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# Rediscovering Ying Qu and His Poetic Relationship to Tao Qian

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YING QU 應璩 (190–252; *hao* Xiulian 休璉) was one of the most renowned writers and calligraphers of the Jian'an (196–220) period; he was also a powerful player in the political arena.[1] Relatively obscure today, he is known simply as the younger brother of Ying Yang (one of the Seven Masters of Jian'an [*Jian'an qizi* 建安七子]), as one of the period's premier letter writers,[2] and as the poet in whose lineage the critic Zhong Rong 鍾嶸 (496?–518) placed Tao Qian (365–427).[3] Zhong Rong's claim has been a main path through which modern readers are introduced to this little-known poet, and yet it has been

I am grateful to David Knechtges, Xiaofei Tian, Stephen Owen, Kang-i Sun Chang, Kathryn Lowry, Alice Cheang, and the anonymous referee for their valuable comments.

[1] Ying Qu's biography is appended to "Wang Can zhuan" 王粲傳, in *Wei shu, Sanguo zhi, Siku quanshu* edition [hereafter *SKQS*], 21.8b–9a. For Ying Yang's 應瑒 (?–217) biography, see also "Wang Can zhuan," in *Wei shu, Sanguo zhi,* 21.4a, 21.5b, 21.6a.

[2] On Ying Qu's place in Chinese epistolary history, see Liu Xie, "Shu ji" 書記, *Wenxin diaolong, Sibu beiyao* edition (Taibei: Taiwan Zhonghua shuju, 1973), 5.19b; Zhao Shugong 趙樹功, *Zhongguo chidu wenxue shi* 中國尺牘文學史 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1999), pp. 124–28.

[3] Zhong Rong, *Shipin zhu* 詩品注, ed. Wang Zhong 汪中 (Taibei: Zhengzhong shuju, 1990), pp. 155–56. For biographies of Tao Qian, see *Song shu, SKQS*, 93.14a–19a; *Jin shu, SKQS,* 94.43a–47a; *Nan shi, SKQS*, 75.2b–6b; Xiao Tong 蕭統, "Tao Yuanming zhuan," in *Jianzhu Tao Yuanming ji* 箋注陶淵明集, ed. (Song) Li Gonghuan 李公煥, *Sibu congkan* edition (Taibei: Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, 1991). See also the important chronological biography for Tao Qian, *Tao Yuanming nianpu* 陶淵明年譜, ed. Xu Yimin 許逸民 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986).

strongly contended since the Song dynasty. The paucity of the extant sources for Ying Qu has made it difficult to evaluate Zhong Rong's claim. For knowledge of Ying Qu's poetic style, one must rely primarily on a few poetry fragments from the "Baiyi shi" 百一詩 (Hundred and one poems),[4] which, given the specific aims and overall tone of this collection, is not representative of Ying Qu's entire poetic oeuvre. His prose writings, though better preserved than his poetry, and far better known in his own time, ironically have been less studied by later readers. By examining not only Ying Qu's poetry but also his letters and prose writings, this article aims to reevaluate Ying Qu's creative work and revisit Zhong Rong's claim regarding his influence on Tao Qian. It further presents a new perspective on his literary relationship to Tao Qian.

## Zhong Rong's Observation

Some sixty years after Tao Qian's death, Zhong Rong declared that Tao's poetry "had its roots in Ying Qu's style and was also aided by Zuo Si's energy." He characterized Ying Qu's and Tao Qian's works as reminiscent of the ancient style and as echoing the sincerity of the earliest poets and their tendency to be earnest and straightforward.[5] The pairing of these two poets, whose extant poetic corpora were so different, incited disagreement among many commentators. The few who concurred with Zhong Rong explained the similarities in terms of the types of rhymes used or the plainness of their diction.[6]

[4] For a discussion of the various arguments about the meaning of "Baiyi" and its nature as a poetic subgenre, as well as the number and the types of poems that it might have included, see Li Shan's notes in *Wenxuan Li Shan zhu* 文選李善注, *Sibu beiyao* edition (Taibei: Taiwan Zhonghua shuju, 1967) [hereafter *Wenxuan*], 21.13b–14a. See also David Knechtges's excellent unpublished paper, "The Problem with Anthologies: The Case of the Writings of Ying Qu (190–252)," presented at the China Humanities Series, Harvard University, October 2002.

[5] Zhong Rong likens Ying Qu's candid criticism of current events to "the [*Shijing*] poet's objective of 'radical satirizing'" (*de shiren ciji zhi zhi* 得詩人刺激之旨) and to Tao Qian's straightforwardness, which is a function of his sincerity. Zhong Rong commented, "Each time I read Tao's writings, I am reminded of the virtues of the man." Zhong Rong thought that Ying Qu's works had "elegant meanings, profound and sincere," while Tao Qian's works were characterized as having "sincere meanings, genuine and ancient," *Shipin zhu*, pp. 144, 155.

[6] Critics who rejected Zhong Rong's assertion include Ye Mengde 葉夢得 (1077–1148), *Shilin shihua* 石林詩話, *SKQS*, 42b–43a; Hu Zi 胡仔 (fl. 1147–1167), *Yuyin conghua* 漁隱叢話, *SKQS*, "qianji" 前集, 3.9b–10a; Wei Qingzhi 魏慶之 (fl. 1240–1244), *Shiren yuxie* 詩

However, no explicit disagreement with Zhong Rong's assertion can be found in any of the extant materials predating the Song dynasty. The early Tang pastoral poet Wang Ji 王績 (590–644) even mistook lines from Ying Qu as being by Tao Qian. Wang writes, "I used to love Tao Yuanming, / Ladling the lees and charring up a bony fish" 嘗愛陶淵明,酌醴焚枯魚.[7] Here, Ying Qu's famous lines from the "Baiyi shi"—"Ladling the lees and charring up a bony fish"—and Ying's evocation of a retired life are linked with and even (mis)attributed to Tao Qian, indicating that the two were perceived as being in close literary relationship during the Tang. The Song debate over these literary bloodlines was to continue into the Ming and Qing dynasties, but cooled off in the twentieth century, as modern Chinese critics came to view their obvious differences as a given.[8] The dispute over the veracity of Zhong Rong's claim coincided with the rise in popularity of Tao Qian's poetry and the gradual loss of Ying Qu's collection. Comparisons between the two poets—whether challenging Zhong Rong or agreeing with him—came to be based on comparing the few extant poems by Ying Qu (primarily from his famous "Baiyi shi") with the entire oeuvre of Tao's works.

人玉屑, *SKQS*, 13.12a–b; Xie Zhen 謝榛 (1495–1575), *Siming shihua* 四溟詩話 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1961), 2.43; Wang Shizhen 王士禎 (1634–1711), *Yuyang shihua* 漁洋詩話 (Jiayi: Jianguo shudian, 1956), *xia*.4a. The Ming scholar Xu Xueyi 許學夷 (1563–1633) suggested that Tao Qian and Ying Qu had a common predilection for *yu* 魚 and *yu* 虞 rhymes, rhymes that, as Ruan Tingyu 阮廷瑜 has noted, Zuo Si also liked to use. The modern scholar Wang Guiling 王貴苓 argues that both Ying Qu and Tao Qian use plain language and show a sense of humor. See Xu Xueyi, *Shiyuan bianti* 詩源辯體, ed. Du Weimo (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1987), 6.35; Ruan Tingyu, *Tao Yuanming shilun ji youguan ziliao fen ji* 陶淵明詩論暨有關資料分輯 (Taibei: Guoli bianyi guan, 1998), 1:10–16; and Wang Guiling, "Taoshi yuanchu Ying Qu shuo tantao" 陶詩源出應璩說探討, in *Tao Yuanming jiqi shi de yanjiu* 陶淵明及其詩的研究 (Taibei: Wenshi congkan, published by Guoli Taiwan daxue, 1966).

[7] Wang Ji, "Xue Jishi you guo zhuang jianxun shuaiti guyi yizeng" 薛記室遊過莊見尋率題古意以贈, in *Wang Ji shiwen ji jiaozhu* 王績詩文集校注, ed. Jin Ronghua 金榮華 (Taibei: Xin wenfeng chuban gufen youxian gongsi, 1998), p. 130. On Wang Ji's works, see Ding Xiang Warner, *A Wild Deer Amid Soaring Phoenixes: The Opposition Poetics of Wang Ji* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003).

[8] For modern scholarship on the literary relationship between Tao Qian and Ying Qu, see Yuan Xingpei 袁行霈, "Zhong Rong Shipin Taoshi yuanchu Ying Qu bianxi," 鍾嶸詩品陶詩源出應璩辨析, in his *Tao Yuanming yanjiu* 陶淵明研究 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1997), pp. 136–61. On Ying Qu's works in relation to their place in the *Shipin*, see: Gu Zhi's 古直, "Introduction," in Gu Zhi, ed., *Zhong ji shi Shipin jian* 鍾記室詩品箋 (Taibei: Guangwen shuju, 1968); Lu Qinli 逯欽立, "Zhong Rong Shipin," in his *Han Wei Liuchao lunji* 漢魏六朝詩論集 (Shanxi: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1984), p. 482.

This paper argues that Ying Qu's extant poems are *not* representative of his entire oeuvre, and that his far more extensive prose writings can better illuminate the wide range of his literary styles. Close reading of Ying Qu's less-read (but far better-known) prose writings, as well as his poetry, will show that Ying Qu and Tao Qian do share a strong cultural vocabulary, including the connected themes of choosing reclusion over public service and the images and poetic gestures taken by the retired gentleman (*yinshi* 隱士).[9] The works of minor poets in the Western and Eastern Jin (265–316 and 317–420, respectively) further suggest that there was in general circulation a set of images and language on the gentleman recluse. These themes and images were appropriated by Tao Qian and would later come to be strongly and solely associated with Tao's poetry.

## Ying Qu's Life and his "Baiyi shi"

Ying Qu came from a distinguished literary family from Nandun 南頓 in Runan 汝南 (modern-day Henan) that included his uncle Ying Shao 應劭 (d. 204),[10] who compiled the *Fengsu tongyi*, and his older brother Ying Yang. Ying Qu's son Ying Zhen 應貞 (220?–69) was also a notable writer, whose works were said to have impressed Xiahou Xuan 夏候玄 (209–254) so much that this patriarch of the powerful Xiahou clan (who was related to Cao Cao) awarded Ying Zhen prominent positions.[11] The biographical note on Ying Qu in the *Sanguo zhi* states that he was renowned for his writing—especially prose—and that he rose to the rank of palace attendant (*shizhong* 侍中), an advisory position to the emperor.[12] Ying's high standing as an insider in the Wei court,

[9] For studies of reclusion, see A. R. Davis, "The Narrow Lane, Some Observations on the Recluse in Traditional Chinese Society," *East Asian History* 11 (June 1996): 33–44; Alan Berkowitz, *Patterns of Disengagement: The Practice and Portrayal of Reclusion in Early Medieval China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); also his "Courting Disengagement: 'Beckoning the Recluse' poems of the Western Jin," in *Studies in Early Medieval Chinese Literature and Cultural History: In Honor of Richard B. Mather and Donald Holzman*, ed. Paul Kroll and David Knechtges (Provo, Utah: T'ang Studies Society, 2003), pp. 81–115.

[10] For Ying Shao's biography, see *Hou Han shu, SKQS*, 78.13a–19b.

[11] For Ying Zhen's biography, see *Jin shu* 92.2a–3b; see also *Wenzhang xulu* 文章敘錄, cited in "Wang Can zhuan," *Wei zhi*, *Sanguo zhi*, 21.9a.

[12] *Weishu, Sanguo zhi,* 21.8b–9a. For accounts of important events in Ying Qu's life as well as the dating of some of his major works, see Lu Kanru 陸侃如, *Zhonggu wenxue xi-*

his close association with the social elite, and his long years in office (almost until his death in 252) would hardly make him an outsider or a recluse in the way that we normally regard Tao Qian.

Both Ying Qu and Ying Yang served in the court of Cao Cao (155–220) and formed close ties to the Cao family. Two famous texts by the Caos document these cherished relationships: Cao Pi (Emperor Wen; 187–226) included Ying Yang in his *Dianlun lunwen* 典論論文 as one of the most prominent writers of the time;[13] and Cao Zhi (192–232) addressed his two famous "Song Yingshi" 送應氏 poems to the Ying brothers, where Cao wrote about seeing the burned capital of Luoyang and reminisced on the gatherings with his old friends.[14] Ying Qu later served Cao Pi as attendant gentleman (*shilang* 侍郎) and cavalier attendant-in-ordinary (*sanji changshi* 散騎常侍).[15] He rose to the position of palace attendant (*shizhong*) in 239, during his fifties, and served as chief clerk (*changshi* 長史) under Cao Shuang 曹爽 (d. 249) during Cao Fang's 曹芳 (232–274) reign.[16] Working late into his life, Ying Qu was reappointed as palace attendant at the age of sixty-one *sui*, in 250. The story surrounding Ying Qu's death has come to illustrate the accuracy of the predictions of the famous fortune-teller Zhu Jianping 朱建平: it was during one of Cao Pi's banquets that Zhu foretold that a year prior to Ying Qu's death, Ying would see a white dog that no one else would see, and that Ying would meet with misfortune a year later at sixty-two *sui*. Indeed, as the story goes, at the age of sixty-one *sui*, Ying Qu saw a white dog and asked those present whether they had seen it; none had.[17] In 252, he passed away at the age of sixty-three *sui*. Ying Qu was awarded the posthumous title of chief minister for the palace garrison (*weiwei* 衛尉).

Ying Qu was also a renowned calligrapher whose name appeared in calligraphy manuals along with the best-known masters: the Tang-dynasty manuals *Fashu yaolu* 法書要錄 and *Muosou* 墨藪 put his calligraphy in the third rank, a category reserved for calligraphers of

*nian* 中古文學繫年 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1985), 2:304, 396, 437, 471, 526, 539, 550, 559, 563.

13 *Wenxuan*, 52.4b.

14 *Wenxuan*, 20.20b–21a.

15 *Wenxuan*, 21.14a; *Wei zhi*, *Sanguo zhi*, 21.8b; Lu Kanru, 2:427, 471.

16 *Wei zhi*, *Sanguo zhi*, 21.8b–9a; Lu Kanru, 2:526, 539.

17 "Zhu Jianping zhuan," *Wei zhi*, *Sanguo zhi*, 29.12b–13b.

extraordinary talent (*qicai* 奇才) whose works were already rare in the Tang and could command a price equivalent to that of Wang Xizhi's cursive script.[18] More importantly, Ying Qu was celebrated in his own day for his writings. To posterity he is best known for the group of poems entitled "Baiyi shi," of which only one reliably complete poem, anthologized in the *Wenxuan* under the subgenre of *baiyi*, is extant.[19] The other poems are all fragments, now scattered among various encyclopedias and anthologies.[20]

Precisely what the title "Baiyi" means is unclear. The Tang commentator Li Shan (d. 689) cited several interpretations, which fell into three general theories: the first maintained that "Baiyi" referred to the number of poems in the collection; the second argued that it indicated the length of the poems (consisting of a hundred characters each); and the last held that "Baiyi" signified the one thing that could go wrong out of hundreds of possibilities. Zhang Fangxian 張方賢 of the Western Jin described "Baiyi shi" in his *Chuguo xianxian zhuan* 楚國先賢傳 (Biographies of former worthies of Chu) as poems written to "critique contemporary affairs to show thoroughly to those in office." Soon after, in the Eastern Jin, Li Chong 李充 noted in his influential *Hanlin lun* 翰林論 that there were a hundred and several tens of poems in the "Baiyi shi," that they were to "teach the proper Way by means of moral persuasion," and that they "perhaps have the same aim as the poets in the *Shijing*." Some hundred years after Ying's time, the noted historian

[18] *Wenxuan*, 21.14a; *Wei zhi*, *Sanguo zhi*, 21.8b; Lu Kanru, 2:427, 471. Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (fl. 847–74 A.D.), *Fashu yaolu* 法書要錄, *SKQS*, 4.4a–5a; (Tang) Wei Xu 韋續, *Mosou* 墨藪, *SKQS*, 2.22a–23a. For later mentions of Ying Qu's calligraphy, see (Song) Zhu Changwen 朱長文, *Mochibian* 墨池編, *SKQS*, 2.69a; (Song) Chen Si 陳思, *Shuyuan jinghua* 書苑菁華, *SKQS*, 5.20a; (Qing) *Peiwenzhai Shuhuapu* 佩文齋書畫譜, *SKQS*, 9.9b, 22.44a–b.

[19] *Wenxuan*, 21.13b–14a. For a discussion of the commentaries cited in the *Wenxuan* regarding the meaning of "Baiyi," see Knechtges, "The Problem with Anthologies," pp. 4–8. A second poem, "Nian ming zai sang yu" 年命在桑榆, is preserved as a "Baiyi shi" in the *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚, comp. Ouyang Xun, *SKQS*, 24.8a. Although it is presented as one entire poem, I, following Lu Qinli and Knechtges, believe that it consists of fragments from two different pieces: the first section speaks about being at the twilight of life, the second section of the extravagance of constructing palaces. See Lu Qinli, *Xian Qin Han Wei Jin Nanbeichao shi* 先秦漢魏晉南北朝詩 (rpt., Taibei: Muduo, 1988) [hereafter Lu Qinli], 1:469–70; and Knechtges, "The Problem with Anthologies," pp. 11–12, 14–15.

[20] *Wenxuan*, 21.13b–14b. Lu Qinli collected in his anthology many untitled fragments preserved in the encyclopedias. Since the contents of these fragments are also admonitory in nature, Lu concludes that they are also from the "Baiyi shi." Lu Qinli 1:469–73.

Sun Sheng 孫盛 (302–373) observed in his now-lost *Jin yangqiu* 晉陽秋 (Annals of Jin): "Ying Qu composed one hundred and thirty pentasyllabic poems that speak about contemporary affairs and offer considerable benefit and improvement. They have been circulated widely in the world."[21] According to these three commentaries, the collection contained approximately a hundred poems—with the number increasing slightly over time—hence the title. More importantly, all three theories suggested that the aim of the poems was to comment on or criticize contemporary affairs—much as did the *Shijing* poems.

Later in the Six Dynasties, the catalog *Jinshu qizhi* 今書七志 (Seven-part treatise on recent books) offered another interpretation of "Baiyi": since the collection—now referred to as "new poetry" or "new-style poetry" (*xinshi* 新詩)—"uses a hundred words for each poem, some call it 'Baiyi shi.'" Here, the title is interpreted to reflect the length—rather than the number—of poems in the collection. Li Shan dismissed this along with the earlier interpretations. Instead, he cited a prose preface—purported to have been written by Ying Qu—to support a fourth theory on the meaning of "Baiyi." This fragmented preface, which Xu Gongchi believed to have been interpolated by a later compiler of Ying's poetry, showed that the poems were Ying Qu's way of subtly admonishing his superior Cao Shuang.[22] In this preface, Ying states: "Today, Sir, you been praised as the venerable Duke of Zhou. Yet [even as the wisest of men], how would you know that in a hundred deliberations there could be one that might go wrong?"[23] Li Shan suggested that "Baiyi" referred to the "one thing in a hundred" that could go wrong in governing the state; thus the poems were written to admonish corrupt officials such as Cao Shuang. On the basis of the events alluded to in the poems,

[21] All cited in *Wenxuan*, 21.13b–14a. Zhang Fangxian holds that Ying Qu's "Baiyi shi" contained 101 poems, Li Chong believes it had 110 poems, and Sun Sheng says it had 130 poems. Although Li Shan attributes the *Chuguo xianxian zhuan* to Zhang Fangxian 張方賢, the work was more likely compiled by Zhang Fu 張輔 (d. 305), Zhang Heng's (78–139) descendant and a native of Nanyang. See *Chuguo xianxian zhuan jiaozhu* 楚國先賢傳校注, ed. Shu Fen 舒焚 (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 1986), p. 6.

[22] The preface is no longer extant; only a partial quotation remains in Li Shan's commentary to the *Wenxuan*. Xu Gongchi 徐公持 dates this preface to some time between Ying Qu's and Li Shan's time. See his *Wei Jin wenxue shi* 魏晉文學史 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1999), p. 162.

[23] *Wenzhang xulu*, cited in *Wei zhi, Sanguo zhi*, 21.8b–9a. Here, Ying Qu was rudely calling to mind the proverb "The intelligent one, in thinking a thousand thoughts, would surely have one neglect" 智者千慮必有一失. *Shiji* 92.9b, *SKQS*; *Han shu*, *SKQS*, 34.9b.

Xu Gongchi contends that Ying Qu wrote them between the ages of forty-five and sixty *sui*.[24]

An initial comparison of Ying Qu's only reliable extant poem with Tao Qian's poetry reveals superficial similarities and profound differences. In the "Baiyi shi" preserved in the *Wenxuan*, Ying Qu describes receiving a visitor at home during his retirement:

| | |
|---|---|
| 下流不可處 | One cannot dwell downstream,[25] |
| 君子慎厥初 | A gentleman must be cautious of this type of beginning. |
| 名高不宿著 | One cannot long maintain high rank, |
| 易用受侵誣 | [For] one could be easily and falsely accused. |
| 前者隳官去 | Previously, I departed from the official post, |
| 有人適我閭 | And a visitor approached my gate. |
| 田家無所有 | [This] farmer did not have much, |
| 酌醴焚枯魚 | Ladling the lees and charring the bony fish. |
| 問我何功德 | [The guest] asked me, "What virtues and achievements have you, |
| 三入承明廬 | That thrice you have been summoned to the Chengming Lodge [to serve],[26] |

[24] Since one of the "Baiyi shi" critiqued the building of extravagant palaces in Luoyang—a project that began in the third year of Qinglong (235 A.D.) and attracted numerous criticisms from officials—Xu Gongchi believed that it was probably written around this time. Other poems, such as the poem on seeing his own old, ugly face ("Shaozhuang mianmu ze" 少壯面目澤, in Lu Qinli, 1:469), or one reflecting on the dusk of his life ("Nian ming zai sang yu," in Lu Qinli, 1:470), were dated by Xu to late in Ying Qu's life. See Xu Gongchi, *Wei Jin wenxue shi*, pp. 162–64. Lu Kanru believes that the entire collection of "Baiyi shi" was written a year before the fall of Cao Shuang, in 248 A.D., when Ying Qu was fifty-nine *sui*; Lu Kanru, 2:550–52. I believe that the "Baishi" poems were most likely written over a span of time.

[25] "[Zigong] said, '[Zhou] was not as wicked as all that. That is why the gentleman hates to dwell downstream, for it is there that all that is sordid in the Empire finds its way'"; *Lunyu zhengyi* 論語正義, *SBBY* edition (Taibei: Taiwan Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 22.6b; trans. D. C. Lau, *Confucius: The Analects* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1987), p. 154.

[26] The Chengming Lodge was a residence built next to the Chengming Hall (Chengming dian 承明殿) of the Imperial Palace in the Western Han capital Chang'an to provide work space and overnight lodging for scholars and officials. In the Wei, Cao Pi held court at the Jianshi Hall (Jianshi dian 建始殿) in Luoyang; the gate leading to this palace was called Chengming Gate, and officials coming to court would rest in the hall before going on to see the Emperor. *Chengming lu* has since come to be associated with either serving at court or becoming an official. See Liu Xujie 劉敘杰, ed., *Zhongguo gudai jianzhu shi: Yuanshi shehui, Xia, Shang, Zhou, Qin, Han jianzhu* 中國古代建築史：原始社會，夏商周秦漢建築 (Beijing: Zhongguo jianzhu gongye chubanshe, 2003), 1:402–3.

所以占此土 And solely on the strength of this able to [build on] this land,[27]
是謂仁智居 This so-called abode of the Virtuous and the Enlightened?
文章不經國 Your writings do not [help to] govern a state,
筐篋無尺書 And your book container is empty of any foot-long [bamboo-slip] books.
用等稱才學 On what basis do you claim to have talent and knowledge,
往往見歎譽 That you are continually exalted and praised?"
避席跪自陳 Edging off the mat, I kneel and profess,
賤子實空虛 "This lowly one is truly devoid of virtue."
宋人遇周客 Like the foolish man of Song encountering a visitor from Zhou,[28]
慚媿靡所如 I am mortified, with no place to hide.[29]

The poem opens with an axiom that explains Ying Qu's choice to retire from court: being in high position makes one the target of slander (lines 1–4). It then describes the poet's joy on receiving a visitor, as he offers—in the words of the poet Cai Yong 蔡邕[30]—to share his meager country fare (lines 7–8). In the second section (lines 9–20) the visitor initiates a long tirade, asking the poet rudely on what merits he has thrice served at court and now retired on this land as a respectable gentleman. The poem then concludes with the poet humbly acknowledging his own inadequacies.

The first section of the poem sounds like a more archaic version of the first of Tao Qian's "Gui yuantian ju" and also of his "Guiqulaixi

[27] *Zhantu* 占土, literally "to divine this land," involves an ellipsis—he divined the land to see if it was appropriate to build a house on.

[28] Li Shan cited the following anecdote from the now-lost *Hanzi* 闞子: a foolish man of Song found a rock from Yan by the side of the Wu Terrace. Mistaking it for a precious stone, he carefully stored it away. When a merchant from Zhou asked to see it, the man of Song first spent seven days abstaining from meat, and then donned a cap and robe before opening the ten-layered leather case where the rock lay wrapped in ten layers of fabric. The Zhou merchant bent over laughing, exclaiming that this was but a rock from Yan, no more precious than a roof tile. But the foolish man thought the merchant was trying to deceive him and stowed the rock away in an even safer place. *Wenxuan*, 21.14b; also cited in *Yiwen leiju*, 6.18a, and *Taiping yulan*, *SKQS*, 51.8a.

[29] *Wenxuan*, 21.13b–14b; Lu Qinli, 1:469.

[30] "Yu Yuangong shu" 與袁公書, fragments of a letter now collected in *waiji* 外集, in *Cai Zhonglang ji* 蔡中郎集, *Sibu beiyao* edition (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1927–36): 2.11a.

ci."[31] It also highlights some major differences between the two poets. In his poems, Tao Qian speaks about his decision to leave office and describes his retired life in the country; likewise, Ying Qu tells us why he left court. Although Tao Qian's reason for retirement is purely personal (it goes against his nature), Ying Qu's choice is moral. The greater part of Tao Qian's two poems speak about the joys of everyday life in retirement; Ying Qu's poem focuses on his conversation with a visitor, admitting that Ying does not deserve praise for his retirement.[32] The tone of Tao Qian's "Gui yuantian ju" is personal; the voice in Ying Qu's poem sounds impersonal and official. The only autobiographical information in Ying Qu's poem is the mention that he stayed three times at the Chengming Lodge, a hall where court officials resided while on duty in Luoyang. Otherwise, as David Knechtges observes, this poem follows the formula in a subgenre of *fu* known as the "hypothetical discourse" (*she lun* 設論), where an official, usually while out of service or holding an obscure position at court, receives a visitor. The guest would fault the official for his success, against whose criticism the host must defend himself.[33]

Most of Ying Qu's other extant poetry fragments from the "Baiyi shi" highlight the negative aspects of a society, as characterized by extravagant and wasteful officials domineering over impoverished yet greedy lower classes. To my knowledge, Ying Qu is the first identifiable *shi* poet to write extensively about the lives of the common people, mock the pretensions of the wealthy and the powerful, and critique social ills. His poems express an ironic humor and discontent—sometimes directly through pointed critiques, and at other times obliquely, through a sardonic wit. In critiquing those in power, Ying Qu portrays a greedy general of a territorial administration, who appears so capable of riding swift horses and handling the bow and arrow but becomes utterly useless when the enemy is close at hand.[34] Lower in stature still

[31] Lu Qinli, 2:991; 987–88.

[32] Ying Qu may be mocking those of his contemporaries who would deliberately leave office to become famous recluses, only to serve again when those in power would seek them out.

[33] Knechtges, "The Problem with Anthologies," p. 27. For examples of *shelun fu*, see *Wenxuan*, 45.2a–12a. For a detailed discussion of *shelun fu*, see Dominik Declercq, *Writing Against the State: Political Rhetorics in Third and Fourth Century China* (Brill: Leiden, 1998).

[34] This poem is listed simply as by Ying Qu in *Taiping yulan*, 353.6a. Lu Qinli holds that the untitled poems are also a part of the "Baiyi shi." See Lu Qinli, 1:473.

is the corrupt grand provisioner (*taiguan* 太官), who puts everything from the imperial kitchen up for sale: "How would it be merely the salted meat and grain, / Even down to vinegar, meat sauce, salt and fermented bean paste he sells" 豈徒脯與糗, 醯醢及鹽豉.[35] As Ying Qu uncovers the inadequacy of those in power, he also comically portrays those who try to flatter their superiors in any way possible:

| | |
|---|---|
| 漢末桓帝時 | In the reign of Emperor Huan, at the end of Han, |
| 郎有馬子侯 | There was a gentleman, a Duke Ma.[36] |
| 自謂識音律 | He considered himself well versed in music, |
| 請客鳴笙竽 | And invited a retainer to play the pipes. |
| 為作陌上桑 | [The guest] played "Mulberry by the Path," |
| 乃言鳳將雛 | But [the duke] claimed that it was "Phoenix and her Chicks." |
| 左右偽稱善 | [Ma's] attendants feigned their praises [of him], |
| 亦復自搖頭 | [The duke], for his part, also wagged his head.[37] |

The Honorable Ma's pompous sense of self and his entire entourage's flattery culminate in a comic moment at the end of the poem when the duke nods his head in pride, on which the poet makes no further comment.

The "Baiyi shi" also offers vignettes from the daily lives of the commoners, especially those from the countryside. One fragment of a poem depicts the routine of an impoverished rural resident, as well as his worries:

| | |
|---|---|
| 平生居□郭 | All his life he dwelled in the outskirts of . . . . |
| 寧丁憂貧賤 | The solitary man worries about his poverty and humble position. |

[35] Lu Qinli, 1:471. On food and the terms used for food in early China, see David Knechtges, "A Literary Feast: Food in Early Chinese Literature," *JAOS* 117.2 (1986), reprinted in his *Court Culture and Literature in Early China* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002), pp. 49–63.

[36] *Zi* and *hou* are two of the five ranks of nobility in the Han: *gong* 公 (duke), *bo* 伯 (earl), *hou* (marquis), *zi* (count), *nan* 男 (baron). *Wangzhi* 王制, *Liji zhushu* 禮記注疏, *SKQS*, 11.1a. Here Ying Qu is using *zi* and *hou* in the general sense of an aristocrat, "a duke or a baron Ma." The character *lang* refers to a man, but it is also possible that here it is an abbreviated form of *shilang* 侍郎, an attendant gentleman, a post Ying Qu once held.

[37] *Taiping yulan*, 490.14a; Lu Qinli, 1:471. My translation is based in part on the translation in Knechtges, "The Problem with Anthologies," p. 11.

| | |
|---|---|
| 出門見富貴 | Going out the gate, he catches sight of the wealthy and the noble, |
| □□□□□ | . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . |
| 竈下發牛矢 | Under the stove burns cow manure; |
| 甑中裝豆飯 | Inside the pot store beans and grain.[38] |

This man's humble existence is glimpsed through a scene from his modest kitchen; Ying Qu contrasts this man's life with the lives of the powerful and wealthy, whom the man sees as he steps outside the house. This juxtaposition reverses the usual polarity between courtier (*chao* 朝) and rustic (*ye* 野) in that the rustic, normally the one who is "outside" the center of power, is at the center of his world, and from this perspective everything appears to be on the "outside."[39]

"Those who have" are often wasteful of resources that could be used to assist the needy, alleviating some of society's problems. Ying Qu criticizes such excess in the following lines on a funeral in the countryside: "Those [outsiders] looking on from the side of the funeral have not filled their bellies, / As meat and wine lie everywhere in disarray." 喪側食不飽, 酒肉紛狼籍.[40] Again, in a fragment from another poem, he writes, "Wine flowed like rivers, / And meat piled up like mountains" 有酒流如川, 有肉積如岑.[41] The couplet foreshadows Du Fu's famous lines, "Around vermilion Gates, the reek of meat and wine / On the roads outside lie the bones of the frozen dead" 朱門酒肉臭, 路有凍死骨.[42] The "Baiyi shi" also includes Ying Qu's musings on policies that might benefit the commoner: in one of his most humorous poems, Ying argues against the ban against fishing in the Luo River, which, he contends, will cause the fish to gobble each other up and leave none for the people.[43] The life of the poor was often reflected in earlier poetic writings, such as the *Shijing* or *yuefu* poems—anonymous songs collected from ordinary people. However, "Baiyi shi" is

[38] *Beitang shuchao*, 144.2a; Lu Qinli, 1:471.

[39] I am indebted to Alice Cheang for this insight, and this portion of the reading of the poem.

[40] Lu Qinli, 1:470.

[41] Lu Qinli, 1:472.

[42] Qiu Zhao'ao 仇兆鰲, ed., *Dushi xiangzhu* 杜詩詳註, *SKQS*, 4.14a; translated in Stephen Owen, *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 196.

[43] Lu Qinli, 1:472.

the first admonitory *shi* collection written by an identifiable poet, an upper-class literatus who imagines the hardship of the commoners and critiques the pretentious upper class for its obliviousness to the needs of the masses. Thus Zhong Rong pronounced Ying Qu's work as "sincere and earnest in criticizing contemporary affairs; their elegant intentions are profound and far-reaching, attaining the [*Shijing*] poet's objective of 'radical satirizing.'"[44]

The closest thematic and linguistic links between Ying Qu's and Tao Qian's poetry can be found in the poetry fragments that I discuss below. Both poets write about their love of wine: Ying Qu has a poem where his headpiece falls off while he is in a drunken stupor, whereupon he is startled to discover his ugly face in the mirror—much in the same way that Tao Qian reflects on his own drunkenness.[45] Both men are concerned with their poverty. In two untitled poetry fragments Ying Qu writes about a poor man who voices concerns about his (presumably Ying Qu's) livelihood as he lies sleepless in bed.[46] Finally, both poets are concerned with self-description: Ying Qu paints physical self-portraits in his writings, whereas Tao Qian expresses his emotions in the most lyrical of his poems.[47] A fragment from the "Baiyi shi" provides a rare glimpse into a personal moment, when Ying Qu speaks movingly about having reached the end of his life and being unable to control his fate. Then the poem shifts to the conventional *carpe diem* theme, as the poet urges himself to drink up the wine.[48]

Although a few of Ying Qu's poems bear some similarities to Tao Qian's—whether in topic or in style—they comprise only seven poems of Ying Qu's extant corpus of thirty-six pieces. Xu Gongchi noted that the corpus can be divided into two types of topics: one was more

[44] *Shipin zhu*, p. 144.

[45] Lu Qinli, 1:470. See also n. 24, above.

[46] Both are found in Lu Qinli: 1:472. The latter verse was attributed to Ying Qu's son Ying Yuan in the *Chuxue ji* and the Ming anthologist Feng Weinan 馮惟訥 followed suit in his *Shi ji* 詩紀. But Lu Qinli attributes it to Ying Qu. This poem captures some of the concern with poverty that Ying Qu addresses extensively in his prose. See Ying Qu's poems in (Tang) Xue Jian 徐堅 et al., eds., *Chuxue ji* 初學記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 2:447; (Ming) Feng Weina, *Gushi ji* 古詩紀, SKQS, 27.5a; Lu Qinli, 2:876, 980, 992, 994–95, 996–97. For Tao Qian, see his seven "Yong pinshi shi" 詠貧士詩, in Lu Qinli, 2:1008–9.

[47] Lu Qinli, 1:470. More poignantly, Ying Qu describes his own weather-beaten face in the following fragment: "The cold mountain wind cut through my bones, / And my entire face is bitten up by the frost" 山風寒折骨, 目面盡生瘡; Lu Qinli, 1:472.

[48] Lu Qinli, 1:469.

outwardly focused, presenting issues in public affairs and critiquing them; the other set of poems tended to be inwardly focused, concentrating on Ying Qu and the people and activities in his daily life.[49] Xu Gongchi argued that the tone of the public poems, written while Ying Qu was middle-aged, was generally direct, pointed, and even sardonic. The more introspective poems showed an older, relaxed poet, who, though coming to terms with his own aging, still retained the humor to mock himself, be it through the guest who interrogates him about his virtues, through seeing his own wrinkled, unsightly face in the mirror. Xu argued that the latter poems were written toward the end of Ying Qu's life.[50]

What caught the eye of most commentators were the outwardly focused poems; the "Baiyi shi" came to be thought of as poetry of social critique. Many critics cited in Li Shan's commentary emphasized the admonitory nature of Ying Qu's verse. Given that "Baiyi shi" would later become synonymous with social criticism, their connection to Tao Qian's more private lyrics naturally also became tenuous and hence baffling to later readers. Literary notes from the Song dynasty on reflected the later reviewers' lack of knowledge of Ying Qu's more personal lyrics. The critic Ye Mengde was the first to grumble in his *Shilin shihua* 石林詩話 (Poetry talk from the stone forest) about Zhong Rong's association of Tao Qian with Ying Qu. Ye stated that, because many Jian'an and Wei poets tended to specialize in one particular literary genre (such as banquet poems or poems on military campaigns), Zhong Rong felt compelled to place Tao Qian, a pastoral poet, in Ying Qu's lineage, whom Ye Mengde saw as a satirical poet. Ye concluded, "This was perhaps due to [Zhong] Rong's ignorance."[51] Although Wang Shizhen of the Qing admired Zhong Rong, he nonetheless expressed reservations about some of Zhong Rong's judgments, specifically, placing Tao Qian in the middle rank (*zhongpin* 中品) and associating Tao with Ying Qu.[52] Other well-respected Qing critics

[49] Examples of his poems of critique include "Shi guang zhi ning yang" 室廣致凝陽, "Xiwei ke bu shen" 細微可不慎, "Bai jun li zhongzheng" 百郡立中正, and "Jingshi he binfen" 京師何繽紛, Lu Qinli, 1:469, 470, 471, 473; the more personal poems include "Xialiu buke chu," "Nian ming zai sang yu," and "Shao zhuang mian mu ze," discussed earlier, as well as "Gu you xingdao ren" 古有行道人, in Lu Qinli, 1:469–70.

[50] Xu Gongchi, *Wei Jin wenxue shi*, pp. 162–64.

[51] Ye Mengde, *Shilin shihua*, 42b–43a.

[52] Wang Shizhen, *Yuyang shihua*, *xia*.4a.

went further in their criticism of Zhong Rong. Shen Deqian 沈德潛 (1673–1769) commented: "What kind of argument is this—that Zhong Rong believed [Tao Qian's poetic style] originated in Ying Qu's?" Li Tiaoyuan 李調元 (1734–1803) went a step further in declaring, "This comment in the *Shipin* is truly child's talk!"[53] Criticisms of Zhong Rong grew increasingly acerbic as Tao Qian's status as a poet rose. A few commentators defended Zhong Rong's assertion, but their arguments sometimes sounded forced: Xu Xueyi of the Ming dynasty, for example, observed that Tao Qian, like Ying Qu, favored words rhyming with *yu* 虞. He additionally noted that Tao Qian frequently used the "question and answer" mode in his poems, lending them a quality of "living presentness"[54]—a quality that one finds in Ying's "Poem of the Three Old Men" as well. He Liangjun 何良俊 (1506–1573) remarked, "It is obvious indeed that [Tao] Jingjie's sincerity and straightforwardness came directly out of Ying Qu's 'Baiyi'!"[55]

Yet, whether they supported or opposed Zhong Rong's observation, these commentators appear to have based their arguments on having read only one or two poems from Ying Qu's "Baiyi shi." Ye Mengde's strong opinion was based on his comparison of the one "Baiyi shi" preserved in the *Wenxuan* with all of Tao Qian's works. Additionally, all the objections to Zhong Rong's comment seemed to have come after the Song dynasty—some eight to nine hundred years after Ying Qu's time, especially as Song literati lost interest in Ying Qu's works and began to hail Tao Qian as the model poet. Most of Ying's extant poetry consists of fragments in his "Baiyi shi"; but since the outwardly focused poems in the collection had specific aims and were written during a narrow time frame,[56] they should not be taken to reflect the entire range of Ying Qu's poetic style. To explore the full scope of Ying Qu's literary style, I have looked into Ying Qu's previously neglected prose writings.

[53] Shen Deqian, *Gushi yuan* 古詩源; Li Tiaoyuan, *Yucun shihua* 雨村詩話; both cited in Ruan Tingyu, *Tao Yuanming shilun ji you guan ziliao fen ji*, 1:7.

[54] Kang-I Sun Chang, *Six Dynasties Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 15–16.

[55] Xu Xueyi, *Shiyuan bianti*; He Liangjun, *Siyou zhai congshuo* 四友齋叢說; cited in Ruan Tingyu, *Tao Yuanming shilun ji you guan ziliao fen ji*, 1:7, 8, respectively.

[56] Xu Gonchi, pp. 162–64; Lu Kanru, 2:550–52. See also n. 24, above.

## Ying Qu's Letters Preserved in the *Wenxuan*

Ying Qu's letters are well preserved. In contrast to his poetry, many remain intact, preserved in canonical anthologies and encyclopedias from the Tang and Song dynasties—a fact that attests to the high esteem his epistles must have enjoyed at the time. The letters that are most complete can be found in the *Wenxuan*—of the twenty-four letters anthologized in the "Epistles" (*shu* 書) section of the *Wenxuan*, four are by Ying Qu.[57] Many other letters—either in full or in part—can be found in such Tang- and Song-dynasty imperial encyclopedias as *Chuxue ji*, *Yiwen leiju*, and *Taiping yulan*.[58]

Ying Qu's letters present a much wider range of style, tone, content, and concerns than found in his "Baiyi shi." Consisting of epistles to his superiors (*jian* 牋) and to relatives, friends, and colleagues (*shu* 書), Ying Qu's correspondence covers an extensive range of topics, including letters of recommendation, memos instructing colleagues on how to govern, social "thank you" notes, letters making urgent appeals to colleagues in court, and personal letters to close friends and relatives. The tone and writing style vary in these letters, depending on the nature of Ying's relationship with the recipients: the manner could be formal, as in the recommendation letters; relaxed and leisurely, as in social or personal correspondence; urgent and dramatic in cases where he is soliciting help; or genuine and heartfelt, as in private letters to his closest friends. Like the "Baiyi shi," the epistles can be divided roughly along the lines of being either "outwardly focused" on public issues or "inwardly focused" on personal experiences, with examples of the latter being much more numerous in his correspondence than in his extant poetry. Notably, the private letters to close friends and relatives share numerous characteristics with Tao Qian's best-known poetry. The four epistles included in the *Wenxuan* are for the most part more moderate in tone and emotion than those preserved in the encyclo-

[57] *Wenxuan*, 42.13a–17b.

[58] Ying Qu's extant prose writings are now collected in *Quan Sanguo wen*, 30.1a–7b, in *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen* 全上古三代秦漢三國六朝文, ed. Yan Kejun 嚴可均 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1999) [hereafter Yan Kejun], 2:1218–21.

pedias; three of these letters can be read as literary precedents to Tao Qian's writings.

A poignant letter, "Yu congdi Junmiao Junzhou shu" 與從弟君苗君胄書 (Letter to my cousins Junmiao and Junzhou), illustrates Ying Qu's strong stylistic resemblance to Tao Qian's pastoral poetry. Writing the letter toward the end of his life, Ying Qu recalls a recent excursion to Mang Mountain with his younger cousins, describes his quiet life back in the city and his desire to retire, and then goes on to warn his relatives of the perils of a life in service, while implicitly expressing his own disappointment at not having been able to serve. In conclusion he projects into the future, when he would be able to retire, and to "follow the old man, raising chickens and planting corn, / studying the classics, / and to establish a name for himself [Ying Qu]."[59]

The descriptive language and the tone in this letter are reminiscent of some of Tao Qian's best-known works.[60] In the opening section cited below, Ying Qu recalls their recent travels together:

A short while back we traveled north together, I was infinitely exhilarated! We ascended the Mang Mountain and crossed the Yellow River—so expansive that it was as if our eyes had been opened [for the first time]. The Wind Deity swept the road, and the Master of Rain drizzled the paths. Pulling in the reins, we rode leisurely on this clean and uncluttered path, gazing at the surrounding mountainous wilderness. On arrival, we poured the spring wine. One step after another, we strolled beneath the thatched huts; the cool [of the thatched huts] surpasses that of grand mansions. Tiny [though] the inch-length (*cun* 寸) [scrap] of dried meat may be, their flavors far surpass an entire feast table. We sailed freely on the pond, and recited poetry beneath the lush willows. We gathered fragrant spring flowers to enhance our girdle adornments, and broke off branches from the *ruo* [*Pollia japonica*] tree to shade ourselves from the sun. With corded arrow, we downed birds flying high in the clouds, and our bait lured forth fish from the pool's

[59] *Wenxuan,* 42.15b–17a; also in *Quan Sanguo wen*, 30.2a–3a, in Yan Kejun, 2:1218–19. Lu Kanru argues that this piece was written late in Ying Qu's life, at the age of sixty-one *sui*, Lu Kanru, 1:559. The quotation is from Zizhang's words in the *Analects*; "the old man with a staff" refers to the recluse from whom Zilu sought help to look for Confucius. During his search, Zilu encountered an old man weeding his field. The man invited Zilu home for a meal of fresh poultry and millet from the field. His existence is an allusion to that of the recluse's. *Lunyu zhengyi*, 21.7b.

[60] For instance, Lu Qinli, 2:974–75; 983; 985–88; 991–92; 1010.

deeps; even the legendary archer Pu Ju would applaud our excellence, and
the famed fisherman Pian Xuan would exclaim how marvelous we were.
Such were the pleasures of that day![61]

Writing about an excursion to the north, Ying Qu celebrates the simple pleasures of wandering in the wilderness, strolling by ponds, and enjoying an effortless meal, in a plain style much like Tao Qian's.[62] He describes the landscape only by naming Mang Mountain and the Yellow River so as to call to mind their majestic sights: "We ascended Mang Mountain and crossed the Yellow River." This is a significant departure from the ornate descriptions of nature found in Han-dynasty *fu* or later in the works of the near-contemporaries of Ying Qu and Tao Qian.[63] Like Tao Qian, Ying Qu draws on words that evoke the openness and purity of nature (such as *kuang* 曠 or *qing* 清); as in Tao Qian, these scenes are imbued with the sensory feel of the weather, as the breeze from the Wind Deity (*Fengbo* 風伯), or the shower from the Master of Rain (*Yushi* 雨師). Furthermore, here as well as in his other works, Ying Qu uses distinctive imagery that later came to be associated with Tao Qian—such metaphors as "the fish in deep waters" (*shenyuan zhiyu* 深淵之魚)[64] and "birds in high clouds" (*gaoyun zhiniao* 高雲之鳥), or the gesture of pouring the spring wine (*zhuobi chunjiu* 酌彼春酒).[65] The happiness Ying experiences with

[61] *Wenxuan,* 42.15b–17a.

[62] The popular notion of Tao Qian's poetry as being simple and straightforward, however, takes a deliberately limited view of the poet's work and is primarily a construct of the Song dynasty. See Xiaofei Tian, *Tao Yuanming and Manuscript Culture: The Record of a Dusty Table* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), pp. 23–55.

[63] Compare Lu Ji's poetry in Lu Qinli, 2:674–93; the works of Zuo Si in Lu Qinli, 2:731–36; and of Zhang Zai and Zhang Xie, in Lu Qinli, 2:739–48.

[64] The image of the fish from the remote depths existed as early as the Zhou in texts such as the *Liezu*, *Hanfeizi*, and the *Shiji*. The *Hanfeizi* records that "it is unlucky to know the fish in the remote depths" 知淵中之魚者不祥; the Liezi concurs: "It is inauspicious for one to catch sight of fish in the remote depths, / Calamity will befall those whose wisdom can anticipate what is hidden" 察見淵魚者不祥, 智料隱匿者有殃. In Ying Qu's poetry, however, the image of the "fish from the remote depths" has changed to refer to the reclusive one, or to animals in their natural surroundings. See, variously, *Liezi jishi* 列子集釋, ed. Yang Bojun 楊伯峻 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), 8.248; *Hanfeizi shiping* 韓非子釋評, ed. Zhu Shouliang 朱守亮 (Taibei: Wunan, 1992), 2:771.

[65] Lu Qinli, 2:968, 974, 991, 1000, 1008, 1013. For a study of the imagery in the poetry of Tao Qian, see Pauline Yu, *The Reading of Imageries in the Chinese Poetic Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 139–48. Ying's reputation for drinking was well known even in the Tang, when the poet Zhang Nanshi 張南史 wrote that he longed for the life of a wood-cutter, where he could "recite poetry along with Jia Yi, / [And] pour

his cousins similarly reminds us of Tao Qian's joy on receiving visiting friends.[66]

The second section shifts back to the capital Luoyang, where Ying Qu returned after the outing. Here, he describes his reclusive life back in the city and warns Miao and Zhou of the perils and hardships of a life of service. Not only is the contrast between service and reclusion reminiscent of Tao Qian's habitual concerns; the images Ying Qi uses to describe the hermit's life also echo Tao Qian's images. For instance, Ying Qu notes, upon returning to the crowded city, that he "dwells in solitude; building [his] residence near the Luo River, feeling hemmed in by the noise and dust of the world." Like Tao Qian, who describes the world of service as a "dusty net" (*chenwang* 塵網), Ying Qu feels trapped by his world. Also like Tao Qian, who claims that "when the heart is distant, the place will naturally become remote" 心遠地自偏,[67] Ying Qu imagines a pure world on the Wen River, where he can transcend this dusty and clamorous world.[68]

The tone in Ying Qu's letter to his cousins is intimate and confiding. Whereas Tao Qian claims that the reason for his retirement is that, by nature, he prefers a leisurely life, Ying Qu expresses his disappointments and his desire to retire. He voices sadness—and the frustrated feeling of ambition unachieved—when he speaks of his life in service. He observes that there are those who "even when they have become white-haired would still fail to meet someone who can appreciate them; they would merely be scurrying about in hunger and in cold." Disillusioned, Ying Qu looks forward to retirement, where he can "clear up the fields, build houses," and enjoy his friends' visits.

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wine to accompany Ying Qu" 詠詩陪賈誼, 酌酒伴應璩. *Yuding Quan Tang shi*, 296.4b; also preserved in *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華, *SKQS*, 256.4b, and (Ming) *Shicang lidai shixuan* 石倉歷代詩選, *SKQS*, 63.9b. In another fragment found in the *Beitang shuchao* 北堂書鈔, Ying Qu writes "Ladling the spring wine. / I was able to serve the needs of my aging parents above, / And below provide warmth and nourishment for my wife and children" 酌彼春酒, 上得供養親老, 下得溫飽妻子; Lu Qinli, 1:473.

[66] *Lunyu zhengyi*, 1.2a. This is a sentiment frequently echoed in Tao Qian's poetry; see "Chou Ding Chaisang" 酬丁柴桑 and "Da Pang canjun" 答龐參軍, in Lu Qinli, 2:972–73. On Tao Qian's use of *Lunyu*, see Donald Holzman, "A Dialogue with the Ancients: Tao Qian's Interrogation of Confucius," in *Culture and Power in the Reconstitution of the Chinese Realm, 200–600*, ed. Scott Pearce, Audrey Spiro, and Patricia Ebrey (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), pp. 75–98.

[67] Lu Qinli, 2:991.

[68] Lu Qinli, 2:998.

Ying Qu's minimalist approach to description and delight in nature are also apparent in another of his letters in the *Wenxuan*, "Yu Man Gongyan shu" 與滿公琰書 (A letter to Man Gongyan). In it, Ying Qu expresses his gratitude to Man Bing, son of the prominent court official Man Chong 滿寵, for visiting him at home; he then conveys regret for not being able to accept Man's invitation for a future excursion to Zhangqu 漳渠, a site that he proceeds to describe:

> As for Zhangqu, there is a Laozi Temple to its west, and a panoramic view of the open wilds to its north. Towering trees obstruct the morning clouds, patterned birds cover the emerald waters; the sandy shore is level and broad, and a clear breeze stirs about [gently]—this is [akin to] the pleasure of the Jing Terrace,[69] how can one not linger on and forget to return!?

The vivid description—with the surrounding landmarks, trees, rivers, and sandy shores all traced out in meticulous detail—belies the fact that it is a landscape envisioned by Ying Qu. The parallels drawn between towering trees blocking the clouds above and colorful birds covering the green waters below indicate a tendency toward a language more crafted than Tao Qian's. Ying Qu commends Man Bing for choosing such a breathtaking site, likening it to the famous Jing Terrace in Chu. Ironically, in the Jing Terrace allusion, the king of Chu declined to join the feast at the terrace for fear that he would be too captivated by the spectacular scenery to return home. In this letter, Ying Qu praises the site of Man's intended outing and then, like the King of Chu—and for the same reason—he gently declines the invitation so that he may tend to his duties.

Ying Qu frequently writes about retirement from service, often referring to himself as a recluse, particularly in those of his letters anthologized in the *Wenxuan*. In the letter to Man Bing he identifies himself as a recluse who has been lured out of his original element by Man Bing; here he uses the metaphors of a fish swimming out from the deeps, and of a fragrant beauty coming out of a secluded lane.[70] Elsewhere, as in "Yu Shilang Cao Changsi shu" 與侍郎曹長思書 (Letter to Atten-

[69] *Wenxuan*, 42.13b.; Yan Kejun, 2:1218. Jing Terrace was one of the largest terraces in the state of Chu. The Wenxuan commentary cites the magistrate's name as Zipei 子佩 rather than Zixia. See *Wenxuan*, 42.14a; also cited in the *Taiping yulan*, 468.6a–b. Nevertheless, the relevant passage cannot be located in the extant editions of the *Huainanzi*.

[70] *Wenxuan*, 42.13b; Yan Kejun, 2:1218.

dant Cao Changsi), Ying Qu reflects on his quiet, retired life after Cao's visit and ponders over the relative merits of service versus retirement. Athough men like Wang Su 王肅 and He Ceng 和曾 can achieve eminent positions because of their ambitions, Ying Qu writes poignantly that those who are like him, without the backing of powerful clans, can only "fold their wings upon returning to the former branch, and dwell in solitude."[71] He contrasts his life in retirement with the famous recluses of old:

> I do not have the virtue of a Chen Ping, so there are no tracks of carriage wheels outside my gate. My learning is not that of a Yang Xiong, so there are no curious students in my hall. My talent is inferior to that of a Dong Zhongshu 董仲連, thus I do not harbor thoughts of lowering the curtains. My household is poorer than that of a Chen Zun, hence I cannot enjoy the pleasures of setting out wine for guests.[72]

Ying Qu has no admiring visitors of the sort who called on these retired men of earlier years. Instead, red dust covers his writing tablet and bed,[73] and he looks forward to an occasional visit by his friend, a Mr. Yuan, with whom he can have a good conversation. The writer concludes that, like all things that blossom in spring and fade away in autumn, his life is also a part of Nature's decree. Although he harbors no bitterness about his life, he wishes to use this letter as a means to "fully express his concerns." Ying Qu's ambivalence resonates throughout the letter: he has to settle for a retired life because he lacked the backing of powerful clans; and unlike the famous recluses who had numerous admiring followers, Ying Qu leads a quiet life.

[71] *Wenxuan*, 42.14a. This image of the lone bird was widely used and hence not original to Ying Qu's poetry. Ying Qu's brother Ying Yang also wrote about the lone bird, which later became a frequent symbol in Zuo Si's poetry. See Lu Qinli, 1:383, 494–501, 504, 510.

[72] *Wenxuan*, 42.14b.

[73] The dust-covered tablet as an emblem of the world of the recluse appears throughout both Ying Qu's and Tao Qian's works. In "Yu Shilang Cao Changsi shu," Ying describes his life in retirement, where "sorrowful winds arise from the humble gate, and red dust covers the bed and the writing tablet" 悲風起於閨闥, 紅塵蔽於机榻. *Wenxuan*, 42.14b; Yan Kejun, 2:1219. Here, the thick layer of red dust symbolizes the undisturbed state of his retirement and voluntary renunciation. The prototype of the dusty tablet is the dusty rice bin in the Han dynasty. The *Hou Han shu* recounts how one Fan Dan 范丹 was so poor that his cooking pot was always empty; consequently a song circulated in his neighborhood: "Dust accumulating in the pot— / That would be Fan Shiyun" 甑中生塵, 范史雲也; *Yiwen leiju* 6.21b.

## Rage against Poverty and Hardship

Through their vivid depictions of poverty in daily life, the extant letters that are not collected in the *Wenxuan* reveal Ying Qu's powerful emotions, which have strong parallels in Tao Qian's writings. Preserved in the "Poverty" (*pin* 貧) section of the *Yiwen leiju*, the three letters to friends at court—Leader of Court Gentlemen Wei 韋仲將, Dong Zhonglian, and his friends in the Imperial Secretariat (*shangshu* 尚書)—were all written around the same period, and describe comparable living conditions.[74] Unlike Tao Qian, who often writes of coming to terms with his poverty, Ying Qu cries out about his dilapidated circumstances to a hyperbolic degree and questions whether he ought to relinquish his principles and return to service. Both "Yu Wei zhongjiang shu" 與韋仲將書 (Letter to Leader of Court Gentlemen Wei) and "Yu Shangshu zhulang shu" 與尚書諸郎書 (Letter to the Gentlemen of the Imperial Secretariat) describe the torrential rains that are destroying Ying Qu's home, respectively as follows:

With a humble, impoverished hut like that of Yuan Xian's 原憲, I am met with this incessant rain from the Lord of Heaven. The roof is drenched and begins to leak, the halls and rooms are all soaked into sludge. We are depleted of firewood; the storage bin is also emptied of any old grain. The thatched hut is disintegrating, and my table and bed are wet [with rain].[75]

Yet in my house, on a humble lane, there is no solid roof above, and the chambers of four walls lack enough supplies for even ten days. The surging flow seeps up to the north hall, and the trickling water saturates our clothing. There is no firewood; not a single *dan* 石 of grain remains in the empty storage vessel. My wife tells me everything is depleted; none of my servants can get up [because they are hungry].[76]

[74] *Yiwen leiju,* 35.32a–33a; also *Quan Sanguo wen,* 30.4a–5a, in Yan Kejun, 2:1219–20.

[75] "Yu Wei zhongjiang shu," in *Yiwen leiju* 35.32a; Yan Kejun, 2:1219; fragments of the letter can be found in *Chuxue ji,* 2:18.447, and *Taiping yulan* 11.4b. Since the *Yiwen leiju* version is the only extant text with the entire cited text, *jianmou* 見謀 is the only variant reading. Here, I have taken *mou* as "to have contact with," hence the table and his bed have had contact with the water, that is, they were soaked.

[76] "Yu Shangshu zhulang shu," in *Chuxue ji,* 2:18.447; *Yiwen leiju,* 35.32b–33a; Yan Kejun, 2:1219–20.

In likening his hut to that of Yuan Xian, the impoverished man from *Zhuangzi*, Ying Qu exaggerates the shabbiness of his own abode. At the same time, the juxtaposition of Yuan Xian's image and life story with Ying Qu's enriches Ying Qu's life with a sense of historical precedence.[77] Likewise, in the second passage, Ying appropriates the image of a lone house in a rundown lane to contrast his home to that of Chen Ping of the Han dynasty,[78] who even in poverty had a stream of carriages carrying distinguished visitors to his door. After associating his own situation with that of earlier recluses, Ying Qu proceeds to describe a dramatic downpour ruining his house and clothes. This disaster is exacerbated by his lack of firewood and food; the cold discomfort makes him truly afraid that "he will become a fish [dying] in the shallow water in the ox's hoof-print, and eventually die in the abalone market."[79] In his letter to the Gentlemen of the Imperial Secretariat, Ying Qu juxtaposes the "continuous, leisurely, and transparent rain" enjoyed by the court gentlemen during the "cool and agreeable" autumn to the driving rain he experiences in his humble alley. Whereas seasonal rain is beneficial for the crops, it brings him only worries: the Imperial Secretaries dine on "precious food cooked with cinnamon wood fuel," but Ying Qu has neither food nor firewood. He thus highlights the contrast between the haves and the have-nots.

In "Yu Dong zhonglian shu" 與董仲連書 (Letter to Dong Zhonglian), Ying's anxiety grows acute as the price of grain suddenly rises, forcing him to go begging to his neighbors.[80] Begging for food is a rather undignified subject, and to my knowledge this is one of the very few letters that discusses the topic; yet Ying Qu shows no embarrassment. He has no food, and when he does find some food, ironically, there is no firewood for cooking. Tao Qian likewise writes frequently

[77] *Zhuangzi zhu* 莊子注, *SKQS*, 9.17b–18a.

[78] *Han shu*, 40.14b–26a.

[79] Yan Kejun, 2:1219. The fish dying in the shallow pool is a metaphor for being in dire straits. See the parable that Zhuangzi told to the Duke of Wei when asking for some millet: on his way to the duke's house, Zhuangzi saw a fish struggling in the shallow water of an ox's hoof-print. The fish asked Zhuangzi to save his life whereupon Zhuangzi told it that he will go to the King of Chu to ask him to divert waters from the Yangzi and Huai to save the fish. The fish snapped back saying that Zhuangzi was treating him as if he were already one of the dead fish sold in the market place. *Shuoyuan jizheng* 說苑集正, ed. Zuo Songchao 左松超 (manuscript edition, Taibei: Guoli Taiwan Shifan daxue guowen yanjiusuo, 1972; rpt., Guoli bianyi guan, 2001), 2:989–92.

[80] *Yiwen leiju* 35.32a–b; Yan Kejun, 2:1219.

that his rice bins are empty,[81] and even about begging for food.[82] Tao Qian is grateful, as he contends in his "Youhui erzuo" 有會而作 (Inspired by events): "I always consider as kind the heart of the one who offered me gruel, / Convinced the man was wrong to have hidden his face, / 'Ah, how could I hold back and begrudge you food,' / In vain he perished, threw himself away" 常善粥者心, 深念蒙袂非. 嗟來何足吝, 徒沒空自遺.[83]

Historical sources would appear to contradict the seemingly desperate straits that Ying Qu describes in these letters. The *Sanguo zhi* records that he served as a Palace Attendant until sixty-one *sui*, two years before his death, and retired late in life.[84] It is possible that Ying Qu could have written some of these letters of impoverishment during the reign of Cao Rui 曹叡 (226–238), Emperor Ming 魏明帝, when Ying Qu was out of office. At the same time, Ying Qu does not seem to have suffered extreme poverty. Upon leaving service, he announces his departure in a manner not unlike Tao Qian in his "Guiqulaixi ci": "From now on I shall depart!" But, in contrast to Tao Qian, who looks forward to his life at home, Ying heaves a sigh as he bids farewell to his accustomed luxury: "From now on I will be away from [this place.] How dare I again aspire to soaring cicadas on my Huiwen cap? Or tinkling jade pendants on my silk belt?!"[85] In the same letter to Dong Zhonglian that describes asking his neighbors for rice though he has no firewood to cook, Ying Qu adds: "Going out I had to endure the derision of my servants, / and coming indoors I had to bear the reproaches of my wife and children."[86] The extent of Ying Qu's actual poverty is

[81] Two examples are "You hui er zuo" 有會而作 and "Kuimao sui shieryue zhong zuo yu congdi Jingyuan shi" 癸卯歲十二月中作與從弟敬遠詩, in Lu Qinli, 2:1003, 980.

[82] "Qishi" 乞食, in Lu Qinli, 2:992–93.

[83] "You hui er zuo," in Lu Qinli, 2:1003, lines 9–12. My translation is based on James Robert Hightower, *The Poetry of T'ao Ch'ien* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 165. Begging for food as a poetic gesture acquired cultural cachet in the third and fourth centuries and came to be seen as a sign of the "unrestrained personality" (*fangda* 放達 or *kuangda* 曠達) so popular at the time. See Tian, *Tao Yuanming and Manuscript Culture*, pp. 125–27.

[84] *Wei shu, Sanguo zhi*, 21.8b–9a. In a letter to his friend Xiahou Xiaozhi 夏侯孝智, Ying describes the shock of seeing himself in the mirror after years of being in office and suddenly realizing that his hair had all turned gray. Yan Kejun, 2:1220.

[85] "Bao Pinglu zhang Bi Bowei shu" 報平陸長賁伯瑋書, in *Taiping yulan* 819.9b; Yan Kejun, 2:1221. A *huiwen* cap was a cap worn by Han palace attendants; the cicada was a common decorative motif on official caps in the Han.

[86] *Yiwen leiju* 35.32b; *Chuxue ji*, 2:18.447; *Quan Sanguo wen juan* 30, in Yan Kejun, 2:1219.

unclear, but he is still able to keep servants in times of hardship. In an unreliable fragment said to be from Ying Qu's letter to Cheng Wenxin 程文信, Ying describes the beautiful and elegant site of his retirement: it "overlooks the Lo River to the south, having strategic command of Mang Mountain to the north. Here I rely on the lofty peaks as my residence, and depend on the verdant forests for protective cover."[87] Ying's residence in retirement seems to be a formidable estate rather than a poor farmer's cottage. So how does one account for the incongruence between Ying Qu's letters to the court gentlemen and what the historical sources report, and the discrepancies even among the various letters?

These three letters show the influence of two poetic subgenres popular in the Wei period: the genre of "being distressed by torrential rain" (*choulin* 愁霖) and that of "celebrating the impoverished gentleman" (*yong pin shi* 詠貧士). During the Wei, the intolerably heavy rain was an immensely popular topic, especially as a theme for *fu*, but also in poetry. Ying Qu's brother, Ying Yang, and his contemporaries Cao Pi and Cao Zhi all have their own versions of "Choulin fu."[88] As an outgrowth of this literary exercise, the topic of "suffering from the rain" (*kuyu* 苦雨) emerged as a subgenre in poetry, on which Ruan Yu 阮瑀 (165?–212), Fu Xuan 傅玄 (217–278), and Zhang Xie 張協 (?–307) all wrote variations.[89] Already a theme in the epideictic *fu*, the "torrential rain" becomes even more dramatic in the hands of Ying Qu, who skillfully weaves the subject of the heavy rain into his poem to amplify

[87] Cited as Ying Qu's letter to Cheng Wenxin ("Yu Cheng Wenxin shu" 與程文信書) in a commentary to Xie Lingyun's "Shanju fu" 山居賦, in "Xie Lingyun zhuan" 謝靈運傳, *Song shu*, *SKQS*, 67.16b. This text is possibly the source of Li Shan's commentary to "Qi Jingling we xuan wang xingzhuang" 齊竟陵文宣王行狀, when Li quoted a fragment of the text, *Wenxuan*, 60.7a; Yan Kejun, 2:1221.

[88] Whereas Cao Pi's treatment describes the hardships of travel in the pouring rain, Cao Zhi's focuses on how the rain obliterates the sun, hinting emblematically at the intrigues of evil ministers at court. In his second "Choulin fu," Cao Zhi links the rain to his own personal sorrow, a direction that Ying Yang was to follow in his version. Tao Qian's image of the dark rain enveloping all eight directions in his "Tingyun shi" 停雲詩 derives from the following lines in Cao Pi's "Choulin fu" : "Black clouds darken all four frontiers, / The rain dense, catching and enveloping the travelers" 玄雲暗其四塞, 雨濛濛而襲子. Ying Yang also has a "Choulin fu." For Cao Zi, Cao Pi, Ying Qu, and Ying Yan Kejung's "Choulin fu," see Yan Kejun, 2:1072, 1122; *Yiwen leiju,* 2.19a–b. Tao Qian, "Tingyun shi," in Lu Qinli, 2:967.

[89] An untitled poem by Ruan Yu, also known as "Ku yu shi" 苦雨詩, in Lu Qinli, 1:381; Fu Xuan, "Jing lei ge" 驚雷歌 and "Yu shi" 雨詩, in Lu Qinli, 1:567, 571; Zhang Xie "Zashi" 雜詩, nos. 2, 3, 4, 10, in Lu Qinli 1:745–47. See also Xiaofei Tian's discussion of this subgenre in Tian, *Tao Yuanming and Manuscript Culture,* pp. 133–34.

his poverty.[90] Commenting on Ying Qu's letters, the modern Chinese literary historian Zhao Shugong notes that, as Ying Qu's letters tend toward exaggeration, they may not be realistic representations of his situation.[91]

## Circulating the Idioms of the Impoverished Gentleman

When Ying Qu embellished stories of his poverty, using references from earlier recluses, he was writing himself into the role of the impoverished gentleman. As he identified himself with earlier hermits, he appropriated their language and interests to describe his own situation. This process is clearly illustrated by the first poem from the "Baiyi shi." There, Ying Qu's description of everyday life in retirement—"This farm-folk does not have much to offer him, ladling the lees and cooking the dried fish"—is borrowed from Cai Yong's "Yu Yuangong shu" 與袁公書 (A letter to Master Yuan). In that letter, Cai Yong had written that, although he could offer his visitor, Master Yuan, only "lees made of barley and roast dried fish," the two—host and guest—were nevertheless "blissfully happy, as joy resides in [their discussion of scholarship]."[92] By alluding to the language of the earlier hermits and the actions that are characteristic of the recluse life, Ying Qu evokes the manners without having lived that life himself. Both the histories and philosophical texts amply document individuals, like Yan Hui 顏回 and Zhang Ping 張平, who had to contend with poverty.[93] The conditions of these earlier recluses—such as the empty house with four bare walls (*tuyou sibi* 徒有四壁), rice bins filled with dust (*chenzeng* 塵甑), and short coarse robes (*duanhe* 短褐)—came to symbolize the recluse's life.[94] As for literary treatments of the reality of poverty, we find only Yang Xiong's

[90] Ying Qu demonstrates his brilliant command of exaggerated language in "Yu Guangchuan zhang Cen Wenyu shu" 與廣川長岑文瑜書, and in "Yu Xiyang ling Kong Deyan shu" 與西陽令孔德琰書, in which he describes a dramatic drought and a locust infestation respectively. *Wenxuan*, 42.14b–15b; Yan Kejun, 2:1219, 1220.

[91] Zhao Shugong, *Zhongguo chidu wenxue shi*, p. 126.

[92] *Cai Zhonglang wai ji* 蔡中郎外集, *Sibu beiyao* edition, 2.11a.

[93] For examples, see the "Pin" section in the *Yiwen leiju*, 33.23a–33a.

[94] For a similar list of conditions associated with poverty and the recluse-gentleman, see the "Pin" section in *Chuxue ji*, 2:18.443–47.

揚雄 "Zhupin fu" 逐貧賦 and Cai Yong's "Jiu wei" 九惟.[95] As far as I know, Ying Qu is the first to write extensively on poverty, as witnessed in these letters.

It was only some ten to twenty years after Ying Qu's death that appropriating earlier gestures and stances to describe one's own impoverishment became widespread among poets. Like Ying Qu, Jin writers borrowed many tropes of the impoverished gentleman from earlier texts (for instance the *Lunyu* and the *Han shu*); as with Ying Qu, these writers alluded to poverty but not necessarily as accurate reflections of their own lives. The two extant Western Jin poems on living an impoverished life are by Jiang You 江逌 and Zhang Wang 張望, who once served as lower ranking officials, with positions similar to that held by Tao Qian. Jiang You wrote a "Yongpin shi" (On poverty) that depicts the familiar abode of the poor: "The thatched gate does not open, / The surrounding walls are covered with weeds and foliage. / A ladle lies turned against the wall, / While dust collects in the rice bin" 蓽門不啟扉, 環堵蒙蒿榛. 空瓢覆壁下, 簞上自生塵.[96] These lines display the attributes of the impoverished gentleman (the unused ladle and the bin gathering dust) that Ying Qu mentioned in his letters. The images also appear later in Tao Qian's poetry: the thatched gate that shuts out uninvited visitors, the natural growth surrounding his house, and the empty rice bin.[97]

Zhang Wang, a near contemporary of Jiang You and an administrator under General Huan Wen 桓溫 (*canjun* 參軍, a position comparable to one held by Tao Qian), likewise wrote a "Pinshi shi" (Poem on the impoverished gentleman). His poem shares many of the tropes on poverty seen in Ying Qu's letter to Cao Changsi. Where Ying says of his quiet life in retirement, "there are no tracks of carriages outside my gate" and "no curious students in my hall," Zhang Wang writes: "Few traces are there of human beings in this abandoned village, / Secluded and distant, from the neighbors far removed. / [My] rush fences crumbling / While I am inside the dilapidated rooms it is open and vast, bare and empty" 荒墟人迹稀, 隱僻閭鄰闊. 葦籬自朽損, 毀屋正寥

[95] Both are included in *Yiwen leiju*, 35.29b–31a, 33a.

[96] *Yiwen leiju*, 35.29a.

[97] See Lu Qinli, 2:991; 978, 991, 1010; 980, respectively.

豁.[98] Although Wang's language is more descriptive than Ying Qu's, he resembles Ying Qu in his use of descriptions to evoke the quiet, rustic, and desolate life of a recluse—adjectives like abandoned (*huang*), rush fence (*weili*), ruined home (*huiwu*), and decayed or eroded (*xiuhui*). These images of the isolated residence of the recluse are echoed by Tao Qian, "Here in the country human contacts are few / On this narrow lane carriages seldom come. / In broad daylight I keep my rustic gates closed, / From the bare rooms all dusty thoughts are banned" 野外罕人事, 窮巷寡輪鞅. 白日掩荊扉, 虛室絕塵想.[99] After his house is destroyed by fire in 408 A.D., Tao Qian recounts the experience by focusing on the vast open space of the sky rather than on the loss of his home.[100] Zhang Wang's complaint about "not having enough gauze for a robe" in the hot summer or a warm leather coat for the winter is mirrored and reworked in one of Tao Qian's "Zashi" (Untitled poems), where he only wishes "to have enough coarse cloth to cope with winter / And netted hemp garments with which to meet the summer sun" 御冬足大布, 麤絺以應陽.[101]

Zhan Fangsheng 湛方生, a contemporary of Tao Qian and one of China's earliest landscape poets, wrote the following poem on reclusion, "Houzhai shi" 後齋詩 (The study toward the back of the house), in which he, like Tao Qian, made use of some of the gestures on retirement that characterize Ying Qu's works. This poem in particular shares a familiar scene found in Tao Qian's poetry:

解纓復褐, Untying the cap-ribbon, and returning to coarse cloth,
辭朝歸藪 I withdrew from court service and went back to the wilderness.
門不容軒 The gates could not accommodate a carriage,
宅不盈畝 The house does not take up even a fraction of an acre.
茂草籠庭 Verdant grasses envelop the courtyard,
滋蘭拂牖 Lush-growing thoroughwort brushes against the windows.

[98] *Yiwen leiju*, 35.28a–b; Lu Qinli, 2:891.

[99] Lu Qinli, 2:991; trans. Hightower, *The Poetry of T'ao Ch'ien*, p. 51. Distance from his neighbors is expressed more visually in the first of Tao Qian's "Gui yuantian ju," where he directly evokes Laozi's utopian society; see Lu Qinli, 1:991; *Laozi Daodejing, SKQS, xia*.25a–b.

[100] Lu Qinli, 2:995.

[101] Lu Qinli, 2:1007; trans. Hightower, *The Poetry of T'ao Ch'ien*, p. 195.

| | |
|---|---|
| 撫我子姪 | Here, I would stroke my sons and nephews, |
| 攜我親友 | And walk hand in hand with kin and friends. |
| 茹彼園蔬 | I eat the vegetables from my garden, |
| 飲此春酒 | And I drink this spring brew. |
| 開櫺攸瞻 | Opening the window, I gaze afar, |
| 坐對川阜 | When I sit down, I face the streams and hills. |
| 心焉孰託 | Where should I entrust my heart? |
| 託心非有 | I entrust my heart in Nothingness. |
| 素構易抱 | The plain structures can be easily embraced, |
| 玄根難朽 | And the profound roots will not easily decay. |
| 即之匪遠 | When you move toward it, it will not be far away, |
| 可以長久 | And will remain with you for a long time.[102] |

Untying the cap-ribbon and donning coarse cloth are well-known gestures of renouncing society. In language similar to Ying Qu's, Zhan adds that there are few officials who would now deem it worthwhile to visit him, so the narrow gates of his dwelling suit his circumstances. The overgrown shrubs, the enjoyment of being "here" with his young children and family, the preparation of spring wine and harvesting of his garden vegetables, and the joys of gazing at the distant hills are all found in the poems of Zhan—and of Tao Qian—as a part of the recluse's life.[103] Ultimately, Zhan's goal was to investigate the metaphysical roots of the Way (since it is a poetry of metaphysical words [*xuanyan shi* 玄言詩], philosophical expositions in poetic form),[104] while Tao Qian appears not to be. The similarities between Ying Qu, Tao Qian, and these Jin poets in their use of images, gestures, and idioms point to the possibility of the existence of a shared language among poets writing about retirement or poverty, with Ying Qu as an important link in this tradition.

Like Ying Qu, none of these Western Jin poets was truly poor. Jiang You was well known for providing military strategy to the general Yin Hao 殷浩, and at different times had advised emperors against the wastefulness of constructing imperial parks and holding extravagant sacrificial ceremonies.[105] He had a literary collection in five *juan*;

[102] *Yiwen leiju*, 64.19b–20a; Lu Qinli, 2:943–44.

[103] See, for example, Lu Qinli, 2:991, 978, 1010.

[104] For a definition of *xuanyan* poetry, see Yang Liu 楊柳, "Xuan yan shi ding yi xin tan" 玄言詩定義新探, in *Nanjing shifan daxue wenxueyuan xuebao* 南京師範大學文學院學報, no. 1 (March 2008): 16–21.

[105] *Jin shu*, *SKQS*, 83.12b–13a, from the extensive biography of Jiang You, *Jin shu*, 83.11b–

although this is no longer extant, fragments of his writings have survived in encyclopedias. Jiang's poetic collection consisted mostly of *fu* on topics fancied by the social elite, such as bamboo, fans, or ice-wells.[106] His "Poem on the Impoverished Gentleman" was an exception in a corpus that showed a penchant for works celebrating objects (*yongwu fu* 詠物賦). Zhan Fangsheng, the author of "The Study Toward the Back of the House," also initially served as an official and later resided in the Lu Mountain area, near Tao Qian. Zhan wrote *fu* on plants and flowers in such numbers that many of his works were later collected in the Qing-dynasty catalog of plants and flowers *Yuding Peiwenzhai Guangqunfangpu* 御定佩文齋廣群芳譜.[107] Zhan was moreover known for his elegant descriptions of the landscapes in the Mount Lu area, his collected works totaling ten *juan*.[108] Thus, as is the case with Ying Qu, these writers were not truly poverty-stricken, but used the tropes of the impoverished gentlemen to reflect upon their characters.

Tao Qian internalized many of the gestures associated with recluses or impoverished gentlemen. In his "Yong pinshi shi," he describes the venerable old recluse Rong Qiqi 榮啟期 as wearing a belt of rope and playing a zither, and writes of his own love of strumming the instrument.[109] The *Song shu* records—by way of attesting to his eccentricity—that Tao Qian would often keep an unstrung zither by his side, and would strum it from time to time.[110] In another of the "Yong pinshi shi," Tao writes about weeds growing tall around an earlier recluse, Zhong Wei's 仲蔚 house, where Zhong lives in retirement, renouncing social ties and composing poetry. This delicious feeling of an enclosed space that shuts out the world is prominent in Tao Qian's poetry as well as in the poetry of some of his contemporaries.[111] Recluses of the past

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16b. Examples of his works can be found in *Yiwen leiju* 1.37a, 3.19b–20a, 3.24b, 9.31b–32a, 69.28a, 89.44a–b; *Sunpu* 筍譜, 37a; *Yuding Peiwenzhai Guangqunfangpu* 御定佩文齋廣群芳譜, *SKQS*, 5.3b, 83.19a–b.

[106] *Jiu Tang shu, SKQS*, 47.41a, *Xin Tang shu, SKQS*, 60.7a.

[107] Zhan Fangshen's works are extensively collected in early encyclopedias. For a diverse selection of his works, see *Yiwen leiju*, 1.36b–37a, 3.10a, 3.36b–37a, 7.14b, 19.15a, 20.6b, 27.4b–5a, 38.41b, 57.24a–25a, 64.19b–20a, 65.14b–15a, 78.15b–16a, 85.8a; *Yuding Peiwenzhai Guangqunfangpu*, 1.12b, 5.2b, 8.14b, 70.18b.

[108] Lu Qinli, 2:943–47; *Sui shu, SKQS*, 35.14b; *Jiu Tang shu*, 47.42b; *Xin Tang shu*, 60.8a.

[109] "Shiyun shi," "Da Pang canjun," "He Guozhubo," no. 1, "Guiqulaixi ci," in Lu Qinli, 2:968, 973, 978, 987, respectively.

[110] "Tao Qian zhuan," *Song shu*, 93.16b.

[111] Lu Qinli, 2:879, 943–44, 978, 991, 1010.

provide models to whom Tao Qian can look back, and from whom Tao can seek solace in his own poverty.[112] In yet another of the "Yongpin shi shi" composed on a blustery year's-end, Tao writes that he has neither food nor wine: "With what do I console my thought? / I rely on the past—on many of these worthies" 何以慰吾懷, 賴古多此賢.[113] Among his models are Qian Lou 黔婁, who once declared that exalted rank and rich rewards are not what he was longing for, and even Huang Zilian 黃子廉, who once helped to rule the state but in retirement had to endure his wife's complaints during a famine.[114] By the Tang, this trope of the impoverished recluse had taken on a life of its own, and was so commonly used that lines from an earlier poet would be appropriated by a later poet, using the lines as if they were describing his own life. As we saw earlier in Wang Ji's couplet—"I used to love Tao Yuanming's 'Ladling the lees and charring the bony fish'"[115]—the language of the impoverished recluse is transferable, intimately related to the gesture, and specific to no particular occasion.

By the late Six Dynasties, Ying Qu's "Baiyi shi" came to tower over his other writings to such an extent that readers gradually lost sight of the more private poems. This was when Tao Qian was emerging as a "virtuous recluse" of some renown. Consequently the imagery and gestures Tao used to represent his own life—even those that he had borrowed from earlier writings on the impoverished gentlemen—came to be associated solely with him.

## The Reception of Ying Qu and Tao Qian

Ying Qu's collected works were well known throughout the Six Dynasties and into the Tang; yet, for reasons not completely clear, his letters elicited little written comment after the Tang. After the Song dynasty, the transmission of Ying's works was selective: first his collection of letters was lost, next the rest of his collected works, and finally the famed "Baiyi shi." The early Tang bibliography *Sui shu jingji zhi* 隋書經籍志 records three titles by Ying Qu—his collected writings, in ten *juan*; a

[112] In like fashion, later writers would in their distress often take comfort in Tao Qian's contentment.

[113] Lu Qinli, 2:1008.

[114] Lu Qinli, 2:1009.

[115] *Yuding Quan Tang shi*, 37.5b.

collection of his "Baiyi shi," in eight *juan*; and a collection of his letters, *Shulin* 書林 (The forest of letters), in eight *juan*—but only one collection of writings by Tao Qian, in nine *juan*.[116] By the time the bibliographical section of the *Xin Tang shu* was compiled in the early Song, only the "Baiyi shi" was still extant and Ying's two other works went unmentioned.[117] The "Baiyi shi" continued to be preserved during the Song; a category was devoted especially to it in Wang Yinglin's 王應麟 (1223–1296) thirteenth-century encyclopedia *Yuhai* 玉海. The *Yuhai* placed the "Baiyi shi" in the poetic subgenre of the admonitory poem, and noted that an eight-*juan* version, with commentary by Ying Qu's son Ying Zhen, was still extant.[118] By the Yuan and Ming Dynasties, no mention of Ying's collected writings is found in the bibliographic sections of the dynastic histories or the catalogs of private libraries.

The *Sanguo zhi* and the *Wenzhang xulu* both attest that in his own time Ying Qu was renowned for his prose writings (*wenzhang* 文章) and particularly for the persuasive power of his letters (*shu*).[119] Especially memorable is a letter recorded in the *Sanguo zhi* that Ying Qu is said to have written to his friend Liu Jing 劉靖 as the latter was about to take up a post in the capital. In offering advice on agriculture and sericulture, Ying advised Liu to focus not on mere rhetoric, but on actions and policies that would benefit the people. Taking this advice to heart, Liu won the people over.[120] The anthologist Wang Zhijian 王志堅 (1578–1633) compiled a lineage of the masters of "Epistles" in his prose anthology *Siliu fahai* 四六法海. It began with Cao Pi, and was immediately followed by Ying Qu and his brother Ying Yang, indicating that at least some Ming-dynasty readers still considered Ying's letters to be a crucial early example of Chinese epistles.[121] Zhao Shugong maintains in his literary history of Chinese letters that Ying Qu's correspondence

[116] In the *Sui shu* "Jingji zhi," Ying Qu's *Shulin* was said to have been compiled by a Xia Chisong 夏赤松; Tao Qian's writings are found under *zayi shu* 雜逸書. See *Sui shu*, 35.5b, 35.31b.

[117] *Xin Tang shu* 60.27a. *Jiu Tang shu* 47.34a lists a *Ying Yuan ji* 應瑗集 in ten *juan*, whose contents are consistent with Ying Qu's chronology; Ying Yuan may have been a scribal error for Ying Qu. A *Shulin* in six *juan* is mentioned in *Jiu Tang shu*, 47.54a. In terms of chronology it does correspond to Ying Qu's time.

[118] *Yuhai*, *SKQS*, 58.7b–8a. This Song encyclopedia refers to another collection of "Baiyi shi," in two *juan*, by a Mr. Li of the Tang dynasty.

[119] "Wang Can zhuan," *Wei zhi*, *Sanguo zhi*, 21.8b–9a.

[120] "Liu Fu zhuan" 劉馥傳, *Wei zhi*, *Sanguo zhi*, 15.2a–b; 2:1218.

[121] *Siliu fahai*, *SKQS*, 7.1a–5b.

marked an important turning point in the creation of an individual voice in Chinese letter writing, and that these letters were characterized by an attention to imageries and a sharp wit.[122]

Ying Qu's "Baiyi shi"—in particular the public poems of admonition in the collection—has solicited the most numerous, immediate, and passionate responses from contemporary and later readers. With its focus on current events, the "Baiyi shi" seems to have had the most direct effect on its readers and to have stimulated wide debate after Ying Qu's own time. The contemporaneous *Wenzhang xulu* noted that Ying Qu wrote the "Baiyi shi" to mock Cao Shuang and other contemporaries, and that the collection "circulated throughout society."[123] Later, *Chugou xianxian zhuan* observes that "everyone was shocked and startled by their oddity, and some thought [the poems] should be proscribed and burned."[124] By the fifth century, Ying Qu's fortunes as a poet had declined to the extent that he was placed only in the middle rank (*zhongpin*) by Zhong Rong, who remarked that Ying's poetry was sincere and earnest in criticizing contemporary affairs, attaining "the [*Shijing*] poet's objective of 'radical satirizing.'" Zhong Rong added that Ying Qu's poetry "derived from the prose-writings of Emperor Wen of Wei," and that he "excelled at affecting the language of the ancients."[125] In the *Wenxin diaolong*, Liu Xie describes Ying Qu's "Baiyi shi" as a collection which "alone stands fearlessly, with subtly crafted words and pure and upright meanings, it is also a legacy of the integrity of the Wei."[126] These contemporaneous critics' views on Ying Qu's poetry focus on the "outwardly focused" poems within the "Baiyi shi," as do the later commentators', emphasizing the admonitory nature of the collection. Little is mentioned of the more private poems that are also a part of that same collection.

[122] Zhao Shugong, *Zhongguo chidu wenxue shi*, pp. 124–26.

[123] "Wang Can zhuan," *Wei zhi, Sanguozhi*, 21.9a.

[124] Cited in Li Shan's commentary, *Wenxuan*, 21.13b.

[125] *Shipin zhu*, p. 144. Ying Qu's name appears again in the "Xiapin" 下品 section of the *Shipin*, but because the title of the entry is "Jin wenxue Ying Qu" (Instructor Ying Qu) it is likely an entry for Ying Yan Kejung, mistakenly inscribed under Ying Qu. *Shipin zhu*, p. 227, also p. 144.

[126] "Mingshi" 明詩, *Wenxin diaolong, SKQS*, 2.2b. On Liu Xie and his role in the formation of the Chinese literary canon, see Kang-I Sun Chang, "Liu Xie's Idea of Canonicity," in *A Chinese Literary Mind,* ed. Zong-qi Cai (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 17–31.

In the Song dynasty, most readers knew the "Baiyi shi" from anthologies or encyclopedias rather than from the collection itself. After having seen an edition of the complete "Baiyi shi" from a Master Yan 晏公 in Linzi 臨淄, Pan Zizhen 潘子真 believed that most of the "Baiyi shi" found in the anthologies or encyclopedias of his time—such as Wu Jing's 吳競 *Gu yuefu* 古樂府 and Ouyang Xun's *Yiwen leiju*—were incomplete.[127] The poet-critic Ge Lifang 葛立方 refuted the *Chuguo xianxian zhuan's* characterization of Ying's poetry as social critique entirely because Ge did not find any poems of this type in the six "Baiyi shi" that he had read in the *Wenxuan* and the *Yuefu shiji*.[128] Similarly, in refuting Zhong Rong's filiation of Tao Qian's poetry to the lineage of Ying Qu, Ye Mengde based his evidence solely on the one poem from the "Baiyi shi" in the *Wenxuan*.[129] Even as anthologists and critics were shaping how Tao Qian was to be received, the works of Ying Qu were being erased through similar processes of selection or omission.

In his own day, Tao Qian had made something of a name for himself as a recluse. When he died, his friend Yan Yanzhi 顏延之 eulogized him primarily as a virtuous, highly principled man who refused to serve—rather than as a poet.[130] The biographies of Tao Qian found in the *Song shu*, *Jin shu*, and *Nan shi*, as well as the one by Xiao Tong, provide evidence that Tao Qian had already gained a reputation as a *yinshi*. In Jiangzhou 江州 (in modern-day Jiangxi), regional inspectors (*cishi* 刺史) such as Tan Daoji 檀道濟 and Wang Hong 王弘 eagerly sought to meet Tao Qian on the strength of his fame as a recluse.[131] Shen Yue (441–513), the compiler of the *Song shu*, portrayed Tao Qian as first and foremost a recluse. He listed Tao Qian in the "Yinyi zhuan" 隱逸傳 (Biographies of recluses) section of the history; and he reproduced in full two of Tao's pieces—"Wuliu xiansheng zhuan" and "Guiqu laixi ci"—in order to illustrate the purity of Tao's resolve to retire and his lofty character as a recluse.[132] Later, in the early sixth century, Xiao Tong named Tao Qian, along with Zhou Xuzhi 周續之 and Liu Yimin 劉遺民, as "the three recluses of Xunyang" (Xunyang sanyin 潯陽三

[127] Quoted in *Yuyin conghua*, 41.5b–6a.
[128] Ge Lifang, *Yunyu yangqiu*, 4.1b–2a.
[129] Ye Mengde, *Shilin shihua*, 42b–43b.
[130] "*Tao zhengshi lei*" 陶徵士誄, *Wenxuan*, 57.9b–13a.
[131] *Song shu*, 93.14a–19a; Xiao Tong, "Tao Yuanming zhuan," *Jianzhu Tao Yuanming ji*.
[132] *Song shu*, 93.14a–19a.

隱),[133] further solidifying Tao's reputation as a recluse. Tao's writing therefore was increasingly understood as a manifestation of Tao Qian's personality; by the fourth century the language of reclusion that he had appropriated from the earlier poets was recognized as Tao Qian's own invention.

## Conclusion

In sum, many of the images and gestures, as well as much of the language that we often assume to be uniquely Tao Qian's came from an earlier—and now forgotten—characterization of the impoverished recluse-gentleman. The literary tradition of the recluse originated in the late Han, when a few poets began to write of their experiences living outside the capital, and culminated in the writings of Ying Qu. Yet the literary connection between Ying Qu and Tao Qian had long been obscured by the preference for, and hence preservation of, Ying Qu's admonitory poems in the "Baiyi shi," at the expense of his more personal writings. A close examination of the remaining fragments of all of Ying Qu's "Baiyi shi" reveals that some poems in that collection demonstrated a more lyrical sensibility and focused on mundane topics and the poet himself. Xu Gongchi dated the public "Baiyi shi" to Ying Qu's service at court, and dated the personal "Baiyi shi" to the end of Ying Qu's life.[134] With their intimate voice and concern with poverty and wine, these personal poems in the collection bear the strongest resemblance to Tao Qian's best-known poems.

Ying Qu's correspondence, once so famous, has opened another window onto his diverse writing styles. These letters further provide evidence of a personal and lyrical style akin to Tao Qian's. Ying Qu's strong interest in ways of perceiving and representing nature paved the way for pastoral prose and poetry later in the Six Dynasties. His voice, which lacked artifice and mannerisms, and which speaks about reclusion and the retired life, brings to mind Tao Qian's best poetry.

[133] Xiao Tong, "Tao Yuanming zhuan." For a discussion of the presentation of Tao Qian in early dynastic histories and the poetry of the late Six Dynasties, see Pauline Lin, "A Separate Space, A New Self," Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1999, pp. 166–89; and Wendy Swartz, "Rewriting a Recluse: The Early Biographers' Construction of Tao Yuanming," *CLEAR* 26 (Dec 2004): 77–97.

[134] Xu Gongchi, *Wei Jin wenxue shi*, pp. 162–64.

The abundance of letters written in this private, leisurely, and pastoral style suggests the possibility that the "Baiyi shi" might indeed have contained many other poems of this type.

Ying Qu was a versatile author capable of writing in many different—and sometimes contradictory—styles. The "Baiyi shi" could be irreverent, witty, or moralizing; their language elegant or vulgar; their diction simple or erudite; and their voice public or private. Moreover, they could take as their subjects either officials or commoners. At their best, the "Baiyi shi" display vignettes of Ying Qu's society—from high to low—and express his opinions, reflections, and criticisms. They were the first set of admonitory poems composed by a known author and thus a harbinger of the socially conscious poetry of Du Fu and Bo Juyi. To contemporary readers, the "Baiyi shi" were relevant, exciting, and popular, addressing contemporary issues. Over time, however, the allusions to recognizable contemporary events and policies became opaque; the once-lucid colloquial dictions became inexplicable and incomprehensible.

Each of Ying Qu's letters illuminates a particular relationship formed by the poet. Each letter creates a unique situation in which two human beings interact; and each letter furnishes insights into Ying Qu's being and his emotions. To Man Bing, the son of a powerful official, Ying Qu was courteous and enthusiastic, as grateful to acknowledge Man's support as he was careful not to offend him: "Publicly, I commend you, Sir, on your virtue of being able to humble yourself before those below; privately, I, though foolish, feel privileged that I could meet a true ally. I am elated and my emotion knows no bounds!"[135] A more relaxed Ying Qu is seen in his letter to his cousins, as he delights in their company and recalls, happily, their travel to the north together.[136] When the district of Guangchuan (in modern-day Hebei) experienced a severe drought that could not be alleviated even after ten days of rain ceremonies, a self-assured Ying Qu wrote to Cen Wenyu 岑文瑜, the district magistrate, and, with a dry wit, commended him (somewhat sarcastically) for praying so tirelessly for rain under the hot sun on behalf of the people. Ying then lashed out at Cen, saying that only virtuous governance—and not mere ceremony—could make the rain

[135] *Wenxuan*, 42.13a; Yan Kejun, 2:1218.

[136] *Wenxuan*, 42.15b; Yan Kejun, 2:1218.

pour down, and concluded somewhat arrogantly and even maliciously, "Thinking that you might not have considered this in your elegant deliberations, I cautiously drafted this letter."[137] In offering unsolicited advice, Ying Qu was careful to use humor to cloak his temerity. At the same time, he did not fear Cen, whom he openly ridiculed for Cen's pompous staging of rain ceremonies. This sharp wit and its underlying intent of criticizing social ills lied at the core of Ying Qu's more outwardly-focused "Baiyi shi."

From Ying Qu's letters a picture of the person emerges, but this image is far from consistent: Ying Qu prized benevolent rule, placing the people's interests at the forefront of an official's goals, but he also enjoyed serving as an official, and the power and privileges that service brought him. Ying spoke frequently about retirement, but when he did retire, he was surprised by the quiet that retirement brought. Ying Qu's relationship to reclusion was ambivalent at best: he wrote repeatedly about withdrawing from service and called himself a recluse, but he also yearned for the company of his colleagues and the material and political rewards of being at court. In his chatty letter to Liu Wenda 劉文達, Ying reminded Liu to store all the planting seeds in a dry place and to keep the agricultural equipment close at hand so that, when the sowing season arrived, Liu's people could set about to planting immediately. In the same letter, Ying Qu wrote that he was weary of "the business of roaming about and offering political strategies, and desired to practice the art of inaction."[138] Therefore, Ying concluded, he sadly was unable to ride alongside Liu to compete for first place. In both the letter to his cousins Miao and Zhou and to Cao Changsi, Ying Qu echoed the desire to retire. But this desire arose less from a genuine yearning for that kind of life than from his realization that one needed the backing of powerful clans in order to rise up the political ladder.[139] When he did retire, the silence and the lack of visitors took Ying Qu by surprise; he thus wrote to Cao Changsi to express his "feelings of distress" (*kuhuai*). In his three letters, respectively to Wei Zhongjiang, Dong Zhonglian, and his fellow gentlemen at the Imperial Secretariat, Ying cried out indignantly about the extreme poverty he suffered after departing

[137] *Wenxuan*, 42.14b–15b; Yan Kejun, 2:1219.
[138] Yan Kejun, 2:1218.
[139] Yan Kejun, 2:1218–19.

court life, and declared in his letter to Wei Zhongjiang that "human beings are not immortals, we need to have clothing and food."[140] Cold and hungry, worrying about his livelihood day and night, Ying confided to Wei Zhongjiang that, should this continue any longer, he would become like the proverbial fish dying in the ox's hoof-print. To the court gentlemen at the Imperial Secretariat, Ying exclaimed that, if one can soar to the top of the government, why would one want to languish in a lowly post, suffering the hardships of poverty.

That Ying Qu was not a true recluse and did not write solely about reclusion was a compelling reason that Zhong Rong did not name him as the originator of recluse poetry. Historical sources make clear that Ying Qu served until the end of his life, and was out of office for only a few years during Emperor Ming's reign. Although he wrote constantly about retirement and often appropriated the language of reclusion, he was not truly a recluse. Ironically, though readers have never assumed that red dust actually covered Ying Qu's writing tablet, we feel compelled to believe that the rustic gate to Tao Qian's house was closed and his rice bin and wine gourd were always empty.[141] In this study, I have reexamined the set of poetic conventions associated with the recluse-gentleman; I have shown that Tao Qian made extensive use of the trope of the recluse-gentleman, and that, as with his predecessors, he might not actually have carried out all the activities that he describes in his poems.[142] Nonetheless, because Tao Qian wrote extensively about his life in retirement, and had acquired a widespread reputation as a recluse even in his own day, it seems logical and fitting he should be given the title of the "originator of recluse poetry, ancient or modern" (*gu jin yin shi zhi zong* 古今隐逸詩人之宗).[143]

[140] Yan Kejun, 2:1219.

[141] Lu Qinli, 2: 980.

[142] Stephen Owen maintains that Tao Qian self-consciously plays the role of a recluse. Kang-I Sun Chang goes so far as to say that Tao is donning a "mask" in his poetry. See Stephen Owen, "The Self's Perfect Mirror: Poetry as Autobiography," in *The Vitality of the Lyric Voice: 'Shih' Poetry from the late Han to the T'ang*, ed. Shuen-fu Lin and Stephen Owen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 71–102. Kang-i Sun Chang, "The Unmasking of Tao Qian and the Indeterminacy of Interpretation," in *Chinese Aesthetics: The Orderings of Word, Image, and the World in the Six Dynasties*, ed. Zong-qi Cai (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), pp. 169–90.

[143] *Shipin zhu*, p. 155.