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Abstract: Previous studies of Sino-Japanese literary interaction during the 1870s and 1880s have generally tended to focus on Sinitic poetry (*kanshi*) within the diplomatic arena, particularly the activities of members of the Qing legation such as Huang Zunxian 黃遵憲 (1848-1905). This article considerably expands this focus, drawing attention to exchanges during this period among private citizens in both countries. Exploring the poetic interaction between three as-yet largely unstudied Chinese nationals (Ye Songshi 葉松石 (1839-1903), Li Zihu 李子虎 (1813-1877), and Ou Hunan 歐湖南 (n.d.)) and their Japanese counterparts, the article devotes particular attention to the resonances within these exchanges of the notion that China and Japan shared the “same writing (Ch. *tongwen*, J. *dōbun*).” Through close reading of the poetry itself and the circumstances surrounding each exchange, I argue for “same writing” and the exchange of *kanshi* as enabling both discourses of friendship and competing claims to cultural pre-eminence in East Asia.

“All Men Within the Four Seas are Brothers:”

Transnational *Kanshi* Exchange in Meiji Japan

Keywords: Kanshi, Ye Songshi, Li Zihu, Ou Hunan, Suzuki Ryōsho, *dōbun*, *tongwen*

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When the Chinese poet Ye Wei 葉煒 (pen name Songshi 松石, 1839-1903) left Japan in the late summer of 1876, he had reason to feel pleased with himself.¹ He had completed his two-year term of service as a teacher of spoken Chinese at the Japanese Foreign Ministry’s Foreign Language School with glowing evaluations from students and employers alike, and he had made a number of Japanese friends through his fondness for Sinitic poetry (*kanshi* 漢詩). Largely through the generosity of said friends, he also brought home a sizeable haul of Japanese paintings, hanging scrolls, swords (valued highly in his home country), and sundry other *objets d’art* as parting gifts. Writing some time after his return to China, Ye reflected that the haul of scrolls and paintings he had brought home “would have given [legendary text collector] Lu Jia a run for his money” (歸裝之富足傲陸賈).²

Among late nineteenth-century Chinese visitors to Japan, Ye Songshi’s sojourn was one of the more successful ones. Judging by the frequent appearance of his name in Tokyo’s *kanshi* journals, during his stay he appears to have been treated as a valued and respected member of the

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¹ In what follows, Chinese authors are referred to by their surname unless a text addresses them by their pen name. Japanese authors are referred to primarily by their pen name, as per convention, with the given name provided when the author is first introduced.

² Ye Wei 葉煒, “Zixu” 自序 (Author’s Preface) in Ye Wei, ed., *Fusang lichang ji* 扶桑驪唱集 (Nanjing: Ye Shi, 1891), p. 1 verso. Lu Jia (fl. 200 BCE) was an early Han politician and scholar who was a strong advocate for the preservation and collection of a textual canon as a way of preserving social and political order.

capital's poetic circles, in demand as a guest at many a poetic gathering. The life and times of such a distinguished Chinese visitor to Japan might be expected to draw a great deal of scholarly attention, yet few literary studies of this period (in any language) mention his name at all. While there have been a number of scholarly works that discuss Sino-Japanese literary exchange during the 1870s and 1880s, these have overwhelmingly tended to limit themselves to the activities, both official and unofficial, of the Qing diplomatic legation dispatched to Tokyo in 1877. Most of these Chinese diplomats engaged in poetic writing to some extent while in Japan, with Huang Zunxian's 黃遵憲 (1848-1905) work being perhaps the best-known among them.³ The focus on Huang and the legation staff has meant that other groups and individuals engaged in transnational exchange elsewhere have been overlooked, and as a result our picture of Sino-Japanese poetic exchange during the early Meiji period remains incomplete.

The discussion that follows aims to expand this coverage, and is structured around three Chinese poets, mostly unknown, but who each had occasion to interact with members of the Japanese *kanshi* community during the 1870s. The poets in question, whose experiences and work make up the bulk of this paper, are Ye Songshi (introduced above), Guangzhou-based literatus Li Changrong 李長榮 (1813-1877, style name Zihu 子虎, courtesy name Liutang 柳堂), and Yokohama merchant Ou Hunan 歐湖南 (n.d.). My discussion of the first two poets centers in particular on the rhetoric of a shared textual culture and personal friendship between the Japanese and Chinese poets; yet, as I argue, at times this rhetoric masks subtler tensions informed by the unstable relationship between the two countries, tensions which become entirely explicit in the case of Ou Hunan. Japanese and Chinese poets could get different things out of these verse exchanges; for the Chinese poets, the shared practice of poetry pointed towards Japan as a possible ally against the West, whereas, in Japan, the same exchanges could also be understood as a sign that Japan might achieve cultural parity with the country that had been the center of East Asian civilization for most of the last fifteen hundred years. In fact, as covered below, some Japanese poets at the time of the 1874 Taiwan Expedition were bold enough to go beyond assertions of

³ For a sampling of work in English dealing with the diplomatic legation's activities in Japan (especially Huang Zunxian), see particularly Richard John Lynn's two studies, "Huang Zunxian and His Association with Meiji Era Japanese Literati (bunjin): The Formation of the Early Meiji Canon of Kanshi" *Japan Review* 15 (2003), and "'This Culture of Ours' and Huang Zunxian's Literary Experiences in Japan, 1877-1882" *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 19 (December 1997). Douglas Howland discusses "brush-talking" and occasional poetry in *Borders of Chinese Civilization: Geography and History at Empire's End* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), esp. pp. 43-65.

mere parity to claim that Japan had in fact supplanted China as cultural and moral center of East Asia.

The clearest articulation of the idea of shared cultural bonds is in a term that occurs repeatedly in Sino-Japanese exchanges of this period, namely “shared writing” (Ch. *tongwen*, J. *dōbun* 同文). Among many examples, a quatrain (Ch. *jueju*, J. *zekku* 絶句) that Japanese scholar Kawada Ōkō 川田甕江 (Takeshi 剛, 1830-1896) sent to Ye Songshi hails this “shared writing” as the basis for an enduring bond of transnational friendship, holding firm even as newer technologies reshaped East Asia:

大艦峩峩馳火輪	Great vessels tower high, steamships surge forth -
風濤不隔異鄉人	The wind and waves no barrier for those from other lands.
雖然四海皆兄弟	And though it is true that all men within the four seas are brothers,
看到同文交最親	Those who read the “same writing” have the closest friendship. ⁴

That poetry was the chosen vehicle for expressing these sentiments was no coincidence. With prose fiction during the 1870s yet to assume its later status as the pre-eminent literary genre, Sinitic poetry enjoyed great intellectual prestige in both countries. As Douglas Howland has observed, poetry had “long [been] considered the most *wen* [J. *bun* 文], or patterned, of writing...As a form central to communication, self-expression, scholarship, and self-cultivation in the Chinese tradition, poetry incorporates the dual meaning of *wen* – writing as patterned object, and patterned practice as Civilization.”⁵ Discussing Japan’s later colonial rule over Taiwan, Saitō Mareshi has cogently noted that the practice of *kanshi* exchange among colonial Japanese and Taiwanese elites “brought with it a function as mechanism of mutual recognition as members of an educated ruling class” (*kyōyō aru tōji kaikyū to shite no sōgo shōnin kinō o tomonatta mono de aru*).⁶ We may discern a similar process of “mutual recognition” at work between Japanese and Qing Chinese poets during the 1870s as well, their writing of poetry bringing membership in a common cultural project extending back millennia.

⁴ “Fusang li chang ji,” *Fusang lichang ji*, p. 12 verso. In this and in all subsequent poems that I quote in full in this paper, the rhyme graphs are marked in gray. The quotation in the poem’s third line is drawn from the Confucian *Analects* 12:5: “When the man of noble mind unfailingly conducts himself with self-respect, and is courteous and well-behaved with others, then all within the four seas are his brothers (君子敬而無失、與人恭而禮。四海之內、皆兄弟也).” Text from Tōdō Akiyasu 藤堂明保 ed., trans, *Rongo 論語* (The *Analects*) Chūgoku no koten 1 (Tokyo: Gakushū Kenkyūsha, 1981 [1984 printing]), supplement p. 32.

⁵ Howland, *Borders of Chinese Civilization*, p. 57

⁶ Saitō Mareshi 斎藤希史, ““Dōbun” no poritikkusu” <同文>のポリティックス (The Politics of “Same Writing”) *Bungaku* 文学 10.6 (November 2009), pp. 41-42.

The need to affirm this common cultural project was particularly pressing during the 1870s, a time of great flux for Sino-Japanese relations in general. Beginning with the relative promise of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Amity and Trade in 1871, the decade soon saw tensions between Japan and Qing China develop to the point that Japan would dispatch troops to Taiwan in 1874, in a punitive expedition against Taiwanese aborigines responsible for the murder of Ryūkyūan sailors a couple of years earlier. To some extent, the individual ties represented by shared poetry seemed as if they might offer a way to smooth over such tensions and forge closer ties between Japan and China proper; writing around 1878, Guangzhou literatus Li Wentai 李文泰 (fl. c.1870) observed while discussing contemporary Sino-Japanese poetic exchanges that “it is such a shame that [the Japanese] cut their hair and imitate the vestments of the English barbarians; this is “coming down from a tree into a dark valley” and will always be subject to the scorn of the superior man” (惜其斷髮效英夷裝。下喬入幽。未免為君子所笑耳).⁷ For Li Wentai, the vibrancy of poetic exchange showed that Japan’s natural ally was China, and the pursuit of things Western nothing but folly.

A putative alliance with China was certainly one possibility for Japan as well, but far from the only one; there was, equally, no shortage of Japanese intellectuals (most famously, Fukuzawa Yukichi 福澤諭吉 (1835-1901)) who advocated abandoning China and joining the ranks of the Western powers. With Japan and China thus occupying fluid and rapidly shifting relative power positions during the 1870s, the significance of Sino-Japanese poetic exchange for the individuals involved could be equally fluid and uncertain. Discussing the activities of the Japanese diplomat Takezoe Seisei 竹添井井 (Shin’ichirō 進一郎, 1842-1917) in China, Atsuko Sakaki has highlighted the complex issues of relationality posed by Sino-Japanese literary interaction in the context of modern East Asia:

⁷ Li Wentai, *Hai shan shi wu shi hua* 海山詩屋詩話 (Talks on Verse from the River and Mountain Hall of Poetry) (Guangzhou: Yue dong Yangcheng, 1878), *juan* 6 p. 3 recto. “Dark valley” is a reference to an admonition against adopting barbarian ways found in *Mencius*, Teng Wen Gong I: “But now you turn your back on your teacher in order to become the disciple of this shrike-tongued barbarian from the south whose teachings are not those of the former kings. How different you are from Zengzi! I have heard of departing from a dark valley to repair to a tall tree; I have not heard of descending from a tall tree to enter a dark valley” (今也南蠻馱舌之人，非先王之道，子倍子之師而學之，亦異於曾子矣。吾聞出於幽谷遷于喬木者，未聞下喬木而入於幽谷者). Chinese text from Jiao Xun 焦循, *Mengzi zheng yi* 孟子正義 (The Correct Meaning of the *Mengzi*) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 1:369. English translation from Irene Bloom, ed. P.J. Ivanhoe, *Mencius* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2009), p. 58

What does it mean for [Takezoe,] a modern Japanese man of letters – who, as a diplomat representing his country to China, was supposed to help establish and maintain Sino-Japanese relations as dictated by the demands of the modern Western imperialist age, wherein Sinocentrism was increasingly becoming the order of the past – to faithfully observe the rules and regulations set by China?⁸

The “power structure” in this context is, she further notes, “constantly confirmed and unmade, with multidirectional negotiations dictated by different ideologies.”⁹ In similar vein, the poetry discussed below can be seen as a contested space, featuring genuine comradeship, but also subtler miscommunications, tensions, and rivalries. In making this point, I aim to offer a corrective to certain previous accounts of Sinitic poetry in modern Japan, which have tended to assume a static, hierarchical relationship in such exchanges. It was not the case that, for Japanese *kanshi* poets, writing *kanshi* represented an “acknowledge[ment] *a priori* that contemporary China was still the arbiter in matters of civilization,”¹⁰ nor was their paramount aim in seeking out exchanges with Chinese poets to give “a mark of authenticity to [their] indigenous discourse.”¹¹ Rather than framing poetic discourse in terms of stable and one-directional notions of “civilization” or

⁸ Atsuko Sakaki, “Waves from Opposing Shores: Exchanges in a Classical Language in the Age of Nationalism” in Richard King, Cody Poulton, Katsuhiko Endō, eds., *Sino-Japanese Transculturation: From the Late Nineteenth Century to the Pacific War* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), p. 39.

⁹ The relatively complex political landscape of the 1870s is perhaps one reason why the majority of recent English-language monographs on Sino-Japanese relations have concentrated on the post-Sino-Japanese War period, which seems to offer the more stable framework of Japan in a consistent position as imperial power and colonizer. Examples include Christopher Keaveney, *Beyond Brushtalk: Sino-Japanese Literary Exchange in the Interwar Period* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), Urs Matthias Zachmann, *China and Japan in the Late Meiji Period: China Policy and the Japanese Discourse on National Identity, 1895-1904* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), Karen Thornber, *Empire of Texts in Motion: Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese Transculturations of Japanese Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), and Eric Han, *Rise of a Japanese Chinatown: Yokohama, 1894-1972* (Harvard University Press, 2014).

¹⁰ Zachmann, *China and Japan in the Late Meiji Period*, p. 11.

¹¹ Howland, *Borders of Chinese Civilization*, p. 66. As a further example of Japanese unwillingness to automatically acknowledge Chinese primacy in poetry, in 1899 poet Iwatani Shōsen 岩溪裳川 (Susumu 晋, 1852-1943) recalled that both Ono Kozan and Narushima Ryūhoku had criticized him for uncritically accepting a critique of a poem and set of proposed changes provided by Wang Zhiben 王治本 (1835-1908), who had served as private tutor to prominent Sinophile Ōkochi Teruna 大河内輝声 (1848-1882), and temporarily as attaché to the Qing legation. According to Shōsen, Kozan reprimanded him by noting that “the Japanese think someone just has to say they’re from China and that means that they’re good at poetry, which is a mistake.” Iwatani Shōsen 岩溪裳川, “Shiwa kan’onju” 詩話・感恩珠 (Talks on Poetry: Expressions of Thanks) in *Shisaku shibun no tomo* 作詩作文之友 No. 7 (Feb. 1899), p. 2. Quoted in Hino Toshihiko 日野俊彦, *Mori Shuntō no kisoteki kenkyū* 森春濤の基礎的研究 (Foundational Studies on Mori Shuntō) (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 2013), p. 140.

“authenticity,” we need to understand that these very concepts were negotiated and re-imagined through poetic exchange.

Discussions of Sino-Japanese relations in modern East Asia are almost always shaped to some degree by the realities of later Japanese imperialism. So too in the cases discussed below, the persistent stress on the notion of “same writing” will to some readers inevitably resonate with the later, similar-sounding slogan “same writing, same race” (Ch. *tongwen tongzhong*, J. *dōbun dōshu* 同文同種). Deployed in the interests of Japanese imperial expansion during the twentieth century, a number of scholars have commented on the ultimately hollow nature of this rallying cry; Joshua Fogel, for instance, observes that it “usually concealed more than it revealed...It assumed an intellectually shaky contiguity between peoples on the basis of culture and race, as if those entities constituted a natural, pure bond between people who were yellow of skin and used Chinese characters to write.”¹² Considering the history of Japanese imperialism in Asia more broadly, Robert Tierney has also pointed out that a Japanese-produced rhetoric of similarity “concealed the contradictions of colonial policy discourse and masked the realities of discrimination and the structures of Japanese domination.”¹³

The concept of “same writing” had a long history before appearing thus in the context of modern Sino-Japanese relations; its *locus classicus* is the *Doctrine of the Mean* (Ch. *Zhongyong*, J. *Chūyō* 中庸), in which context it is highlighted as an important element in the moral responsibilities of a good ruler.¹⁴ Closer to the time period under discussion, Arai Hakuseki’s 1760 *A Treatise on Same Writing* (*Dōbun tsūkō* 同文通考) notes the obvious fact of shared written language between Japan and China.¹⁵ Though therefore available to previous Japanese and

¹² Joshua Fogel, *The Literature of Travel in the Japanese Rediscovery of China, 1862-1945* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 171.

¹³ Robert Tierney, *Tropics of Savagery: The Culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Frame* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), p. 30.

¹⁴ “To no one but the Son of Heaven does it belong to order ceremonies, to fix the measures, and to determine the written characters. Now over the kingdom, carriages have all wheels, of the-same size; all writing is with the same characters; and for conduct there are the same rules” (非天子、不議禮、不制度、不考文。今天下車同軌、書同文、行同倫). Text and translation from James Legge, *The Analects, The Greater Learning, The Doctrine of the Mean* (New York: Dover Books, 1971), pp. 423-4.

¹⁵ Although, as J. Marshall Unger argues, Hakuseki does not necessarily draw any broader geopolitical conclusions from this fact: “For [Hakuseki], *dōbun* apparently means nothing more than that the same characters are used in both Chinese and Japanese writing, much as we might say—a little imprecisely but not falsely - that the same characters are used in English and Italian (as opposed to Russian) writing.” See J.

Chinese intellectuals, it is only in the modern period that this term seems to assume its considerable weight in Sino-Japanese interactions. Yet we would be making a mistake to assume that “same writing” was understood and used in the same way in the 1870s as it was in the 1930s. Careful study of the way in which the rhetoric of “same writing” tended to function in its 1870s is thus merited, and paying closer attention to the differing contexts reveals some important differences with the resonances of the later imperial slogan. For one, it is not until as late as 1885 that we first see the term “same writing” used in tandem with “same race.”¹⁶ The way in which “same writing” is used in the 1870s makes clear that it outlined a vision of a specifically elite transnational group, one that was not coterminous with either ethnic or national groups as a whole. Rather, one of the points of the rhetoric was to establish and reinforce the boundaries of poets as a group of intellectuals apart from the hoi polloi of their respective countries. “Same writing” in its 1870s context must thus be understood as advancing a far narrower set of claims than those implied by its later re-use in the context of Japanese imperial conquest.

At least on the surface, the ties celebrated in this discourse of “same writing” do seem to offer the possibility of narrating a Sino-Japanese literary history not predicated on exclusive ideas of national identity as the underpinnings of literary production, a possibility taken up in a number of recent studies. Richard King and Cody Poulton have described the early 1870s as a period of exploration of “the Sinosphere outside its Chinese core, among both Chinese and Japanese members of an intellectual class that grew up at a time when their shared command of an elite culture created a homeland without national boundaries, an Eden before the Fall of Japanese militarism.”¹⁷ Though discussing a rather later period, the early 20th century, Karen Thornber adopts similar goals in her path-breaking study of literary interaction in East Asia. She proposes a

Marshall Unger, “The Very Idea: The Notion of Ideogram in China and Japan” *Monumenta Nipponica* 45:4 (Winter 1990), p. 399.

¹⁶ As far as I can tell, this is the first use in public discourse of the longer “same writing, same race” slogan. It appears in a piece serialized between August 29th and 31st, 1885, in the *Jiyū shinbun* 自由新聞 newspaper, against the background of the recently-concluded Sino-French War of 1884-5. Juxtaposing the French, who were of “different writing, different race” (Ch. *yīwén yìzhǒng*, J. *ibun ishu* 異文異種), with the Chinese, who were of the “same writing, same race,” the Japanese author concluded that it may be true that the two countries shared writing; however, this did not matter, for simple similarity did not constitute a compelling argument for Japan casting its lot in with its Asian neighbor. Quoted in Shibahara Takuji 芝原拓自 et al., eds., *Taigaikan* 对外観 (Views of the Outside World) *Nihon kindai shisō taikai* 12 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1988), p. 290-291.

¹⁷ Richard King and Cody Poulton, “Introduction” in *Sino-Japanese Transculturations*, p. 5. The term “Sinosphere” here borrows from Joshua Fogel’s use of the term in Fogel, *Articulating the Sinosphere: Sino-Japanese Relations in Space and Time* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 4.

model of “East Asian contact nebulae,” which avoid the “steep hierarchies presupposed when viewing intra-Asian relationships in terms such as “(post)colonial and (post)semicolonial peoples, or those promoted by imperial discourse... Instead, artistic contact nebulae are characterized by atmospheres of greater reciprocity and diminished claims to authority than those of many other (post) imperial spaces.”¹⁸

The fluid nature of Sino-Japanese relations during the 1870s, though, renders any categorical statement as to the cordiality or otherwise of these interactions somewhat problematic. Furthermore, as Michael Bourdaughs has pointed out, the model upon which Thornber bases her notion of “contact nebulae,” that of the “contact zone” first proposed by Mary Louise Pratt, does itself allow the possibility that claims of equality and reciprocity can serve to mask mechanisms of hierarchical domination.¹⁹ As I argue, “same writing” could indeed function as a vehicle for friendship and affirmation of mutual ties; but, at the same time, it could equally be used as a discursive tool with which to challenge the primacy of China within the Sinosphere. If everyone, Chinese and Japanese, was writing the same poetry, then this implicitly questioned any ethical or geographical model that privileged center and periphery, and allowed that the participants might engage with one another as ostensible equals. It followed, therefore, that if everyone was playing the same game, sooner or later the question might arise as to who was winning.

“Friends with the Same Hearts”: Ye Songshi in Japan

Though overshadowed by his more famous countrymen who visited Japan, not least Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936), Ye Songshi has a claim to be one of the more successful Chinese men of letters to reside in Japan. Ye had, for instance, the honor of being the first non-Japanese poet to appear in prominent poet Mori Shuntō’s 森春濤 (Rochoku 魯直, 1819-1889) widely-circulated quatrain anthologies, and during his stay (and, indeed, after) he published letters and poems in Narushima Ryūhoku’s 成島柳北 (Korehiro 惟弘, 1837-1884) journal *Kagetsu shinshi* 花月新誌 and

¹⁸ Thornber, *Empire of Texts in Motion*, p. 3. Thornber re-iterates this crucial feature of “contact nebulae” in her 2012 “Collaborating, Acquiescing, Resisting: Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Transculturation of Japanese Literature” in King et al., eds., *Sino-Japanese Transculturations*, p. 102.

¹⁹ Michael Bourdaughs, Review of *Empire of Texts in Motion* in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 71:1 (June 2011), pp. 148-49. See also Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992) esp. Ch. 4, “Anti-Conquest II: The Myth of Reciprocity.”

Shuntō's *Shinbunshi* 新文詩, as well as in Ryūhoku's literary column in the *Chōya shinbun* 朝野新聞 newspaper.²⁰ If anything, his name actually appears more frequently than those of his better-studied compatriots in the Qing legation.

Unfortunately, we know very little about Ye's life outside of Japan. Originally from Jiaxing 嘉興, in the northern part of Zhejiang 浙江, few details are available concerning his early life other than fact that he sat, unsuccessfully, for the Metropolitan Graduate (*jinsshi* 進士) exam for entry to the civil service. Failure in this exam was exceedingly common, and it may have been the resulting need to secure employment that caused him to look overseas to make a living. The precise dates of Ye's stay in Japan are uncertain; most probably, he arrived in February of 1874 and stayed until September of 1876, returning for a second, far less felicitous stay from the summer of 1880 to around February of 1882.²¹ His initial arrival can be dated to February 1874 by Tokyo metropolitan archives, which show that he had become a registered resident of Tokyo's Jinbōchō 神保町 district by February of 1874.

Having been recommended by the Japanese consulate in Shanghai, Ye was taken on by the newly-established Tokyo Foreign Languages School as an instructor in spoken Chinese. There was a growing need for such instruction, for, according to the recollections of later diplomat Nakata Takanori 中田敬義 (1858-1943), who studied at the school, the Foreign Ministry's academy was at the time the only place in the country where it was possible to study spoken Chinese, rather than the written texts of the Chinese classics.²² Precisely what was defined as "spoken Chinese" and taught at the academy varied considerably over the years; the initial instructors had all been Japanese-born interpreters from Nagasaki, who spoke their own distinctive version of the language. The next few Chinese-born instructors, including Ye himself, were all from the south of China, which meant that they spoke a southern dialect rather than the northern

²⁰ Songshi's name appears as a contributor in Shuntō's 1875 *Tokyo saijin zekku* 東京才人絶句 (Quatrains by Tokyo's Men of Talent). See Fujikawa Hideo 富士川英郎, Matsushita Tadashi 松下忠, Sano Masami 佐野正巳, eds., *Shikashū Nihon kanshi* 詞華集 日本漢詩 (Poetry Collections of Japanese *Kanshi*) (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin, 1983-1984), vol. 8.

²¹ Wang Baoping 王宝平, *Shindai Chūnichi gakujuutsu kōryū no kenkyū* 清代中日学術交流の研究 (Studies on Sino-Japanese Scholarly Exchanges of the Qing era) (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 2005), pp. 36-37.

²² Nakata Takanori 中田敬義, "Meiji shoki no Shinago" 明治初期の支那語 (The Chinese Language in the Early Meiji Period) *Chūgoku bungaku* no. 83 (May 1942), p.12.

Mandarin (Ch. *guan hua*, J. *kanwa* 官話) that would perhaps have been more useful for trade and commerce.

Ye's direct predecessor was a man named Zhou Yu 周愈 (pen name Youmei 幼梅, c.1820-?) from Suzhou 蘇州 in coastal Jiangsu 江蘇, who also spoke the southern dialect. As with Ye himself, very little is known about Zhou Youmei's background; he had apparently come to Japan originally as a painter, and held the position at the school from August 1873 to January 1874, at a decent but not lavish salary of forty yen a month.²³ Though not in his post very long, Zhou seems to have made a marked negative impression on Nakata in particular, who dismissed him as "a fine painter, but not scholarly, and what's worse, he used opium" (*kono hito wa e wa umai ga, gakumon ga nai, sore ni ahen o nonda*).²⁴ Whether or not the specific allegation of opium abuse was true, in the eyes of some more high-minded students, Zhou's replacement with the scholarly and poetically-inclined Ye Songshi must have seemed a great improvement in the caliber of instructional staff.²⁵ Certainly, Ye's salary supports this impression that he was considered an upgrade over Zhou; at the princely sum of one hundred and fifty yen per month, he was earning not far off four times what his allegedly erratic predecessor had commanded. The available evidence suggests that he more than earned his wages, receiving a bonus and commendation from the school in February of 1876 for staying up late into the night grading student compositions.²⁶

Though evidently a diligent and committed teacher, probably Ye's most enduring contribution was his poetry. Very much in demand as a guest at poetry gatherings during his stay, he received a positive deluge of such invitations in the weeks before his return to China in the late summer of 1876. The poems offered to him at these gatherings, as well as a number that Ye himself composed in return, seem to have had special personal significance, for it was primarily

²³ The salary information derives from Rokkaku Tsunehiro 六角恒廣, *Chūgokugo gakushū yobun* 中国語学習余聞 (Anecdotes on the Study of Chinese Language) (Tokyo: Dōgakusha, 1998), p. 245.

²⁴ Nakata "Meiji shoki no Shinago" p. 13.

²⁵ Songshi was the last instructor to teach a southern dialect; from September of 1876, the school employed Xue Nailiang 薛乃良 (n.d.) as instructor. As there were no textbooks for northern dialect, the school apparently used British Ambassador to China Thomas Wade's (1818-1895) *A Progressive Course Designed to Assist the Student of Colloquial Chinese* (*Yu yan zi er ji* 語言自邇集). Xue worked for two years and returned to China, to be replaced by Gong Enlu 龔恩祿 (n.d.), who likewise served for two years until September 1880. The next instructor, Cai Boang 蔡伯昂 (n.d.) resigned partway through his contract in October 1881, and the position remained unfilled thereafter. See Rokkaku, *Chūgokugo gakushū yobun*, pp. 245-48.

²⁶ Wang Baoping, *Shindai Chūnichi gakujutsu kōryū no kenkyū*, pp. 36-37.

these that he gathered and edited into a collection entitled *Parting Songs From Fusang* (Ch. *Fusang lichang ji* 扶桑離唱集).²⁷ Though Ye seems to have done a lot of the editing shortly after his return, the complete volume was not published until 1891, nearly fifteen years later, in Nanjing. Of all the possessions he brought back from Japan, Ye writes in the preface to the collection, the poems from his Japanese colleagues seem to have spurred the most interest in his fellow friends and literati back home in China:

The threads of my departing were in such a tangle that I had not the time to arrange everything in proper fashion. Therefore, after I had reached the Hu river [i.e. Shanghai], I opened up my trunk and showed everything to my friends, who fell over themselves to get hold of these things, understanding it to be literary writing from a foreign land. So I hurriedly copied everything out so as to preserve it.²⁸

時別緒紛如不遑編次抵滬後啓篋示諸友咸以為外國翰墨爭相持去因亟抄存之

This sense of the importance of literary writing is also attested to by several of the poems in the collection addressed to Ye by his Japanese friends, as in the case of Confucian scholar Matsuoka Kiken 松岡毅軒 (Tokitoshi 時敏, 1814-1877), who invokes the power of “shared writing.”²⁹

逸士西來名利輕	You, o reclusive literatus, came from the west, fame and glory as yet light, ³⁰
晶熒天際少微星	Your brilliance as stars twinkling on the horizon.
雖然殊俗談容易	Though our customs are different, conversation is easy;
本是同文筆太靈	The reason is the marvelous power of the brush of shared writing.
林下蕙蘭工寫意	In the shade of trees, cymbidium orchids skillfully tell their intent,
湖邊鷗鷺淡忘形	By the lake, gulls and shrikes, pure of heart, forget all formality. ³¹

²⁷ The Fusang is a mythical tree growing far to the east in Chinese mythology, often used by both Chinese and Japanese poets to refer to the Japanese archipelago.

²⁸ Ye Songshi, “Zixu” *Fusang lichang ji*, p. 1 verso.

²⁹ Kiken was a keen *kanshi* poet and accomplished politician; a retained scholar for the Tosa domain, he was also a member of the Council of Elders (*genrō-in* 元老院).

³⁰ The use of the term “reclusive literatus” (Ch. *yishi*, J. *issshi* 逸士) may be a little in-joke here; Chen Jie notes that Songshi had requested that for his published poems in Mori Shuntō’s *Shinbunshi*, he be referred to by that title rather than “hermit” (Ch. *jushi*, J. *koji* 居士), which Shuntō had previously used for him and which Songshi apparently disliked. See Chen Jie 陳捷, *Meiji zenki NitChū gakujutsu kōryū no kenkyū: Shinkoku chūNichī kōshikan no bunka katsudō* 明治前期日中学術交流の研究：清国駐日公使館の文化活動 (Studies on Early Meiji Sino-Japanese Scholarly Exchanges: The Cultural Activities of the Qing Legation in Japan) (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 2003), p. 16. The term “coming from the west” (Ch. *xilai*, J. *seirai* 西來) has strong religious overtones, being used in both Japan and China to denote the propagation of Buddhist teachings from India to China, specifically by the monk Bodhidharma.

³¹ “Cymbidium orchids” were associated with the refined gentleman in Chinese textual tradition, especially one who was unappreciated or lived in an out-of-the-way place. “Gulls and shrikes” refers to an anecdote in

歸雲何日重飛渡
再得見君雙眼青

You drift home, like a cloud; when will you fly back once more,
That I may look on you again, with the eyes of a close friend?³²

Kiken's poem suggests throughout that, though unappreciated in his home country, Ye has fallen among friends in Japan; the reference to "fame and glory as yet light" and to cymbidium orchids (Ch. *hui lan* 蕙蘭) can perhaps be read as a reference to Ye's travails with the official examination system. Nevertheless, Kiken observes, they not only have "shared writing" but are kindred spirits, able to communicate in a way that transcends any cultural differences that may exist between them. Journalist and poet Narushima Ryūhoku, too, made passing reference to the idea that Ye was a man undervalued in his home country, in a verse produced at a drinking party prior to Ye's departure:

the *Lie Zi* concerning a man who was able to walk among seabirds only so long as his intent was pure; when his father suggested that he catch and sell them, they would not approach. The phrase *wang xing* 忘形 is used by Bai Juyi, "A Poem Imitating the Style of Tao Qian" (Xiao Tao Qian ti shi 效陶潛體詩): "I have friends with whom I can forget formality / They are faraway Li Guyan and Yuan Zhen (我有忘形友 / 迢迢李与元)." Chinese text from Bai Juyi, eds. Ding Ruming 丁如明, Nie Shimei 聂世美 *Bai Juyi quan ji* 白居易全集 (Collected Works of Bai Juyi) (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1999), p. 67.

³² "Fusang lichang ji" *Fusang lichang ji* p. 11 recto.

次韻餞松石葉君

FOLLOWING THE RHYMES AT THE FAREWELL PARTY FOR MR. YE
SONGSHI

同文之國友同心	Lands with the same writing, friends with the same hearts -
亦是歡諧比瑟琴	And our joyous banter is as harmonious as zither and lute. ³³
浙土更生新杜牧	The soil of Zhejiang brought forth a new Du Mu, ³⁴
瀧川遠訪小支林	And the waters of the Shuang river carried him far, to visit this little “spur of the woods.” ³⁵
儒家何必論賓戲	Why should the scholar bother debating “A Guest’s Jest?” ³⁶
藝苑長應賦子襟	You have long been active in literature; you should write poetry <i>a la</i> “The Blue Hood.” ³⁷
可愛樓頭送君酒	Upstairs at the Ke’ai drinking house, I pass you a cup of wine;
兕觥雖淺別情深	The old wine-cup is shallow, but our grief on parting deep. ³⁸

Ryūhoku himself had some experience of being a man disengaged from official patronage, having won a certain amount of popular admiration for refusing to transfer his allegiances as an official of the Tokugawa bakufu and serve in the new Meiji administration. Ryūhoku’s chosen references, to Du Mu and to Ban Gu, highlight a specific archetype from Chinese history, that of the talented scholar-official who never receives the official recognition he deserves. As the same description could perhaps be applied to Ryūhoku himself, we can read this as emphasizing their shared textual

³³ The *Classic of Poetry*: “Loving union with wife and children / Is like the music of lutes / But it is the accord of brothers / Which makes the harmony and happiness lasting” (妻子好合 / 如鼓瑟琴 / 兄弟既翕 / 和樂且湛). English translation from James Legge, *The Chinese Classics With a Translation, Critical and Exegetical Notes, Prolegomena, and Copious Indexes* (Hong Kong: Lane, Crawford, and Company, 1871), 4:252. Chinese text from Ge Peiling 葛培嶺, ed., *Shi jing 詩經 Wu jing quan yi* (Zhengzhou Shi) (Zhengzhou Shi: Zhongzhou gu ji chu ban she, 1993), p. 256.

³⁴ Du Mu 杜牧 (803-852), a major late Tang poet who occupied a series of official positions in different locales throughout China, but never achieved high rank. Ryūhoku is paying Ye a compliment by suggesting that despite his peregrinations and lack of success in the official exams in his home country, history will nevertheless remember him as a fine poet.

³⁵ *Xiao zhi* 小支, literally the “little branch,” refers to the secondary protruding blade on a halberd. Here it is used more literally, in the sense of an offshoot (here, I read 枝 for the original text’s 支).

³⁶ A reference to Ban Gu 班固 (32-92 CE), “Answering a Guest’s Jest” (Da bin xi 答賓戲), from the *Selections of Refined Literature* (Ch. *Wen xuan*, J. Monzen 文選). This piece consists in part of Ban Gu defending himself against the suggestion that his literary abilities had won him no official recognition.

³⁷ “Blue collar” refers to a famous poem from the *Classic of Poetry*: “O you, with the blue collar / Prolonged is the anxiety of my heart / Although I do not go [to you] / Why do you not continue your messages [to me]?” (青青子衿 / 悠悠我心 / 縱我不往 / 子寧不嗣音) Text from Ge Peiling, ed., *Shi jing*, p. 138-9).

³⁸ “Fusang lichang ji” *Fusang li chang ji*, p. 7 recto. This is the second in a sequence of two separate rhyme-matching poems on which the guests were composing.

knowledge and personal experiences, with Ryūhoku then concluding the poem by offering Ye another cup of wine.

Ye's own responding poem features a measure of self-deprecating humor in answering Ryūhoku:

戰酣文字醉紅裙
努力糟邱共策勳

絃上恨聲藏隱謎
鬢邊花氣破微醺
因窺妙舞呼輕鳳
擬發狂言乞紫雲
今夜酒醒何處也
別筵休怪手難分

With this battle at its height, our words get the beauties drunk,
Striving to drain the keg to the last drop, we both get our names in
the record books.

Notes of regret from musical strings hold hidden mysteries,
Scent of flowers by my beard awakens me from my tipsy state.
Having beheld wondrous dances that recall Qing Feng,³⁹
I set about writing crazy words, and call for a purple ink-stone.
Where will I be when I wake from tonight's drunkenness?⁴⁰
With a farewell party like this, it's hardly surprising that parting is
so hard.⁴¹

Ye's opening lines echo Tang poet Han Yu's 韓愈 (768-824) celebration of "literary drinking (*wenzi yin* 文字飲),"⁴² though with a good deal of self-deprecating humor in the mix; poetic production is, in his conception, matched by equal alcoholic consumption, as both parties become more eloquent in literary skill and more inebriated at the same time. Setting off the male companionship with Ryūhoku by expressing appreciation for the female entertainers at the banquet, Ye proceeds to close with a line from a famous parting poem by Liu Yong, implying his distress at setting off on a journey in which he must leave his friends behind.

³⁹ One of two legendary dancing girls from the Tang era, sisters by the name of Qing Feng 輕鳳 ("Light Phoenix") and Fei Luan 飛鸞 ("Flying Simurgh").

⁴⁰ A slight variation on a line from a famous parting poem, "The Rain-Soaked Bell" (Yu lin ling 雨霖鈴), by Song poet Liu Yong 柳永 (987-1053). In the original poem, the speaker laments the prospect of leaving loved ones behind as he sets out on his travels: "Where will I be when I wake from this night's drunkenness? / Willow banks, the dawn breeze, the waning moon" (今宵酒醒何處 / 楊柳岸曉風殘月). Chinese text from Liu Yong, ed. Zhang Huimin 張惠民, *Liu Yong ci xuan zhu* 柳永詞選注 (Selections and Commentary of Liu Yong's *Ci*) (Beijing Shi : Ren min wen xue chu ban she, 2007), p. 44

⁴¹ "Fusang li chang ji" *Fusang li chang ji*, p. 7 recto.

⁴² From "Presented While Drunk, to Secretary Zhang" (Zui zeng Zhang mi shu 醉贈張秘書): "The crowds of rich boys in Chang'an / with their fine dishes and rows of fine meats / don't understand literary drinking - / they can only get red-skirted girls drunk." (長安眾富兒 / 盤饌羅臚葷 / 不解文字飲 / 惟能醉紅裙). Text and translation taken from Anna Shields, *One Who Knows Me: Friendship and Literary Culture in Mid-Tang China* Harvard-Yenching Monographs 96 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), p. 160.

The sentiments of friendship seem to have been genuine enough, for Ye did indeed keep in touch with his erstwhile friends in Japan. Mori Shuntō's *kanshi* journal *Shinbunshi* published several letters from Ye after his return to China, though it seems from these letters that Ye's subsequent life was not a particularly happy one. In a letter published in August of 1878, Ye announces his pleasure at his marriage the previous autumn to a woman from a merchant family who was skilled in poetry, but this happy news was tempered somewhat by his apparent difficulties in finding suitable employment.⁴³ In a further letter published in November 1878, Ye writes wistfully that "when I think on the old days in Tokyo, of dallying in wine and poetry, it all seems like a glorious dream. These days I grow ever busier with mundane affairs, and for quite some time I have set aside the composition of poetry" (憶昔東京詩酒流連恍如夢寐今者俗障滋深久廢吟事).⁴⁴ A further letter in the following issue of *Shinbunshi* records that, in search of suitable employment, "I travelled to Shanghai and took lodgings there, but it was as pointless as climbing a tree to catch fish... There is no Xu Jia in this world, so who will take pity on this Fan Shu?" (弟羈留上海緣木求魚 [...] 世無須賈誰憐范叔)⁴⁵

Seemingly out of both desperation and nostalgia, Ye elected to return to Japan for a second sojourn in the summer of 1880. Given his straitened circumstances, this was not easy; a letter published in the *Chōya shinbun* newspaper on May 19th 1880 indicated that he had found passage back to Japan, but was concerned that he did not have enough money to fund his trip.⁴⁶ Having made it to Japan, Ye subsequently spent time in Osaka and Kyoto, but fell ill during his sojourn and was ultimately forced to return to China by February of 1882 without having fully recovered. What happened to him subsequently is not entirely clear; during 1884, he is known to have been working in an official post in Jiangning 江寧 in Jiangsu, but seems to have left that job to move to

⁴³ Ye Songshi, "Yu Sen Xihuang" 與森希黃 (To Mori Shuntō), letter published in *Shinbunshi* no. 37 (August 1878), p. 8 verso. Songshi writes that "since I returned home, my circumstances have not been good" (煒歸國以來迄無佳境), but also notes his pleasure at marrying a woman who shared his interest in scholarship ("she is rather well-versed in literature" (亦頗知書)). I am grateful to Tom Gaubatz for assistance in gaining access to the *Shinbunshi* materials.

⁴⁴ Ye Songshi, "Fu Hushan Xiaoye Cizong xiansheng" 復湖山小野詞宗先生 (Replying to Master Poet Mr. Ono Kozan) *Shinbunshi* no. 41 (November 1878), p. 10 recto.

⁴⁵ Ye Songshi, "Yu Sen Xihuang" 與森希黃 (To Mori Shuntō), letter published in *Shinbunshi* no. 42 (December 1879), p. 8 verso. Fan Shu (aka Fan Ju 范雎) was a minister of the state of Wei 魏 who served under Xu Jia 須賈. Fan Shu was beaten as a result of a false charge of treachery, and escaped to the state of Qin. Encountering Fan Shu while on a diplomatic mission to Qin, Xu Jia took pity on him and provided him with a silk robe, unaware that Fan Shu had become prime minister of the state in the meantime.

⁴⁶ Chen Jie, *Meiji zenki Nitchū gakujutsu kōryū no kenkyū*, p. 22.

Nanjing in 1885, where he published a portion of the poems he had written and received in Japan, among them the collection that later became *Parting Songs*. This second trip was, in many ways, an unhappy sequel to a remarkable first sojourn in Japan.

“Give us the first note, and we will join in with you”: Li Zihu’s *Collected Harmonies*

Not all of the poems that make up Ye’s collection *Parting Songs* were composed in Japan; some of the featured verse appear to have been written by his friends in China to welcome him back. The term “same writing” crops up in these exchanges too; one sequence, composed by a poet from Xiaoshan 蕭山 (part of present-day Hangzhou) named Zhou Yinxi 周蔭溪 (n.d.) opines that “Trade with foreign lands was like exchanging hostages / But the friendship of “shared writing” makes us ever closer” (互市如交質 / 同文誼倍親).⁴⁷ A couplet later in the same sequence by Zhou also hails “[Ye] Songshi, the hero of our realm / His prose and poetry respected even abroad!” (松石吾邦傑 / 詩文異域尊)⁴⁸

Ye Songshi had had the distinct advantage of being physically present in Japan when exchanging poetry with his Japanese counterparts, but this was not an absolute requirement for a Chinese poet to gain celebrity in the Tokyo *kanshi* world. So it proved with *Collected Harmonies of the Eastern Seas* (Ch. *Hai dong chang chou ji*, J. *Kaitō shōshū shū* 海東唱酬集). In this collection, the exchange that made up the bulk of the collection was between two poets, Guangzhou-based Li Zihu and Tokyo *kanshi* poet Suzuki Ryōsho 鈴木蓼処 (Ro 魯, 1833-1878), who never actually met in person.

In fact, the closest Li Zihu ever came to meeting any of the Japanese poets whose names appear in *Collected Harmonies* seems to have been a near miss with Seki Shōun 關湘雲 (Yoshiomi 義臣, 1839-1918). A keen *kanshi* poet and later politician from Echizen 越前, in north-central Japan, Shōun had set out in June of 1867 for what was supposed to be a period of study in the United Kingdom. En route, however, his ship encountered a typhoon in the Bay of Hong Kong

⁴⁷ “Ti ci” 題詞 (Dedicatory Poems) *Fusang lichang ji*, p. 2 verso. *Hu shi* 互市 or “exchange fair” refers to a Han-dynasty practice of establishing exchanges at border areas, where trade could be conducted between the Chinese and their neighbors. Hans Van de Ven notes that the 1818 *Collected Statutes of the Qing Dynasty* divided foreign countries into “trade partners” (*hu shi zhu guo* 互市諸国) and tributary states, with Japan falling into the former category. See Hans Van de Ven, *Breaking with the Past: the Maritime Customs Service and the Global Origins of Modernity in China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), p. 54.

⁴⁸ “Ti ci” *Fusang lichang ji*, p. 2 verso.

and got into difficulties, meaning that Shōun had to abandon his voyage and spend a period of time in the British colony before returning to Japan in September of the same year. While recuperating, Shōun met two local Chinese men of letters, Wu Guanzhi 吳貫之 (n.d.) and Zhuo Shaoqiong 卓少瓊 (n.d.). Finding Shōun convivial company, both urged him to meet Li Zihu, a prominent name in local poetic circles. Shōun explains what happened next in the first half of his afterword to *Collected Harmonies*:

A little over ten years ago, I sailed to Guangdong in China. There I became friends with Zhuo Shaoqiong and Wu Guanzhi. The two spoke approvingly of the poems of Li Zihu, and went on and on endlessly about him. The day of my departure was close at hand, and so I had not the leisure to knock at Zihu's door. I thought this most regrettable, but not long after, Guanzhi came to visit me in Yokohama, and we were able to renew our acquaintance. In due course I entrusted Guanzhi with a letter to give to Zihu, and from that time and thereafter, our correspondence flew and swam back and forth. Barely a month went by without it. My friend Suzuki Ryōsho was one who was skilled in the composition of poetry, and through me he became friends with Zihu.[...]

距今十餘年前。余航清國廣東。卓少瓊吳貫之結交。二字稱道李子詩。嘖々不釋口。余開飄有日。無暇叩其門。以為憾既而貫之來我橫濱。再得相見。遂託貫之通書子。自時厥後。魚雁往復。殆無虛月。友人鈴木蓼処。巧於吟詠者也。亦介余納交子 [...]⁴⁹

Like Ye Songshi, Li had been unsuccessful in the civil service exams, and had chosen to make a living teaching in Guangzhou while writing and publishing on matters poetic.⁵⁰ The two did not meet during his period of stay in Hong Kong, though as it happened Shōun was far from the only Japanese poet to enter Li's social orbit during this time. From his own poetry and from other writings around the time, it seems virtually certain that Li was also good friends with none other

⁴⁹ Seki Yoshiomi, "Batsu" 跋 (Afterword), in *KSS*, p. 1; *ZRSJLJ*, p. 124. The primary text I have consulted is that contained in Wang Baoping, ed., *Zhong Ri shi wen jiao liu ji* 中日詩文交流集 (Collection of Sino-Japanese Poetry and Prose Exchanges) Wan Qing dong you ri ji hui ban 1 (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 2004). For all citations below from the text of *Kaitō shōshū shū* (hereafter *KSS*), I give both the page number in the original 1879 edition (*KSS*) and in the *Zhong Ri shi wen jiao liu ji* (*ZRSJLJ*) version. I have also consulted the microfiche version produced by Meiji kankōbutsu shūsei. I am grateful for assistance from the libraries of The Ohio State University for access to this version. Both versions appear to be based on the first edition of *KSS* rather than the slightly revised version issued with some minor corrections; for instance, Chen Jie notes that the second edition corrects an error regarding the date that news of Zihu's death reached Ryōsho (see *Meiji zenki Nitchū gakujutsu kōryū no kenkyū*, p. 36, n. 57).

⁵⁰ Cai Yi 蔡毅, "Li Changrong *Haidong chang chou ji kao*" 李長榮「海東唱酬集」考 (Thoughts on Li Changrong's *Haidong chang chou ji*) *Taiwan gu dian wen xue yan jiu ji kan* 臺灣古典文學研究集刊 (June 2009), p. 393.

than Yabe Junshuku 八戸順叔 (Kisaburō 喜三郎, n.d.), a mysterious Japanese expatriate resident in Hong Kong in or around 1867.⁵¹

Junshuku's major claim to fame was that he had managed to do substantial damage to Japan's earliest modern diplomatic relations with China and Korea, primarily by publishing a letter in the January 17th, 1867 edition of the Hong Kong Chinese-language newspaper *Zhong wai xin wen* 中外新聞. In this letter, he asserted Japan's historical claims over the Korean peninsula, and, noting Japan's rapid modernization of its military, claimed that the country's various feudal lords were even now assembling in Edo as part of a planned invasion of Korea, since that state had failed to send appropriate tribute to Japan. Though the plans described were almost total fantasy, the letter caused a major stir; the Qing authorities forwarded it to Korea and demanded an explanation from Japan, and Junshuku's letter continued to cast a shadow on Korean-Japanese relations for some time after.

If Li was aware of Junshuku's notoriety, it does not seem to have acted as any barrier to their friendship. Li mentions Junshuku by name on multiple occasions in the text of the poems of *Collected Harmonies*, as well as in several interlinear notes to the poems, and other local Chinese literati seem to have taken note of Junshuku and Li's interaction as well. In a text entitled *Occasional Discussions using Leftover Ink* (*Yu mou ou tan* 餘墨偶譚, 1873), another literatus named Sun Yun 孫雲 (n.d.; fl. 19th c) noted Junshuku's interest in poetry and his relationship with Zihu:

⁵¹ Other Chinese travelers encountered Junshuku; Wang Tao 王韜 (1828-1897) mentions in his writings that Junshuku had previously lived in the U.S. and spoke fluent English. Overall, however, relatively little is known about him or what he was doing in Hong Kong; for a survey of available evidence, see Yasuoka Akio 安岡昭男, *Bakumatsu ishin no ryōdo to gaikō* 幕末維新の領土と外交 (Territory and Diplomacy in the Bakumatsu-Restoration Period) (Osaka-shi: Seibundō, 2002), p. 177 n. 6. Yasuoka also provides a useful short summary of the Yabe incident and its ripples on pp. 143-6. Kang Pomsok 姜範錫 discusses Junshuku in *Seikanron seihen: Meiji rokunen no kenryoku tōsō* 征韓論政変：明治六年の権力闘争 (The "Invade Korea" Political Crisis: A Power Struggle in the Sixth Year of Meiji) (Tokyo: Saimaru shuppankai, 1990), pp. 258-266. Of particular interest is the intriguing (if extremely speculative) assertion that "Hachinohe" (per Kang's reading) Junshuku may actually have been none other than Joseph Heco (aka Hamada Hikozaō 浜田彦蔵, 1837-1897), a shipwreck victim who became the first Japanese person to naturalize as a US citizen. The most comprehensive summary of known information on Junshuku in English is in Joshua Fogel, *Between Japan and China: The Writings of Joshua Fogel* (Boston: Brill, 2015), p. 289.

Part of a Verse by a Japanese Poet

The way of poetry in Japan has reached great heights. Of late, there was a poet from Edo, Yabe Fuji Junshuku (named Hiromitsu/Hongguang), who thought nothing of vast distances, and, sailing over here, came to the Willow Hall [i.e., Zihu's study], where, apprenticing himself to the highly esteemed Li Zihu, he asked about matters of poetry, calling himself a "poetic disciple from across the seas." On parting from Zihu, he wrote a verse which ran "Perhaps some day you will visit my home in Edo / A place of white lotus and cool waters in the evening sunset." He was possessed of particularly elegant thoughts.⁵²

日本詩人斷句

日本詩教甚盛。近有詞人江戸百戸藤順叔（宏光）、不遠數万里、航海至柳堂從李子光祿問詩、自稱海外之詩弟子。其別子有句云：「他日倘尋江戸宅・白蓮秋水夕陽邊。」亦殊有美思也。

Having thus already made the acquaintance of Japanese poet, Li would shortly get to know several others as well. The poem that opens *Collected Harmonies* is in fact addressed to Li from Suzuki Ryōsho, and is probably the same poem that Shōun mentions as having given to Wu Guanzhi to carry back to China:

寄呈南海李子虎先生

PRESENTED TO MASTER LI ZIHU OF NANHAI

幾見詞葩落日東	As I look again and again on these poetic flowers falling in eastern sunlight,
神交十載夢空通	The prospect of ten years of spiritual friendship fills the void of my dreams.
屋梁一夜留殘月	Beside the rafters of my room, all night long I keep company with the waning moon,
尺素三秋付去鴻	My 'foot of silk' I entrust to departing swans in this autumn season. ⁵³
筆法森嚴北海垂	Your brush is more grand and solemn than the northern seas,
詩情豪逸青蓮風	Your poetry's emotion bold and unrestrained, in the style of Li Bai.
何當把臂華堂上	When then shall we, in shining halls, go arm in arm,
剪盡深宵燭炬紅	And trim to its end, in the deep night, the red lamp-wick? ⁵⁴

⁵² Sun Yun 孫樸, *Yu mou ou tan* 餘墨偶譚 (Taibei Shi: Da li chu ban she, 1982), *juan* 5 p. 12 recto. Quoted in Cai Yi, "Li Changrong *Haidong changchou ji kao*," p. 396.

⁵³ "Foot of silk" refers to a letter or missive, as attested to in fn. 55 below.

⁵⁴ KSS, 1 verso; ZRSJLJ, 115.

Ryōsho's opening line and praise for Zihu's poetry suggests that he had previously read some of the latter's work, possibly brought to Japan by Guanzhi, though if so the verses in question have since been lost. The poem hails Zihu as one with whom Ryōsho can share a "spiritual friendship" (Ch. *shen jiao*, J. *shinkō* 神交) that transcends physical separation; it features the classic image of messages being carried by autumn geese, while also positing the world of dreams and the imagination as a place where a meeting becomes possible.⁵⁵ Ryōsho's imagery and language consciously evoke the Tang poet Du Fu 杜甫 (J. To Ho, 712-770) and his well-known expressions of admiration for another poetic great, Li Bai 李白 (J. Ri Haku, 701-762). In particular, Ryōsho's third line echoes Du Fu's "Two Poems on Seeing Li Bai in a Dream" (Ch. Meng Li Bai er shou, J. Ri Haku o yumemu nishu 夢李白二首): "The sinking moon floods my rafters; I half expect to see it light up your face" (落月滿屋梁 / 猶疑照顏色).⁵⁶ Adapting Du Fu's imagery of dreams and moonlight as a venue where parted friends can meet, Ryōsho fashions an image of himself as a latter-day Du Fu, sitting alone and thinking of his absent friend by moonlight. Du Fu's admiration for Li Bai resonates throughout the whole poem; in addition to the obvious compliment paid to Zihu in line six, the final couplet's invitation to Zihu echoes the closing lines of another of Du Fu's poems to Li Bai, "Recalling Li Bai on a Spring Day" (Ch. Chun ri yi Li Bai, J. Haru no hi Ri Haku o omou 春日憶李白): "When shall we share a cask of wine / And again talk in depth of literature together?" (何時一尊酒 / 重與細論文)?⁵⁷

In using the model of Du Fu and Li Bai to structure his poem, Ryōsho could scarcely have been more complimentary to his Chinese counterpart, and all the indications are its intended recipient received it with great enthusiasm. Li's reply, preserved in *Collected Harmonies*, took the shape of no fewer than ten separate poems, all following the rhyme scheme of Ryōsho's original, in a practice known as "rhyme-following" (Ch. *ciyun*, J. *jiin* 次韻):

⁵⁵ The origin of this legend comes from the Han Dynasty diplomat Su Wu 蘇武 (140 BCE-60 BCE), who, when a prisoner of the Xiongnu, sent word to his family by attaching letters to the legs of departing birds.

⁵⁶ Chinese text from Du Fu, ed. Gao Ren 高仁, *Du Fu quan ji* 杜甫全集 (Complete Works of Du Fu) (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1996), p. 34.

⁵⁷ Chinese text from *Du Fu quan ji*, p. 126. The parallel with Du Fu's verse was not lost on its recipients in China; Guangzhou literatus Li Wentai records Ryōsho's exchange with Zihu and quotes the poem *in toto*, observing that "both form and intent in this poem follow old Du Fu's 'Recalling Li Bai on a Spring Day.'" (此詩格意全仿老杜春日懷李白) See Li Wentai, ed., *Hai shan shi wu shi hua*, *juan* 6 p. 3.

日本鈴木魯先生遠寄瑤篇次韵奉酬兼簡順叔諸君

Mr. Suzuki Ro of Japan sent me a fine poem from far away. Following the rhymes, I answered him. I also send this missive to Yabe Junshuku and everyone else.

疊韻九首
[Second of Ten]⁵⁸

NINE POEMS, REDOUBLING THE RHYMES

詩國遙開東極東
天教我輩墨緣通
疊來春信雙雙鯉
不斷秋心一一鴻
往日曾編才子傳

Poetry's domain stretches far to the east, the furthest east;
Heaven's will comes through in these bonds of ink.
Again and again word of spring comes to me, inside paired carp,⁵⁹
Thoughts of autumn always with me, as each wild swan flies by.
In days gone by, your people re-compiled the *Biographies of Tang Masters*,⁶⁰

貴國曾再刻唐才子傳
此邦原稟聖人風
關情試望天涯月
竟夕相思詫曲紅

[Interlinear note:] Your country once re-printed the *Tang caizi zhuan*
And in this land, we have ever acknowledged the way of the sages.
Greatly moved, I try looking to the moon at the ends of the earth,
Awake 'til dawn, my thoughts turn to Zhang Qujiang.⁶¹

張曲紅詩海上生明月天涯共此時情人怨遙夜竟夕起相思

[Interlinear note:] Zhang Qujiang's poem: "Over the sea rises the moon bright / On the horizon, you see it just the same as I do / My love, I hate the long, long night / I stay up 'til dawn, with my lovesick thoughts of you."

Li's responding poem retains not only the rhyme structure of Ryōsho's verse, but also much of its tone and imagery; in addition to echoing the image of departing birds carrying messages, it

⁵⁸ Per the count in the collection itself, Zihu's responding poems consist of one response and nine further "redoubling" poems, for a total of ten. Above, I have reproduced the second and the tenth poems in the sequence.

⁵⁹ Much like geese, "paired carp" were strongly associated with letters in Chinese poetry. The *locus classicus* is from a *yuefu* poem attributed to Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133-192) that appears in the Six Dynasties collection *Yutai xinyong* 玉臺新詠 (New Poems from the Jade Terrace): "A traveler came from far away / He brought me a brace of carp / I call my children and cook the carp / Inside I find a white silk letter" (客從遠方來 / 遺我雙鯉魚 / 呼兒烹鯉魚 / 中有尺素書). Text from Ling Xu 徐陵 et al., eds., *Yutai xinyong jian zhu* 玉臺新詠箋注 (Annotated Commentary on the *Yutai xinyong*) (Zhongguo gu dian wen xue ji ben cong shu (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju : Xin hua shu dian Beijing fa xing suo fa xing, 1985), 1:33-34; translation from Kang-I Sung Chang et al., eds., *Women Writers of Traditional China: An Anthology of Poetry and Criticism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 148

⁶⁰ This refers to the *Tang caizi zhuan* 唐才子傳, a series of biographies of Tang poets. Originally compiled by Xin Wenfang 辛文房 (fl. 13th-14th c), this was subsequently lost in China until the early 19th century, when it was re-imported as part of the *Itsuzon sōsho* 佚存叢書 (Series of Lost Texts). The latter was a collection of works lost in China but preserved in Japan, edited by scholar Hayashi Jussai 林述齋 (1768-1841) and published between 1799 and 1810.

⁶¹ KSS, 1 recto-2 verso; ZRSJLJ, 115-16. Zhang Qujiang (more commonly written as 張曲江, 678-740, a.k.a. Zhang Jiuling 張九齡), a noted scholar, poet, and minister of the Tang dynasty. The change in the final graph of Zhang's name may be an error or an attempt to conform to the poem's rhyme scheme.

follows up on Ryōsho's image of Du Fu and the moon by introducing another, similar image of parted friends (or lovers) both gazing at the moon in their respective locations. Li also points to the preservation of lost Chinese texts in Japan as evidence of a common reverence for learning and textual scholarship, the *Biographies of Tang Masters* being only one of a number of such texts originally lost in China but preserved in Japan. This careful reverence shown to such precious textual materials is clear evidence of Japan's propriety, implicitly paralleling China's observance of "the way of the sages."

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the considerable distances separating the main protagonists, the possibility of bridging distance is a recurring theme in most of the poems in *Collected Harmonies*. For both Li and Ryōsho, just as the exchange of poetry represents harmony and friendship between the two as individuals, it also points towards a shared bond between their two countries:

[Tenth Poem of Ten]

一笑平生吾道東	I laugh to find that all along, "our Way has travelled east," ⁶²
詩聲遠與海聲通	The sound of poetry carrying far with the sound of ocean waves.
山間雪榻身依鶴	With a couch of snow amid the mountains, cranes are my companions;
江上秋琴目送鴻	Over the river, I watch departing swans to the sounds of the autumn <i>qin</i> .
中國何會分外國	How can the Middle Kingdom be divided from outer lands?
正風從不入淫風	One does not slip into immorality after knowing righteousness.
釣鰲願學青蓮祖	Fishing for great turtles, I wish to imitate old Li Bai,
[interlinear note]: 李白自署海上釣鰲客 Li Bai called himself "the man who fishes on the sea for turtles"	
鈎把珊瑚七尺紅	My hook catches a coral tree, seven <i>chi</i> of bright red. ⁶³

⁶² This expression originates from the story of the classical scholar Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) of the Later Han, who studied the classics with the scholar Ma Rong 馬融 (79-166) for over ten years, before leaving to start his own school. His biography is recorded in the *Book of Latter Han*, Ch. 35; Ma Rong sighs that "Now student Zheng has left me, and my way will travel east" (鄭生今去, 吾道東矣). In context, Zihu is expressing pleasure that the practice of Sinitic poetry has made its way to Japan. Chinese text from Ye Fan 范曄, ed. Xianqian Wang 王先謙 *Hou Han shu ji jie* 後漢書集解 (Collected Commentaries on the *Hou Han Shu*) (Taipei: Yi wen yin shu guan, 1955), 1:434.

⁶³ *KSS*, 3 verso; *ZRSJLJ*, 116. Red coral was a highly prized trade commodity produced far to the west of China, in the Mediterranean and Red Sea area. Associated with mysterious lands far away and of great value, in context this is a lavish compliment as to the high quality of the poems he has received. A seven *chi* (J. *shaku*) coral tree would have been enormous (around seven feet tall) and of great value. See Mark E.

Having been likened to Li Bai by Ryōsho, Li develops this motif further by alluding to a recurring image in Li Bai's poetry of "fishing for turtles."⁶⁴ This is a complex and multi-layered allusion; on one level, the expression 'to fish for turtles' (*diao ao* 釣鰲) in Chinese can refer to one with grand ambitions; in this context, the reference is a good-humored way for Li to deny Ryōsho's compliment by suggesting that Li's ambitions are not as grand as his accomplishments. In another layer of complexity, the *locus classicus* for the expression is the "Questions of Tang" (Tang wen 湯問) chapter of the *Liezi* 列子, which describes islands on the back of giant turtles floating in the sea far to the east of China. For Li Zihu to "fish for turtles," in the manner of Li Bai's poetic persona, is thus also for him implicitly to gaze across the waters and imagine the quasi-mythical islands of Japan. What Li catches, in this complicated image, is a red-coral tree, a valuable item from far away – by implication, a mark of high esteem for Ryōsho's poem.

Li's ten responding poems seem to have been met with a rapturous reception in the Tokyo *kanshi* world, and Ryōsho seems to have shown them to as many of his fellow poets as possible. Washizu Kidō 鷲津毅堂 (Norimitsu 宣光, 1825-1882), the grandfather of the celebrated writer Nagai Kafū 永井荷風 (Sōkichi 壯吉, 1879-1959), noted in an interlinear note to his own responding poem in the collection that "the exchanges between Ryōsho and Ye Songshi, and now those between him and Li Zihu of Nanhai, have been on everyone's lips for a while in the *kanshi* world" (夢処与葉松石倡和今又李南海倡酬一時文場傳為佳話).⁶⁵ Kidō was not alone in wanting to join in, as *Collected Harmonies* features verses from Mori Shuntō, Ono Kozan 小野湖山 (Nagayoshi 長愿, 1814-1910), Matsuoka Kiken, and Seki Shōun, all important figures in the Tokyo *kanshi* world at the time.

It is unclear exactly when these collected responses from the Japanese poets reached Li in Guangzhou, but he seems once again to have been thrilled to receive them. It was at this point that Li began the work of collecting together the various poems in the exchange, and he who gave it

Lewis, *China Between Empires: The Northern and Southern Dynasties* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), pp. 159-60.

⁶⁴ Li Bai refers to "catching turtles" in several of his poems; Zihu may have in mind here "Song of Sorrow on a Clear Autumn" (Bei qing qiu fu 悲清秋賦): "Looking out over the great ocean fills me with envy / I think I will go and fish for giant turtles on its shores" (臨窮溟以有羨 / 思釣鰲于滄洲). Text from Li Bai, ed. Wang Qi 王琦, *Li Bai quan ji* 李白全集 (Collected Works of Li Bai) Zhongguo gu dian wen xue ji ben cong shu (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1977), 1:23.

⁶⁵ KSS, 6 recto; ZRSJLJ, 116.

the title *Collected Harmonies*, under which it would later be published in Japan. For the anticipated complete collection, Li penned a preface that placed the exchange in the context of other great interactions between Chinese poets and foreigners:

In times of old the Prime Minister of Jilin would only acknowledge the “true poems” referred to in the *Biography of Bai Juyi*.⁶⁶ The poet of Wheel River [i.e. Wang Wei 王維 (699-759)], in his preface sending Zhao Heng [i.e., Abe no Nakamaro 阿倍仲麻呂 (c. 698-c.770)] back to his home land, by turns praised his poetic skill and recorded their sorrow on parting.⁶⁷ Since those days, I have not heard of poetic jewels cast far, or fine works many times answered. Master Suzuki is a man of soaring talent, able to cross the sea and fly to the land of immortals. As I look back on over ten years of spiritual friendship, I have his heptasyllabic quatrains here to hand; as I discourse on his style, I am an enraptured Du Fu recalling Li Bai’s poems; in being awestruck at his artistic skill, it is just the same as how the Korean emissary sought Wang Shizhen’s appreciation.⁶⁸ So, in great excitement, “give us the first note, and we will join in with you!”⁶⁹ I have taken several of these poems and turned them into *Collected Harmonies of the Eastern Sea*,

⁶⁶ Jilin (Kr. *Gyerim*) refers to the state of Shilla 新羅, which existed from 57 BCE-935 CE and occupied most of the Korean peninsula. Bai Juyi’s poems were apparently so much in demand there that unscrupulous merchants would concoct fake verses and sell them to visiting Korean merchants as the real thing. Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779-831) records in his preface to the *Bai shi changqing ji* 白氏長慶集 (Collected Poems by Mr. Bai of the Changqing Era) that “An merchant from Jilin came to the market looking for [Bai’s poems], saying that the Prime Minister of his country would exchange each one for one hundred pieces of gold; but that if there was a fake poem, the minister would immediately be able to detect it. Ever since writing began, there has never been anyone who has become as widely known as this!” (鷄林賈人求市頗切自云本國宰相每以百金換氣一篇其甚偽者宰相輒能辯是自篇章已來未有如是流傳之廣者) Chinese text from Yuan Zhen 元稹, *Bai shi changqing ji* 白氏長慶集 (Taipei shi: Taiwan Zhonghua shu ju, 1965), *juan* 51 p. 2 verso. See also Richard John Lynn, “Wang Shizhen’s Poems on Poetry” in John Ching-yu Wang, ed., *Chinese Literary Criticism of the Ch’ing Period (1644-1911)* (Hong Kong: Xianggang da xue chu ban she, 1993), p. 69.

⁶⁷ Zhao Heng 晁衡 (J. Chō Kō) was the Chinese name given to Abe no Nakamaro, who travelled to China in 717-718 as part of the Heian court’s mission to China. He distinguished himself by, among other things, passing the Civil Service exam. Despite multiple attempts to return to Japan, he never did so and died in 770. He was close friends with, among others, poets Li Bai and Wang Wei; the latter wrote him a poem and preface in parallel prose on the occasion of one of his attempts to return to Japan. This is “Farewell to Secretary Zhao Jian, on His Return to Japan” (Song mi shu Zhao Jian hai Ribenguo 送祕書晁監還日本國), the text that is being referred to here.

⁶⁸ In his discussion of poetry, *Yuyang shihua* 漁洋詩話 (Yuyang’s Talks on Poetry, 1725), Wang Shizhen notes appreciatively that “during the Tianqi era an emissary from Korea, Jin Shangxian 金尚憲 [Kim Sang-hōn, 1570-1652] whose courtesy name was Shudu 叔度, entered China at Dengzhou 登州 and presented tribute to the court...[his poetry] contains a considerable number of beautiful lines...” Wang Shizhen himself writes in the closing lines of one of his own quatrains that “I’ve recalled these words by the emissary from Korea / Of course, those in that eastern country know how to write melodic verse!” (記得朝鮮使臣語 / 果然東國解聲詩) Text and translation from Lynn, “Wang Shizhen’s Poems on Poetry” pp. 92-93.

⁶⁹ An allusion to “O Withered Leaves” (Tuo xi 薤兮) from the canonical *Shi jing* 詩經 (Classic of Poetry): “O withered leaves ! O withered leaves ! / How the wind is blowing you away ! / O ye uncles / Give us the

a record of matters just as they occurred. Ah, to be in each other's thoughts across ten thousand *li* – happily, close friends endure even across the seas.⁷⁰ In our three existences, our past, present, and future lives, we share ties from former lives. Among humankind there are many wondrous karmic ties. Ours is a great and noble-spirited friendship in which we link arms, in dignified friendship and deep sorrow at being apart. At this time, there is no strife between our two countries. Liang Yaoting [1632-1708] wrote an extemporaneous poem on a Japanese sword;⁷¹ on another night, filled with emotion in the waning sliver of moonlight, Zhang Qujiang also thought of his poetic friends far, far away.⁷²

-Preface by Li Changrong.

昔雞林國相。但知白傳真詩。輞川詩人。曾送晁鄉歸序。一誇精鑑一寫離衷。從未聞瓊瑤遠投琅玕疊報。鈴木魯先生。凌滄才子。超海飛仙。遡十載神交。爰七言手寄。論其格法。恍少陵懷太白之詩。仰彼風流。等高麗邀漁洋之賞。倡予和汝。興往⁷³情來。得詩若干編。為海東倡酬集。紀實也。嗟夫萬里相思。海外幸存知己。三生宿契。人間共有奇緣。落落知心。依依把臂。此際兩邦無事。梁葉亭漫吟日本刀歌。他宵片月多情。張曲江更念天涯詩友。李長榮序。

Li's line "At this time there is no strife between our two countries" suggests that he was fully aware of broader political tensions between Japan and China, yet held out hope that poetic exchange might provide a way to bring individual Japanese and Chinese poets together in both common humanity and literary friendship.

In addition to this preface, Li also sent back to Japan a further poem, one using a new rhyme scheme and celebrating the "bonds of ink" among the participants:

first note, and we will join in with you" (薤兮薤兮、風其吹女。叔兮伯兮、倡予和女)." Chinese text from Ge Peiling, ed., *Shi jing* p. 132.

⁷⁰ A play on a line famous line from Tang poet Wang Bo's (王勃 650-676), "Seeing off Vice-Prefect Du on the Occasion of His Appointment to the State of Shu" (Song Du shaofu zhi ren Shu zhou 送杜少府之任蜀州): "When one has a true friend within the realm / Even the farthest shores of Heaven are as next door" (海內存知己 / 天涯若比鄰)." Chinese text from Peng Dingqiu 彭定求 et al., eds., *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 (Complete Collection of Tang Poems) (Shanghai: Shanghai gu ji chu ban she, 1986), 1:166.

⁷¹ Also known as Liang Peilan 梁佩蘭. Liang's poem "Song on a Japanese Sword" (Ribendao ge 日本刀歌) was apparently composed on a sword he acquired from a merchant, who had in turn got it from an unnamed Dutchman. See Howland, *Borders of Chinese Civilization*, p. 101.

⁷² KSS "Xu" 序 (Preface), 1 recto-verso; ZRSJLJ, 115.

⁷³ Here, I read 往 for the printed text's 往.

答日本諸公
IN REPLY TO THE GENTLEMEN OF JAPAN

日南霞接日東霞
霞唱新詞我又誇
詩屋何分千萬里

墨緣喜結兩三家
愧推人物中朝望
漫說遊路遠島槎
天意倘聯中外會
定教歡聚在天涯

The southern sun's evening glow meets the glow of the eastern sun;
In the glow we sing new songs, and I am filled with pride.
When we are in the halls of poetry, what matter a thousand, ten
thousand leagues -
These bonds of ink joyously unite our small group.
Though shamed to put my talent in sight of the morning sun,
My ramblings have become a raft by which I visit far-flung isles.
If Heaven's intent is to join central and outer lands together,
Then surely it will have us happily assemble at the ends of the
earth.⁷⁴

As the closing lines suggest, by this point Li does seem to have been seriously considering travelling to Japan to meet his poetic interlocutors in person. This possibility was apparently on Li's mind from the beginning; in one of his earlier poems to Ryōsho, Li opens with the line "Someday, Heaven will send me east" (他年天遣我来東) and continues by imagining what he would like to do in Japan:

[...]
好探秘画奇書藏

親見峩冠博帶風
為語故交藤順叔
重逢應認老顏紅

I should like to hunt through storehouses of hidden paintings and
marvelous calligraphy,
To see with my own eyes the style of high cap and wide belt,⁷⁵
To exchange words with my old friend Junshuku.
When we are reunited, I will surely know his old red face.⁷⁶

Sadly, this anticipated reunion between Li and Junshuku was never to take place, as Li passed away in the early summer of 1877. In a moment of tragic irony recorded in completed version of the collection, Ryōsho notes that news of Li's death reached him on the same day as another set of poems from the Guangzhou-based poet, the promise of continuation of the poetic exchange thus followed by the news that it had been ended forever. The closing pages of *Collected Harmonies* contain tributes to Li from several Japanese poets, including Ryōsho himself:

⁷⁴ KSS, 10 verso; ZRSJLJ, 120.

⁷⁵ *E guan bo dai*, an ancient mode of dress for a Confucian scholar or literatus-official. Zihu is saying that he wishes to meet with Japanese scholars and poets, perhaps to see how they have preserved older Chinese traditions.

⁷⁶ KSS, 2 recto; ZRSJLJ, 116.

柳堂李君訃至詩以哭之

NEWS OF MR. LI LIUTANG'S PASSING REACHED ME. I LAMENT WITH A POEM.

訃音此日繼芳音	Words of your death, on this day, were what followed your own poetic words,
喜忽變來悲忽深	My joy suddenly changed to grief, that grief at once profound.
以六月廿日接手書是日訃至	[[Interlinear note:] I received your letter on June 20 th ; on this day too news of your death reached me) ⁷⁷
果信人間均幻夢	Truly, I have come to know that all human life is as fleeting as illusion;
可堪海外失同心	How can I bear the loss, across the seas, of one with the same heart?
空山吊墓一雙鶴	'Mid the empty mountains, one of a pair of cranes comes to your grave, ⁷⁸
孤榻絕絃三尺琴	And by my lonely couch, I break the strings of my three-foot lute.
妙墨惟餘倡酬集	Of your fine work, only the echoes of these <i>Harmonies</i> remain,
幾回追誦感題襟	How many times shall I read it over, and feel you tell your heart? ⁷⁹

Ryōsho's sixth line here alludes to one of the most famous stories of friendship in the entire Chinese textual tradition, the legend of the broken strings (Ch. *jue xian*, J. *zetsugen* 絕絃) of Bo Ya 伯牙 and Zhong Ziqi 鍾子期.⁸⁰ Out of respect for his departed "spiritual friend," Ryōsho apparently began to edit the collected poems of *Harmonies* together for publication, but this project was cut short by Ryōsho's own untimely death a few months later. Wanting to ensure that the exchange was not lost and to pay tribute to both departed friends, Seki Shōun arranged for its final compilation and publication, as he explains in the second half of his own afterword to *Collected Harmonies*:

At [the news of Li's death], Ryōsho wished to collect and publish the poems that made up their exchanges as a way of paying tribute to a deceased friend. But then he too passed away before the work was completed. Now Aoki Kan'ichi has been able to take up the mantle and make Ryōsho's aspiration a reality, and he calls upon me to say a few words. I lament for a worthy relationship that did not run its full course, and that one can trust to nothing in this life. My heart breaks each time I think on this; and yet, in truth Ryōsho's friendship [with Zihu] at that time began because of me. For that reason, it would not be

⁷⁷ Seki Shōun attests elsewhere in the collection that this date should actually be June 28th. See Chen Jie, *Meiji zenki Nitchū gakujutsu kōryū no kenkyū*, p. 36 n. 57.

⁷⁸ Paired cranes symbolized happiness and longevity (often in the context of a marriage); the loss of one of the pair thus functions as an expression of Ryōsho's grief at the loss of his friend.

⁷⁹ KSS, 15 recto; ZRSJLJ, 122.

⁸⁰ This story appears in *Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋, compiled c. 293 BCE). Bo Ya was a skilled player of the zither, and Zhong Ziqi his friend with an unparalleled appreciation for his work. When Zhong died, Bo Ya broke the strings of his lute and never played again.

right were I unable to bring myself to write the whole story from beginning to end. From that comes this afterword.

- Written one day after the “Double Ninth” of the year 1879 by the poet Shōun, known as Seki Yoshiomi.⁸¹

於是蓼處將校刻唱酬諸作以表絕絃之意。亦中道以沒。今青木咸一能續緒成其志。徵余一言。嗚呼良緣難完。人生之不可恃。每一思之。五內為裂。雖然。當時鈴木之交。實肇自余。則不得不忍書其顛末。於之乎跋。

巳卯重陽後一日湘雲外史關義臣撰

With assistance from fellow poets Aoki Kan'ichi 青木咸一 (n.d.) and Mori Shuntō, the collection was duly published in 1879, the covers crediting Li Zihu with the original manuscript and Mori Shuntō with “editing and publishing” (*kōkoku* 校刻). Having spanned close to a decade and begun through essentially a chance meeting, one of the more remarkable exchanges in modern Sino-Japanese history was thus preserved.

“It’s Like a War of Poetry!,” Ou Hunan, Poetic Tensions, and the Taiwan Expedition

Collected Harmonies is unquestionably structured as a celebration of transnational friendship, built around Li Zihu’s joy at finding fellow poets beyond China’s borders and corresponding admiration towards him on the part of his Japanese colleagues. Yet at certain points in the poetic exchange it is also possible to discern moments where the poets are talking slightly at cross-purposes; though all were keen to celebrate “same writing,” one has the sense that at times their understanding of the significance of this “same writing” was very subtly at odds. As we have seen above, one of Li’s very first poems contains the line “How can the Middle Kingdom be divided from outer lands?” (中國何會分外國), an expression of delight at finding poets overseas that nevertheless includes a presumption of China’s geographic and cultural centrality; through Japanese poets’ embrace of Sinitic poetry, the “outer land” of Japan becomes one with the “Middle Kingdom” of China. Precisely because of its implied claims of centrality, the term “Middle Kingdom” (中國 Ch. *Zhongguo*, J. *Chūgoku*) was rarely if ever used by Japanese *kanshi* poets of the Meiji period, following a general trend that stretched back at least as far as the mid-

⁸¹ Seki Yoshiomi, “Batsu” KSS, 1 recto and verso; ZRSJLJ, 124.

Edo period.⁸² In exchanges with Li Zihu and Ye Songshi, when the need arose to refer directly to China, Japanese poets seem to have consciously used other terms. Confucian scholar Tomita Ôha 富田鷗波 (Hisataka 久稼, 1836-1907), for instance, wrote to Ye Songshi that “Since ancient times, Japan and China (*Shina*) have been lands with “shared writing” / Though I have not known you long, our friendship is already profound” (日支從古同文国 / 交誼未深情既深).⁸³

In like vein, a number of poems within *Collected Harmonies* by Japanese poets seem to subtly call into question the idea of geographic or cultural centrality. Matsuoka Kiken, for instance, returns to this motif repeatedly in his poetry, as in the below:

疊韻寄廣東李子虎

REDOUBLING THE RHYMES, SENT TO LI ZIHU IN GUANGDONG

斯文本不異西東
情思須將筆話通
消息有機如掣電
往來何翼借冥鴻
渡江應招謫仙月

出塞肯鉞飛將風

This Culture of Ours is the same in essence, east or west,
And cordial thoughts are surely told through our brush-talk.
Our messages are quick and nimble as lightning,
There and back – why borrow the wings of a soaring bird?
If you are to cross the waters, we will summon Li Bai and his
moon,⁸⁴
One who crosses borders must be willing to adopt the style of the
“winged general.”⁸⁵

⁸² As Ronald Toby has pointed out, the choice of what exactly to call China was a sensitive one for the Tokugawa shogunate, which deliberately refused to use the appellation Zhongguo/Chūgoku for precisely these reasons. See Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 199.

⁸³ “Fusang lichang ji” in *Fusang lichang ji*, p. 14 recto. One is far more likely to encounter Shinkoku 清国, Shina 支那, Kara 唐, or Tōdo 唐土 as terms for China in early Meiji Japan; I have yet to encounter any Meiji Japanese poet using the term Chūgoku. Where it was necessary to specify Ye Songshi’s country of origin, as in for instance his published poems in Japanese journals, he was usually referred to as being from “Shinkoku.”

⁸⁴ Probably a reference to a famous Li Bai poem, “Drinking Alone by Moonlight” (Yue xia du zhou 月下獨酌), in which Li imagines the moon as a drinking companion. The allusion suggests that if Li Zihu does come to Japan, he will be welcomed with a drinking session.

⁸⁵ The reference here is ambiguous; “winged general” (Ch. *fei jiang*, J. *hishō*) is a piece in the board game *shōgi* 將棋 that can “jump” or “fly” over other pieces. The term was also used in Chinese texts as a soubriquet for the Han military general Li Guang 李廣 (?-119 BCE), bestowed by the Xiongnu barbarian tribes against which he fought. The reference to “crossing the border” echoes Tang poet Wang Changling’s 王昌齡 (698-756) poem “Over the Border” (Chu sai 出塞): “Oh, that the winged general of the Dragon City were here / Never to allow a barbarian horseman to cross the Yin Mountains!” (但使龍城飛將在 / 不教胡馬渡陰山) Chinese text from Lu Jiaji 陸家驥, ed., *Tang shi qi jue gu shi suo tan* 唐詩七絕故事瑣談 (Conversations and Stories of Heptasyllabic Quatrains of the Tang) (Taipei shi: Taiwan Shangwu, 2004), p. 245.

詩未寄君春又去 Before I could send you my poem, spring had already gone;
半簾烟雨落花紅 Blinds half-raised, misty rain, fallen flowers pink.⁸⁶

Kiken here holds up “This Culture of Ours” – the literate practices of all civilized men – as something that is universal to both “East and West,” not determined or bound by geography.⁸⁷ To compose and exchange poetry is to participate in a universal civilized discourse that is not the particular property of any nation or geographical area. Exchange between Japanese and Chinese poets is thus to be understood in terms of cultural parity, not in terms of center and periphery. It is worth noting that similar imagery that appears to challenge notions of center and periphery occurs in the opening lines of Kiken’s other poems as well:

雲路茫茫西復東 The distances between us are vast, for east as for west;
豈應獨恃夢魂通 But why rely only on dreams for our spirits to meet?⁸⁸
[...]

Pointing to equally vast distances between both parties can, perhaps, be read as a response to Li Zihu’s consistent framing of Japan as a land “at the ends of the earth,” and indeed other poets beside Kiken seem to echo this theme. The opening lines of one of Seki Shōun’s responses to Li, for instance, closely mirror Kiken’s assertion concerning “This Culture of Ours:”

道無物我與西東 The Way knows no “me” and “you,” nor “East” and “West”
何況古來文字通 All the more has this held for writing, since ancient times.⁸⁹
[...]

And also true of one of Ryōsho’s own further responses:

蒼茫雲海隔西東 Great green ocean, vast expanses of cloud divide east and west;
此夕双魚信忽通 Now, on this evening, word comes swiftly to me, in paired carp.⁹⁰
[...]

⁸⁶ KSS, 8 verso / ZRSJLJ, 119.

⁸⁷ I follow Peter K. Bol’s translation of *siwen* in “This Culture of Ours: Intellectual Transitions in T’ang and Sung China” (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 1. The *locus classicus* is *Analects* 9:5: “When under siege in Kuang, the Master said, “With King Wen dead, is not Culture (*wen*) here with me? Had Heaven intended that This Culture of Ours (*siwen*) should perish, those who died later would not have been able to participate in This Culture of Ours. Heaven is not about to let This Culture of Ours perish, so what can the men of Kuang do to me?” (trans. Richard John Lynn, “Straddling the Tradition-Modernity Divide: Huang Zunxian (1848-1905) and His *Poems on Miscellaneous Subjects from Japan*” in King et al, *Sino-Japanese Transculturation*, p. 25).

⁸⁸ KSS, 9 verso; ZRSJLJ, 119.

⁸⁹ KSS, 11 verso-recto; ZRSJLJ, 120.

⁹⁰ KSS, 4 verso; ZRSJLJ, 117.

These are, to be certain, subtle differences; it seems highly unlikely that Li Zihu's intent in using these terms was to insult or belittle his Japanese counterparts, yet these examples are perhaps illustrative of the way in which even assertions of transnational friendship can be colored by unspoken assumptions concerning the relative positions of the countries in question. The final poetic sequence under discussion here is, however, one in which these themes – center and periphery, competing claims to civilization and cultural pre-eminence – are contested in much more explicit fashion. Published in Japanese newspapers during the summer and fall of 1874, this ill-tempered sequence thus came against the backdrop of Japanese forces fighting in Taiwan, and under these circumstances Sinitic poetry served not as a basis for friendship, but rather as a vehicle in and through which competing claims of cultural dominance might be asserted.

The Taiwan Expedition, as it is usually known, was Japan's first dispatch of troops overseas since Hideyoshi's campaign in Korea in the late sixteenth century. The expedition was prompted by the murder, at the hands of Taiwanese aborigines, of fifty-four shipwrecked Ryūkyūan sailors who had drifted ashore on Taiwan. Subsequently, Japan made representations to the Qing government that it was entitled to compensation for the wrongful deaths of its "subjects," though in point of fact the precise status of the Ryūkyūs – as part of the Meiji state, or as a tributary state of China – was far from settled at the time. In response to Japanese demands for action, Qing officials countered that since the Ryūkyūs were China's tributary state, Japan had no basis on which to seek damages, and the inhabitants of the area of Taiwan in question were in any case barbarians, beyond the scope of civilization (Ch. *huawai*, J. *kegai* 化外). As such, the Qing government could not accept responsibility for their actions. This strategy did, though, open up the possibility that Japan could in turn claim that Qing officials were thereby relinquishing any territorial claim on Taiwan.

The dispatch of troops to southern Taiwan, under the leadership of Saigō Tsugumichi 西郷従道 (1843-1902), was thus one of the most important events in modern Sino-Japanese history.⁹¹ As the diplomatic maneuvering and eventual military events unfolded, the crisis was widely

⁹¹ There is an extensive body of English-language scholarship on the Taiwan Expedition and its significance; in addition to the work cited below, particularly relevant are Leonard D. H. Gordon, *Confrontation over Taiwan: Nineteenth-Century China and the Powers* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007); Robert Eskildsen, "Of Civilization and Savages: The Mimetic Imperialism of Japan's 1874 Expedition to Taiwan", *The American Historical Review*, 107:2 (2002), pp. 388–418; and Edwin Pak-Wah Leung, "The Quasi-War in East Asia: Japan's Expedition to Taiwan and the Ryūkyū Controversy", *Modern Asian Studies* 17:2 (1983), pp. 257–281.

discussed in Japan's still relatively new print media. With the war reportage of Kishida Ginkō 岸田吟香 (Tarō 太郎, 1833-1905) particularly prominent, and a wealth of pictures and commentary available through the newspapers, the expedition also proved significant as a major modern media event.⁹² Of most direct relevance here is a strong focus in the reporting on questions of civilization and barbarism. At issue was not only the precise status of the Taiwanese aborigines and whether or not they were part of the greater Chinese cultural orbit, but also the fundamental applicability to contemporary East Asia of a traditional Sinocentric order, as against a Western-inspired model of international law in which nations approached one another as equals. In short, by the late summer of 1874, notions of who was civilized, who was not, and who had the right to make such judgments, had come to be very much in flux.

This was nowhere better represented than in the case of the "Peony Girl" (Taiwan Botan shōjo 台湾牡丹少女). In June of 1874, towards the end of the conflict, Japanese soldiers in Taiwan captured a young girl of the indigenous Taiwanese Mudan 牡丹 tribe (*J. botan*), and subsequently took her to Japan to be educated and cared for under the auspices of Japanese "civilization." As Matthew Fraleigh shows, the "Peony Girl" case, held as representing her "redemption" from "savagery," was covered extensively in the Japanese print media of the day, and performed an important propaganda function; it stressed both the Taiwanese natives' supposed latent affinity for Japan and the transformative, "civilizing" purpose of the military campaign itself.⁹³ Accessible to a variety of readerships through visual depictions in woodblock prints, photographs, and line drawings, the "Peony Girl" discourse spoke to Japan's fundamental sense of purpose and place within the late 19th-century world order, implicitly placing it on the same level as the Western powers in assuming a mission of civilizing the non-civilized.

The reporting on the "Peony Girl" did not necessarily impress everyone, especially, one may assume, the still relatively small number of Chinese expatriates in Japan.⁹⁴ One of these, a

⁹² For a good overview of recent scholarship on the expedition and a discussion of Kishida in particular, see Matthew Fraleigh, "Japan's First War Reporter: Kishida Ginkō and the Taiwan Expedition" *Japanese Studies* 30:1, pp. 43-66.

⁹³ Matthew Fraleigh, "Transplanting the Flower of Civilization: The "Peony Girl" and Japan's 1874 Expedition to Taiwan" *International Journal of Asian Studies* 9:2 (2012), pp. 177-209.

⁹⁴ Wang Baoping's study of Japanese government statistics regarding Chinese nationals known to be resident in Japan shows, for instance, that in 1876 (Meiji 9) there were a mere 2,316 Chinese residents, rising by one-third to 3,152 by 1880 (Meiji 13). See Wang Baoping, *Shindai ChūNichi Gakujutsu Kōryū no kenkyū*, p. 15.

shoe merchant by the name of Ou Hunan, ventured to record his thoughts on the affair in *kanshi* form, the verse then finding its way into the pages of the Tokyo newspapers.⁹⁵ The verse, first published in the pages of the *Shinbun zasshi* 新聞雑誌 newspaper on July 18, 1874, is accompanied by an unsigned commentary:

I have come by a recent composition by Ou Hunan, a man from China's Jiangsu district who is residing in Yokohama. I believe it hits the nail on the head regarding the malady of our times, so I am sending it in to your newspaper.

横濱在留支那江蘇ノ人歐湖南ノ近作一首ヲ得タリ頗フル我時病ヲ中ルヲ覺フ因テ
貴社ニ投ス

日本方今事太艱
征韓議罷討臺灣
国力耗衰為何事
惟見奏勲擒女蠻

Things right now have gotten really terrible in Japan,
Talk of invading Korea dropped, so they hit Taiwan;
The national might frittered away, and all for what cause?
The sole heroic deed reported to the throne, nabbing a girl
barbarian!⁹⁶

Other than the information appended to this and the subsequent poem discussed below, virtually nothing is known about Ou Hunan or his background. His poem begins by calling into question the motives behind the expedition, alluding to the idea that the dispatch of troops to Taiwan aimed to assuage certain factions of the warrior class after the rejection of a plan to invade the Korean peninsula (the *seikanron* 征韓論 dispute of 1873).⁹⁷ Ou's poem turns the "Peony Girl" discourse on its head, neatly puncturing the grand narratives of "civilization" created around the case by suggesting that the capture of a small girl is laughably small return for the resources that Japan has brought to bear.

Ou Hunan was perhaps not alone in taking a dim view of Japan's first overseas expedition in nearly three centuries, for the Taiwan expedition was by no means universally welcomed among Japanese intellectuals; as Robert Tierney notes, Japanese voices in the print media of the time attacked the expedition as a waste of resources, or as a risky maneuver that might cause the

⁹⁵ As discussed below, Ou Hunan's preface to his second, follow-up poem makes clear that he had not originally intended to make the poem public, but that it was passed on to the newspaper by an as yet-unknown third party.

⁹⁶ *Shinbun zasshi*, July 18th 1874.

⁹⁷ Marlene J. Mayo describes the Taiwan expedition as "a safety valve. It was not for glory, prestige, or security so much as for diversion of *shizoku* rancor." Mayo, "The Korean Crisis of 1873 and Early Meiji Foreign Policy" *The Journal of Asian Studies* 31:4 (August 1972), p. 818.

Western powers to intervene.⁹⁸ The anonymous party responsible for sending in Ou Hunan's poem seems to have been in the latter camp, judging from the supportive comment that the poem "hits the nail on the head regarding the malady of our times." The readers of *Shinbun zasshi* may well have held similar opinions, because despite its potentially inflammatory content – a Qing resident in Japan openly mocking the war effort – the poem apparently drew no particular response in *Shinbun zasshi*. Rather, it was the reprinting of the poem five days later on July 23rd in Scotsman John Reddie Black's (1826-1880) *Nisshin shinjishi* 日新真事誌 that proved rather more incendiary. Founded in 1872, the *Nisshin shinjishi* had close ties to the Meiji government, and Ou Hunan's poem met with a rather more animated reception in its pages.

On August 4th, for instance, the *Nisshin shinjishi* published several verses in response to Ou's poem from the hand of a correspondent signing himself with the improbable name of "The Crazy Boat-Swallowing Fish-Man" (*kyōsei donshū gyōjin* 狂生吞舟魚人).⁹⁹ As had been the case with a number of Li Zihu's poems, these and subsequent responses adhered to the practice of rhyme-following, meaning that each responding poem retained the original rhyme graphs of Ou Hunan's poem in their original order as a key structural element:

征韓之事素非艱	Pacifying Korea would never have been so hard,
況是臺灣瑣々灣	Even less so Taiwan, with its tiny little bays.
休嘲日本如彈丸	Let sneering cease; Japan is like a bullet,
々々又能彈百蠻	And these "bullets" can bring down all manner of barbarian.

四百余州政日艱	Governing the four-hundred-odd districts gets harder day by day, ¹⁰⁰
一言誰料失臺灣	Who'd have thought that with one word, the Chinese would give up Taiwan?
方今畫策出何事	All this plotting and scheming lately, and what's the outcome?
只應到底為野蠻	Just that we end up, rightly, regarding them as barbarian.

⁹⁸ Tierney, *Tropics of Savagery*, p. 15.

⁹⁹ A slight variation on the expression "ship-swallowing fish" (Ch. *tun zhou zhi yu*, J. *donshū no uo* 吞舟之魚), denoting a fish large enough to swallow a boat and, by extension, an uncommonly great individual. The *locus classicus* is *Zhuangzi*: "A fish large enough to swallow a boat, if he is tossed up by the waves and left stranded, is bound to fall victim to ants" (吞舟之魚，碭而失水，則蟻能苦之). Chinese text from Wang Shumin 王叔岷, ed., *Zhuangzi jiao qian* 莊子校詮 (Edited Commentary on *Zhuangzi*) (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, 1988), 2:861.

¹⁰⁰ "Four Hundred Districts" (Ch. *si bai zhou* 四百州) is a term used to refer to all of China.

I happened to see the quatrain which Ou Hunan of the Qing published in issue 67 of the *Shinjishi*. Here, for fun, I followed his rhymes. – The Big Crazy Boat-Swallowing Fish-Man, who lives in Ogawa-machi.¹⁰¹

偶眞事誌弟三百周年六十七號ニ載スル所清人歐湖南ノ一絶句ヲ見ル今戯ニ其韻ヲ
歩ス小川街ニ住スー狂生吞舟魚人

These two poems rework Ou Hunan's imagery in strikingly pugnacious and jingoistic terms. The first poem in particular leaves a great deal of ambiguity as to the identity of the "barbarian" being threatened; possible readings here could include the Taiwanese aborigines, Qing Chinese in general, or even Ou Hunan himself. The sense of the *Nisshin shinjishi*'s readers interpreting Ou's poem as a gauntlet thrown down was strengthened by a further submission from another reader ten days later on August 14th, which seems to follow the second poem quoted above in not only rejecting a Sinocentric model of East Asia, but in reversing it to place Japan in the position of the main civilizing influence, and the Chinese in that of "barbarian:"

Your company's newspaper has featured a poem by Qing citizen Ou Hunan. These poems say that recent events in our country are "terrible". I wished to follow the rhymes used in these poems, yet am not skilled in Sinitic poetry, still less in his babbling tongue. If I were to test my abilities against his, this would hardly measure up to the standards of the great ages of poetry. So now I record my own humble words in asking all your gentlemen readers out there; sirs, will you not produce masterworks to deflate the Tatar?¹⁰²

貴社新聞誌中清国人歐湖南ノ詩ヲ載ス其詩我邦近事ノ艱ムヲ云我輩之ニ次答セン
ト欲ス而シテ詩ヲ善セス況ヤ喋々彼ト相短長スル恐ラクハ盛代ノ規模ニ非ザラン
今蕪辭ヲ録ス江湖諸君子ニ質ス諸君子何ソ傑作以韃兒ノ膽ヲ破ラサル

The above reader's submission frames the growing poetic exchange as a matter of national prestige, calling on the newspaper's readers to respond to Ou Hunan's verse as a slight to Japanese national pride. This call-to-arms is couched in terms that question the Chinese presumption of cultural centrality; the *locus classicus* for the term "babbling tongue" (Ch. *diedie* 喋喋) (Ch. *diedie* 喋喋), for instance, is a passage in the *Chronicles of the Grand Historian* in which a Xiongnu envoy rebukes the Han Chinese for (among other things) their lack of martial vigor.¹⁰³ By implication,

¹⁰¹ *Nisshin shinjishi*, August 4th 1874.

¹⁰² *Nisshin shinjishi*, August 14th 1874.

¹⁰³ "You people in your mud huts, you talk too much! Enough of this blabbering on – just because you wear hats, what does that get you?" (嗟土室之人顧無多辭令喋喋而佔佔冠固何當) English translation from Sima Qian, trans. Burton Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian: Han Dynasty* (New York: Columbia

this Japanese correspondent is rebuking the theoretically superior Chinese, just as did the Xiongnu. Likewise, in closing the correspondent refers to Ou as “Tatar” (Ch. *da er*, J. *datsuji* 韃兒), a term of unstable meaning over Chinese history but usually used to refer to various non-Han tribes.¹⁰⁴ Casting Ou Hunan as a “Tatar” relegates him to the periphery, the center presumably open to be claimed by Japan by virtue of a demonstration of poetic skill.

As it could often be quite technically demanding to use the original rhymes of another poet’s work, producing a rhyme-matching poem could often be understood as answering a challenge by picking up a poetic gauntlet thrown down. Here, the challenge is cast in explicitly national terms; in calling on Japanese poets to “deflate” the Chinese poet by beating him at his own game, the fact of poetry being a “same writing” serves to enable not friendship but rather rivalry and competition. Japanese skill in the same literary art form becomes a way of questioning Chinese assumptions of superiority.

As the summer continued, other responses came in to the pages of the *Nisshin shinjishi*, several of which reprised the theme of Japan as taking over the role of civilizational center. On August 28th, the newspaper printed some more verses, along with a brief comment:

Of late we have recorded in these pages several people who have followed the rhymes of Qing poet Ou Hunan’s work. Now, in addition to these, we have the following two poems from Tsuchiyasuda Mitake in Suô [modern day Yamaguchi]. The troops in Taiwan are fearsome in their martial dignity, enough to cause the hearts of all the four hundred-odd districts of China to tremble.

曩キ二本誌二清人歐湖南カ詩二次韻スル者ヲ登録セシガ今亦周防ノ土安田三岳ヨリ左ノ二首 ヲ寄ス討臺灣兵威ノ赫々タル支那四百餘州ノ心膽ヲ戦慄セシムルニ足ル

義舉何論易與艱
天涯討罪定孤灣

If an act is righteous, why debate whether it is “easy” or “hard?”
At the ends of the earth, we punish crimes and pacify those isolated bays.

請看東海皇家澤
分與餘波及野蠻

Look ye on the blessings of the emperor of the eastern seas,
Shared among all, the ripples reaching even unto the barbarian.¹⁰⁵

University Press, 1993), p. 144; Chinese text from Sima Qian 司馬遷, ed. Wang Niansun 王念孫 *Shi ji* 史記 *Yi wen yin shu guan yin xing* (Taipei: Yi wen yin shu guan, 1955), 2:1184

¹⁰⁴ In current usage, the term Tatar/*dada* is generally used to refer to the Tatar ethnic group living in Xinjiang and speaking Turkic, with the Mongols of Inner Mongolia being regarded as a separate group. Neither Chinese nor Japanese histories during the premodern period necessarily drew a clear distinction between these, however.

¹⁰⁵ *Nisshin shinjishi*, August 28th 1874.

The first of Tsuchiyasuda's poems, quoted here, further develops the idea of Japan as civilizational center, the "emperor of the eastern seas" – that is, the Japanese emperor – becoming the fount of benevolence to the barbarians at the "ends of the earth." We may note, for instance, the consistent use of the same expression to refer to Japan in Zihu's earlier poetry; here, the geographic and moral configuration is completely reversed.

On the same day, the *Nisshin shinjishi* also published a set of *waka* poems that, in an unusual twist, incorporated each of the rhyme graphs of the *kanshi*:

We also have a *waka* in which a certain person composes by following the rhyme graphs of the [Sinitic] poem. We reproduce it here after the preface.

又或人此詩ノ韻ヲ踏テ咏スル和歌有リ筆ノ序ニ末ニ載ス

On account of the fierce army of our divine emperor's realm, how much the Chinese will surely be distressed!

猛キ我スメラ御國ノ御軍ニ唐土人ヤイカニ艱マン

Let there not be the slightest gap between the warships of our divine land, dispatched to that isle; the watery bay.

彼島ニ寄スル御國ノ軍船隙コソ無ケレ水ノ湾

The grass, moistened in the dew of Japanese munificence; even the grass that justly bears the name "wild."¹⁰⁶

日本ノ恵ミノ露ニウルフラシ草ノ其名ニ負ヘル蠻モ

Adapting rhyme-following to fashion the basis for *waka* was not common practice, and we can perhaps read this as an attempt to change the linguistic terms of engagement more in favor of the Japanese. What Ou Hunan himself made of this is unknown, but he does seem to have been reading the poems that were sent in to the *Nisshin shinjishi*, as he chose to reply himself on September 8th. He did so, though, in *Shinbun zasshi*, where his first poem had originally been published:

I have long made my living selling shoes to customers in Yokohama. This year, the Japanese government launched its expedition to Taiwan and wished to wage war with China. The people's hearts are full of trepidation, the discussions at the court most vexed. When judging the right and wrong of a matter, since there is international law, one can judge the situation and make a determination immediately. As for the small poem which I composed recently on the present situation, though undeserving, it was placed in the Tokyo

¹⁰⁶ *Nisshin shinjishi*, August 28th 1874. "Grass" here functions as a metaphor for the people of uncivilized lands, who become the recipients of Japanese benevolence.

newspapers by a citizen's chance error. There have been a certain number who have answered me in rhyme-matching, and therefore I once again repeat the previous rhymes to state my humble intent. By doing so I would lay this matter completely to rest at the bottom of a box. I say:

余業補靴客橫濱已久矣是歲日本政府有征臺之舉終將與中華交干戈民心危懼廟議太艱至其是非曲直則自有萬國公法在不俟辨而可判也曩就目今形勢所見賦小詩一首不敢市人偶誤見載東京新聞和韻應答者若干因重步前韻述微志以深藏之箱底云

男兒報國豈辭艱	If a man would serve his country, he cannot turn away from hardship;
愧我潛身橫港灣	Ashamed I am to be hiding myself in Yokohama Bay.
寸丹遙獻邊防策	But those of loyal heart can offer strategies for border defense even from afar,
要護南陲十八蕃	Desiring to protect the southern borders and the eighteen barbarians. ¹⁰⁷

This defiant response, implicitly arguing for Taiwan as part of Qing territory and expressing a desire to help defend it as such, seems to have had the effect of steering Japanese responses in a slightly more moderate direction; one further response in the *Nisshin shinjishi* was archly humorous and critical of all parties in the Taiwan crisis:

The other day I saw in your newspaper an awful lot of our countrymen answering Qing merchant Ou Hunan's poem, and I too imitated them. I composed three quatrains, to support Master Chikudō [one of the previous respondents, not quoted here]. It seems rather as if Hunan has playfully challenged us to a war of poetry – haha!

– The “Sickly Tiger in the Freshly Cut Grass,” in Gifu

頃閱貴社新聞我邦人次韻清商歐湖南詩者頗多余亦倣其輦賦三絕為竹堂主人後援似湖南戲挑詩戰呵々

岐阜 病虎生艸

元識生蕃力取艱	We've always known uncivilized barbarians are hard to bring to heel,
欲將舌戰領全灣	So the aim is to use a war of words to occupy all Taiwan!
笑他清相言無信	They smile at the other's sagely countenances, but their words are not to be trusted,

¹⁰⁷ *Shinbun zasshi*, September 8th 1874. The final rhyme graph in this poem is different from the previous iterations. “Eighteen barbarians” likely refers to the Paiwan 排灣 aboriginal tribe of southern Taiwan, composed of eighteen smaller tribal units that had been unified under the leadership of chieftain Tok-e-Tok 卓其督 (c.1817-1874). See Gordon, *Confrontation over Taiwan*, p. xviii.

州里不行何況蠻 One's own countrymen are no good, to say nothing of barbarians.¹⁰⁸

The “Sickly Tiger” appears here to criticize what he sees as phoniness and hypocrisy of everyone involved in the discourse, Japanese and Chinese alike. Despite the playful tone to the response, the correspondent's description of the exchange thus far as a “war of poetry” seems to be an uncomfortably accurate description of the underlying cultural dynamics.

One final coda was also provided by prominent *kanshi* poet Ōtsuki Bankei 大槻磐溪 (Kiyotaka 清崇, 1801-1878). Having initially sent in four poems of his own to the *Nisshin shinjishi* on August 20th, Bankei further revised the poems and republished them, along with four new poems, in a different venue, the *Chōya shinbun* newspaper of September 28th. In addition to the revision, Bankei also added a preface explaining his reasons for matching rhymes with Ou Hunan:

Qing poet Ou Hunan's poems on Taiwan used the three rhyme graphs “艱[“suffering”],” “灣[“bay,” also the second graph of “Taiwan”]” and “蠻[“barbarian”].” These are very difficult rhymes, and our countrymen have gone back and forth in matching its rhymes. I read this myself and my brush became unbearably itchy, so I composed these eight quatrains in response. This is a case of “Feng Fu baring his arms,” and I assuredly will not escape widespread scorn.¹⁰⁹

清人歐湖南台灣詩押艱灣蠻三字韻頗險而邦人往々有和余讀之不堪技痒遂疊作八絕句馮婦之攘臂固不免大方姍笑耳

為恤漂民暴殺艱	In pity for those shipwrecked souls, and the ordeal of their violent murder,
編師問罪向台灣	The lieutenant-general's punitive force makes for Taiwan.
何圖大國生嫌隙	I never would have imagined so great a country as China giving rise to such ill will,

¹⁰⁸ *Nisshin shinjishi*, September 28th 1874.

¹⁰⁹ The allusion is to an anecdote from Mencius regarding a man who sought fame and popular applause even against his better judgment, and is Bankei's way of saying that he is going against his own better judgment, which would ordinarily be to stay out of the argument: “There was a man named Feng Fu in Jin who was skilled in catching tigers with his bare hands. Later he became a capable scholar. Going once out to the wild country, he found the people all in pursuit of a tiger. The tiger went to ground in a mountainous area where no one dared attack him. When they saw Feng Fu approaching, they ran and met him. Feng Fu bared his arms, and got out of his carriage. The crowd rejoiced at this, but those who were scholars laughed at him” (晉人有馮婦者。善搏虎。卒為善士。則之野。有眾逐虎。虎負嵎。莫之敢撓。望見馮婦。趨而迎之。馮婦攘臂下車。眾皆悅之。其為士者笑之。). Text from Tōdō Akiyasu, Ōshima Akira 大島晃, eds., trans., *Mōshi* 孟子 (Mencius) Chūgoku no koten 4 (Tokyo: Gakushū Kenkyūsha, 1983), suppl. p.93.

不許南邊化外蠻

We cannot let the southern borders become the domain of barbarians!

天子本知王業艱
保民恩遍海之灣The Son of Heaven knows the hardships of governing the realm,¹¹⁰
Protecting the people, spreading out blessings, as far as the ocean's bays.好待春風吹到日
飽聞黃鳥語綿蠻I eagerly await the day when the spring breeze will reach us -
One tires of listening to the chatter of yellow orioles.¹¹¹

Bankei's poems are considerably more sober than those of a number of his compatriots; the second poem, in particular, suggests that he has become tired of the constant "chatter" on the expedition, and looks forward to the day when peace ("spring breeze") will come. The reference to "yellow orioles" perhaps conveys a sense of sympathy for the Japanese soldiers dispatched to Taiwan; "chirruping orioles" appear in a poem of the same title in Lesser Odes of the *Classic of Poetry*, in which a tired and hungry soldier on the march hears the chirruping of orioles.¹¹²

Bankei's eight poems in late September were where the exchange came to rest, in the *Chōya shinbun*, *Nisshin shinjishi*, and *Shinbun zasshi*. To some extent, this may have been because the newspaper commentary had been overtaken by events on the ground; most of the fighting on Taiwan was already over, having been completed earlier in the summer, and Japanese troops would officially withdraw in November, a little over a month after the last poems were published. What became of Ou Hunan is not known; though he seems to have left no further trace during his stay in Japan, his poem did live on in some small way. It was included, along with

¹¹⁰ For reasons of space, I have excerpted only two of Bankei's eight poems. The second poem quoted is a revision of an earlier version published in the *Nisshin shinjishi*: "Well knows the Son of Heaven how hard it is to sow and reap / Loving the people, spreading out blessings far as ocean bays / I eagerly await the day when far-off lands will be at peace / I am tired of listening to yellow orioles bring forth their chirrups." (天子深知稼穡艱 / 愛民恩遍海之灣 / 好待八荒無事日 / 飽聞黃鳥送綿蠻). I am grateful to Matthew Fraleigh for advice on the interpretation of this verse.

¹¹¹ The "spring breeze" suggests the coming of a new day, and the end of both conflicts. *Chōya shinbun* September 29th 1874, p. 2.

¹¹² Arthur Waley renders the first verse of the poem in question as: "Tender and pretty are the yellow orioles / Perching on the side of the hill / The way is long / I am so tired / What will become of me? / "Let him have a drink, let him have some food / Give him a lesson, scold him / But bid that hind coach / Call to him and pick him up" (綿蠻黃鳥 / 止於丘阿 / 道之雲遠 / 我勞如何 / 飲之食之 / 教之誨之 / 命彼後車 / 謂之載之). English translation from Waley, trans., *The Book of Songs: The Ancient Chinese Classic of Poetry* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 1996), p. 219; Chinese text from Ge Peiling, ed., *Shi jing*, pp. 429-30.

Bankei's preface and eight responses, in a collection of *kanshi* and waka verse published the following year, entitled *Fine Verse of the Meiji Period* (*Meiji kōinshū* 明治好音集).¹¹³

Conclusion: Same Writing, Same Difference?

By examining these three hitherto overlooked moments of poetic exchange outside of the diplomatic sphere, the preceding has shown *kanshi*'s importance attention as a method of written communication between Chinese and Japanese intellectuals. The aim has been to look more closely at what both the rhetoric of "same writing" and the fact of poetic exchange meant for the intellectuals involved in it. Transnational *kanshi* exchange did, I believe, perform a number of important functions; the encounter with poets from other nations provided a validation of a poet's cultural priorities, and stressed the importance of the textual and cultural tradition in which they themselves were invested, even as it appeared perhaps to be threatened by the encroachment of the West. It provided a way of making some sense of an unstable situation; "same writing" offered common ground and perhaps even a way forward, if personal ties between Japanese and Chinese could be extrapolated into national ones. Yet in any transnational friendship, politics will sooner or later play a role. Because of poetry's great and enduring prestige within both countries' literary traditions, as well as the unstable balance of power between Japan and China, such *kanshi* exchanges could not be completely neutral; to engage with the other was always to some extent to make a statement, positive or negative, about the two countries' positions relative to one another. In order to be mutually intelligible, Japanese and Chinese poets had to draw on a shared idiom and textual storehouse that had certain assumptions about foreignness deeply embedded within it already; it may be that the very language of Sinitic poetry made it difficult to articulate a model of trans-national relations that did not in some way reify notions of hierarchy or center and periphery.

The discourse of "same writing" thus took place against a background of fluidity and possibility; it allowed both groups of poets to advance claims of friendship, for Chinese poets to imagine a world in which cultural ties might draw the Japanese to stand with them against the West, and for the Japanese poets to search for a notion of cultural parity with their neighbor. This latter notion of parity sought, or maybe even achieved, clearly emboldened some Japanese poets to challenge the traditional geographic and ethical assumptions of what Joshua Fogel has called the

¹¹³ See Okabe Keigorō 岡部啓五郎, ed., *Meiji kōinshū* 明治好音集 Ripurinto Nihon kindai bungaku 194 (Tokyo: Kokubungaku kenkyū shiryōkan, 2009 [original printing 1875]), pp. 50-52.

“Sinosphere” in East Asia, or even, as in the case of the Taiwan poems discussed above, invert those assumptions to work in Japan’s favor. Though it functions rather differently in its earlier historical context, it is perhaps no coincidence that the oft-stressed term “same writing” resonates with the later imperialist slogan “same writing, same race;” from the Japanese point of view, the notion of “same writing” allowed those who invoked it to re-envision Japan’s position in the world in a new and politically advantageous manner. We might say, then, that though both Japanese and Chinese poets of the 1870s talked about “same writing,” they were not necessarily speaking the same language.