人亦戲云：“江鬲隔江，問巫馬期騎馬無？”未有對者。元

祐中，有“石萬石授石州離石縣令”，人訝其遠宦，云“要令後世無對”。

元豐中，又有“馬子山騎山子馬”之句，偶有姓錢人任衡水知縣，人遂

²⁸ Jiang Ge is otherwise unknown. Wu Maqi was a disciple of Confucius.

對以“錢衡水盜水衡錢”。其人聞之大怒，欲辯其事，對者謝曰：“君雖實無，且欲與山子馬為偶耳。”

Zhuang shows that men were assigned to far away locales and even accused of crimes merely to demonstrate someone's wit. Although it appears that there were no lasting repercussions for these events, Zhuang shows how rumors begin and demonstrates the dangerous side of language. Zhuang in a later entry comments that “words that hurt others [cut] deeper than spears and halberds. Truly, this one can take as a warning” 傷人之言，深於矛戟，信可為戒。²⁹

These entries are followed by another entry about nepotism that focuses on language mistakes and misunderstandings. One of these anecdotes recalls when Cao Xiaozhong's 曹孝忠 (fl. 1107–17) son, upset over an argument he had just had with his father, sat in the courtyard by himself after arriving at work:

...At the time it was autumn and the sun was scorching. He was sitting where the sun was shining, and for a long time did not move his seat. One of his colleagues thought it was strange, so he asked: “Why are you ‘bearing the sun’s heat?’ (*he gu fu xuan*)”³⁰ The son, greatly angered, said: “What concern are the private affairs of my family to you?!” The one who asked at first did not realize what was going on. It was only after a long time that he came to

²⁹ *Jilei bian*, p. 29.

³⁰ The phrase ‘bearing the sun’s heat’ (*fuxuan* 負暄 [煊]) comes from *Liezi* and is used to describe loyalty to one’s ruler (7.16). However, it seems that Cao’s son had misconstrued this question as: “Why did you argue with your father?” 何故父暄 (*He gu fu xuan*).

understand it. Everyone passed it on and laughed about it. After a while, [the son] was transferred to another post.

時秋陽方烈，為日所射，久不遷坐。有同僚怪之，問：“何故負暄”，乃大怒云：“家私間事，關公甚底？”問者初尚未悟，久乃知之，莫不傳笑。既而易為它官。

This is followed by examples of language mistakes: “reward with food and drink” (*jiaoshou*),³¹ “giving birth to a roebuck” (*nongzhang*),³² “gathered anxieties” (*jiuyou*),³³ and “crouching to hunt” (*fulie*).³⁴ Zhuang comments that the Song examples were just as embarrassing as these and they reflected poorly on the Song government. One of these mistakes was even allowed to be published in the *Xu Jiangchi* 續降敕 (Continuation of Official Proclamations).³⁵ These

³¹ Song Honggui 宋鴻貴 often had trouble understanding orders. Once he saw the command to behead an enemy soldier (*xiaoshou* 梟首), so he cut off his hand (*shou* 手), washed it in water (*jiao* 澆), and then cut off his head (*Wei shu*, 63.1418).

³² When Li Linfu’s 李林甫 (d. 752) nephew’s wife gave birth to a boy, he mistakenly wrote: “I have heard there is a celebration for the birth of a roebuck” 聞有弄麋之慶; writing the character ‘roebuck’ (*zhang* 麋) instead of ‘boy’ (*zhang* 璋) (*Jiu Tangshu*, 106.3240).

³³ Liu Shu 劉述, Liu Yixin’s 劉義欣 son (404–39), thought that the line from the *Book of Rites* was “now, [if men] lacked propriety like birds and beasts, then fathers and sons would have ‘gathered anxieties’” 夫唯禽獸無禮，父子聚憂, instead of “fathers and sons could have the same mate” 父子聚麀 (*Liji*, 1A.9; *Nan shi*, 13.355).

³⁴ Xiao Jiong 蕭炅, an uneducated associate of Li Linfu, misread the character ‘la’ in *fula* 伏臘 (ceremonial sacrifices made in the hottest days of summer and on the 8th day of the 12th month of the lunar calendar) as ‘to hunt’ (*lie* 獵), because he was unaware of the existence of such a ceremony. After this he was nicknamed ‘Crouching and Hunting Palace Gentleman’ 伏獵侍郎, and was hated and demoted by Li Linfu (*Jiu Tangshu*, 99.3105 and *Xin Tangshu*, 129.4483).

³⁵ Yang Tong 楊通 should have written ‘pillar axe’ (*zhuifu* 柱斧), a ceremonial object made from crystal, in a document, but instead wrote ‘main axe’ (*zhuifu* 主斧). According to the incident recorded in *Song hui yao jingao*, on September 29, 1120, Yang was dismissed for ignorance of common characters and basic rituals. He purportedly confused ‘main’ for ‘pillar’ when discussing this ceremonial object, saying: “‘Main’ is the gentleman’s way, and ‘axe’ is the image of the gentleman’s virtue” 主為君道，斧象君德. Moreover, while this object is termed ‘axe,’ it does not resemble a real axe (69.6). Yang Tong is otherwise unknown.

men were embarrassed, ridiculed, and demoted because their ignorance of language revealed a lack of understanding of rituals.

Zhuang then returns poetry, this time to focus on examples of prosody and pronunciation. He describes poetry as a combination of sound and experience:

Du Fu's "Ballad of the Stone Rhinoceroses" says: "I myself avoided the swelling wave of leprosy outbreak," sharing a rhyme with *ji* and *shi*.³⁶

"Planting Lettuce" says: "I trust that after lodging here I will become lofty,"

rhyming together with *er* and *shi*.³⁷ "Going out from the Frontier, the Latter"

says: "I fear this is Huo [Commandant of] Piaoyao (140–117 BCE)," making

yao an even tone.³⁸ "Song of the Eight Transcendents [in my Drink]" rhymes two *chuan*, and "Dimingfu" two *jis*.

The character *sa* [in "Planting Lettuce"] has three sounds, but *zhai* [in "Ballad of the Stone Rhinoceroses"] only has the *fanqie* reading *ce* + *jie*. [Huo] Qubing was the Piaoyao Commandant. Fu Qian, in his notes to the *Han History*: "It is pronounced 'Piaoyao.'" Yan Shigu (581–645) said: "Piao is pronounced with the *fanqie* reading *ping* + *miao*. Yao is pronounced with the *fanqie* reading *yang* + *zha*. Piaoyao is the appearance of a strong and fast response. Xun Yue (148–209) in *Record of the Han* wrote it with the characters 'Piaoyao.' Qubing was later the Piaoji General, so they simply took the

³⁶ *Quan Tang shi*, 791.

³⁷ *Quan Tang shi*, 221.

³⁸ This is the second of five poems.

characters *Piaoyao* [from this]. Now readers pronounce it as ‘*Piaoyao*,’ but it should not have this meaning.”³⁹

Poets are restrained by the rules of sound, so they take the sounds and omit the meanings.⁴⁰ Like “numerous” (*jiji*) and “Qingji River” (*qingji*) [in “Dimingfu”], although their sounds are the same, their meanings are different.

That is why for the two ‘boats’ (*chuan*) [in “Song of the Eight Transcendants”], some have consequently said that “did not get on the boat” (*bu shang chuan*) means that the people of Shu call the hem of their robes ‘boats.’ I was once in Shu and asked the locals about this, but it was not so.⁴¹ Later I saw that Fan Chuanzheng’s (*jinsbi* 794) “New Stele Inscription for [Li] Taibai” said: “Xuanzong’s [skiff] floated on White Lotus Pond, and he summoned the deceased to compose a preface.⁴² At the time the deceased had already liquored up in the Garden of Brushes, so he ordered Gao Lishi (684–762) to help him ascend the skiff.” What Du sang about is probably this event.

³⁹ These can be found in *Han shu*, 55.2478, n. 1.

⁴⁰ I concur with the Zhonghua editor’s opinion that *yi* 意 (meaning) should be *yin* 音 (sound) here (*Jilei bian*, p. 38, n. 4).

⁴¹ I take *zhou* 舟 (skiff) as a haplographic error for Shu 蜀.

⁴² I take *xun* 汛 (rising waters) as *fan* 汎 (to set afloat). Li Bo was originally buried in Donglu 東麓, but when Fan visited Li’s relatives to offer condolences, they told him that Li had wished to be buried at Qingshan 青山. Upon hearing this, Fan had Li reburied at Qingshan, and erected two stele (*Xin Tang shu*, 202.5763). Brief biographical sketches of Fan Chuanzheng can be found in *Jiu Tang shu*, 185B.4830; and *Xin Tang shu*, 172.5208.

杜子美《石犀行》云：“自免洪濤恣雕瘵。”與濟逝為韻。《種蒿苳》云：“信宿罷瀟灑。”與耳始同押。《後出塞》云：“恐是霍粟姚。”作平聲。《〔飲中〕八仙歌》押兩船字，《狄明府》兩濟字。灑字有三音，而瘵但切側界。去病為粟姚校尉，服虔註《漢書》：“音飄搖。”顏師古云：“粟音平妙反，姚音羊召反。粟姚，勁疾之貌也。”荀悅《漢紀》作粟鶴字。去病後為粟騎將軍，尚取粟姚之字耳。今讀者音飄搖，則不當其義也。詩人拘於聲律，取其意而略其義也，如濟濟清濟，音雖同而義異。故兩船字或者遂謂不上船為蜀人以衣襟為船。余嘗至舟中問土人，則不然。後見范傳正《太白新墓誌》云：玄宗汎白蓮池，召公作序，時公已被酒於翰苑中，命高力士扶以登舟。杜之所歌，蓋此事爾。

This is the second entry in which Zhuang makes the claim that poetry is ruled by sound, and he said in the first entry that poetry must be read with this in mind. However, while meaning is approximated, it does not mean that choices are made without reason. Zhuang uses a historical approach in his search for the meaning of the two *chuans* in Du Fu's poem. In this way we can see that in order to appropriately interpret literature, one must understand the literary use of language, as well as the circumstances of composition.

Huang Tingjian's (1045–1105) poem "Sending off Zhang Mo to be Transport Clerk of Hedong" says:

Chinese Sage Herb can be picked and is suitable for tribute;

As for green iron there is not a lot that is not smelted into money.

At the time, Fan Chunren (1027–1101) was Commandant of Taiyuan, and was just discussing the widespread practice of smelting, resulting in the defect of expensive goods.⁴³ His son, [Fan] Ziyi was also able to write poetry, and once said: “He should change ‘lack’ to ‘although,’ then it would be right.”⁴⁴

There is also a piece that says:

As for Tiger Head's ink miracles, you can send them again and again;

*As for Concord grapes, don't wait to be asked for them.*⁴⁵

Someone discussing this said: “One portrait of Vimalakīrti is enough; why would you want more?”

I guess that when you belittle others, it is easy [to do so by attacking] their craftsmanship. Mengzi reproached Gaozi saying he was daft [in how he

⁴³ Zhongxuan is the posthumous name of Fan Chunren 范純仁, Fan Zhongyan's 范仲淹 second son. Fan Chunren spent less than a year as governor of Taiyuan Prefecture, from some time in the fourth year of the Yuanyou reign (1089/90) to the autumn of that same year (*Song shi*, 314.10289). His biography can be found in *Song shi*, 314.10281-93.

⁴⁴ The line would then read: “Although there is a lot of metal, do not smelt it into money.” Ziyi was the style name of Fan Zhengping 范正平. His biography can be found in *Song shi*, 314.10293-5.

⁴⁵ This line is from the third poem in Huang's “Sending off Gu Zidun on his way to Hedong” 送顧子敦赴河東. Tiger Head (*butou* 虎頭) was one of Gu Kaizhi's 顧愷之 style names (see *Taiping guangji*, 210). Tiger head was also a name for Vimalakīrti, who was often illustrated with a tiger's head. See for example, the first poem of “Xie Hu Cangzhi song lishuwei hua Weimo” (Thanking Hu Cangzhi for Giving the Chestnut Squirrel Tail Painting of Vimalakīrti) 謝胡藏之送栗鼠尾畫維摩: 貂尾珍材可筆，虎頭墨妙疑神。頗知君塵外物，真是我眼中人。

approached the Odes],⁴⁶ yet Mengzi did not use [all of] the bamboo strips from “Completion of War.”⁴⁷ How much more so for the rest?⁴⁸

黃魯直《送張謨河東漕使》詩云：“紫參可擻宜包貢，青鐵無多莫鑄錢。”時范忠宣帥太原，方論冶多鑄廣，故物重為弊。其子子夷亦能詩，嘗云：“當易‘無’字為‘雖’乃可。”又一篇云：“虎頭墨妙能頻寄，馬乳蒲萄不待求。”議者又謂：“維摩畫像一本足矣，何用多為？”蓋貶駁他人，易於為工也。孟子斥高子云固，而不取武成之策，況餘者乎？

Zhuang first describes how Fan Ziyi changed a line in Huang Tingjian’s poem in order to make a social commentary about his father, Fan Chunren. Next Zhuang introduces a critic (*yizhe* 議者) who criticized one of Huang’s lines to make a joke. Zhuang concludes with a comment about Mengzi criticizing Gaozi for not considering the *Odes* in relation to the circumstances of its creation, yet Mengzi opined that it is better to be without the *Shujing*

⁴⁶ Gaozi called the “Xiao bian” (小弁) “odes for the petty man” (*xiaoren zhi shi* 小人之詩) because it expressed “dissatisfaction” (*yuàn* 怨). In response, Mengzi replied: “The dissatisfaction expressed in ‘Xiao bian’ is due to the intimacy of relatives. Intimacy of relatives is called humane. How daft Gao is towards the *Odes*!” 小弁之怨，親親也。親親，仁也。固矣夫，高叟之為《詩》！(*Mengzi*, 6B.23).

⁴⁷ Mengzi said, “It would be better to be without the *Book of Documents* than to believe in it entirely. I only use two or three bamboo slips from ‘Completion of War.’ The humane man has no enemy under heaven. To the extent that when a humane man (King Wu of Zhou) attacked a non-humane man (Zhou of Shang), how could their blood have flowed until it floated the pestles of the mortars?” 孟子曰：“盡信《書》，則不如無《書》。吾於《武成》，取二三策而已矣。仁人無敵於天下。以至仁伐至不仁，而何其血之流杵也？”(*Mengzi*, 7B.3; Yang Bojun, *Mengzi yi zhu*, p. 325). Wang Chong also discusses this *Shangshu* account in the “Exaggerations” chapter (*Yuzeng pian* 語增篇) of *Lunheng*. Wang says that Mengzi is dissatisfied with the exaggeration in this chapter, because “the floating pestles went beyond the truth” (*fu chu guo qi shi* 浮杵過其實) (*Lunheng*, 25.12).

⁴⁸ *Jilei bian*, p. 4.

than to believe it entirely, because it contains exaggerated accounts. Zhuang here is suggesting that even Mengzi was confused about how to read literature.

These entries, placed after his claim that *Jilei bian*, like the Cao Cao account, is nothing more than “empty words,” instead focus on the power and complexity of language, especially in regard to the translation of spoken words into the written form.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter began this process of reading *Jilei bian* as a complete text. An analysis of Zhuang Chuo’s preface of *Jilei bian* reveals two major themes: first, the ways in which language creates meaning for experience; and second, the role of chance in the formation and preservation of the historical record.

This chapter also examined how Zhuang’s preface introduces the idea of “empty” words in the context of history writing, yet claims that his *Jilei bian* will consist of this very thing. We then saw how Zhuang proceeded to dismantle the idea that spoken words are less valuable than deeds by giving examples of words giving rise to actions. Indeed, Zhuang paints a picture of language as a dangerous, powerful force that must be handled with caution.

Language, especially poetry and jokes, is meant to be experienced aurally. Language is also bound to experience, and once it is removed from the original circumstances misunderstandings can arise. All words are in danger of becoming public and once they enter the public sphere, they become vulnerable to changes or misunderstandings. Most importantly, history and language are inextricably bound; without words, accounts of history cannot exist.

CHAPTER 3: HISTORY BY CHANCE: SELECTION, OMISSION, AND PRESERVATION

As mentioned in chapter two, in his preface to *Jilei bian* 雞肋編, Zhuang Chuo 莊綽 introduces the theme of chance (*xing* 幸) as it relates to the creation of the historical record and the discovery of historical information. Zhuang's anecdote about Cao Cao 曹操 (155–220) in his preface illustrates the random nature of what came to be included in history. Why, Zhuang asks, is Cao Cao's choice to use the phrase “chicken ribs” to issue a command included in history, but not Cao's many achievements? Moreover, Zhuang submits in his preface that in a time when scholars are rooting around for historical information, it is chance that causes them to stumble across traces of the past.

This chapter explores the ways in which this theme about chance is continued throughout *Jilei bian*. The first section places Zhuang's understanding of fate and chance within the context of discourse about the causes of fortune and misfortune. It shows that Zhuang thinks that whether a person is successful in his career mostly has to do with luck. The second section discusses Zhuang's frustrated attempts to connect with the tangible traces of the past. He finds cultural sites altered such that they now only exist in texts and cultural imagination. Yet, even these remnants are in danger of being lost, with the ceaselessly shifting landscape and appropriation of cultural objects for personal use. Zhuang concludes that what ends up being salvaged and chosen for inclusion in history is only there because of chance.

FATE AND CHANCE: PATTERNS AND THE RANDOM

Zhuang makes a distinction in *Jilei bian* between chance or luck (*xing*) and fate (*ming* 命) or lot (*shu* 數). In a short entry, Zhuang gives two examples of an official who would, based on whether a person's name could be reinterpreted to convey a negative political outcome, choose to not employ or to terminate him. Zhuang concludes this anecdote by saying: "There have been many examples in ancient times and now of people who have become fortunate or unfortunate because of a prognostic saying (*chenyu*).¹ Although there is lucky (*xing*) and unlucky (*bu xing*), it is also one's lot (*shu*) that makes things as such. This can be endlessly sighed over!" 古今以讖語而為禍福者多矣，雖有幸不幸，蓋亦數使之然也。可勝嘆哉。² In this entry we see that, to Zhuang, the outcomes of fortune and misfortune are shaped by both fate and chance.

What is Fate?

In this section we will take a closer look at Zhuang's view on the roles fate and the individual play in determining one's fortune. Fate is inescapable, as we see in an entry in which Zhuang cites Zeng Gong's 曾鞏 (1019–83; *jinsbi* 1058) "Etai ji" 厄臺記 (Record of Etai).³

¹ The term *chen*, also rendered as portent-text or prophecy, is intimately connected with oracle or oracle-slip (*qian* 籤) (Michel Strickmann, *Chinese Poetry and Prophecy: The Written Oracle in East Asia* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005], pp. 30–1 and 55–6).

² *Jilei bian*, p. 116.

³ Etai was where Confucius nearly starved to death.

“*Etai ji*” elucidates Zeng’s notion that, as there is darkness and light in nature, humanity must also maintain this balance: “If Heaven and earth do not have troubles (*pi*), then how will the myriad things know great virtue? If the sun and the moon do not get dark, then how will the myriad things know great brightness?” 天地不否，萬物豈知大德乎？日月不晦，萬物豈知大明乎。⁴ In other words, while there are sure to be challenges in life, it is how a man responds to these trials that reveal his worth. “This is how we know that, even if one is in accord with the virtues of heaven and earth, one is unable to escape the lot (*shu*) of Heaven and earth; and, one can be on par with the brightness of the sun and moon, but one is unable to violate the way of the sun and moon” 是知合於天地之德，不能逃天地之數；齊日月之明，不能違日月之道。⁵

Although the patterns of men follow the same principles as nature, Zhuang maintains that fate cannot be controlled or predicted because, as we see in another entry, fate, in the form of fortune and misfortune, is a secret guarded by Heaven:

... As such, then, as for diagnostic texts, such as the appearance of a “trigram shadow,”⁶ although every person will have his own response (*ying*) [to it], yet whether it is auspicious or inauspicious, in particular, has not yet been

⁴ Cited in *Jilei bian*, p. 60; cf. Zeng Gong, *Zeng Gong ji* 曾鞏集, punctuated and collated by Chen Xingzhen 陳杏珍 and Chao Jizhou 晁繼周, *Zhongguo gudian wenxue jiben congshu* 中國古典文學基本叢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), pp. 717–8. *Yijing*: (12th Hexagram *pi*).

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Guaying* are drawings that illustrate the response to a particular trigram (cf. Rui Shiming 芮詩茗, “Songdai guige guaying qiantan” 宋代軌革卦影淺探, *Zhouyi yanjiu* 1 (2009): 78.

determined. Can it be that calamity and fortune are what Heaven holds secret, and in the end does not allow men to predict?⁷

然則繇文如卦影之象，雖人各有其應，而吉兇特未定也。豈禍福天之所秘，終不容人推測乎。

Therefore, Zhuang warns against men who claim to be able to predict the future through observation of outward manifestations, such as physical appearance, trigrams in the *Yijing*, or dates (i.e., Yin-yang school):

In the world, there are many who use the five elements and the star calendar to discuss fate (*ming*). Now there are several people who have salaries and are noble, and yet have met disastrous ends. When they were at their highest, no one was able to tell them about their calamities they had not yet reached.

From this we can know that the Yin-yang school is not worth deeply clinging to. The only things that can be relied on are rectifying yourself and upholding the way.⁸

世之以五行星歷論命者多矣。今祿貴而兇終者數人，其盛時未有能言其未至之災也。以此知陰陽家不足深泥，唯正已守道為可恃耳。

Fate cannot be predicted, at least by means of astrological calculations, because although the patterns might be discernable, the meanings of these patterns, applied to an individual, are unknowable. Yet, in this passage Zhuang also suggests that through human agency; that is,

⁷ *Jilei bian*, p. 22. Zhuang conceives of Heaven as an anthropomorphic entity, as a force that shapes men's lives. In another entry, Zhuang writes that Heaven "favors" (*si 私*) those with the names Li 李 and Du 杜 (*Ibid.*, p. 4).

⁸ *Jilei bian*, p. 14. Zhuang also warns against trusting in physiognomy to predict fate (*Ibid.*).

by following the virtuous example of sages and by cultivating oneself, one might be able to bring about a positive outcome.⁹

Zhuang was not the only Song literatus to oppose prognostication. Hsien-hui Liao writes that Song intellectuals publicly denounced prognostication for such reasons as: the belief that fate is unforeseeable or immutable, the inaccuracy or incapability of diviners, concerns about the fatalism induced by an excessive reliance on fortune-tellers or the improper application of divination, and a desire to encourage moral improvement and Confucian orthodoxy. However, the strongest objection was the conviction that no one should try to predict or mediate fate for the sake of personal profit or material reward.¹⁰ These reasons also reveal the variety of attitudes toward fate during the Song dynasty.

Orthodox Confucian beliefs maintained that Heaven would reward the morally upright and punish the morally corrupt, but that it was possible to appease Heaven through a combination of offerings and moral rectification. This is why emperors were often advised

⁹ While Zhuang thinks that man's fate cannot be predicted, he maintains that certain aspects of a man's life can be understood through careful observation. For example, one can tell whether a man is base by observing his habits: "If you want to know if some one is base, first you must look for four bad habits: eating slowly and shitting quickly; sleeping with ease and getting dressed with difficulty" 欲識為人賤，先須看四般，飯遲屙屎疾，睡易著衣難 (*Jilei bian*, p. 18). Yet while Zhuang thinks that a person's character can be observed, whether he is base or not cannot guarantee fortune or misfortune.

¹⁰ "Exploring Weal and Woe: The Song Elite's Mantic Beliefs and Practices," *T'ung Pao*, Second Series, 91.4/5 (2005): 353–4. This, of course, did not prevent literati from seeking out diviners in their private lives. While private divinatory practices were legally prohibited from the beginning of the Song until Emperor Renzong's reign (1010–63; r. 1022–63) (*Ibid.*, 355–60), stalls offering various types of divination services in urban centers seem to have been popular during the Late-Northern and Southern Song. Song elite often sought ought fortune-tellers to divine their success in the examinations and in the official world (*Ibid.*, p. 348; John Chaffee, *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China: A Social History of Examinations* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985], p. 178; and Shih-Shan Susan Huang, "Tianzhu Lingqian: Divination Prints from a Buddhist Temple in Song Hangzhou," *Artibus Asiae* 67.2 [2007]: 285). Cosmological and divinatory charts and diagrams were also popular in the Song (Richard J. Smith, *Fathoming the Cosmos and Ordering the World: The Yijing [I-Ching, or Classic of Changes] and Its Evolution in China* [Charlottesville & London: University of Virginia Press, 2008], pp. 114–20).

to make offerings during turbulent times.¹¹ Some intellectuals, however, such as Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–72), struggled to understand why these rules of moral retribution did not find universal application.¹² Ouyang, for example, argued that the traditional concept of legitimate succession (*zhengtong* 正統) was simply a Han dynasty construct, and that no true correlation existed between morality and politics.¹³ As we will see, although Zhuang did comment, as we saw above, that moral actions are the “only things that can be relied on,” he also expressed doubts that moral actions would invariably lead to political success.

Attitudes about foreordination and the possibility of human agency to affect one’s fate were actually quite complex. Paolo Santangeolo explains that in the Song dynasty fate or destiny could be interpreted in two different senses, static or dynamic, which were, in practice, understood concurrently. In the static sense, fate was viewed as independent of human will. “In this perspective, a person’s behaviour, which concerns his moral sphere directly, can itself become an event that in turn influences the destinies of other individuals. This is what is termed contingent or accidental in the life of an individual or in history.”¹⁴ In the dynamic sense, fate was seen as “the projection of previous actions and behaviour, the

¹¹ James Liu remarked: “Confucianism was thus driven into the anomalous position of upholding the belief that the heavenly order and human events do interact. By this belief, both sympathetic magic and moral conduct *would* help bring good fortune. However, sympathetic magic received little emphasis from rational-minded Confucianists. They believed that moral conduct served the purpose better, for heaven would reward the upright man. Natural disasters and unusual omens were customarily interpreted as warning signs by which heaven expressed its disapproval of human conduct at court—sins of either omission or commission” (James Liu, *Ou-yang Hsiu: An Eleventh-Century Neo-Confucianist* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967], pp. 156–7). For a concise introduction to the idea that human behavior could affect destiny, including Daoist and Buddhist influences, see Paolo Santangeolo, “Destiny and Retribution in Late Imperial China,” *Philosophy East and West* 42.2/4 (Dec., 1992): 387–91.

¹² Liu, *Ou-yang Hsiu*, pp. 167–70.

¹³ On-cho Ng and Q. Edward Wang, *Mirroring the Past: The Writing and Use of History in Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005), pp. 146–7.

¹⁴ “Destiny and Retribution in Late Imperial China,” pp. 382–3.

consequence of certain conduct.”¹⁵ This is explained in terms of karma or retribution (*bao* 報). In this perspective, the outcome of events can be shaped by an individual’s moral behavior.

What is Chance?

Zhuang views fate as unknowable and inescapable, yet he also intimates that it is mutable, to some extent, through moral conduct. These notions of fate are further complicated by the role of chance, which Zhuang sees as separate but connected to fate. In the following anecdote, we can see that, like Zhuang, Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123–1202; *jinsbi* 1146) makes a distinction between chance (*xing*) and kalpic lot (*jieshu*) in *Rongzhai suibi* 容齋隨筆 and views them as contributors to the outcomes of fortune and misfortune in different ways: “From ancient times there have been cases of ‘unseen misfortunes,’ in which ‘jade and stone burned together.’¹⁶ The Buddhists call this ‘kalpic lot’ (*jieshu*). Yet, there have also been those who are lucky and those who are not” 自古無望之禍玉石俱焚者，釋氏謂之劫數

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ “Unexpected disaster” (*Wuwang zhi buo* 無望之禍) comes from the twenty-fifth hexagram in the *Yijing*, *wuwang* 無妄: “Six in the third place, an unexpected calamity. A tethered ox is a traveler’s gain, a resident’s calamity” 六三，無妄之災。或系之牛，行人之得。邑人之災 (translation modified from Margaret Pearson, *The Original I Ching: An Authentic Translation of the Book of Changes* [New York: Tuttle Publishing, 2011], p. 127, <http://GVSU.ebib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=868759> [accessed February 03, 2015]). “Jade and stone burned together” (*yu shi ju fen* 玉石俱焚) comes from the *Shangshu* (James Legge, transl., *Sacred Books of the East, Volume 3, The Shoo King* [1879; Reprint] [Taipei: SMC Publishing, 1994], p. 168). This was a punishment from Heaven. Although *jieshu* is a Buddhist concept regarding the transformation of mankind into ash at the end of the final kalpa cycle (cf. *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類, p. 3025), these writers appear to understand it as ordinary fate.

，然固自有幸不幸者。 This is followed by examples from history of people who were saved from death only by a chance intervention.¹⁷ In this passage, Hong opines that one's luck is predicated on a matrix of personal choices and the decisions of others, and as such, is irrational and unpredictable.

Zhou Mi 周密 (1232–98) also provides an illustration of the interrelationship between chance and kalpic lot:

In the fifth month of the *gengyin* year it rained continuously for forty days. All of the fields in Zhexi were flooded. ... There were those who were lucky (*xing*) not to have their fields flooded, but then the water from the lake came riding upon a great wind, and their fields and houses were instantly gone. ... The farmers formed into groups and headed to Huainan in search of food. They bought a hundred or so boats on Lake Taihu, and the thousands of people who could fit on it went off together. They had just arrived at the middle of the lake when a great wind suddenly came, and everyone drowned. There were another thousand or so people who crossed the Yangzi River, but they also all drowned while crossing on the same day. The Jingci and Lingyin Temples closed their halls, and several hundred sojourning monks all crossed the river to return to Zhedong. Among them were four monks who, by chance (*ou*), had separated from the other acolytes, and stopped midway because they had forgotten their rain gear. They went back to get it, but by the time they returned to Jianggan the boat had already left. They had just

¹⁷ *Xubi* 續筆, 3.251. See also *Suibi* 隨筆, 5.60. Cf. Zhou Mi, *Qidong yeyu* (*daoxue*).

been feeling disappointed and upset when the boat reached the center current, where it was also overturned by a wave stirred up by the wind.

Those four monks were spared by luck (*xing*). Is this not an example of what is meant by “kalpic lot” (*jieshu*)?¹⁸

庚寅五月連雨四十日，浙西之田盡沒無遺□□幸而不沒者，則大風駕湖水而來，田廬頃刻而盡□□農人皆相與結隊往淮南趁食，於太湖買舟百十餘，所載數千人同往。甫至湖心，大風驟至，悉就溺死。又有千餘人渡楊子江，濟者同日亦沉於江。淨慈、靈隱皆停堂，客僧數百皆渡江還浙東。內四僧偶別門徒，至中途忘攜雨具，還取之，至江干則渡舟解維矣。方悵然自失，舟至中流，亦為風浪所覆，四僧幸而得免。豈非所謂劫數者耶！

It is unclear whether the kalpic lot refers to those who could not escape death because it was their lot to die, or to the four monks who did escape death because they were lotted to live, or to both cases. Regardless, these monks escaped death by chance or luck (*xing*) because they chose to turn back to retrieve items they had forgotten.

These anecdotes by Hong and Zhou represent two voices from the Song dynasty who, like Zhuang, viewed chance and fate as working together to determine the fortunes of man. Hong and Mai both see chance as stemming from human agency; that is, it is the unknown result of the interactions among individual choices that result in chance.

¹⁸ Zhou Mi, *Guixin zashu* 癸辛雜識 (Reprint; 1988. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), p. 138.

While Hong and Zhou are concerned about how chance affects life and death, Zhuang is more interested in how chance affects one's career. Zhuang observes that one's physical appearance and others' response to it has a bearing on how one is treated and how one is remembered posthumously. In one entry, Zhuang relates Ran Min's 冉閔 (d. 352; r. 350–2) slaughter of the Jie 羯, who were recognizable by their beards and big noses.¹⁹ This is followed by an account of Yuan Shao's 袁紹 (154?–202) slaughter of eunuchs, who were recognizable because they lacked beards.²⁰ Finally, Zhuang turns to Wang Deyong 王德用 (987–1065) of the Song dynasty:

The speakers said that his facial features resembled the founding emperor, and that he made his residence by pillowing his head at the northwestern hill.²¹ So [Wang] said: “[My appearance is] what my parents originally gave birth to, and [my home is] a gift of the court.” Yet are not big noses or no

¹⁹ *Jin shu*, 107.2792. According to the account in *Jin shu*, half of those who died were killed unjustly because of their beards and big noses. That is, they were not actually Jie people, but had the misfortune of resembling one.

²⁰ Zhuang quotes the account in *Hou Han shu*, 69.2252–3; cf. *Sanguo zhi*, 6.189.

²¹ A hill located in the northwest was considered a suitable place to build a ruler's palace. According to an annotation in *Shengshui yantan lu* 澗水燕談錄, it was Su Shen 蘇紳 (999–1046; *jinsbi* 1019) and Kong Daofu 孔道輔 (985–1039; *jinsbi* 1012) who made these comments (2.17). According to *Shilin yanyu* 石林燕語, Wang was dismissed as *qumishi* 樞密使 in 1039 (Baoyuan 寶元 2) 二年五月 because Kong opined that Wang's appearance made him not suitable to his position, and was sent to govern in Suizhou 知隨州. While there he refused all guests and never spoke. He only started to speak again one year later, after he was sent to govern in Caozhou 知曹州 (7.103); cf. *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian*, 123.2907; *Song shi*, 278.9467–8). Su's biography in *Song shi* writes that Su said these things because he was “skilled at hurting people” (*shan zhong shang ren* 善中傷人). When Renzong heard this comment about Wang, he was upset and dismissed Su, who died soon after (294.9813).

whiskers “bestowed forms”²² and “given by Heaven as it should”?²³

Especially when it comes to chance, one cannot yet escape misfortune!²⁴

言者謂其貌類藝祖，宅枕乾岡，乃云：“本父母所生，朝廷之賜。”而

高鼻無須，豈非遺體天與而然邪？特有幸不幸耳，未可以脫禍也！

Wang Deyong’s quip was a popular anecdote in the Song. It was said that Wang was universally feared because his face was completely black, while his body was white.²⁵

Everyone, regardless of whether they had met him before, knew his name. The Jin even invoked his name to scare their children.²⁶

Other records about Wang Deyong in miscellany use this anecdote to accomplish one of two things. First, to highlight the wrongdoing of Su Shen 蘇紳 (999–1046; *jinsbi* 1019) and Kong Daoфу 孔道輔 (985–1039; *jinsbi* 1012), who, they claim, were responsible for Wang’s dismissal because of their gossiping. These accounts name the gossipers and describe the consequences of their actions. Second, some accounts conclude with an anecdote that purportedly took place after the emperor rectified this undeserved dismissal and recalled Wang to court. An envoy from the Jin arrives and, noticing Wang, comments on the emperor’s ability to select good men. These accounts use Wang’s unusual appearance and the emperor’s willingness to overlook it to illustrate the emperor’s sagacity.

²² *Liji*: “The body is the form bestowed by our parents” 身也者，父母之遺體也 (21.26).

²³ This seems to be a paraphrase from Liu Yuxi’s 劉禹錫 (772–842) “Tian lun” 天論 (Discourse on Heaven).

²⁴ *Jilei bian*, p. 81.

²⁵ *Shengshui yantan lu*, 2.17; *Shilin yanyu*, 7.103.

²⁶ *Shengshui yantan lu*, 2.17.

Zhuang's treatment of this event is different from other works that record this anecdote, in that he focuses on the cosmic reasoning behind Wang's unjust treatment despite his innocence. Wang is as he should be, as was determined by Heaven (i.e., fate), but it is others' reactions to his appearance that illustrate the workings of chance. Although Wang looked different, he was still fortunate enough to have become an official. Yet, it was also his unusual appearance that caused gossipers to take notice of him. While Zhuang does not specifically discuss the result of this gossip (i.e., Wang's dismissal), by juxtaposing this well-known anecdote about Wang with accounts of the ruthless slaughter of foreigners and eunuchs, as well as the accidental deaths of those who resembled foreigners and eunuchs, he equates Wang's misfortune with those atrocities. Moreover, by drawing this parallel, Zhuang forces readers to reconsider the cost of othering.²⁷

In another entry, Zhuang gives an account of Song Hui 宋輝, another official with a black face who, in this case, was incompetent, but was highly favored by the emperor because Song had once helped him onto a boat. Zhuang concludes by saying: "In the end, he was simply on the Emperor's mind because of Song's service of offering the Emperor a hand [while boarding the boat]" 終以扶侍之勞，簡在上心也。²⁸ Yet, people said that they had a "sending fires army" (*Song buo jun* 送火軍), referring to Song and the devastating fires that occurred while he was in the capital.²⁹ In the end, Song was dismissed because too many people gossiped about his ineptitude. Zhuang comments: "If those who said this had not

²⁷ This is not Zhuang's only entry to complicate the issue of otherness. See, for example, his entry about the Jin soldier who refused to raze a building because he appreciated the poem that Zhuang written on a wall (*Jilei bian*, pp. 17–8).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

²⁹ This nickname was created by taking apart Song Hui's name.

expressed their opinion, then fate would not have been able to be carried out” 言者弗置，命乃不行。³⁰

Zhuang’s analyses of these two cases echo Wang Chong 王充 (72–100), who argued in his chapter about chance (*xing ou* 幸偶):

In conducting affairs men may be either talented or stupid, but when it comes to calamity or good fortune, there are some who are lucky and some unlucky. The things they do may be right or wrong, but whether they meet with reward or punishment depends on chance... . There are many persons who wish to display their loyalty [to a ruler], yet he rewards some and distrusts others. Those whom he rewards and trusts are not necessarily the true ones, nor are those whom he punishes and distrusts necessarily the false. It is simply that the rewarded and trusted ones are lucky, while those who are punished and distrusted are unlucky.³¹

凡人操行，有賢有愚，及遭禍福，有幸有不幸。舉事有是有非，及觸賞罰，有偶有不偶……俱欲納忠，或賞或罰；並欲有益，或信或疑。賞而信者未必真，罰而疑者未必偽，賞信者偶，罰疑不偶也。

As Lisa Raphals has discussed, in *Lunheng*, Wang Chong “articulates four overlapping influences: (1) *ming*, (2) *lu* 祿, good fortune in the general sense of prosperity and the specific

³⁰ *Jilei bian*, p. 55.

³¹ *Lunheng*, “Xing ou” 幸偶, 2:1; transl. Yang Lien-sheng, “The Concept of *Pao* as a Basis for Social Relations in China,” in John Fairbank, ed., *Chinese Thought and Institutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 298.

sense of emoluments, (3) *zao yu* 遭遇, adverse encounters, and (4) *xing ou* 幸偶, chance and luck. These four distinct factors provide a nuanced, nondeterministic explanation of the action of fate.³² Chance, including adverse encounters, waxes and wanes and interacts with one's fate to bring about either fortune or misfortune. That is, fate is subject to the whims of chance.³³

CHANCE AND PRESERVATION

In this section we will take a closer look at the role chance plays in the preservation of cultural and historical landmarks and materials. We will see that Zhuang sought out authentic knowledge of the past by visiting cultural sites, but that these sites were often drastically changed due to natural and human intervention. Zhuang concludes that chance affects changes in the landscape, which, in turn, determines historical continuity.

Altered Landscapes: Appropriation of Cultural Sites

In this section we will examine Zhuang's views on how cultural sites and the historical record are affected by natural and man-made changes in the landscape. Zhuang often attempted to visit sites that contained traces of key historical figures. While he does

³² "Fate, Fortune, Chance, and Luck in Chinese and Greek: A Comparative Semantic History," *Philosophy East and West* 53.4 (Oct., 2003): 551; reprinted in *The Magnitude of Ming: Command, Allotment, and Fate in Chinese Culture*, Christopher Lupke, ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), pp. 70–106.

³³ Raphals notes that this was Wang Chong's unique reformulation of Warring States discourse on fate (*Ibid.*).

not specifically state his purpose for this, we can see that he thought the knowledge of the past was “hidden in the ancients” (*yin yu guren* 隱於古人).³⁴ Thus, Zhuang took pains to visit historical sites and used what he discovered to supplement, corroborate, or correct the textual record. In one entry, for example, Zhuang cites an anecdote in *Longcheng lu* 龍城錄 about a cave on Mount Jinhua 金華山 where Liu Zhongqing 劉仲卿 supposedly lived in reclusion.³⁵ Everyone in the area also said that was the case and there even was a brief biography of Liu on the wall of the cave written by the Daoist, Xiao Yuxuan 蕭玉玄. But Zhuang later read in *Jinhua tu jing* 金華圖經 that it was actually Liu Jun 劉峻 (462–521) who lived there while he was compiling the *Wenxuan* 文選. So Zhuang wrote all this down and gave it to Ouyang Mao 歐陽懋 (Ouyang Xiu’s grandson), who was then governor of Wu 婺 (where Mount Jinhua is located), in hopes that Ouyang would correct this mistake.³⁶

During his travels, Zhuang often stumbled upon pieces of history that were not recorded in the official histories. For example, he discovered the death anniversaries of three members of the Tang imperial family written in a Tang edition of the *Huayan jing* 華嚴經 (Huayan Sutra)³⁷ and he also discovered an unknown reign name on the hinges of a gate that had been removed for repair.³⁸

³⁴ Citing Zhang Jiuling 張九齡 (678?–740; *jinsbi* 702), “Ying tu zan” 鷹圖贊 (Encomium for a Painting of an Eagle) in *Jilei bian*, p. 48.

³⁵ *Longcheng lu* was written by Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773–819).

³⁶ Zhuang concludes this entry by wondering whether the changes he submitted were ever made (*Jilei bian*, pp. 51–2).

³⁷ *Jilei bian*, p. 18.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

Despite the occasional chance discovery, however, Zhuang often found himself disappointed by his encounters with a landscape that was drastically different from what was preserved in the textual record. In one entry, for example, Zhuang retraces Han Yu's 韓愈 (768–824; *jinsbi* 792) journey to the Yicheng Shrine 宜城祠, which was the subject of Han Yu's poem, “Ti Chu Zhaowang miao” 題楚昭王廟 (On the Temple of King Zhao of Chu),³⁹ yet finds not only the landscape altered, but also that the poem he thought he knew so well had been changed during the course of its transmission.⁴⁰ Zhuang discovers a stone engraving that provides an alternate reading to one of the lines, which all the current anthologies had as “hillocks and plains fill the eyes” (*qiuyuan manmu* 丘原滿目). The engraving, however, had “grave mounds” (*qinfen* 丘墳) instead of “hillocks” (*qiuyuan* 丘原).⁴¹

Zhuang also finds the “King Zhao Well” (*Zhao Wang jing* 昭王井) that Han wrote about in an essay, “Ji Yicheng yi” 記宜城驛 (Record of Yicheng Postal Station).⁴² Zhuang notes: “[I]t is relatively far from today's roads, so no one draws water from it. I still would

³⁹ The temple for King Zhao of Chu (Xiong Ren 熊王; ca. 523–489 B.C.E.) was located in Yicheng (modern Hubei), a tomb town. The king had made his capital here in 505 B.C.E. Locals had constructed a simple shrine next to the ruins of the Chu court. Hartmann writes that Han Yu visited here on the day that his daughter died, March 1, 819. Hartmann reads this poem as “a powerful yet subtle encomium to Confucian royal virtue and its ability to endure as a positive force for stability in a transitory world” (*Han Yü*, pp. 88–9).

⁴⁰ *Jilei bian*, p. 4.

⁴¹ This poem, as preserved in the *Quan Tang shi*, reads “grave mounds” (343.1); cf. trans. in Hartmann, *Han Yü*, pp. 88–9.

⁴² According to the *Xin Tang shu*, Han Chaozong 韓朝宗 (686–750) visited this location in Kaiyuan 22 (734) when the ten circuits had just been built. At the time it was said that all those who had drunk from this well died, so no one dared to use it. Han Chaozong then wrote a memorial to the spirits (*yishu yushen* 移書諭神), and those who were afflicted all recovered. After this, the well was renamed “Sir Han Well” (*Han gong jing* 韓公井) (118.4273; cf. Wei Zhongju 魏仲舉, *Wubai jia zhu Changli wenji* 五百家注昌黎文集, *juan* 4).

like to see the small walled area [behind the shrine] where the Zhen clan lived” 今之道稍遠，人無汲者。小城甄氏之居，猶想見也。⁴³ While Zhuang manages to find the well, it is only an echo of Han’s experience. Just as the well is now at a remove from the road and the wall no longer exists, the glory of Tang’s legacy is fading into the irretrievable past.⁴⁴

Another entry, in which Zhuang seeks the traces of reknowned men of the past in the Xiangyang 襄陽 area, illustrates Zhuang’s frustration with the shifting landscape. First, Zhuang searches for two stele that celebrated Du Yu’s 杜預 (222–85) meritorious deeds, but was unsuccessful. It was said that Du Yu wanted to ensure that his name was passed on to later generations, so he had two stele erected—one at the foot of Mount Wan 萬山 and the other on top of Mount Xian 峴山—which read: “Who knows whether this will later become a cliff or a valley” 安知此後不為陵谷乎?⁴⁵ The stelae on Mount Xian could not be found, and when Zhuang looked for the one at the foot of Mount Wan, he found that River Han’s 漢水 course had changed several times so that he was unable to locate it. All of Du’s careful calculations regarding his placement of these stele were for naught.⁴⁶

⁴³ According to Han Yu’s essay, dated Yuanhe 14 (819 C.E.), there was a small walled area behind the shrine, which he believed was part of the palace. At the time Han composed this essay it was occupied by the Zhen family. Han praised the son, Zhen Feng 甄逢, for his learning. Wei Zhongju identifies this as Zhen Ji’s 甄濟 (d. 766) home, citing “Da Yuanshiyu shu” 答元侍御書 (Letter in Reply to yuanshiyu) (*Wubai jia zhu Changli wenji*, juan 4).

⁴⁴ According to Han’s essay, the bricks that made up the wall made excellent ink stones. Perhaps the wall is no longer there because people took the bricks for this purpose. The entry in *Jilei bian* immediately following this one, about stele being repurposed for musical instruments, suggests that Zhuang believes this was the case (*Jilei bian*, p. 4).

⁴⁵ *Jilei bian*, p. 35. These lines come from Du Yu’s biography in *Jinshu* (34.1031) and indicate Du’s understanding of the constant changes in the natural landscape.

⁴⁶ Instead they were preserved through the textual record. The preservation of grave markers was also attributed to chance in the gazetteer, *Yunjian zhi* 雲間志, by Yang Qian 楊潛 (fl. 1190) (*juan zhong*, 36b).

Other monuments in the Xiangyang area were also no longer in their original locations due to human intervention. For example, the provincial wall had later been built in between Mount Xian and Mount Wan, so that now Liu Biao's 劉表 (142–208) tomb was located within the border of the provincial wall. “This is probably not the way it was planned by the ancients” 蓋非古所治也, writes Zhuang.⁴⁷ This comment continues a leitmotif in *Jilei bian*: the degradation of ancient custom. While Zhuang's focus is typically to identify the source of change as lexical misunderstanding, here we can see that the root of the problem is urban expansion (i.e., modernization) with disregard for the plans of the ancients. This is not merely a philosophical concern, however. Zhuang applied the traces of ancient life to practical problems. For example, Zhuang once discovered an ancient well that was shaped like a food-steaming basket and whose perimeter was made of ceramic tiles instead of bricks. Later when he held an office in Wuyuan 五原, a sandy area near modern Inner Mongolia where wells could not be dug, Zhuang taught the citizens there this construction technique.⁴⁸

Zhuang then mentions the Wang Can Well (*Wang Can jing* 王粲井), which he thinks was the very well that Du Fu 杜甫 (712–70) wrote about in a poem.⁴⁹ This well was not only embellished with carved ancient script, but also provided a direct link to Du Fu's experiences. Now, however, this well has been moved from a public space to the gardens behind the living quarters for provincial officials. Zhuang also laments that Meng Haoran's 孟浩然 (691?–740) tombstone had been moved into the *Guyin si* 谷隱寺 (Hidden Valley Temple), so

⁴⁷ *Jilei bian*, p. 35.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁴⁹ “Yi shi” 一室.

that now the actual location of his grave is unknown.⁵⁰ These monuments were important cultural sites because they provided tangible links to the lives of the ancients. These sites belonged to the greater community as part of the cultural legacy of great men of the past, yet as individuals claimed private ownership of the objects that had marked these sites, only the object remained while the location had been lost.

Finally, Zhuang returns to the naturally shifting landscape. He concludes this entry by stating that the *Xi chi* 習池 (Xi Family Pond), where Xi Yu 習郁 famously raised fish, still exists and can be found near the *Fenglin si shan* 鳳林寺山 (Phoenix Grove Temple Mountain).⁵¹ He worries, however, that since it is located on the northern bank of the River Han, which is being eroded away, that it too will disappear in the next decade or so.⁵²

Yet, Zhuang also participates in the private appropriation of cultural artifacts, as we see in one entry:

The land 40 *li* north of Hongzhou is named Bixie (Warding off Malevolence). Since there are these stone beasts along the river, that is why it has this name. I passed through there and obtained a broken brick that had four characters, “the ninth year of Kaihuang reign (589 C.E.),” on it in clerical script, yet I didn’t know to whose tomb it belonged. Also, there is the Jingju Abbot in the area between Hong[zhou] and Fu[?], which is named Qingyuan. I also obtained a brick, four sides on which were stamped with the characters, “the

⁵⁰ *Jilei bian*, p. 35.

⁵¹ This was referred to as the Gaoyang Pond 高阳池 in *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 (Richard B. Mather, transl. and comm., *Shih-shuo Hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World, Michigan Monographs in Chinese Studies, Vol. 95* [Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies: The University of Michigan, 2002], pp. 406–7).

⁵² *Jilei bian*, p. 35.

sixteenth year of Kaihuang reign (596 C.E.).” On the mountain behind the temple there is a Shouzhang Pavilion. In front of the pavilion there is a camphor tree about three *xun* around.⁵³ [On it] were inscribed many poems that said it had been struck thrice by lightning and that a giant snake lived inside of it. Dongpo was buried in Ruzhou, and the bricks of his tomb were all stamped with the two characters, “Dongpo,” which had been written by Wang Shouqing (1063–1125), a Luo native. When I was in Xiangyang, I obtained a brick from the tomb of Wei Zhangli, written in clerical script in the third year of the Shengming reign (479 C.E.) of the [Southern Dynasty Kingdom of] Song. I investigated and found that he was Wei Rui’s (442–520) father. After more than six-hundred years, it was sturdy enough to be used as an inkstone. It avoided destruction also by being discarded in Yangdi’s Shancai Temple.⁵⁴

洪州之北四十裏，地名辟邪，以江邊有此石獸，故以為名。余過彼，得破甃，上有隸書“開皇九年”四字，竟不知墓為何人。又洪、撫之間，地名清遠，有淨居院。余又得一磚，四傍皆印開皇十六年字。寺後山上有壽章亭，亭前樟木圍三尋，多題詩，云三經霹靂，中有巨蛇也。東坡葬汝州，其墓甃皆印東坡二字，洛人王壽卿所篆。余在襄陽，得隸書宋昇明三年韋長史墓磚，考之睿之父也。餘六百年矣，堅實可作研。避地亦棄於陽翟善財寺中。

⁵³ One *xun* is approximately equal to eight *chi* or eight armspans in length.

⁵⁴ *Jilei bian*, p. 99.

Preservation of Texts

Another reason for the alteration of the cultural landscape that Zhuang encountered is the appropriation of cultural sites. Zhuang records, for example, that someone told him the stele at a postal station had all been removed to make stone chimes when Emperor Huizong institutionalized Grand Music (*Da sheng yue* 大晟樂).⁵⁵ Zhuang had visited there in his youth and had noticed the official title “Strong Man” (*jian'er* 健兒), which until that time, he had only seen in histories. And, in another entry, Zhuang records that the statues of the eleven princes who were struck down by Han Jian 韓建 (855–912) in 897 are now acting as (*zuò* 作) Sakyamuni and the Ten Kings.⁵⁶ The entry following that describes how a rain- and wind-worn plaque has led Buddhists to mistake a statue of Confucius for a Buddhist effigy. “Cases like this in the world,” Zhuang concludes, “are probably too many to count” 天下如是者，蓋不可勝數。⁵⁷

These example, again, focus on Zhuang’s indignation over others’ disregard for the past. The stele that had been appropriated for the emperor’s use had originally served as a means to connect Zhuang and others to the histories that they read in texts. The appropriation of Confucian sites by Buddhists are a result of ignorance about customs and history. A temple was built and the eleven figures were given Buddhist identities because

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

their original purpose was unknown, presumably because the men who renamed them were ignorant of the event that these statues were intended to commemorate. In the case of confusing the statue of Confucius for Buddha, this was the result of a language misunderstanding because the elements had rendered the plaques illegible. These examples also highlight Zhuang's anxiety about the preservation of cultural artifacts and writing. If even stone cannot withstand change, then how can writing on paper survive?

Zhuang states that changes such as these affect the contents of history. For example, when Zhuang stumbles upon an epitaph for Yin Xiaozi's 尹孝子 mother, which had been re-appropriated for the base of a reclining Buddha statue, he notes that if he had not found this epitaph, the only record of Yin would have been a single line in one of Wang Anshi's 王安石 (1021–86) poems.⁵⁸ Zhuang concludes: “So what is included or omitted from history is mostly up to chance” 然史之去取，幸不幸者多矣。⁵⁹

Zhuang's comments on how chance determines what is eventually included in history is only part of a larger discourse on this subject. While Zhuang focuses on how the elements, natural landscape, and men alter written traces of history within the landscape, which in turn, affects the contents of history, other Song scholars focus on how the contents of history are decided and the preservation of texts.

Zhu Bian 朱弁, in *Fengyuetang shibua* 風月堂詩話 (Remarks on Poetry from Wind and Moon Hall), for example, writes that inclusion in history is purely “by chance” (*ouran* 偶

⁵⁸ The line in question is from Wang's “Ji Zhang Xiangzhou” 寄張襄州 (Sent to Zhang of Xiangzhou).

⁵⁹ *Jilei bian*, p. 7.

然).⁶⁰ And Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–72) in his *Linyi shihua* 六一詩話 (Remarks on Poetry from the Retired Scholar with Six Single Things) writes that “There are many cases of those who, at the time, hid their virtuous actions in mountains, forests, and fields, and were not heard of in their era. Yet cheap, piddling craftsman and artists were attached (to history), and were handed down in history, never decaying. It must be that each person is lucky or unlucky” 當時山林田畝，潛德隱行君子，不聞於世者多矣，而賤工末藝得所附托，乃垂於不朽，蓋其各有幸不幸也。⁶¹ Ouyang here is confounded that morally virtuous men were left out of histories while those less important were included. He attributes their inclusion to an individual’s luck and the preservation of these written accounts to chance:

... As such, the profound extensiveness [of the sages’ writings], each exhausted their talents, but the strange and beautiful often broke through. This is what makes them unforgettable to the curious who love everything. Yet those that have been scattered or obliterated also cannot be counted.⁶² Could this be because their flowery writing and lack of truth made them insufficient to travel far? As for slang and common sayings, many have been preserved, is this also not a matter of chance? Today maybe five or six out of

⁶⁰ *SKQS* ed. While there is no evidence that Zhu and Zhuang ever met, they had a connection through the Chao family Zhuang through a branch of the Bian clan, as discussed in Chapter One; and Zhu Bian married Chao Yuezhi’s (1059–1129; *jinsbi* 1082) eldest daughter in the early 1100s.

⁶¹ In *Baichuan xuehai* 百川學海 (民國十六年武進陶氏覆宋咸淳左圭原刻本), 6a. This also appears in Jiang Shaoyu’s *Song shishi leiyan* (p. 486). Curiously, Ouyang notes in this entry that certain details about Wang Jian were not included in the *Jiu Tang shu* and *Xin Tang shu*.

⁶² This is a reference to Kong Anguo’s 孔安國 (W. Han) preface to the *Shangshu*, which had been discovered hidden in the walls of a Kong family building. Kong reconstructed what he could from the text, but “what has been mixed-up or worn away can never be known again” 錯亂摩滅，勿可復知 (in Xiao Tong 蕭統 [501–31], *Wenxuan* 文選, *Zhongguo gudian wenxue congshu* [Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1986]: 45.2032).

ten writings have their titles but the book itself has been lost. Is this not pitiable?...⁶³

然其精深閎博，各盡其術，而怪奇偉麗，往往震發於其間，此所以使好奇博愛者不能忘也。然凋零磨滅，亦不可勝數，豈其華文少實，不足以行遠歟？而俚言俗說，猥有存者，亦其有幸不幸者歟？今著于篇，有其名而亡其書者，十蓋五六也，可不惜哉。

Here Ouyang wonders why some records are transmitted far and wide and preserved for generations, while others are lost completely. He first posits that writings were lost because they were not substantial enough; that is, their teachings did not sufficiently uphold the *Dao*. Yet, this supposition is immediately complicated by the fact that slang and common sayings were preserved. Thus he concludes that it is simply a matter of chance.

Jiang Shaoyu 江少虞 (fl. 12th c.), in his preface to *Song shishi leiyuan* 宋事實類苑 (Categorized Garden of Historical Facts of the Song Dynasty), completed in 1145, also worries about the incompleteness of histories: “Whatever is not in the volumes of history cannot be discussed by scholars, and if those things that have been ‘mixed-up or worn away cannot be known again,⁶⁴ then how can they all be counted?” 史冊所無有，學者不道也；錯亂磨滅，不可復知者，豈勝計耶。⁶⁵

⁶³ The introduction to the “Yiwen” section of *Xin Tang shu* (57.1422).

⁶⁴ Again, referring to the discovery of the *Shangshu*.

⁶⁵ “Huang Song shishi leiyuan yuanxu” 皇宋事實類苑原序, *Song shishi leiyuan* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1981), p. 1027.

In the second half of the preface for *Duxing zazhi* 獨醒雜誌, Yang Wanli 楊萬里 also questions the role that chance plays in determining the contents of history:

...When Fuyun Jushi (Floating Cloud Hermit) of Luling, Zeng Dachen (Zeng Minxing 曾敏行; 1118–75), was young he set his ambition to learning, and with deep feeling (*kairan*) focused his will on his contemporary era. He was not who sought out the abstruse meaning of things. Once he roughly discussed ancient and current writings with literati of the current era, and judged the valorous of former times. ...The ancients surely had those who were born to be unused in their age, yet when they passed away, then they had something passed on to later [generations]. So why do they all have to be [accounts of] the illustrious deeds of the meritorious and famous? There are already many records of the fineness of an action or the greatness of a word. There are also many for which there are no record. Is there something in control of this? Or is it just chance (*xing*)? Or does whether later generations transmit something or not, just like whether the contemporary generation makes use of someone or not, all stem from happenstance (*shiran*)? This is something not yet knowable. For someone with a will like Dachen's to not be used is lamentable. But if one is not used, should this consequently mean that his [words and deeds] are not to be passed on to the world (*chuanshi*)?⁶⁶

廬陵浮云居士曾達臣，少刻意於問學，慨然有志於當世，非素隱者也。嘗與當世之士商略古今文章，前代之豪杰……古之人固有生不用于

⁶⁶ “Preface to *Duxing zazhi*” 獨醒雜誌, in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 234.

時，而沒則有傳於後，夫豈必皆以功名之卓著哉！一行之淑，一言之臧，而傳者多矣，其不傳者亦不少也，豈有司之者歟？抑有幸不幸歟？抑其后世之傳不傳，亦如當時之用不用，皆出於適然歟？是未可知也。若達臣之志而不用世，是可嘆也。既不用世，豈遂不傳世歟？

Yang's discourse reveals a burgeoning discontent for exclusionary history. What determines who and what is included in history? If history only includes great men, then who or what determines how greatness should be defined?

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Why do good things happen to bad people? Why does the land swallow up some sites while others are left untouched? Why are some men included in history while others are omitted? Zhuang and other men of the Song were interested in such questions because they did not correspond with commonly held notions about retribution based on morality. The reason that these men came up with was that, while fate shapes our lives, we are also subject to the whims of chance.

Chance is the unpredictable element of fate because it does not follow any set pattern. Its occurrence is random because it is dependent on the choices of men, the elements, and the shifting landscape. While this chapter took a closer look at Zhuang's explicit expressions of chance within a larger discourse of chance and fate, chance is also the unspoken thread that holds *Jilei bian* together. *Jilei bian* is a record of chance encounters and chance discoveries. Indeed, even the transmission of this text to us today is entirely due to chance.

This chapter also introduced Zhuang's anxiety about the widespread disappearance of cultural and historical artifacts, both to natural and man-made causes. Since the written word is reliant on physical objects for their preservation and transmission, they can be easily misunderstood, corrupted, or lost. Thus Zhuang conveys a sense of urgency to collect and record what traces remain.

CHAPTER 4: WRITING ABOUT VIOLENCE

This chapter explores the way that Zhuang Chuo 莊綽 writes about trauma, especially violence that occurred around the fall of the Northern Song and the chaos that followed in its wake. The first section in this chapter introduces three waves of migration from 1126 to 1131 and provides a background to Zhuang's writings about his experiences and observations during this time. The second section explores Zhuang's conscious attempt to distinguish *Jilei bian* from previous historical accounts. First it looks at Zhuang's criticism of historical writing and, using his accounts of cannibalism, posits that it is his vivid descriptions of violence, an eagerness to portray real suffering, that sets him apart from earlier historical accounts. The third section discusses the repercussions of the war. Zhuang equates the loss of the north to the loss of cultural values and views the deterioration of moral values as a form of violence inflicted by the Jin. This section also examines Zhuang's unwillingness to make moral assumptions of people based on outward appearance. To Zhuang, it is the practice of appropriate (i.e., Han) cultural norms that defines morality, not ethnicity or place of origin.

MIGRATION

In the years surrounding the fall of the Northern Song dynasty and the revival of the Song in the south, Jin troops relentlessly pursued members of the Song imperial house and its remnant citizens, waging battle on each important city in their path. Entire cities were looted and razed; countless men, women, and children died at the hands of troops and

bandits, or from cold and starvation. Those who could flee, did, resulting in the largest southern migratory movement in Chinese history up to this point.¹ According to Wu Songdi's 吳松弟 estimates, during this time approximately 500,000 people migrated to Liangzhe dong 兩浙東 and Liangzhe xi 兩浙西 circuits alone.²

Wu identifies three major waves of migration between 1126 and 1130. The first wave, roughly from 1126 to 1128, occurred soon after the Jin army entered Hebei and Hedong. During this wave, people fled to He'nan and Huai'nan. During the second wave, from 1128 to 1129, people fled to Jiangnan after the Jin began to attack Huainan. Finally, in 1130, after the Jin troops began fighting in Jiangnan, people sought safety in the mountainous areas of Lingnan and Fujian.

Migration: 1126–1127

During this first wave of migration, following the early Jin attacks, the sacking of the capital, and the resulting Song surrender, most of the areas near the Yellow River—modern Hebei, Hedong, and Shandong Provinces—were decimated. The Jin troops, according to Li Xinchuan 李心傳 (1167–1240), killed anyone in their path.³ Other citizens of the Song were

¹ Migration during this period was even larger in scale than that of the Western Jin 西晉, after the Yongjia Rebellion (*Yongjia zhi luan* 永嘉之亂), and than at the end of the Tang dynasty (Songdi Wu 吳松弟, *Zhongguo yimin shi: Liao Song Jin Yuan shiqi* 中國移民史: 遼宋金元時期, Jianxiong Ge 葛劍雄, ed. [Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1997], 4:246).

² *Ibid.* Information about migration is drawn from Wu's research unless otherwise noted.

³ The Jin army roamed the area surrounding the Shandong-He'nan border (*Jiannan yilai xinian yaolu* 建炎以來繫年要錄, *juan* 4, cited in Wu, *Zhongguo yimin shi*, 4:250).

herded to the north and northeast. People fled south of the River Huai (Huainan 淮南), which at that point was still relatively untouched by war.

By the first month 1126 (Jiyan 1), the Jin troops had already reached the northern banks of the Yellow River. Worried about this threat, former Emperor Huizong fled south with a group of trusted officials.⁴ Kaifeng was left virtually undefended. There were no generals or weapons, only a group of twenty-thousand or so soldiers. Around the same time, men and women fled with their children and elderly. Some fled east, but they encountered Jin troops who slaughtered more than half of them.⁵ Another group made it to Sizhou 泗州,⁶ south of the River Huai.

In the eighth month of 1126, the Jin again launched another two-pronged attack led by Wanyan Zonghan 完顏宗翰 (orig. name Nianhan 黏罕; 1080–1137) and Wanyan Zongwang 完顏宗望 (Wolibu 斡離不; d. 1127). To the east, the Song troops were defeated in Hedong. People living in this area fled enmasse south of the Yangtze River, leaving Weisheng jun 威勝軍,⁷ Longde fu 隆德府,⁸ Fenzhou 汾州,⁹ Jinzhou 晉州,¹⁰ Zezhou 澤州,¹¹

⁴ Route: Kaifeng to Bozhou 亳州 (present-day Anhui) to Sizhou 泗州, heading to Zhenjiang 鎮江. After arriving in Sizhou, the Jin troops closed in, so he returned to Kaifeng.

⁵ Xu Mengxin 徐夢莘 (1124–1207), *Sanchao beimeng huibian* 三朝北盟彙編, *juan* 28, cited in Wu, *Zhongguo yimin shi*, 4:248.

⁶ Located north of present-day Xuyi County 盱眙縣, Jiangsu.

⁷ Seat located in present-day Qin County 沁縣, Shanxi.

⁸ Seat located in present-day Changzhi 長治, Shanxi.

⁹ Seat located in present-day Xihe County 西河縣, Shanxi.

¹⁰ Seat located in present-day Linfen 臨汾, Shanxi.

¹¹ Seat located in present-day Jincheng 晉城, Shanxi.

and Jiangzhou 絳州 empty.¹² To the west, the Jin smashed Zhending 真定¹³ and Zhongshanfu 中山府.¹⁴ By the eleventh month, the two Jin armies approached Kaifeng from the west and the east. People again fled to Ruzhou 汝州,¹⁵ Yingzhou 潁州,¹⁶ Xiangyangfu 襄陽府,¹⁷ and Dengzhou 鄧州.¹⁸ The court issued a decree that refugees in Hebei, Hedong, and in the areas surrounding Kaifeng be allowed to stay in official compounds, Buddhist temples, and Daoist rectories.¹⁹ The Jin troops finally entered Kaifeng in January 1127. After the Jin took Kaifeng in 1127, the Song negotiated terms for the withdrawal of Jin troops.²⁰ The Song court had decided to

¹² Seat located in present-day Xinjiang County 新絳縣, Shanxi. *Song shi*, 23.430, cited in Wu, *Zhongguo yimin shi*, 4:248.

¹³ Located in present-day Zhengding County 正定縣, Hebei.

¹⁴ Located in present-day Dingzhou 定州, Hebei.

¹⁵ Seat located in present-day Ruzhou 汝州, He'nan.

¹⁶ Seat located in present-day Xuchang 許昌, He'nan.

¹⁷ Seat located in present-day Xiangfan 襄樊, Hubei.

¹⁸ Seat located in present-day Deng County 鄧縣, He'nan.

¹⁹ *Song shi*, 23.433, cited in Wu, *Zhongguo yimin shi*, 4:249.

²⁰ For more on the terms of this agreement, see *The Cambridge History of China: Alien Regimes and Border States 907–1368*, Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, eds. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 6:227–9.

sign the peace treaty with the Jin before the advisors had a chance to finish their debate, and did not make any preparations for the defense of its borders.²¹

After this, the barbarians year after year, under cover of deep autumn with strong bows and fat horses, made incursions, and only returned [to their land] when summer arrived. They went as far as Hu[zhou], Xiang, and Liangzhe [circuits]. Weapons spread in tumult, and there was nowhere to find peace. From this time on, people of Yue would hide in the mountains when autumn came, and only come out again in the spring.²²

其後金人連年以深秋弓勁馬肥入寇，薄暑乃歸，遠至湖、湘、二浙。兵戈擾攘，所在未嘗有樂土也。自是越人至秋亦隱山間，逾春乃出。

In May of that year, Qinzong, Huizong, and members of the imperial household were taken north as hostages. The remaining members of the imperial household and high-ranking officials began their move south to join the newly enthroned Emperor Gaozong 高宗 (Zhao Gou 趙構; 1107–87, r. 1127–62) in Songcheng. Kaifeng was not only the capital, but also the largest urban metropolis at the time. It was home to approximately one million people, not including a temporary population consisting of merchants (rural farmers and

²¹ Zhuang writes that a saying at the time criticized the government for paying attention to factional politics, money, and history writing instead of on defense of the country (*Jilei bian*, p. 43). Soon after signing this agreement, Huizong abdicated the throne for Qinzong and Cai Jing's 蔡京 (1047–1126) faction was eliminated (*Cambridge History of China*, 6:229). For more on the link between the decision to sign the peace treaty and Wang Anshi's 王安石 (1021–86) New Policies, see Shen Songqin 沈松勤, *Nan Song wenren yu dangzheng* 南宋文人與黨爭 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005), pp. 3–13.

²² *Jilei bian*, p. 43.

craftsmen) and examinees and their families.²³ More than 100,000 people fled from the Wansheng Gate 萬勝門 to Jingxi nanlu 京西南路.²⁴

It was around this time that Zhuang began his journey south. Zhuang was in Dengzhou when Kaifeng fell and he fled south shortly thereafter. His migration south was rough and slow going. It was four years until he was again appointed to a government position (in 1131). Due to the increasing number of refugees along the Yellow River basin, Gaozong issued a decree in the first month of 1128 (Jiyan 1) for administrators to place refugees in settlements along the river.²⁵ Yet, it seems that the majority of refugees continued south.

Migration: 1128–1129

During this second wave of migration, people fled further south to the lower reaches of the Yangtze after the Jin army entered the area south of the River Huai in the first month of 1129 (Jiyan 3). As the Jin troops neared Yangzhou, masses of people followed Emperor Gaozong further south, crossing the Long River (Changjiang 長江) into Changzhou 常州²⁶ and Runzhou 潤州.²⁷ Over the course of the year, there are records of troops from all areas

²³ Frederick Mote, *Imperial China: 900–1800* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 164–6.

²⁴ Administrative area located in the northern part of Hubei.

²⁵ *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿, 69.46, cited in Wu, *Zhongguo yimin shi*, 4:251.

²⁶ Located in present-day Changzhou 常州.

²⁷ Located in present-day Zhenjiang 鎮江.

heading south. In most cases, ordinary citizens also likely followed the troops in search of safety.²⁸ Those from Anhui headed to Hongzhou 洪州 where the Empress Dowager was staying, and those from Hebei headed to Huainan. In the seventh month of 1129, Guo Zhongxun 郭仲荀 led remaining troops and ten-thousand plus people from Kaifeng to Nanjing, where the emperor was staying.²⁹ In the twelfth month, Zhao Li 趙立 led about thirty-thousand troops from Xuzhou 徐州 to Chuzhou 楚州.³⁰

Near the end of 1129, Jin troops closed in on Gaozong in Yuezhou 越州.³¹ Gaozong retreated to Mingzhou 明州 and finally to sea to Wenzhou 溫州.³² Those who followed Gaozong were unable to find sea passage, so they either eventually settled in Yuezhou or in Mingzhou, or continued to journey south into Taizhou 台州, Wenzhou, and Fujian.³³ The Jin troops struck Hongzhou, and the Empress Dowager was forced to flee to Qianzhou 虔州. After the Jin retreated, she returned to Liangzhe 兩浙, but those who had followed her either settled in Jiangxi or crossed into Lingnan.

As the fighting in the Jianghuai region increased, local officials organized their residents to move south. The numbers of refugees increased to such an extent that it was

²⁸ Wu, *Zhongguo yimin shi*, 4:253.

²⁹ *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, juan 26, cited in Wu, *Zhongguo yimin shi*, 4:253.

³⁰ Located in present-day Huai'an 淮安, Jiangsu.

³¹ The administrative seat of Yuezhou was located in present-day Shaoxing.

³² The administrative seat of Mingzhou was located in present-day Ningbo.

³³ Wu, *Zhongguo yimin shi*, 4:254.

difficult to find adequate housing for them. A suggestion was made at this time to move all refugees from the central plain to the southeast, but that plan was never carried out.³⁴

In 1130 (Jiayuan 4), more Song troops fled south to Jiangxi and Jiangsu. Most of the Jin army crossed the River Huai, and headed back north in the fifth and sixth months of this year, with the exception of a small group that stationed themselves in Huainan. Liu Guangshi 劉光世 (1089–1142), a Song general, made special coins called *zhaona xinbao* 招納信寶 for those who desired to come over to the Song. These men made up the Makeshift (*qibing* 奇兵) and Vermillion Heart (*chixin* 赤心) Troops.³⁵ The Jin troops who had made camp in Huainan soon fled north.

Migration: 1130–1131

From 1129–31, the areas south of the Changjiang 長江 saw constant skirmishes from Jin troops and militant groups formed by immigrants from the north.³⁶ For this reason people fled to the mountainous regions such as Sichuan, Lingnan, and Fujian, as well as the mountains of Jiangxi, Zhexi, Hunan, and Hubei. Zhuang Chuo notes that because Kaihua

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 4:253.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 4:255–6.

³⁶ There were more than one million of these militants. The Song did not quell them until around 1133 (Shaoxing 3) (*Ibid.*, 4:256–7).

County 開化縣 in Quzhou 衢州 was hemmed in by mountains scores of people sought refuge there.³⁷

This mass migration brought changes to the southern landscape. In a passage that begins with a discussion of eating habits, Zhuang turns to the impact the migration had on southern economy and agriculture:

...After the Jianyan period, Jiang, Zhe, Hu, Xiang, Min, and Guang were filled with northwesterners seeking shelter. In the beginning of Shaoxing, wheat reached 12,000 strings of cash for a peck. Farmers benefitted from this much more than from planting rice. Tenants lost their rent and only had enough for fall taxes (*qiu ke*). Yet the earnings from planting wheat all went back to the owners. Therefore, competition for the spring planting was no different from Huaibei as far as the eye could see.³⁸

建炎之後，江、浙、湖、湘、閩、廣，西北流寓之人遍滿。紹興初，麥一斛至萬二千錢，農獲其利，倍於種稻，而佃戶輸租，只有秋課，而種麥之利，獨歸客戶。於是競種春稼，極目不減淮北。

Zhuang notes here that by the Shaoxing period, because of the demand for wheat caused by the influx of Northwesterners, wheat became a more profitable crop than rice. Therefore, not only did the South experience a shift in the physical landscape (from rice paddies to wheat fields), but this passage also suggests that a similar shift in dietary habits of Southerners might have also occurred after this time.

³⁷ *Jilei bian*, p. 64.

³⁸ *Jilei bian*, p. 36.

Zhuang's Writings about Migration

Zhuang began his migration in 1127, when he left Dengzhou. He describes the scene as follows:

In the autumn of 1127, I went from Rangxia through Xuchang in order to hurry back to Songcheng. For several thousand *li* there were no chickens or dogs, and the wells were all piled with corpses, so none were potable. All of the Buddhist temples were empty, their statues completely smashed in the chests and backs, and the items taken from their hearts and stomachs. Burials did not have any complete coffins, for the most part they were already covered with sagebrush and artemisia. There was also no one to pick the vegetables, pears, and jujubes, or scythe the grain.

When I reached the Buddhist cloister at Xianping, there was a hidden Diamond Sutra. The cords and book covers were all taken away by people, and the scattered leaves were in between the walls. It was bestowed [upon the temple] during the Taiping Xingguo reign (976–84), and the characters, illustrations, paper, and decorations were really exquisite and fine. Later I saw a family come bringing their own three volumes [of the Diamond Sutra]. Since they regularly recited it, they wanted to pass it on and give it to others.³⁹

³⁹ *Jilei bian*, pp. 21–2.

建炎元年秋，余自穰下由許昌以趨宋城，幾千里無復雞犬，井皆積屍莫可飲。佛寺俱空，塑像盡破胸背以取心腹中物，殞無完柩，大達已蔽於蓬蒿，菽粟梨棗，亦無人采刈。至鹹平僧舍，有《金剛經》一藏，帶帙皆為人取去，散棄墻壁間。乃太平興國中所賜，字畫紙飾，頗極精好。後見家人輩私攜其三卷以來，常念欲轉以授人。

Zhuang begins by describing a landscape of utter desolation, devoid of any humanity. The inhumanity of this slaughter is demonstrated by the lack of proper burials. Instead, “piles of corpses” (*ji shi* 積屍) pollute the wells and grasses encroach upon the dead in their coffins. Even the “organs” of Buddhist effigies were torn out. Amidst this chaos, Zhuang discovers a rare edition of the *Diamond Sutra*, and a family arrives and shares their personal copy of the *Diamond Sutra*.

Directly (*zhi* 值) following this, Zhuang runs into Ouyang Yanshi 歐陽延世 (Styler Qingzhang 慶長) and his brothers who happen (*ou* 偶) to tell him about a young scholar they had met who had a supernatural encounter in which his ability to chant the *Diamond Sutra* saved his life. Zhuang concludes by saying:

...[This was] something that Qingzhang and his brothers personally saw and heard, so they also wanted to obtain and chant this sutra. They regretted that they didn't have a rare edition, so I gave them [the three *juan* that I had obtained]. I believe that in the secluded darkness of the underworld one cannot cheat; as for true words, their benefits are many.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

慶長兄弟親所聞見，亦欲持誦此經，恨無善本，遂以與之。信幽冥之中不可以欺，真實之語，其利為博也。

In this long entry, Zhuang uses the desolation of war as a backdrop to show the power and efficacy of Buddhist texts. In another entry Zhuang cites two instances in which the *Huayan* Sutra 華嚴經 protected homes from fire.⁴¹

Yet, while Zhuang believes that relics can provide protection, through his experiences during this time of destruction, he comes to understand that protection of life is not the only desired outcome:

Yingshang County in Ruyin and Lu'an in Shouchun are neighbors. They are two villages that straddle the River Huai, and so they are called East- and West-Zhengyang. The west belongs to Yingzhen. There is a brick Buddha within the city wall. Buried underneath it is the monk from the western regions, Fotuoboli. The stone has a carved record saying that he came together with Sangha and ended up in Zhengyang. It says that many years later that Sangha's karma was used up and he was fated to replace him to spread [Buddhism] and transform [non-believers]. Now the bottom of it still reaches the flow of the River Huai, yet even when it swells greatly it does not pass the stairs of the base. When Su Shi governed Ying, he wrote something as a sacrifice to him.⁴² When they pray for rehabilitation there is a response. It is a well-respected [place] for the entire region.

⁴¹ *Jilei bian*, pp. 55–6.

⁴² “Qi ci Guangfan si e zhuang”乞賜光梵寺額狀, *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集, *juan* 61.

In the first year of the Jianyan reign, a fire broke out inside the floating gate at Sizhou. It did not reach the Puzhao Temple, yet flames were already coming out from within the pagoda, and it was completely burned. The Buddhist acolytes were able to save the true image of Sangha and built a separate hall to protect it. Not long after, the foreign invaders came and again burned and destroyed everything so that the city was turned into a hill of ruins. Some say that the foreigners carried the true image back to the north, but I suspect it was that the Buddhists made a taboo of “ash and smoke” (*hui yan*). Yet, the coming of the end of a kalpic cycle (*jieshao*) is more beautiful than form (*xingzhi*). What does not return to nothingness? When one’s allotted fate is already finished, although it is said to be solid, it should also disappear itself. Could it be that Buddha’s prophecy (*chen*) lies in this?⁴³

汝陰穎上縣，與壽春六安為鄰，夾淮為二鎮，號東西正陽。其西屬穎鎮，城之中有甌浮屠，下葬西域僧佛陀波利。其石刻載其與僧伽俱來，終於正陽。云後若千年，僧伽緣盡，彼當代其揚化。今亦下臨淮流，雖大漲不過塋基之陸。東坡守穎，有文祭之。禱雪即應，一方事之甚嚴。建炎元年，泗州浮門內火發，未及普照寺，而塔中已焰出，一爇皆盡。僧伽真像，僧徒僅能營救，別建殿已庇。方就，而胡寇已來，又皆燒毀，城中遂成丘墟。或云真像胡人負之北去，疑釋子諱為灰煙

⁴³ *Jilei bian*, p. 37.

也。然劫燒之來，麗於形質，孰不歸空？數緣既盡，雖云堅固，亦自當滅。豈佛陀之識，將在是乎？

This passage suggests that Zhuang might view this period of time as the coming of the end of a kalpic cycle.

DEPARTING FROM THE NORM: A NEW TYPE OF HISTORY

Jilei bian was written during the chaotic period from the fall of the Northern Song and after. This section discusses Zhuang's opinions about the received historical tradition. Generally speaking, Zhuang expresses that errors and omissions from the historical record can lead to incorrect behavior, either due to dishonest men seeking power or to misunderstandings. Therefore, scholars who record history should aim to provide a full account of events and people, including those that are negative.

Zhuang's Views on History

Zhuang is critical of omissions, in part, because they can cause confusion in later generations. For example, an entry about a robbery of imperial tombs in *Jin shi* 晉史 that lacked appropriate details caused later scholars to suspect (*yi* 疑) that Han Emperor Wendi

did not really have a frugal burial as stated in Ban Gu's 班固 "Han Wendi zan" 漢文帝贊 (Encomium on Han Emperor Wendi).⁴⁴

Errors and omissions also affect the reconstruction of the rites. Zhuang writes that since these documents were either lost or incomplete, many rites were reconstructed using the memories of the older generation. Often, however, these men used their privileged position as knowledge holders to change the rules to favor themselves, friends, and relatives.⁴⁵ Therefore, a full, accurate account of rites and other precedents would minimize the possibility for this type of duplicity. Zhuang himself participates in the discussion of some rites, seeking out Tang dynasty precedents in poetry and other writings.⁴⁶

As history is written by humans, Zhuang understands that certain omissions are often intentional. Zhuang cites a lengthy passage written by Zeng Gong, in which Zeng offers some opinions about history writing.⁴⁷ Zeng asserts that one must understand what is wrong in order to understand what is right. In this way, presenting a full account of happenings is part of the ruler's responsibility to educate the people. If a historian were to omit or edit certain events in order to cover-up a ruler's inappropriate actions, then future

⁴⁴ *Jilei bian*, p. 24.

⁴⁵ Zhuang is specifically referring to "remembered regulations" (*xingji tiao* 省記條) (*Jilei bian*, p. 46).

⁴⁶ For example, a discussion of appropriate clothing for official ranks (*Jilei bian*, p. 51).

⁴⁷ Zeng Gong worked in the history office from Jiayou 嘉祐 5 (1060) to Xining 熙寧 2 (1070). He aided in the compilation of or personally wrote the following historical works: *Yingzong shilu* 英宗實錄 (Veritable Records of Yingzong), *Liangchao guo shi* 兩朝國史 (State Histories of the Two Kingdoms), and *Wuchao guo shi* 五朝國史 (State Histories of the Five Kingdoms) (Li Junbiao 李俊標, *Zeng Gong yanjiu* 曾鞏研究 [Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2011], pp. 64–70).

generations will be destined to repeat the same mistakes, because they have nothing upon which to model their actions.⁴⁸

Ouyang Xiu expressed a similar sentiment in a memorial to the emperor in 1059, which requested that early drafts of the records used to draft the state history (*guoshi*) not be altered or destroyed, and moreover, should not be submitted to the emperor lest historians feel inhibited.⁴⁹ Yet, at the same time, Ouyang, in the composition of *Xin Tang shu*, would gloss over non-flattering aspects of a man's history, if he felt they detracted from his overall judgment of his person.⁵⁰

Wang Dechen 王德臣 claims that his work was “drawn from true accounts (*shilu*), and proceeds by not increasing what is beautiful [in ethical terms] (*yimei*) and not hiding what is repugnant (*yin'e*)” 蓋取出夫實錄，以其無溢美無隱惡而已。⁵¹ This description echoes Ban Biao's 班彪 (3–54) critique of the *Shiji*.⁵² Qin Guan 秦觀 (1049–1100; *jinsbi* 1085) also used these words to describe Han Yu's 韓愈 writing, which he likened to Sima Qian's: “[Han's writings] ‘do not emptily praise beauty and do not cover-up ethical repugnance’,

⁴⁸ “Shu ‘Wei Zheng gong zhuan’ hou” 書魏鄭公傳後 (Written as an Afterward to “Biography of Duke Zheng of Wei”), cited in *Jilei bian*, p. 59.

⁴⁹ James Liu, *Ou-yang Hsiu: An Eleventh-Century Neo-Confucianist* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), pp. 102–5.

⁵⁰ Richard Davis, “Introduction,” Ouyang Xiu, *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties*, Richard Davis, trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 439–43.

⁵¹ *Zhu shi xu* 塵史序 (Preface of Elk-Hair Duster History), in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 198.

⁵² Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A New Manual, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 84* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 611.

[therefore] people consider them true accounts. These narrative writings are similar to the works of Sima Qian and Ban Gu” 不虛美，不隱惡，人以為實錄，此敘事之文，如司馬遷、班固之作是也。⁵³

Zhuang is critical of the *Xin Tang shu*, which abbreviated the language of admonishment and deceit and made other omissions.⁵⁴ Zhuang praises the *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 for including what he calls “vile history” (*buisbi* 穢史): a detailed admonishment (*jian* 諫) written by Zhu Jingze 朱敬則 (635–709) to Wu Zetian 武則天 (624–705) about her “inner favorites” (*neichong* 內寵).⁵⁵ This account does not appear in the *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書. For example, the record of the incident of Li Lin’s 李璘 (d. 757) attempted revolt in *Jiu Tang shu* includes the complete contents of the document that Li wrote in response to Li Xiyan 李希言,⁵⁶ whereas the version in *Xin Tang shu* greatly abbreviates (*lie* 略) this document.⁵⁷ The

⁵³ “Han Yu lun” 韓愈論 (About Han Yu), in *Qin Shaoyou shihua* 秦少游詩話, *Huabai ji jianzhu* 淮海集箋注, *juan* 22. This was already a matter of concern in the Tang. Li Deyu 李德裕 (787–849) stated that court historians did not write down what they thought was too scandalous or too strange, for fear that these stories would spread far and wide. He wrote *Ci Liushi jiuwen* 次柳氏舊聞 because he “feared [certain stories] would be lost from transmission” 懼失其傳 (Shanghai guji chubanshe ed., in Huang, ed., *Xuba jilu*, p. 115).

⁵⁴ Zhuang refers to this as *Xin shi* 新史 throughout *Jilei bian*. A number of modern scholars have criticized *Xin Tang shu* for the same reason (cf. On Cho Ng and Q. Thomas Wang, *Mirroring the Past: The Writing and Use of History in Imperial China* [Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005], pp. 137–8).

⁵⁵ *Jilei bian*, p. 125. See Zhang Xingcheng’s 張行成 (587–653) biography in *Jiu Tang shu* (78.2706–7). Zhuang also notes that Zhang Yizhi said his brother’s skills in bed surpassed his own (*qi yong guo chen* 器用過臣), but in the *Xin Tang shu* account, Yizhi recommends his brother for his aptitude (*cai yong guo chen* 材用過臣; 104.4014). For more on the Zhang brothers, see *Cambridge History of China*, 3:315–21. The term “dirty history” (*buisbi*) is usually employed in a negative sense to describe unauthorized, inaccurate history. Cf. criticism of *Hou Wei shu* 後魏書 (Hong Mai 洪邁 [1123–1202], *Rongzhai suibi* 容齋隨筆, *san bi*, *juan* 2, p. 442; and Chen Zhensun 陳振孫 (1183?–1262?) *Zhizhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解體, *juan* 4, p. 8a).

⁵⁶ Zhuang quotes Li Lin’s biography in *Jiu Tang shu*, 107.3265. This happened in the twelfth month of 756 (Tianbao 天寶 15; *Xin Tang shu*, 5.153). The *Cambridge History of China* writes that this happened in early 757 (3:479 and 3:565).

involvement of Hanlin scholars, such as Li Bo 李白 (701–62), was also downplayed in the *Xin Tang shu*.⁵⁸ For Zhuang, these accounts are excellent lessons about revolt (*fanshun* 犯順) and unclear laws and light punishments (*qingdian* 輕典) for future generations.⁵⁹

In another entry, Zhuang discusses the ramifications of following precedent without forethought in a discussion of Tang emperors who deposed their wives and princes without consulting officials, claiming that it was a “family matter” (*jiashi* 家事). Li Mi 李泌 (722–89) was the one who finally stood up to this.

... Li Ji was the first to trumpet the vile words, consequently making Linfu first (zu) employ its tactic (ce), in order to incite the wickedness of his ruler.⁶⁰ By Dezong’s time it was already considered the thing to do. And so he (Dezong) wrongly (fan) said “family matter” to reject his officials’ [advice]. And so being a model, can one be not cautious? (i.e. one should be cautious when setting a precedent). In the end Li Mi was able to protect his family. Yet, [Xu] Jingye’s (also Li Jingye) misfortune ended in the slaughter of his father (Li Zhen 李震) and grandfather (Li Ji), and they cut open his grave

⁵⁷ *Xin Tang shu*, 82.3611. The *Jiu Tang shu* also recorded details about Wang Wei’s residence, while the *Xin Tang shu* abbreviated them (*lüe* 略) (*Jilei bian*, p. 97).

⁵⁸ Compare Li Bo’s biography in *Jiu Tang shu* which draws a direct relationship between Li’s involvement in this revolt and his subsequent death from alcohol (190B.5053–4), with his biography in *Xin Tang shu*, which simply states that he was involved with Li Lin at first but fled as soon as he raised troops (202.5763). Arthur Waley makes a brief note of this issue in *The Poet Li Po, A.D. 701–762* (London: East and West Ltd., 1919), p. 10.

⁵⁹ *Jilei bian*, p. 126.

⁶⁰ *Mengzi*: “The crime for causing one’s sovereign’s repugnance to grow is small, but the crime for inciting his repugnance is great. Now the grand masters all incite their sovereigns’ repugnance. Therefore I say that the grand masters are the criminals of the various ministers” 長君之惡其罪小，逢君之惡其罪大。今之大夫，皆逢君之惡，故曰：今之大夫，今之諸侯之罪人也 (6B.27).

and exposed his body. The retribution for loyalty and immortality can indeed be reflected [in these stories]! Yet we still meet with examples of those who follow the tracks of an overturned cart. Alas!⁶¹

李績首倡奸言，遂使林甫祖用其策以逢君惡。至德宗便謂當然，反云家事以拒臣下。則作俑者，可不慎乎？卒之長源能保其家族，而敬業之禍戮及父祖，剖棺暴屍。忠邪之報，亦可以鑒矣！而蹈覆轍者相接，哀哉！

Zhuang here illustrates the didactic value to later generations of unflattering accounts, yet also laments that even when they are recorded, these warning often remain unheeded.

Zhuang's contemporary, Zhu Bian 朱弁 (d. 1138), also laments the inaccuracy of historical accounts, mainly because these mistakes spread faster due to the practice of using historical accounts in poetry. In one entry from *Quwei jiuwen* 曲洧舊聞 (Old stories from the Bend of River Wei), Zhu Bian and Kang Dunfu 康敦復 are having a chat about the practice of outfitting pubs with red chairs, and Zhu makes the following comment about history writing:

We do not know how many mistakes are in ancient books and records from the Five Dynasties and after, through today. As for writers that use historical events, there are those who thoroughly understand and do not investigate, and there are those who tread on the old tracks of former men and do not discuss from whence they have come. It is like a dwarf watching a play; when

⁶¹ *Jilei bian*, p. 49. "Following the tracks of an overturned cart" comes from *Hou Han shu* (36.1227).

others laugh, he laughs, and says ‘the crowd definitely will not misjudge me.’

Everywhere there are cases like this.⁶²

典籍自五季以後，經今又不知幾厄，秉筆之士所用故實，有淹貫所不究者，有蹈前人舊轍而不討論所從來者，譬如侏儒觀戲，人笑亦笑，謂眾人決不誤我者，比比皆是也。

But these omissions also cause Zhuang to question why certain things were left out. For instance, Zhang Jiuling 張九齡 (678?-740; *jinsbi* 702) petitioned Emperor Xuanzong to allow information about the appearance of a rainbow at Princess Shangxian’s 上仙公主 (Ascending to Transcendancy) funeral that he felt was evidence of her corpse release. The emperor allowed it. However, Zhuang notes that it is not included in the *Xin Tang shu*.⁶³ “Could it be,” Zhuang wonders, “that it was because it was too fantastical and so it was deleted” 豈以其妖妄而削之乎?⁶⁴ Zhuang continues, “Qujiang was called upright (*duanshi*), and yet he also made this [petition]. Was it not because he was forced by [Li] Linfu and his lot? As for his words about ascending as a transcendent, now even someone as great as the emperor wouldn’t dare to use it!” 曲江號為端士，亦復為此，將非林甫輩迫之故耶？至上仙之語，今雖帝子之貴，不敢用矣。⁶⁵

⁶² Zhonghua ed., pp. 184–5.

⁶³ *Jin Tang shu* writes that Princess Shangxian died as a young child (*qiangbao bu yu* 襁褓不育) in early Kaiyuan (51.2177). *Xin Tang shu* only writes that she “passed early” (*zao hong* 蚤薨) (83.3658).

⁶⁴ *Jilei bian*, p. 49.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

In the previous section we took a brief look at Zhuang's dissatisfaction with history writing because it is often inaccurate due to censorship. A historical record full of lacunae can easily result in (negative) history repeating itself or allow scheming men to manipulate it as they see fit. In this section we will see that Zhuang views *Jilei bian* as a departure from the accounts of previous generations.

Zhuang begins an entry that illustrates his sudden understanding of the line “suffering and chaos have killed many entire families” 喪亂死多門 from Du Fu's 杜甫 (712–70) “White Horse” (*Bai ma* 白馬) as follows:

Since the Central Plain encountered the Misfortune of the Northern Enemies, those who have died from troops' weapons, water or fire (calamities), illness, starvation, oppression, or labor in the cold and heat, probably already cannot be fully counted. Those who fled to Guang[nan] Eastern and Western Circuits, were fortunate to find a safe place to live. Year after year of suffering from malaria resulted in entire families being wiped out.⁶⁶

自中原遭北敵之禍，人死於兵革水火疾饑墜壓，寒暑力役者，蓋已不可勝計。而避地二廣者，幸獲安居。連年瘴癘，至有滅門。

Zhuang then gives five instances of suffering precipitated by war. The first describes the fate of those who managed to escape to the Dongting Mountains in Suzhou. Because these mountains were entirely surrounded by water, they were safe from the Jin armies who were

⁶⁶ *Jilei bian*, p. 64.

not familiar with naval combat. Yet, during the unusually cold winter of 1132, supply boats could not reach the mountains, and many starved to death or died trying to walk across the ice for supplies. The second tells how hundreds died trying to collect kindling when a tidal bore unexpectedly hit Hangzhou. The third describes how people hid out in the mountainous areas around Quzhou.⁶⁷ This area was so rough that no roads could reach it and, therefore, it took ten years before those sent by the Ministry (*Bu shizhe* 部使者) could make it there. Next he gives an account in which a man is falsely accused of practicing Manichaeism, a severe offense punishable by exile.⁶⁸ Troops were sent to capture him, and the incident escalated into a riot during which one-hundred accused Manichaeists were beheaded, and several officials were killed.⁶⁹ Zhuang remarks in a separate entry regarding this event that it was “particularly lamentable” because the selfish actions of a single man

⁶⁷ Approximately 50% of this area is mountainous.

⁶⁸ According to Fan Wenjian 範文瀾, after Manichaeism was banned in the Tang, believers formed underground societies. One was called *Mojiao* 魔教 and its believers were called “people who serve demons through vegetarianism” (*shi mo chi cai ren* 事魔吃菜人). Other sects were the White Lotus Society (*Bailian she* 白蓮社 or *Bailian hui* 白蓮會), White Cloud Sect (*Baiyun zong* 白雲宗) and Bright Respect Teachings (*Mingzun jiao* 明尊教) (*Zhongguo jindai shi* 中國近代史 [Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1953], 1:354).

⁶⁹ *Song shi*: “In the third year (of Shaoxing), the wayward thug Miao Luo controlled Baimayuan and killed an official. (Yang) Cunzhong settled the incident” 三年，嚴州妖賊繆羅據白馬源，殺王官，存中討平之 (367.11435). Yang Cunzhong 楊存中 (originally named Yizhong 沂中; styled Zhengfu 正甫), then Imperially Commissioned Promulgation Officer 中使宣押 and Imperial Body Guard 宿衛親兵, ordered troops to be sent down on June 18, 1133. “They captured and beheaded one hundred of his followers, and the demon thugs were pacified” 捕斬其徒百人魔賊平 (*Song shi*, 27.505). See also Li Xinchuan, *Jiyan yi lai xinian yaolu* (*juan* 63 and 65).

harmed innocent people in two provinces.⁷⁰ Finally, he tells of a flood which devastated thousands of homes from Xinghuajun to the borders of Quanzhou. This is followed by the comments:

The preceding are things the elders did not record. It would seem that within the entire kingdom, there is hardly a place able to protect life. Could it be that the men of just one time are destined [to suffer]? Du Fu said, “Suffering and chaos killed many entire families.” I now believe it!⁷¹

前此父老所不記，蓋九州之內，幾無地能保其生者。豈一時之人數當爾邪？少陵謂“喪亂死多門”，信矣！

Zhuang offers no explanation as to why the “elders did not record” these things. Perhaps because they are too gruesome, perhaps because they are about common people. Regardless, it is important to note that he distinguishes his current project from the historical efforts of previous generations. By choosing to record these accounts, Zhuang makes a conscious

⁷⁰ Zhuang mentions this incident elsewhere in *Jilei bian*: “(Annotation:) Not even a year had passed since I began writing this when Yu Wupo, from Kaihua County in Quzhou, was reported by somebody and fled to the home of Miao Luo from Baimadong at Suian County in Yanzhou. They captured him but they were restrained by obstructions, and they killed and harmed officials. To the extent that they dispatched the official army to pacify them. The two provinces (i.e., Quzhou and Yanzhou) were harmed, and it extended to the common people. This was particularly lamentable” 余既書此未一歲，而衢州開化縣余五婆者，為人所告，逃於嚴州遂安縣之白馬洞繆羅家。捕之則阻險為拒，殺害官吏。至遣官軍平蕩，兩州被害，延及平民甚眾。殊可傷憫 (pp. 12–3). See also translations in Samuel N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1992), p. 279; and Hubert Seiwert, *Popular Religious Movements and Heterodox Sects in Chinese History* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 191–3. Yu Wupo and Miao Luo are otherwise unknown. Sui’an was located approximately 30 km southwest of modern Chun’an 淳安, Jiangxi province (Tan Qixiang, 6:59). In the northern Song, Yanzhou was known as Muzhou. I do not know where White Horse Cave is located.

⁷¹ *Jilei bian*, p. 64. Charles Hartmann writes that Du Fu’s identity underwent three periods of construction in the Song dynasty: From the 1040s to the 1070s, he was imagined as social reformer, remonstrator, and poetic historian; from the 1070s until 1127, he was portrayed as political martyr; and after 1127 Du Fu became a “cosmic survivor, a sage whose poetic corpus was a guidebook to personal and moral salvation” (Charles Hartmann, “The Tang Poet Du Fu and the Song Dynasty Literati,” *CLEAR* 30 [Dec., 2008]: 45). See also Eva Shan Chou, *Reconsidering Tu Fu: Literary Greatness and Cultural Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 25–8.

decision to break from the way that his forefathers remembered (or rather, omitted) traumatic events and recorded history.

Surviving Famine: Cannibalism

While this chapter thus far has introduced Zhuang's opinions on history writing and his intention to surpass the historical accounts of earlier generations, for the most part, Zhuang's encounters with history in *Jilei bian* serve mainly as illustrative examples to impart larger moral lessons or philosophical questions. A distinguishing feature of Song miscellany is that entries are followed by or include analytical comments. An entry about a historical location, for instance, would include a description of its physical attributes, but through a combination of juxtaposition of sources and analyses, could serve as an entrée to a discussion about any number of other topics, such as history, politics, loss, or morality.⁷² This tendency is part of a long-standing tradition of using history to understand and discuss the present. As such, factuality becomes subordinate to the larger connections that the author creates. Merely mining a fact from an entry such as this misses the point of the entry.

An example from *Jilei bian* is an entry titled by the Zhonghua editors “Zhang Yi (1078–1138) Made a Law and Harmed Himself” 張誼作法自弊. This entry relates an anecdote about Zhang Yi jokingly telling his brother-in-law, Liu Tingjun 劉庭俊, who was

⁷² This is, in part, because of the role of memory in miscellany. “As we search for a means to impose a meaningful order upon reality we rely on memory for the provision of symbolic representations and frames which can influence and organize both our actions and our conception of ourselves. Thus ‘memory at once reflects, programs, and frames the present’” (Barbara Misztal, *Theories of Social Remembering* [Berkshire, England: Open University Press, 2003], p. 13).

too hung over to come up with an idea to debate in court, to discuss increasing the taxes on land owned by officials in order to add to the government coffers. Liu, not realizing it was a joke, did as Zhang had suggested. As a result, Liu's idea was implemented, and Zhang's own tax burden increased three-fold.⁷³

In an article that discusses a factual error in this account, Deng Qihui 鄧啟輝 concludes that this exchange never actually occurred, and moreover, that it could not possibly have been written by Zhuang.⁷⁴ Deng assumes that Zhuang's motivation for writing was to convey factually accurate details that might have been left out of standard histories. However, Zhuang's comments at the closing of this entry state: "Zhang's suffering stemmed from a single joke. The phrase 'self harm' truly has flavor" 其受害，蓋出於一言之戲，「自弊」之語，誠有味也。⁷⁵ From this, it becomes apparent that Zhuang simply used this anecdote as a vehicle for introducing the novel phrase, "self harm" (*zhibi*), and for providing

⁷³ *Jilei bian*, p. 48.

⁷⁴ Deng surmises that since Zhuang and Zhang had lived in the same area their paths would have passed, therefore, Zhuang would never have made such an error. "Du *Jilei bian* zhong biji yi ze xianyi" 讀《雞肋編》中筆記一則獻疑, *Wenjian ziliao* (2012) 26: 122. See also, Deng Qihui, "*Jilei bian* biji zheng wu er ze" 《雞肋編》筆記正誤二則, *Wenxue jie* 12 (2012): 224–5.

⁷⁵ Zhuang appears to be interested in this novel twist on the Lord of Shang's 商君 words: "disadvantages of making laws" (*wei fa zhibi* 為法之敝). When the Lord of Shang fled following accusations that he was planning to rebel, King Hui of Qin 秦惠王 put out a warrant for his arrest. "The Lord of Shang fled to the foot of the Pass. He sought to lodge in the traveler's lodge. The owner of the traveler's lodge did not know he was the Lord of Shang: 'According to the laws of the Lord of Shang, one who puts up a person without identification will be prosecuted for it.' The Lord of Shang heaved a sigh and said, 'Alas, that the disadvantages of making laws should come to this!'" 發吏捕商君。商君亡至關下，欲捨客捨，客人不知其是商君也，曰：商君之法，捨人無驗者，坐之。商君喟然嘆曰：嗟乎！為法之敝一至此哉！ (translated in William H. Nienhauser, Jr., ed., *The Grand Scribe's Records* [Taipei: SMC Publishing, 1994], vol. 7, p. 95; cf. *Shiji*, 68.2236–7; Burton Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian: Qin Dynasty* [Hong Kong and New York: Research Centre for Translation, Chinese University of Hong Kong and Columbia University Press, 1993], p. 89).

yet another example of the importance of being circumspect with one's words—a leitmotif in *Jilei bian*.

Viewed within the broader context of *Jilei bian*, this entry acquires another dimension. This is the eleventh entry in the middle chapter. The middle chapter, up to this point, paints a picture of a misguided Song state that lost its northern territories to the Jin due, in part, to inept, corrupt officials. As a result, Song citizens were forced to abandon their humanity through such indignities as thieving, murder, and cannibalism.⁷⁶ Zhang Yi's joke becoming a law is yet another example of irresponsible governance. So we can see that it is the essence of this story about Zhang Yi harming himself and others, and how it fits into larger themes of language and corruption within *Jilei bian*, not the accuracy of dates and official titles, that give this entry meaning.

In this section we will look at how Zhuang's descriptions of cannibalism for survival during the years of famine, caused by war and natural disasters, are depicted as an extension of the violence inflicted by the Jin. When Zhuang first brings up the issue of cannibalism, it is hidden at the end of an entry about the ingredients of edible oils in various regions of China. Zhuang begins with descriptions of seed- and nut-oils in the north. He then moves south where the seed oils become less edible and are often used for lamps or candles, and the animal-based fish oil is introduced as unpleasant. Suddenly, Zhuang introduces a famine in the Jingxi area, west of the capital, during the Xuanhe reign (1119–26), when people were forced to eat each other (*ren xiang shi* 人相食): “They cooked down the brains to make oil

⁷⁶ *Jilei bian*, pp. 43–8.

for eating, and sold it to the four areas. No one could distinguish it [from other oils]” 煉腦為油以食，販於四方，莫能辯也。⁷⁷

The shift from the delicious oils in the cultured north, to the less edible oils of the south, and finally to the shocking revelation that people were tricked into eating oil made from human brains shows the abrupt transition into chaos that began soon after the Xuanhe. We can also see in this passage the disintegration of moral integrity that becomes a theme in narratives about the fall of the Northern Song. Merchants who made and sold oil continued to profit, even in times of famine, because they made oil from humans and turned unsuspecting customers into cannibals.

A few pages later, Zhuang provides another, more detailed, account of cannibalism:

In the beginning of the Tang, the turncoat Zhu Can used people for food. He placed them in the smashing and grinding corral (*dao mo zhai*).⁷⁸ It was said that he “that he ate drunkards as if he were eating a suckling pig.” Each time I read the histories of the previous [eras] I would sigh in pain because of this. Yet since the *bingwu* year of the Jingkang reign (1126), in the six or seven years of the height of the Jin chaos, circuits such as Shandong, Jingxi, and Huainan were desolate for one-thousand *li*.⁷⁹ The price of a catty of rice reached several tens of thousands, such that no one could obtain it.

⁷⁷ *Jilei bian*, p. 32. According to *Song shi* Jingxi had a famine in Xuanhe 1 (1119) (22.405), the result of a severe drought (*Song hui yao jigao*, shihuo yi zhi wu, Xuanhe yuannian).

⁷⁸ According to *Jin Tang shu*, Huang Chao 黃巢 (d. 884) also put people into a “pounding and grinding corral” (*chong mo zhai* 舂磨寨) (19B.717).

⁷⁹ Li Xinchuan also notes that “the several provinces that linked and spanned Jingxi lacked grains to eat, so people ate each other” 京西連跨數州無糧食，人相啗 (*Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, juan 42).

Thieves, officials, troops, and even ordinary people ate each other. The price of human flesh was cheaper than dog meat. A whole plump and hearty man did not go beyond 15,000 cash. They would set the entire corpse out to dry in the sun to make jerky.

When Fan Wen from Dengzhou led loyalists, they crossed the sea to reach Qiantang in the Kuichou year of the Shaoxing reign (1133). There were those who brought some along to the camp and still ate it.

Old and skinny men and boys were metaphorically called “rich little torch you hold in your hand” (*shao ba buo*). Pretty and young women were called “more delicious than mutton” (*buxian yang*). Children were called “meat and bone mush” (*he gu lan*). As a class, they were all grouped as “two legged sheep” (*liang jiao yang*).

In the Tang there was only Zhu Can’s single army, but now there are a hundred times more [cases of cannibalism] than the previous era. Those who died by murder, slaughter, burning, drowning, starving, illness, and epidemic were legion. Also add to this by being eaten by another. Du Fu said: “Death and chaos killed many families,” this is the truth! I never thought these old eyes would personally see this in my time. Alas! Such Pain!⁸⁰

唐初，賊朱粲以人為糧，置搗磨寨，謂啖醉人如食糟豚。每覽前史，
為之傷歎。而自靖康丙午歲，金人之亂，六七年間，山東、京西、淮

⁸⁰ *Jilei bian*, pp. 34-5. For a summary of the nicknames for human flesh in this passage, see Key Ray Chong, *Cannibalism in China* (Wakefield, New Hampshire: Longwood Academic, 1990), p. 137.

南等路，荊榛千里，斗米至數十千，且不可得。盜賊、官兵以至居民，更互相食，人肉價賤於犬豕，肥壯者一枚不過十五千，全軀暴以為臘。登州範溫率忠義之人，紹興癸丑歲泛海到錢塘，有持至行在猶食者。老瘦男子，廋詞謂之“饒把火”，婦人少艾者名為“不羨羊”，小兒呼為“和骨爛”，又通目為“兩腳羊”。唐止朱粲一軍，今百倍於前世，殺戮焚溺饑餓疾疫陷墮，其死已眾，又加之以相食。杜少陵謂“喪亂死多門”，信矣！不意老眼親見此時，嗚呼痛哉！

This entry begins with a description of Zhu Can's cannibalism. Zhu Can is described as a turncoat or bandit (賊) and as enjoying the act of eating human flesh. Cannibalism during this period of famine was also recorded in the “Famine” (*Jixiong* 饑凶) chapter of *Song shi*. In Bianjing 汴京 in Jianyan 1 (1127), the price of a rat rose to several hundred strings of cash. In Jianyan 3 (1129), Shandong also suffered from famine, such that people ate each other: “At the time the Jin had sunk the various commanderies east of the capital, and the people had banded together as bandits. It reached the point that they loaded dried corpses into carts to serve as food” 時金人陷京東諸郡，民聚為盜，至車載乾尸為糧.⁸¹ While this description is startling, it was only “bandits” who resorted to eating human flesh.

Zhuang's account, however, makes it clear that everyone, regardless of status, was forced into cannibalism in order to survive. This is presented as a direct result of the Jin incursion. Not only have people suffered the violence of murder, looting, and burning, but

⁸¹ 67.1463.

war has also forced the people of the Song to act as animals. In *Mengzi* we read that cannibalism is a result of veering from the way:

If the way of Yang and Mo had not been extinguished, and the way of Confucius had not been written down, then perverse theories would have deluded the common people, and blocked the path of humanity and righteousness. If humanity and righteousness are blocked, then just as beasts devour men, men will also be led to devour each other.

楊墨之道不息，孔子之道不著，是邪說誣民，充塞仁義也。仁義充塞，則率獸食人，人將相食。⁸²

According to Tao Jing-shen, the Cheng brothers viewed moral depravity as stemming from a loss of *li* (natural patterns embodied by a civilized, orderly society). Mengzi's theory of the innate goodness of man allows the heart-mind to apprehend *li* in situations and to follow it. "If it is partially lost, the Chinese will be degraded into 'barbarians.' If the *li* is completely lost, people will sink to the level of animals."⁸³ Indeed, in Zhuang's description above, human flesh is bought and sold at the marketplace just like mutton. Even worse, Zhuang portrays this violence against the Song as having lasting repercussions.

Key Ray Chong, in her study of cannibalism in China, writes that cannibalism can be divided into two types: survival and learned.⁸⁴ Zhuang's description of people forced to

⁸² 3B.14; cf. Wang Anshi cited in *Xu Zizhi tongjian changbian*, 225.5475.

⁸³ "Barbarians or Northerners: Northern Sung Images of the Khitans," *China Among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbors, 10th–14th Centuries*, Morris Rossabi, ed. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1983), p. 74.

⁸⁴ Survival cannibalism takes place because of war and famine. Learned cannibalism can result from many factors, including punishment, revenge, filial piety, and psychological warfare (*Cannibalism in China*, pp. 56–103).

consume human flesh because it was cheaper than dog meat is an example of survival cannibalism. However, when Zhuang introduces the actions of the soldiers who joined Fan Wen, we see that cannibalism has become habitual, even preferred, for these men. Although they arrived at the camp—presumably where rations were made available—they still (*you*) consumed the human flesh they had brought with them. From outside accounts it would appear that the government was aware of this learned behavior, and therefore, we read that in Shaoxing 2 (1132), an official Yue Liang 岳亮, ordered the capture of remaining cannibals in Chuzhou 滁州. Six were caught, and they pointed him to Zhou Zhi 周智 and Zhang Jiu 張九, the two biggest offenders.⁸⁵

Zhuang Chuo emphasizes this shift from survival to learned behavior by placing these cases next to the account of Zhu Can who savored human meat as a delicacy. To Zhuang, this is yet another instance of the wave of immorality following the war with the Jin.

LOST CULTURE AND RITES

Zhuang mourns the loss of the northern territories, noting that “only Zhe[dong], Zhe[xi], Min,⁸⁶ Guang[nan],⁸⁷ and Jiangnan [circuits] are now ruled by the Song court; a mere one-fifth of [the territory] during peaceful times” 朝廷所仰，惟二浙、閩、廣、江南，

⁸⁵ *Sanchao Beimeng huibian*, juan 150; Li Xinchuan, *Jianyan yilai xinian yaolu*, 51.692a–b.

⁸⁶ Approximately the area of present-day Fujian province.

⁸⁷ Approximately the area including present-day Guangdong and Guangxi provinces.

才平時五分之一。⁸⁸ Yet, more dire than losing land was the destruction of documents and cultural artifacts. As memories and history are tied to place, writes Barbara Misztal, “the preservation of recollections also rests on their anchorage in space, which—because of its relative stability—gives us the illusion of permanence.”⁸⁹ Now, cut off from the north, which embodied the memories that informed Han (i.e., Song) culture, Zhuang and other scholars were left to find substitute spaces wherein they could mend the broken line of history.⁹⁰ All of these feelings about the conflict with the Jin—anger and sadness over the suffering of the masses and the loss of land and objects which embody northern cultural values, especially texts and centers of knowledge production; concerns about the changing values of the Song people; and a fear that history will be forgotten—are common themes in Zhuang’s writing about this period.

Shifting Center; Shifting Values

The disappearance of these cultural and historical sites highlights larger concerns about losing the north and the culture that it contained. Chapter seventeen of *Shaoshi jianmen lu* 邵氏見聞錄 (Record of Mr. Shao’s Experiences), for example, is largely devoted to the splendors of the men and landscapes of northern capitals. In one entry Shao Bowen 邵伯溫

⁸⁸ *Jilei bian*, p. 76.

⁸⁹ Barbara Misztal, *Theories of Social Remembering* (Berkshire, England: Open University Press, 2003), p. 52.

⁹⁰ Such as gardens, memorials, and (possibly) memoirs. An excellent study of identity building through gardens and paintings is Robert E. Harrist, *Painting and Private Life in Eleventh-Century China: Mountain Villa by Li Gonglin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

(1055–1134) describes Luoyang’s landscape and lists the names of famous sites therein. He concludes by saying:

The customs of Luoyang are peaceful. Its land is suitable for flowers and bamboo. Chang’an still has the culture (*feng*) of wandering knights from the Qin and the Han. Its land grows many willow catkins and old locust trees. Farming mulberries is most popular. Its ancient name was Luhai (“land of plenty”).⁹¹ Heroes from previous generations had to get this culture (*feng*) before they were able to do anything. But now this land has been sunken by northern foreigners, such a pity!⁹²

洛陽民俗和平，土宜花竹。長安尚有秦、漢遊俠之風，地多長楊花、老槐，耕桑最盛，古稱陸海。前代英雄必得此然後可以有為，今陸沈於北狄，惜哉！

To Shao, there is a direct correlation between the types of plants in the northern capitals and the moral qualities of the people who resided there. Thus, losing northern territory to the Jin meant more than just lost land; to Shao it represented a separation from the superior moral influence of the north.

Zhuang makes similar observations about the relationship between landscape and personality in his entries about geographical differences of the Northwest and the

⁹¹ *Han shu*, 28B.1642.

⁹² *Shaoshi wenjian lu* 邵氏聞見錄, *Song Yuan biji xiaoshuo daguan*, pp. 1810–1.

Southeast.⁹³ This entry is followed by two more that list aphorisms about the people of Yuezhou 越州 and Zhexi 浙西.⁹⁴ For example, Zhuang writes:

Yuezhou is in the middle of Lake Jian, and surrounded by Qinwang and other mountains, yet fish and firewood are hard to come by.⁹⁵ Thus there is a saying: “There are mountains, but no wood; there is water, but no fish; there are people, but no sense of duty.”⁹⁶

越州在鑿湖之中，繞以秦望等山，而魚薪艱得。故諺云：“有山無木，有水無魚，有人無義。”

The physical characteristics of a locale are understood as metaphors for the moral constitution of its inhabitants. Since the mountains and water in Yuezhou are lacking the materials to contribute to their usefulness to society, this selfishness is extended to the populace.

These entries highlight traditional ideas about the moralizing “influence of terrain and climate on a region’s inhabitants,” as indicated by the term *feng*, literally meaning “wind.” As Mark Lewis explains, varying “winds” in different geographical areas contribute to the creation of regional customs (*su*), which is “a negative category indicating what was local, partial, and tied to the characteristics of a specific place or region.”⁹⁷

⁹³ *Jilei bian*, p. 10.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11.

⁹⁵ Lake Jian is located just south of Shaoxing, Zhejiang.

⁹⁶ *Jilei bian*, p. 10.

⁹⁷ Mark Edward Lewis, *The Construction of Space in Early China* (New York: SUNY, 2006), p. 190.

Zhuang Chuo shows concern about the effect the southern environment on the future of the Song dynasty. He concludes the above entry about Zhexi by musing, “To not be changed by one’s environment is something that can only be done by the worthy and the wise” 不為風俗所移者，唯賢哲為能耳. Here we can see echos of Jia Yi’s discourse about the influence of custom in his “*Zhi an ce*” 治安策 (Document on Governance and Peace):

.... So those who are accustomed to reside among proper men cannot help but be proper; just like those who grow up in Qi cannot help but use the language of Qi. And those who are accustomed to reside among improper men cannot help but be improper; just like those who grow up in the lands of Chu cannot help but use the language of Chu.⁹⁸ Confucius said, “Youth grow following their natures, but habits follow the environment.”⁹⁹ Habit and knowledge develop together, therefore unashamedly be concise. Transformation and the mind mature together, therefore the middle way follows nature.¹⁰⁰

夫習與正人居之不能毋正，猶生長於齊不能不齊言也；習與不正人居之不能毋不正，猶生長於楚之地不能不楚言也。孔子曰：‘少成若天性，習貫如自然。’習與智長，故切而不愧；化與心成，故中道若性。

Zhuang sees the widening distance between history and present in the shifting contours of the landscape. He also reveals a concern about the inevitability of the decline of

⁹⁸ *Xunzi*, 8.25.

⁹⁹ This does not appear in today’s *Lunyu*.

¹⁰⁰ *Han shu*, 48.2248.

cultural values as the center of government moves to the south. Zhuang is concerned that the spiritual distress suffered would have a lasting impact on the morality of the Song dynasty. Zhuang records a saying from the Jianyan period that reflects his concern about the changing values of the Song: “If you want to become an official, then kill men and set fires (i.e. be a bandit), then surrender and you will be called to serve; if you want to become rich, then start a business selling wine and vinegar” 欲得官，殺人放火受招安；欲得富，趕著行在賣酒醋。¹⁰¹

This preoccupation with money is but one example in *Jilei bian* of the slight virtue (*bode* 薄德) exhibited in these chaotic times. Anecdotes of selfish acts harming the innocent appear throughout Zhuang’s memoir. For example, Zhuang expresses his disapproval of a man who redirects his anger over the loss of his family to Jin troops towards innocent people.¹⁰² And, twice in *Jilei bian*, as noted above, Zhuang laments an incident in which a man falsely accuses his neighbors of practicing Manichaeism, a severe offense punishable by exile, for his own gain. Troops are called and the incident results in harming a great number of innocent people in two provinces (Quzhou and Yanzhou).

To Zhuang, the root of this moral depravity is the destruction of texts and resultant break in the perceived continuity of knowledge and history caused by the war with the Jin. He begins this entry by framing these objects as family heirlooms; traces of famous men with whom his father had personal contact. Then he describes each object in detail. 1) thank you notes from a great number of people, including Su Shi; 2) the colophon at the end by

¹⁰¹ *Jilei bian*, p. 67.

¹⁰² *Jilei bian*, p. 6.

Chao Buzhi; 3) another calligraphy once owned by Wang Dan 王旦 (957–1017); and 4) twenty rolls of calligraphy by Su Shi. Finally, he describes how he was able to keep them safe through the Dagan period, but the Jin attacked and destroyed everything in Yingchuan, including these personal, precious cultural objects. Zhuang recalls:

During the Jingkang reign, Yingchuan encountered the misfortune of the Jin catiffs, and was transformed into smoke and dust. This goes back and forth in my heart, and even today I am still unable to stop it. Pearls and jade can be obtained, but these cannot be found again. This is so regrettable!

靖康中，穎川遭金國之禍，化為煙塵。往來於心，迄今不能已已。珠玉可得，而此不可再得，是可恨也！

This is one of the few entries in which Zhuang describes the personal losses that he suffered during the wars with the Jin.

Redefining Difference

Hilde De Weerdt argues that in the Southern Song “the north carried ambivalent meanings because it was the carrier of historical memory, and because it was at the same time perceived as a potential source of threat to the existence of the Song Empire.”¹⁰³ We can observe such conflicted feelings about the north and the Jin conquerers in *Jilei bian*.

¹⁰³ “What Did Su Che See in the North? Publishing Regulations, State Security, and Political Culture in Song China,” *T'oung Pao* 92 (2006): 470. Tao Jing-shen also problematizes the Chinese/Barbarian dichotomy as an oversimplification (“Barbarians or Northerners,” pp. 66–86).

In a long entry discussing the history of treaties between the Song and the Jin, Zhuang characterizes the Jin as not trustworthy (*shi xin* 失信) and comments that “I can now see [what] Confucius [meant when he said] that armies and food can be discarded” 孔子以兵食為可去.¹⁰⁴ This is a reference to the *Analects* in which Confucius says that armies, food, and trust are the three elements to government; and of these three, only trust cannot be discarded.¹⁰⁵ In this way Zhuang draws the readers’ attention to important cultural differences (i.e., the non-Confucian nature of the Jin) and illustrates the immorality of the Jin.¹⁰⁶ This negative impression is further emphasized by Zhuang’s use of the unflattering terms “northern enemy” (*beidi* 北敵), “barbarians” (*buren* 胡人), “Jin caitiffs” (*Jin lu* 金虜), “northern caitiffs” (*beilu* 北虜), and so on.

However, among such entries that emphasize the non-Hanness of the Jin (i.e., “uncivilized aspects”) in *Jilei bian*, there are also those that provide a more nuanced assessment. One anecdote, in particular, provides a jarring contrast to other accounts about the havoc wreaked by the Jin:

In the seventh month of the third year of the Jianyan reign (7/18–8/16/1129), I lodged temporarily in the hut of Mr. Zhang at White Horse Ravine to the north of Mount Gaojing in Penghua Village, Changzhou County, Pingjiang fu.¹⁰⁷ At the time beacon fires were set up on top of the

¹⁰⁴ *Jilei bian*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁵ *Lunyu*, 12.7

¹⁰⁶ Zhuang makes similar comments about the Jin elsewhere in *Jilei bian*. For example, p. 76.

¹⁰⁷ Changzhou was the administrative seat of Pingjiang fu, located near modern Suzhou (Tan Qixiang, 6:60).

mountains, and were raised at night in order to report that all was safe. I stayed there for more than a month, and then went through Zhedong. Just before leaving I wrote a poem on the wall that said:

*In years past, I followed official orders as assistant to frontier marquis,
With melancholy I gaze upon Chang'an, facing the watchtower.¹⁰⁸
Today weak and downtrodden I arrive at this marshy land,
And again see the beacon fires shining at Changzhou.*

In the winter of this year the Jin attacked Hang[zhou] and Yue[zhou]. In the spring of the following year, I went through Pingjiang on my way home. White Horse Ravine was eighteen *li* away from the capital. Mr. Zhang's various abodes numbered more than one hundred. They were all destroyed from fire. The only place that remained was where I had resided. Written on the wall next [to my poem] was inscribed: "Mr. Geng was here and did not burn it down."¹⁰⁹

建炎三年七月，余寓平江府長洲縣彭華鄉高景山北白馬澗張氏舍。時山上設烽火，夕舉以報平安。留月余，即過浙東，臨行書一絕於壁間雲：“昔年隨牒佐邊侯，愁望長安向戍樓。今日衰頹來澤國，又看烽火照長洲。”是年冬金人犯杭、越。明年春，由平江以歸。白馬澗去

¹⁰⁸ Wang Wei 王維 wrote "Longtou yin" 隴頭吟 (also called "Bianqing" 邊情) in 737 when he was sent to Turpan 吐蕃: "Youth of Chang'an wander as knights errants; ascending the watchtowers at night to look at Venus (the military star)" 長安少年游俠客，夜上戍樓看太白。

¹⁰⁹ *Jilei bian*, pp. 17-8. According to *Song shu*, Jin cavalry (*youqi* 游騎) rode into Pingjiang on 4/3/1130 followed two days later by troops who looted and burned the city (25.476). They left the city on 4/10/1130 (25.477).

城十八裏，張氏數宅百余區，盡被焚毀，獨留余所居。於壁邊題“耿先生到此不燒”七字。

Mr. Geng, a Jin soldier, it is presumed, was so moved by Zhuang's poetry that he could not bear to burn his home down. This very human description of a Jin soldier as a man appreciative of Chinese culture is jarring when read alongside Zhuang's numerous accounts of death and suffering at the hands of the Jin army. Focusing on similarities of physical and human geography rather than on stereotypical differences would later become the cornerstone of discourse of diplomatic relations with the Jin.¹¹⁰

Zhuang asserts that while “every local culture in the world has something that is taboo; they also have a reason why it is so” 天下方俗各有所諱，亦有謂而然。¹¹¹ This is as much a reflection of the generally more sophisticated geographical awareness in the Song dynasty, as it is of Zhuang's engagement with texts over the course of his travels.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter we saw that Zhuang strives to record “what the elders would not.” This finds expression in the inclusion of unflattering accounts of men and bald descriptions of the destruction of war. Yet we also saw in this chapter that Zhuang's historical accounts were often not really about what really happened, but rather served to illustrate a moral lesson.

¹¹⁰ Christian Lamouroux, “De l'étrangeté à la différence: les relations des émissaires Song en pays Liao (XI^e siècle),” Claudine Salmon, ed., *Récits de voyages asiatiques—genres, mentalités, conception de l'espace: actes du colloque EFEO-EHESS de décembre 1994* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1996), pp. 101-26.

¹¹¹ *Jilei bian*, p. 13.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has aimed to spur scholars to re-evaluate the current approach to the study of miscellany by re-directing the focus of inquiry away from bibliographic categorization to understanding the scope and purpose of miscellany in the Song dynasty. It can be hard to fathom what to do with miscellany as it resists traditional bibliographic categories and lacks an internal structure. Yet, miscellany was a popular genre in the Song dynasty, and we know that they were circulated as manuscripts and sold as printed books. So people in the Song dynasty wrote and read miscellany. For what purpose?

For an answer, this study turned to prefaces to see what authors of Song dynasty miscellany had to say about their own works. We saw that authors of miscellany in the Song dynasty conceived of their works in a variety of ways. Generally speaking, they envisioned their works as contributing to the historical tradition, by supplementing (*bu* 補) history with contradictory, local, and contemporary accounts; that is, subjects deemed unsuitable for standard histories. At the same time, authors of miscellany emphasized the entertaining and conversational value of their works, framing these purportedly historical works as memories and chats. Moreover, in discussing the intended function of miscellany, authors overwhelmingly emphasize that their topics were selected because they were instructional; that is, they illustrated larger issues.

That most works in this corpus use the frame of chats is compelling and, perhaps, gives us the most insight into why miscellany are (un)structured the way they are. First, it is possible that some authors intentionally avoided imposing an artificial structure to their miscellany in order to imitate the flow of a conversation. For those interested in

categorization, it might be useful to see whether those miscellany that do impose an external structure through the addition of paratextual devices, such as a table of contents and titles to entries, also emphasize the conversational quality of their works. Second, the various modes of orality—gossip, chats, discussions—provide the freedom to test out theories and present conflicting viewpoints, something for which other genres do not allow. Finally, the temporal and spatial distance between the “original” utterance and its record in miscellany might also serve as a safety net for authors who are, after all is said and done, writing about contemporary society.

Another finding from this analysis of Song dynasty prefaces was that authors seemed to have moved beyond the apologetic attitude towards *xiaoshuo* to more nuanced meditations on the necessity of the spoken word. This is likely because the majority of authors of miscellany were officials who either worked on imperially sponsored history projects, and therefore, understood the value of oral transmission and the role it played in the writing of history in previous eras. Perhaps it was this new appreciation for orality that caused authors to rehabilitate the negative trope of the gossiper into a category of men who shared an interest in cultivating a culture of intellectual curiosity beyond the confines of the canon and imperially sanctioned histories.

Is it with this group of intellectuals, this community of miscellany readers, whom the authors of miscellany are chatting? Perhaps miscellany served as a substitute space for face-to-face interactions with friends and other intellectuals who were separated for long periods of time because of frequent moves from one official position to another or because of separation due to war and strife. The tentative conclusion of this study is yes; miscellany seem to represent intellectuals in conversation with like-minded men about texts through the

medium of texts. It is for these reasons that I chose to title this study “The Social Life of Texts.”

Of course, what we glean from prefaces must be taken with caution. The preface is, after all, a genre in its own right and comes with its own set of conventions. Yet, when comparing prefaces from Tang and Song dynasty works, we do see that there is a shift in rhetoric. This would seem to indicate that these prefaces as a whole represent, at least to some degree, general intellectual trends as they relate to the miscellany genre.

What type of reading does the miscellany form facilitate? How does the implicit invitation to join and continue the “conversations” that were contained within the pages of miscellany affect how they were read? While we cannot assume that there was a single way of reading miscellany, nor that everyone engaged with a single text in the same way, it is unlikely that miscellany were read in the same manner as canonical works. Should we assume, then, that miscellany were only to be picked through for topics of interest to the reader? If all miscellany were written for the purpose of conveying information seen, observed, or overheard, then why were they not all organized in a manner more conducive to finding said information (e.g., organized into categories of topics)?

The main part of this dissertation is an experiment in close-reading an individual miscellany, Zhuang Chuo’s *Jilei bian*. If we read this miscellany in a holistic manner, using its preface as a guide, what shape does this text take? *Jilei bian* represents the voice of a Northern elite official whose first extended contact with the people and customs of the South comes after he escapes there following the fall of the Northern Song dynasty. The people in his miscellany are mostly the scholar-officials who belonged to his extensive familial and social network. While many of these men were influential in government and intellectual circles, Zhuang himself remains on the periphery. *Jilei bian*, as the miscellany of a

well-connected yet not famous man, thus broadens our understanding of the intellectual inclinations of the Song.

In *Jilei bian*, Zhuang expresses interest in how language is experienced and comes to be written down for posterity. While Zhuang describes records such as his that are based on oral accounts as “empty words” (*kongyan* 空言) and places them at the bottom of a hierarchy of historical texts, he proceeds to complicate this assumption through the arrangement of the opening anecdotes of his first chapter. In these anecdotes, Zhuang Chuo paints a compelling picture of the vital role of linguistic ability in Song dynasty society. Zhuang describes a society in which poetic prowess was on public display, and in which casualties were frequent in this war of wits and literary skill.

Zhuang wrote that during his travels he stumbled upon artifacts, records, and texts that were previously unrecorded in history. He also encountered landscapes and historical sites that had drastically transformed, due both to natural causes and human intervention. Even language has evolved over time. These changes make it difficult for later generations to make a spiritual connection with meaningful events and great men of the past. Zhuang recognizes that the world is in constant motion and seeks to understand the patterns of change. When these changes do not adhere to the laws of retribution and fate, he concludes that it is really chance that decides the outcome of people’s lives.

Even so, Zhuang participates in the creation of historical record, yet he claims to do so in a novel way. From his criticisms about history, we can see that he views history as serving a didactic purpose, and therefore, historians should strive to record all history: the good, the bad, and the ugly. It seems to be his insistence on recording suffering, scheming,

and injustice by which he distinguishes his miscellany from the way that men of earlier eras wrote history.

Yet, it is also apparent that Zhuang does not intend for *Jilei bian* to be a history in the strict sense of the word. While he is interested in the lessons that history can teach us, he is also interested in the ways in which history can connect us to great thinkers and poets of the past. This is achieved through using history and other experiences to clarify, corroborate, elucidate, and even negate the received textual tradition.

This dissertation is not an exhaustive close-reading of *Jilei bian*. It has simply followed the themes outlined in its preface in order to see whether these themes found further expression in the body of the text; in order to see whether there was a different way to find meaning in miscellany. This close-reading has found that reading entries contextually results in a deeper level of meaning—sometimes even a completely different meaning—than when read separated from the work in its entirety and the life experiences of its author.

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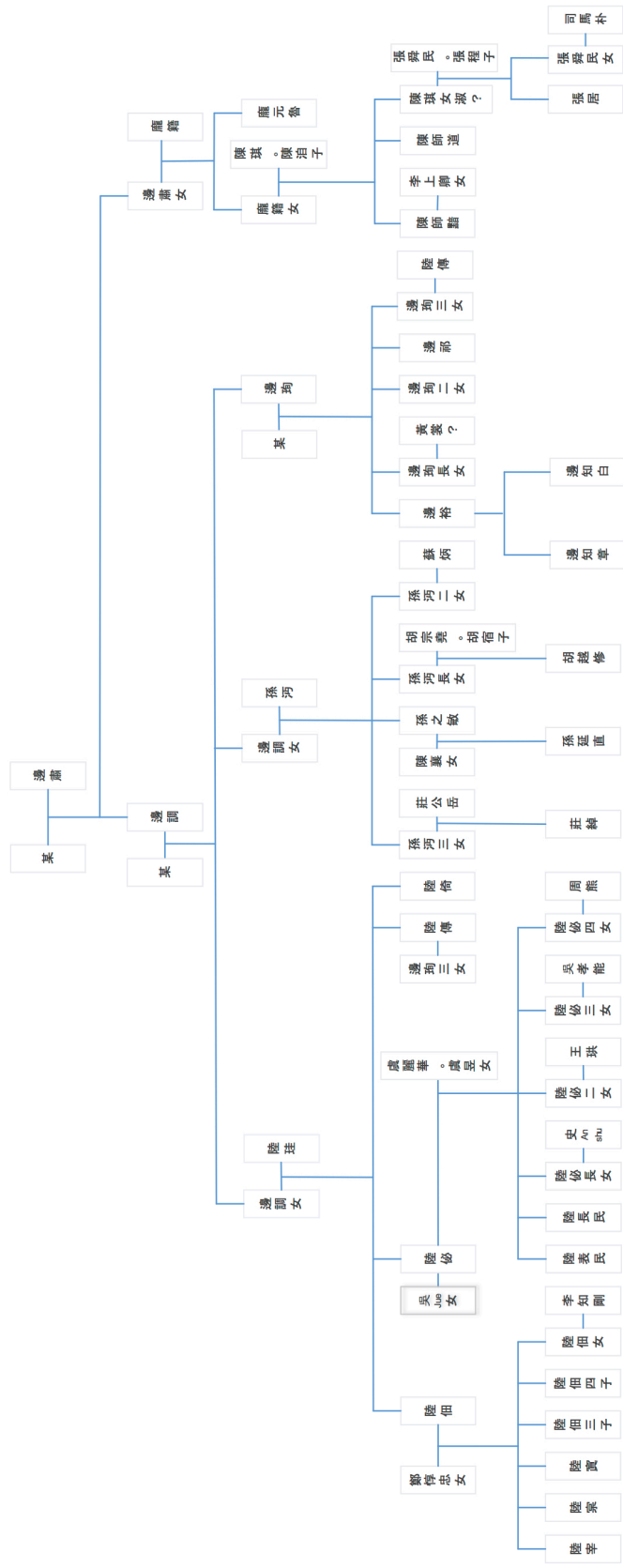
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APPENDIX A

ZHUANG GONGYUE'S LINEAGE

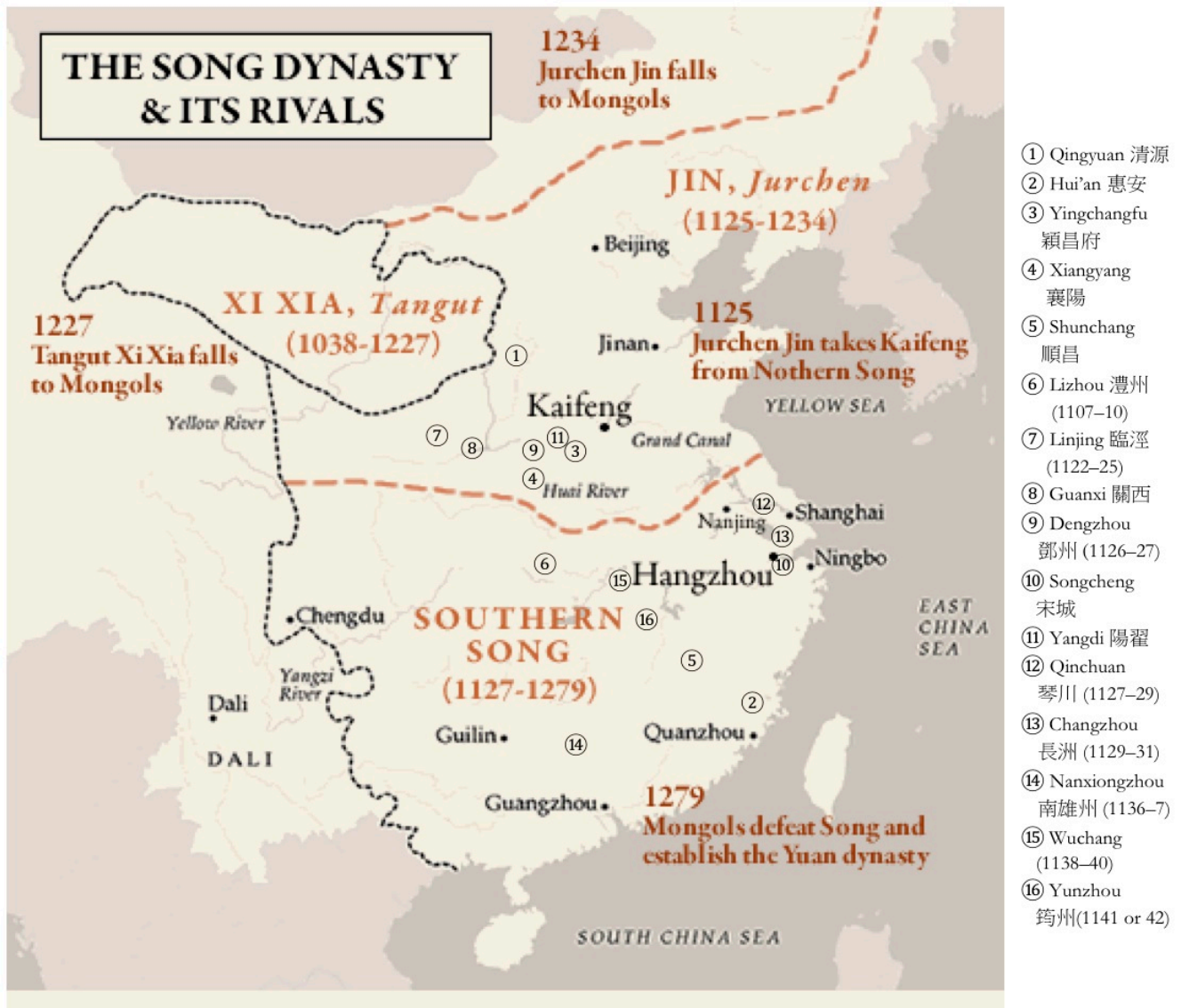


APPENDIX B

BIAN QIU'S (BIAN SU'S GRANDSON) LINEAGE

APPENDIX C

MAP OF ZHUANG CHUO'S TRAVELS



Map modified from The Metropolitan Museum of Art
(<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/song/out/rivals.htm>)